

SAMMLUNG IRVING

Deckblatt

1. Kurzbezeichnung:

"Written Statements by Members of the Stenografischer Dienst des Führerhauptquartiers", written and translated into English in 1945

2. Personalien des Verfassers:

Mr. Horace R. Hansen, attorney at law; ab September 1945 zunächst in München, dann in Dachau als Chief Prosecutor for the Eastern District in War Crimes Trials; damals Leutnant der US-Armee.

3. Benützungsbeschränkung: die Genehmigung zur Einsicht muss eingeholt werden bei:

- ohne -

4. Standort des Originaldokuments:

Horace R. Hansen, of Hansen, Dordell, Bradt & Koll, Attorneys at Law, 600 Degree of Honor Building, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101, USA (tel.: 612/ 227-8056)

5. Allgemein

Anliegende Unterlagen wurden dem Institut für Zeitgeschichte in München, zur Disposition von Herrn Dr. Anton Hoch, überlassen. Sie stellen einen Teil der Aktenbestände dar, die Mr. David Irving für sein im Jahre 1975 erschienenenes Werk über Adolf Hitler zusammengestellt hat. Diese Akten wurden in den Jahren 1964 - 1974 gesammelt, teilweise in einer chronologischen Kartei verzeichnet (Stempel: Indexed), teilweise auf Mikrofilm im Original verfilmt vor Rückgabe der Akten an den Originalbesitzer, teilweise als Fotokopien kopiert. In den meisten Fällen unterliegen diese Akten Benützungsbeschränkungen, und der Benutzer muss vorher die Genehmigung zur Einsicht von dem Besitzer einholen. David Irving selbst verzichtet auf jegliche Beschränkung in dieser Richtung. Vielmehr soll Herr Dr. Anton Hoch vorerst die Entscheidungen treffen.

34. Written statements by Members of
the Stenographic Service at the Führer's
headquarters; written for U.S. authorities
in 1945. (50 pages).

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1: See Irving Sammlung, Akte: Nachlass Krieger.

2: See Irving Sammlung, Akte: Tagebuch Karl Thöt, 1942-45.

3: For German original see Univ. of Pennsylvania Library, 46M-25.

4: For German original, see ibid., 46M-15 (Irving Microfilm DJ-13).

5: For Gen. Karl Koller's account of the same episode, see his letter
to Prof. Dr. Exner, 25.3.1946 [Nachlass Salmuth, copy attached].

Filed with Nachlaß Krieger, although not really part of it.

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June 11, 1974

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TELEPHONE (612) 227-8056

Mr. David Irving
81 Duke Street
London W. 1

Dear Mr. Irving:

After the end of the war in Europe, I was appointed Chief Prosecutor of the War Crimes Branch at Dachau, Germany. I found that among the prisoners were five of Hitler's six personal secretaries - Reynitz, Thoet, Krieger, Buchholz and Jonuschat. The sixth, Erich Kempka, was a "automatic arrestee" as a member of the SS, and was held at another place.

*Kempka was
chauffeur, not
secretary.*

I moved the five secretaries from a prisoner to a witness status so that they could enjoy better living conditions and would help me in preparation for the trials of war criminals charged with atrocities toward civilians under the Geneva Treaties.

The five were most cooperative, gave me great insights into the chain of command operating the concentration camps throughout Europe and Hitler's philosophy that brought them into being. They helped me and the staff in preparation of the cases, including leads to important evidence against some of the principals, including the apprehension of some of them.

I took a good many notes at the time, and have some of them among my papers, including statements from each of them as to some of their general impressions about Hitler himself.

I am enclosing copies of the first sheets of these statements to give you an idea of their content. These were prepared with the idea that I would show them to a publisher so that these men could collaborate in writing an intimate war-time biography of Hitler. I did make contact with one publisher, but found by correspondence

HANSEN, HAZEN, DORDELL, BRADT & KOLL

Mr. David Irving
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with these men that they had lost interest in the project. One of them wrote me that all of them were fearful of reprisals. Some were warned by loyal Nazis, still loose among the civilian population, not to speak with anyone about Hitler's personal or official life. Thus, the project died.

Krieger, to whom I wrote the letter you sent dated March 25, 1947, at that time was the only one still at Dachau, as I recall. I had kept in touch with them for a time hoping they would change their minds, to no avail.

I am enclosing also first page of copy from statement of Erich Kempka on Hitler's last days in the bunker at Berlin. He was the one who procured the gasoline for destroying the bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun, at Hitler's request, so that their bodies would not be displayed at some "Russian side show". Perhaps the addresses of the secretaries shown on the enclosed might help you to locate those who are still alive.

Very truly yours,

Horace R. Hansen

HRH/kb
Enclosures

81 DUKE STREET
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TELEPHONE 01-499 9409

22 June 1974

Dear Mr Hansen:

Thank you very much indeed for your courteous reply to my letter; I received both copies, the first in New York and then the second here in London yesterday. I had a very pleasant stay in the States, and my wife found it very enjoyable – it was her first visit.

The attachments appear to be of very considerable historic interest. It is a tragedy that these men never got further towards completing a written study of Hitler. I have been working on the project myself these last nine years, and the result is to be published by Viking Press next spring. I would very much like to read the rest of the reports in your possession – I would of course give you full credit as their originator – and wonder if you could prepare Xerox copies of the complete file, whether you feel it would be of interest or not, and mail it to me as rapidly as possible. I will pay for the copying and mailing cost (I will ask my New York agent to send you a cheque, as the easiest way). Subsequently the reports will be deposited with the rest of my document collection in the esteemed Institute of Contemporary History at Munich, Germany, so your work would after all serve a historical purpose not only for my own researches.

You may have learned that Dr Ludwig Krieger died about a month ago – a charming man whom I interviewed on several occasions, and who could clearly have revealed a lot more to people interested in other periods. Karl Thöt kept a diary from 1942 to 1945 which he has just transcribed from the shorthand for me, also.

With the very best regards, and thanks again for having assisted me with such a prompt reply, I remain

Yours sincerely,

(David Irving)

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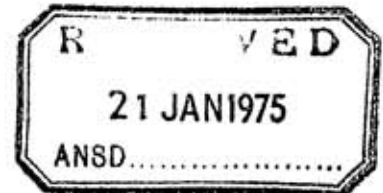
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January 17, 1975

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Mr. David Irving
81 Duke Street
London W. 1, England

Dear Mr. Irving:

I apologize for the delay in sending the enclosed materials to you. It took some time to get clearance from Viking Press, then I became extremely busy and put these materials aside.

I had intended to write a memorandum on the background of Hitler's secretaries, how they became appointed, and how and why they wrote these memoranda for me. If you wish, I can send you such a memorandum in a couple of weeks. Let me know if you want it.

There were six male secretaries. The five taken to Dachau, where I was chief prosecutor, were first prisoners then moved to the status of witnesses, then, at my request, made employees in my translation section.

They were of great help to me in gathering evidence and giving me leads in the preparation of the concentration camp cases. In return, they were friendly and wanted to do what they could to make the record straight on the conduct of Hitler during the war years.

They were appalled at what happened in the concentration camps and felt they could lend something to history. The memoranda were a beginning in this direction, the plan being that I would help them contact a publisher here and they would mail me more extensive memoranda. This did not work out for reasons I can explain to you later.

Of the six secretaries, all were at Dachau except Erich Kempka. They were in the Wehrmacht and were handled differently from Kempka who was a member of the SS and retained at a different camp. The translation from Kempka enclosed was not taken by me but came into my possession during the preparation for the Dachau trial. There has been some excerpts of Kempka's statements published in magazines here.

HANSEN, DORDELL, BRADT & KOLL

Mr. David Irving
January 17, 1975
Page Two

I am keeping the originals here. You mentioned that the documents you uncovered would be kept in some museum. Perhaps later you can advise me about this and I will consider turning the originals over to the museum.

Best wishes, and I hope your book is a great success.

Sincerely,


Horace R. Hansen

HRH/k

P.S. A little explanation is contained in part of a letter I wrote home in December, 1945. H.R.H.

confusion, while in the adjoining Russian zone reconstruction progressed smoothly. Such examples could be listed endlessly, and it all adds up to the conclusion that we are probably the world's worst occupiers.

After watching the occupation from one end of the country to the other for over a year, I have a few other conclusions. Germany is destroyed to the point of prostration. The people are docile, obedient, bewildered. They fear doing anything, even necessary things, until specifically ordered by the proper authority. They lack the temperament for democracy, are politically irresponsible, and if given full opportunity, would probably botch the attempt by profusing dozens of political parties, worse than in France and Italy. The Church cannot do the job of rehabilitation as some insist, in fact, even now it is not teaching the simple, obvious lessons. Economically and morally, Germany needs complete re-education and constant guidance, perhaps for a generation. The four-zone plan of occupation, each zone administered differently, is already a bad beginning.

The endless discussion of "good and bad Germans" is purely academic. As individuals there are countless good Germans, but as a nationalistic mass they are arrogant and treacherous. They like good order, which, in their experience means a society where each has his superior. In their continuing misery they will again hope for another Bismarck, Kaiser or Hitler to bring order out of confusion and to avenge their misery. If that means war again, the most exemplary "good German", like Pastor Niemöller, will not ask if the war is just, but will volunteer instinctively. Niemöller, the great Church man and world-famous Anti-Nazi, volunteered for the U-boat service in 1939.

The long, tough occupation job should be turned over to interested career people as soon as possible. The troops here now have no stomach for the job, are sick and tired of Europe and want to go home.

Fortunately, I was spared occupation duty. In September I was ordered into prosecution of war crimes, went to Munich then to Dachau. A Colonel was going home on points so I landed in the plush seat as chief prosecutor for the Eastern District.

The Dachau concentration camp is now the central cage for the Eastern District and over 30,000 war criminals and SS troops are here now. In made-over factory buildings we have three court rooms, administrative offices and a 400 bed "hotel" to accommodate witnesses. I have a staff of officer-lawyers and researchers and some forty translators and typists investigating and preparing cases for trial.

All of us pitched in to prepare the Dachau case now being tried by a team from central headquarters that has worked on it since last May. Meantime my section has been working on other concentration camp cases -- Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Flossen-berg -- and other atrocity cases which occurred in this District. We hope that when these are tried and recorded the "doubters" back home will believe and remember.

While this big job has been going on I have tried several cases involving atrocities against Americans, which we are anxious to clean up first. Most of these were against members of the Nazi Party, Gestapo and Kripo for murder of surrendered fliers, and resulted in death sentences. After investigation and preparation work months ago, it is a personal satisfaction to me now to be in on the payoff.

Our trials are models of fairness and give the defendant every opportunity for defense. The court is a military commission of high-ranking responsible officers. The defendant is represented by a civilian lawyer if he chooses, and in any event by American officer-lawyers who are bound to produce all witnesses and evidence he requests. The court interpreter assures that every word is translated into German for the benefit of the defendant. The trials are well-attended by German civilians, mostly from Munich, who also hear full reports on the radio. There is no question that Germans are impressed with the fairness of these trials, a result which we are anxious to obtain for its historical value.

Letter 2 pages of letter, Dec 1945
X

RECEIVED
21 JAN 1975
NSD

Like most units here, ours is short on personnel because of redeployment. We have had to hire a good number of civilians, mostly DPs, to fill in. The best of the lot are five Germans with an interesting background. They were secretaries to Hitler who were taken at Berchtesgaden and held here as material witnesses. When the work got too heavy to handle, I put them to work as translators and typists. They are all well-educated and are loyal, hard workers. Since I have gotten to know them better, I use two of them for my dictation.

They have each written lengthy and detailed statements for our files on the entire time they acted as secretaries, and on my suggestion are going to collaborate in writing a book on Hitler's official life. We believe their accounts to be trustworthy because a close check on their personal history shows that they were chosen only for intelligence and their ability as linguists and recorders. Secrecy was assured by keeping them under guard.

Some highlights of their statements: They worked in shifts and followed Hitler like a shadow. He wanted every word he uttered recorded for posterity, believing implicitly that he was a man of world destiny. He never chewed a rug, and went into a rage only to impress his listeners, usually in a critical situation. Only twice in staff meetings did anyone speak up against his orders. Both times it was Jodl and he was promptly squelched by a good raging each time. In the bomb attempt on his life on 20 July 1944, Hitler's pants' leg was burned off, arm bruised when the table flew upward and his hearing so affected that he had extreme difficulty using the telephone ever afterward. (The secretary present in the room at the time is still half deaf). Hitler was not a homosexual, showed normal affection toward Eva Braun. He did not consult astrologists. Since the invasion, the closest Hitler came to the front was Hamburg, when the fighting was still in France. Most of the time he was in Berlin or Berchtesgaden. In early April, 1945, he ordered all "Aussiedlers" (concentration camp inmates) to be liquidated, to keep them from falling into our hands. He functioned normally until Himmler double-crossed him, on the occasion when he ordered 80,000 SS troops from the West to the Redoubt and Himmler sent only one-third that number. From that day he refused to talk with Himmler, he knew his power had slipped, and from then on started to go to pieces. He became bent-over, his face was always red and his hands shook constantly. He took many pills and received regular injections of drugs. Dr. Reymnitz last took Hitler's dictation in Berlin on 22 April 1945 and says he was all but a dead man then. All five secretaries believe without doubt that Hitler is dead, basing their assumption on the story told by the sixth secretary.* They know him well, and knowing him especially as being anything but clever, feel instinctively that he would not be chosen for a ruse artist in any plot. Furthermore, it was his normal shift.

Of all the bizarre things that have happened to me over here, having Hitler's secretaries take my dictation concerning prosecution of Nazis tops them all. There's one more goofy touch to this. Prince Leopold of Prussia, nephew of the Kaiser Wilhelm, was a political prisoner in Dachau and is here as a witness in the trial. I had dinner with him one night and told him about the five secretaries. He was highly excited and wanted to see them so the next day I had them all together in my office. He questioned them carefully as to who and on what evidence he was condemned to Dachau. He got some leads which he is going to follow up when he returns to Austria. So I help German royalty avenge itself too.

If I weren't so busy, life in Dachau would be quite pleasant. I live in the former SS Kommandant's mansion, have a maid (altfrau) and chauffeur. We have a nice officer's club, a wonderful mess and a lot of entertainment available in Munich ten miles away. The Alps are only a short way south but so far I have been able to make only one visit to Berchtesgaden and one to Garmisch. The snow is staying on the ground now and it's almost as cold as it would be in Minnesota.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR - H.R.H.

Note for Capt. HANSEN.

My name is Hans JONUSCHAT, born in 1901 in Königsberg i.Pr. (East Prussia). My home address is: Berlin-Lankwitz, Hirzbacher Weg No. 10. I visited elementary and higher schools in Berlin until graduation (Abiturium) in 1920 and entered the stenographic service of the German Reichstag in October 1920. Along with this occupation I was studying national economics at the university of Berlin and concluded these studies with getting the diploma of a Dr. rerum politicarum in 1926. I became a civilian service official as Reichstagsstenograph in 1928 and remained in this position also after 1933 without being compelled to join the national socialist party. I never sought admission to this party on my own initiative, because I am no revolutionary character and I opposed certain methods which, however, obviously belong to the "dynamics" or "autonomy" of a revolution. Before 1933, too, I was never a member of a political party.

During the war I served as a private from August 1941 to September 1942, finally with the deputy headquarters of an army corps in Berlin, whence I was transferred to the Führer's headquarters in September 1942, in order to work there as a conference stenographer. I did this work as a civilian service employee and was discharged from the army.

I scarcely can contribute reports of importance about the events that happened when I was on duty there. The great events and incidents are known and reported by others. What I should be able to say would be no more than personal impressions which are not valid in general and may be false. Therefore I should like to confine myself to a few items.

Hitler was a man of vast knowledge in matters of technical construction of tanks etc. and could not easily be deceived in this respect. But also in other matters, ^{too} he was endowed with the power of a sharp discrimination. He could give discourses which were unassailable in their logics, if you ^{first} once accept the ~~the supposition~~
~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~

suppositions from which he started. But these suppositions may not always have been correct. He thought, in the end of 1942 and in 1943, that Russia was nearly standing before a collapse, and he indulged in calculations of the Russian strength based on foreign press news favoring his opinion. One should think that he was blinded concerning the realities of power in Germany and in foreign countries, particularly with his enemies. He would overlook or treat in an off-handish way such things as were not conform with his deductions which were for the most part dictated by certain purposes. Notwithstanding he was convinced that he always saw things right and that his resolutions were based upon realities.

Therefore it is no wonder that he was sometimes spoken of as a demoniac nature. It is a sentence from antiquity: Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat. God first blinds him or makes demented him whom he will destroy (without, of course, extinguishing his own responsibility). That seems to be true with Hitler, especially in his last months. Perhaps he did not know what he did, may be he was darkened by his desperation so that he did no longer take any care for the lot of others.

But it is known that along with the ^{honest} efforts of his regime for the reconstruction and the overcoming of an economic and social crisis obviously existing in Germany, he even in former years he cared too little for many a thing now publicly denounced. I mean the fragile moral base of his theories. But it must not be forgotten that in this respect there is no great difference between revolutions altogether, as may be seen from history, i.e. from the Russian and from the great French revolution of 1789, the prototype for ~~xxx~~ the principles of all modern revolutions. The latter ended with the elevation of one man whose will was stronger than that of others, and in a similar way things came to pass in Russia and in Germany. Incidents like those during the French, Russian and Hitler's revolutions might justify some doubts,

if such principles as Kant's categorical imperative can be maintained by man as an independent being, only relying on his own mind.

But you do not want to listen to philosophical contemplations, you wish to know something about Hitler. The first time I saw him from eye to eye was in 1930 or 1931. He had to give witness to the ^{unpleasant} purposes of the SA on a trial, and I together with another stenographer had to write down his speech. When the session was finished he approached to us two stenographers, gave his hand to each looking him full in the face. I do not know ~~whether~~ whether there was something demoniac in his eye, but I should not have liked to work near him for fear to lose the power of my own will and in the end to approve everything he would do only because it was he who would do so without its being justified from moral point of view. But may be he only intended or was accustomed to look in such a way at strangers in order to change them into blind followers. When, after 11 years, I had to work in his presence, my former impression had vanished and I did not suffer myself to be constrained by his spell. It struck me, however, that he occasionally, when talking to a person, seemed to look not into his interlocutor's eyes but ~~through~~ through his eyes at a point far behind.

To conclude, he may have been a demoniac, but no more than Napoleon was who is told to have said in a speech to the Council of Ancients on 10 November 1799: "I have always followed the god of war, and fortune and the god of war are with me." I cannot know ~~if~~ whether that was a figure of speech or whether he really thought so, but the fact is that afterwards he was blinded and deceived by fortune and his god and that he was ruined, with the only difference from our times that to-day the consequences of such politics are much worse than in former times, because with the increase of human knowledge (but not wisdom) means of destruction have increased, too.

To persons near him ~~xxxxxx~~ Hitler showed the ~~xxxx~~ most friendly demeanor and cared much for their welfare. During the military meetings of the day he ~~xxxxxx~~ behaved in the most self-composed manner; if he was incited he did not utter it otherwise than by words.

I do not know if the opinion of a German about the question of the Jews may be of interest. I give mine though - or because - it is probably that of an outsider. In this question the extreme differences oppose each other. The national socialist teachings maintain that the Jew is inferior because of his racial constitution and can at all (only be active) in a harmful or destructive way so far as non-Jews are concerned. These teachings one-sidedly emphasize certain features of the Jews which undoubtedly exist, as every nation has its characteristic features and which in Germany may have come forth more than in Anglo-Saxon countries, ~~whereas~~ whereas the common nature of man is denied by those teachings. Therefore they are inconsistent with the facts which show that people of all shades of moral qualities may be found among Jews as well as non-Jews.

The liberal-individualistic doctrine one-sidedly sees the common nature of man and principally denies the differences existing between the nations. Thus, it, too, is inconsistent with the facts. It says: German Jew equals German, American Jew equals American etc. History, however, proves that during the long centuries of separate treatment of Jews as well as in the past century under the rule of liberal principles since the emancipation of the Jews, these have remained recognizable as such, have not been assimilated by other nations, as, for instance, a German or another European usually is being assimilated by the American people after a few generations and may only still be recognized by name and speech if he has kept them yet.

Thus the Jews have remained a nation for themselves. This historical fact subsists even if it is not acknowledged by theory, and it is supported by the tendency of Jewish leaders to bring their people back to their promised country, which proves that the Jews themselves feel as a nation of their own. Therefore I have some doubts if unconditional equalisation will do. Hear one Jewish witness from the past. When the Jews in Spain were systematically persecuted and driven away about the time of the discovery of America, one of their Rabbis is said to have criticized the Christians by the following words: "We are both a blessed and a

cursed people. Now you Christians want to exterminate us but you will not succeed, for we are blessed; some other time ~~we~~ you will make efforts to raise us, but that, too, will be unsuccessful, for we are cursed."

If, even according ~~to~~ to the above quotation, certain differences cannot be eliminated, men, however, are not justified in looking down on the Jews like Pharisees and treating them as inferiors or suppressing them. Perhaps people would do best if they were to accept them like foreigners and guests who may occupy honored positions and with whom friendly relations may be entertained. How this relationship could be formed may be shown by the basis which is described by the Mosaic law itself: "If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him, but the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Lev. XIX, 33.34). To meet each other with a mind like that would perhaps serve to encourage mutual understanding.

Wherewith I conclude, for I was to write ^{down} a note and not a book.

Ernst Jomunhat

Notes of my stenographic career and my impressions 1907 - 1945.
=====

Personal data:

My name is Ludwig KRIEGER.

Permanent address: Berlin-Steglitz, Schönhauser Str. 17, I.

Last rank: Oberregierungsrat, director of the stenographers' Office of the German Reichstag.

I was born at Dresden (Saxony) on 16. February 1887. After absolving the Secondary school of "Mother Anna" at Dresden I studied philosophy and psychology at the University of Leipzig from 1906 - 1908. After being called as stenographer to the Saxon Diet and to other parliaments of German provinces in 1907 and as stenographer to the German Reichstag at Berlin in February 1908 I studied political sciences at the University of Berlin from 1908 until 1912 beside performing my service at the Parliaments-Office.

From 1908 - 1914 I was a stenographer of the German Reichstag (during the time of the Chancellors of the Reich VON BÜLOW and BETHMANN-HOLLWEG). At that time I also wrote down speeches of August BEBEL and the German emperor WILHELM II.

From August 1914 - November 1918 I was stenographer of the Chief of the Staff of the German Field-Army in the "Great Headquarters of H.M. the Emperor" (with all Chiefs of Staff of World War I: VON MOLTKE, VON FALCKENHAYN, and HINDENBURG with LUDENDORFF).

From November 1918 until February 1919 I was stenographer at several discussions of the Zentralrat der Arbeiter- und Soldatenräte (Central meeting of the Laborers and Soldiers Councils) and of meetings of the Rat der Volksbeauftragten (Council of the Peoples Commissars) (EBERT, LANDSBERG, SCHEIDEMANN, EISNER).

In 1919 and 1920 I was stenographer of the "Deutsche Nationalversammlung" (The German National-Assembly) at Weimar and at Berlin.

From 1920 - 1940 I was a stenographer of the German Reichstag under all German governments from SCHEIDEMANN to HITLER.

At that time I also was stenographer of various meetings of the Reichs-cabinet-Ministers, also stenographer of the Reichswirtschaftsrat (German Parliament of Economy), and besides a stenographer of various political assemblies, for instance of the party-meetings of the Social-Democratic Party, of the German-National People's Party, and also of some meetings of the Communist Party.

From 1919 until about 1923 I also was a stenographer of the Investigation-Committees of the German National Assembly and of the German Reichstag concerning the question of the war-guilt of

World-War I, concerning the German submarine-war, and concerning of the possibilities of peace during the World-War I (among others, investigations against VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, HELFFERICH, VON PAPEN, LUDENDORF, VON HINDENBURG).

About 1920 I was stenographer of the proceedings in the insult-suit of ERZBERGER against HELFFERICH at Berlin.

In 1921 I was stenographer of the Supreme Court of the Reich at Leipzig, in presence of representatives of the Allied Powers, investigating the German war crimes and the violations of the laws of nations.

In 1922 I was stenographer of the German State Court at Leipzig against the murderers of Walther RATHENAU.

In 1932 I was stenographer of several severely secret meetings of the Chancellor of the Reich VON PAPEN.

In 1933 I was stenographer of the trial of the Supreme Court of the Reich at Leipzig and Berlin, concerning the Reichstag-Fire.

Since 1933 I was stenographer of various secret meetings presided by the then Prussian Minister-president and the later Reichsmarschall GÖRING (in the Reichsluftfahrtministerium in Berlin or at GÖRING's country-seat at Carinhall), for instance the meeting with the Gauleiters and the SS etc after the action against the Jews in November 1938, also a stenographer of the meetings of the Reich-Defense-Committee, of the Four-Years-Plan etc, and also stenographer of courses of reports lectured by HITLER and the leading personalities of the Party and of the Reich, taking place for instance at the Ordensburg (Order-training-castles) of Vogelsang and Sonthofen.

In 1936 (?) I was a stenographer of the non-public Trial against the priest NIEMÖLLER.

Since 1938 I was stenographer of several meetings of Special Senates of the Supreme Court Martial of the Reich (concerning General von FRITSCH and several high commanding officers of the German Army and of the Navy.

In 1941 I was appointed to Director of the stenographers' Office of the German Reichstag.

In 1942 I was delegated temporary to the Headquarters of the Reichsmarschall GÖRING.

In August of 1942 I was charged (as Chief of the stenographer's Office) to nominate stenographers for the military situation meetings at HITLER's Headquarters.

In February 1943 I myself was called as stenographer to HITLER's Headquarters and was on duty at the military situation-

meetings until the end of April 1945.

In the 38 years of my stenographic career from 1907 to 1945 in peace- and war-time I was an eye- and ear-witness of so many important historical events and writing down the words spoken by politicians, generals, and men of science at these occurrences, that I may say I was always feeling the pulsation of the present and of history. Having been summoned only last night to write down a report of my impressions during my career, I must nearly limit myself to the above enumeration of the most important assemblies and meetings which I was writing down by shorthand. I thereby wish to state that among the people the speeches of whom I wrote down there were men and women of all parties being prominent in my remembrance, and other ones the name of whom had a special sound, but who, according to my personal subjective opinion, were less important than their reputation. Though I must fear to omit some important men during this rash writing down my impressions I may set off the following personalities who caused a special impression to me: Professor WUNDT of the University at Leipzig, the Professor of history LAMPRECHT, the Chancellors of the Reich VON BÜLOW, BethMANN-HOLLWEG, and especially BRÜNING, also the Minister RATHENAU, especially as a member of the socialisation-committee in 1919/20, the social-democrats August BEBEL and Paul LÖBE, the communist Mrs. Clara ZETKIN, then the former member of the German pre-World-War-I-Reichstag FEHRENBACH, whom I especially remember on account of his speech in the so called Zabern-affair⁽¹⁹¹³⁾ and later on with his appeal to the world at the meeting of the German National Assembly on the 12th of May ~~xxxxx~~ 1919 at the Large Hall of the University in Berlin, when the conditions of the peace after the first World-War became public at first. I also must name in this category the generals Ludendorff and VON HINDENBURG and also GÖRING and HITEER. Among the people who left a bad impression I may only name RÖHM, STREICHER, FRANK and LEY out of the last years.

I cannot deny that also the personal impression which HITLER made to me and, as far as I know, to all ~~xxx~~ stenographers of his meetings was that of an extraordinary man. To those who worked closely with him nearly every day he appeared as a man of indefatigable diligence, scarcely granting any rest to himself by day and by night, as a man of great knowledge and experience, mostly convincing by his oratory, on the other hand a man of great personal modesty and of kindness towards his associates and collaborators, also a man of a special understanding of the stenographers' work, which in none of my former positions - and in the opinion of the other stenographers, too - at any times was as hard as in the meetings of HITLER's Headquarters.

It may be mentioned that GÖRING, when presiding meetings himself, always made the impression of an overtopping leader of the discussions and of surely finding his decisions, but that he sloped beside HITLER in the meetings and that his remarks at such occasions

sometimes appeared naive and even childish. I occasionally heard that this was also the opinion of the other stenographers working in meetings with HITLER and with GÖRING.

In the 2 years (1943 - 1945) of my being together with HITLER nearly every day I found it strange that he had no congenial persons with him, also no friends in the real sense, at best I may name general DIETL a friend of him. His military advisers, to be sure, were officers of great understanding and knowledge, but also with perceptible differences in this relation among themselves. But among his adjutants there were men as VON PUTTKAMER, DARGES, and PFEIFFER, who could not be estimated highly, neither according to their characters nor to their achievements. Only his adjutant colonel VON BELOW appeared as a thoroughly decent man.

I wish to state that in the meetings with the Führer, written down by shorthand by me, never those atrocities against Jews or prisoners of concentration camps were mentioned, which I myself and the other stenographers, and, surely, the most German people only learned after the end of the war. It remains a problem first unsolved whether HITLER himself issued the orders of such cruelties or authorized men as HIMMLER or BORMANN to do so or whether generally held orders were carried out by subordinate organs and sadists in such a brutal and vile manner. Some disclosures of GÖRING, HIMMLER, NIEMÖLLER etc would be fit to justify this conclusion. But on the other hand it seems impossible that HITLER, who always consulted with his advisers, did not know these important affairs. After having read Kurt HEIDEN's "Der Führer" in English (presented to me by an American in the summer of 1945) I learned the background of HITLER's life, and now I believe that on account of his origin he was a split character. Apparently he came from the depth and he wished to conceal it. Therefore he held connection and even truth to men who met with him and served to him in earlier days, though he later on must have realised that they were no decent characters. He surely was a strange mixture of a brutal, most energetical, but also a good man.

Altogether the disclosures of HITLER in the military situation meetings caused the impression that he believed the war against Poland in August of 1939 unavoidable, to be true, on account of the occurrences there and at that time, but that he endeavoured and thought to be entitled, according to the agreements existing by that time, to hope that the war at ~~xxxx~~ least might be localized. This intention, however, had been frustrated, on his opinion, by the guilt of the Italian king, as HITLER repeatedly founded in particulars during his meditations in the meetings. He often regretted that the war because of this behaviour of the Italian King had widened to the Western powers and later on to the Americans.

After being in war HITLER's total willing and doing was directed only by the idea to win the war. All things hindering himself and the Army on this way ought to be exterminated and eliminated on his opinion. Therefore he demanded the strongest punishment :

of all faults directing against the state or fit to weaken the warfare. He had a good understanding of the difficulties and of the performances demanded of the simple soldier, but he practised the sharpest critique and the strongest justice against officers and especially higher commanders who obviously did not obey to his orders.

HITLER already in 1943 felt the failure of the German Air-Forces and he gave special and exact orders to improve these conditions. He often complained of the sabotage of various higher officers in the offices of replacement and armament, especially of the delay of the achievement and of the employment of the V 1 and the V 2 and of the production of the Me 262 and the Arado 234 and of the bigger submarines and of other weapons. These weapons ought to be ready in big numbers already at the end of 1943 and should be used in the moment of the landing of troops in France. He also saw coming the desertion of Italy. After the attempt of the 20th of July he saw the background and the connection with a treason of some generals. It was a dramatical meeting, in which only KEITEL and later on JODL were present in HITLER's room (beside me and Dr. REYNITZ as stenographers), when he at first recognized the false operation of Field-Marshal VON KLUGE and his delivering the best German troops to the enemy. -

It is impossible for me to describe the most interest meetings with HITLER and his advisers in the last two years in the short time I have for the writing down of these notes. Without claiming any completeness I especially remember the introducing of Colonel PELTZ to his task of the intended air-raid-attacks against England in summer 1943, the night-meeting on the day of the landing of the Allied Forces at Sicilia, the meeting concerning the preparation of the liberation of the Duce, the military-situation-meeting in the presence of MUSSOLINI himself, the controversies with general GUDERIAN and HIMMLER and KREBS about the Russian attack either directly to Berlin or at first to Pommerania in February 1945 etc.

HITLER often admonished his generals by the examples of Frederic the Great, but also by the examples of CHURCHILL and the late President ROOSEVELT and even of STALIN and TITO, as examples of men who did their best for their ideas and for their countries.

Dachau, 13. December 1945

Ludwig Krieger
LUDWIG KRIEGER.

Dr. Ewald REYNITZ home-address Berlin-Lankwitz, Kaiser-Wilhelmstr. 71c, married, two children.

Born 1907 at Brunswick, attended elementary school, teachers college from 1916 to 1922, was a teacher for one year and then as an extraneous gained the leaving certificate of a Realgymnasium entitling to study at an university. 2 terms at Technical highschool Brunswick, since 1924 studying National Economics at Berlin University promotion there to Dr. phil. in 1929.

Employed as verbatim reporter (stenographer) with the Brunswick and Thuringian Diet and since 1926 with the German Reichstag. Drafted into the army in 1941, March, service in Berlin, since summer 1942 detailed to Fieldmarshall MILCH's HQ in Berlin and on 16 Sept., 1942, to Hitlers Headquarters (FHQ), at that time in Ukrainia, Russia.

A stenographers office had been established there a short time before, at first with members of the Party Chancellery in Munich who, however, proved a failure. The man in charge of that affair had then asked for "old" party members in the Reichstags stenographers office. There were none and consequently 3 "young" party members with membership since 1933 and 1937 had been called. When the work could not be efficiently done by them alone, even non party members were ordered: myself and two colleagues who at that time were also in the army. One of them later died after being severely injured ~~in~~ when the attempt on Hitlers life was ~~made~~ made on 20 July 1944. As most of us had been drafted into the army at the age of about 40 years we were only corporals and sergeants and were consequently retransferred into civilian status as Reichstags stenographers (Regierungsrat).

After being sworn in by Hitler we had to sign a pledge to keep silent on everything we would hear and see, would not take notes for personal use or make any copies of typewritten transcripts. The form prepared for signature ~~xxxx~~ continuously referred to the signatory as "Parteigenosse" = Party member. When I drew Bormanns attention to my being no Party member he simply waved away this and had us sign. No attempt was ever made to induce us into joining the Party, strange to say regarding the confidential work we were employed in.

Our duties were to take down in shorthand every word spoken in the meetings of Hitlers military staff, daily briefings of the military situation (Lage). There were no dictations of Hitler to the stenographers; for this purpose he had his special female secretaries in his bunker who mostly did not take shorthand but typed right away.

Two of us were on duty for one day around the clock, covering from 2 to 6 hours of stenogramm. We then had two days time for dictating our shorthand to lady typists. Only one original and two copies were typed and no corrections were ever made by anyone. Whoever wanted to have a look into these records had to get - through Bormann - Hitlers personal permission. As Hitler himself repeatedly explained to his generals, he wanted these verbatim reports not ~~so much~~ for his own protection against false or incorrect reports from his subordinates but mainly for history in order to fix responsibilities for everything done or left undone in the war. Thus it may be said that the final

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burning of these documents - approximately 100.000 typewritten pages and the original stenograms - by a SS officer in the beginning of May, 1945, at Berchtesgaden, was against Hitler's outspoken intention that he did not mind their falling into enemies hands is clearly to be taken from the fact that he as late as 23 April 1945, when Russian artillery fire was most severely hitting the Reichs Chancellery in Berlin, expressively ordered the two last stenographers on duty on those days to go to Berchtesgaden so that the minutes of these days meetings might be saved for history.

As, however, about 1.000 typewritten pages could be rewritten by our transferring from burnt fragments of original stenograms, even this small percentage will give a rather close idea of how Hitler and his military staff acted in these meetings.

When I entered upon my duties in the FHQ on 16 Sept. 1942 I was still in the belief that Hitler was merely a puppet in the hands of his generals. This belief proved untrue from the very beginning. It was just the time when Chief of General Staff HALDER, old-style general staff school, was replaced by the more Nazi-like type front general, ZEITZLER, recommended by Himmler, and Grand Admiral RAEDER was replaced by DONITZ.

The most striking feature in these meetings was how Hitler actually mastered all those around him not by bullying but simply talking, talking and talking. There was never such a thing that might be called discussion, only monologue after monologue up to any length of time. So I scarcely ever watched anyone speaking up or talking back even if this might have been his intention when being summoned to the FHQ or coming there on his own request. That there were at Hitler's disposal other means of "convincing" goes without saying and is proved best in the case of fieldmarshall ROMMEL, but it does not altogether alter the fact as such. Hermann GÖRING sometimes would start contradicting, but his arguments were mostly so poor that Hitler could simply wave them away. (This refers only to the "Large-meetings". I can tell nothing about the very frequent personal meetings of Hitler with Goring as well as Himmler and Bormann.)

JODL was the only one who in fact spoke up. After the Allied landing in Italy when Hitler wanted 15 to 20 divisions activated out of Mussolini's "true fascists", JODL bluntly told him that to his knowledge there were no fascists in Italy, at least not in southern Italy. He immediately received his rebuff. Another time during the final days in the bunker in the Reichs Chancellery in Berlin when the first rumours about President Roosevelt's imminent death were leaking out, Jodl made a vague remark about "historic personalities". Whether this was meant to doubt Hitler being a historic personality or not, Hitler took it as such, and this was one of the rare moments when I saw him in an actual rage. But even this was far away from carpet beating, fist clinking and stamping the floor or things like that. He always regained his self control very soon.

The attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July 1944 has been described by one of my colleagues who was present and escaped safe and sound. What struck me after the attempt was Hitler's outspoken belief that Providence (die Vorsehung) must have something in store for him by sparing just his life when he was one meter away from the exploding

bomb which had meant death and most severe injuries for so many of his staff. He was glad instead because the explosion and the shock received had relieved him of the neurotic trembling of his right hand. He took that as one more good omen and felt himself inspired to preparing into the last detail the Ardennes offensive (Battle of the bulge), calling JODL and BUEHE into his bedroom, where he was lying sick for a couple of days in August or September. This offensive was as far as I as a military layman can judge from all I have seen or heard was in planning and scheming entirely Hitler's work.

This man was possessed by one single idea, of what he called the "greatness of Germany", and believed himself chosen by providence to perform another "Wunder" or miracle, leading Germany to final victory in a war that actually had been lost several times. After President Roosevelt's death he said: Believe me or not, this is the turning point in the history of this war and it is certainly a good omen that providence took him away from the earth before me. His death may have no immediate consequences but you will see them after 3 or 4 months at the latest. - So he went on, calling for another offensive out of the Harz mountains, though all his military advisers were rather sceptical, an offensive with 10 divisions newly activated and inexperienced in combat, consisting merely of teen-agers who never even got to their jump-off lines. This offensive was to stop the Americans, and even if they marched into Berlin, he would not mind, if only the Russians could be kept at the Oder-front where their offensive was to be drenched in blood and would suffer their biggest defeat in history!

What finally broke even this maniac fanatic not only in spirit but also in body must have been this:

1. He knew very well that he started his biggest lie in telling the world that National Socialism and Germany are one thing. It actually was a moment of triumph when he finally succeeded, the world swallowed this lie and consequently started ~~in~~ retaliating by bombing overcrowded cities and destroying ~~to~~ the heap of rubble they are now. This lie and its consequences, however, did not bother him.

2. He was never quite sure of his army and fieldmarshalls. There was never a man so much admired and envied at the same time as Stalin by Hitler who repeatedly complained that up to then he, Hitler, could not afford a thorough purging of the army, by means of which Stalin, he said, had relieved his army from any residuents of the "damned intelligentsia".

3. He had lost his intimate HESS who "actually must have gone mad". He had lost confidence in GÖRING at a rather early time, had himself predicted the final failure of the Luftwaffe unless certain measures were carried through. They were not, as Hitler charged, on account of "sabotage" in the air ministry and GÖRING's inefficiency in tackling this problem. The Luftwaffe could not attack England, had been unable in preventing the invasion of France, let alone the protection of the home country.

4. He finally lost confidence in his beloved SS. It is not quite clear whether this was caused by false reports from the SS that a troop movement of 75.000 SS elite troops from the West front to Austria

to Austria had been carried out according to Hitler's orders, whereas the SS command had sent only 40- to 45,000 and held back the rest for unknown reasons. Fact is that Hitler during the final days refused ~~xxxx~~ to speak to Himmler even over the telephone, and whenever REGELEIN, liaison between Hitler and Himmler, suggested Himmler's participation in the meetings, ^{his} was flatly denied.

Whatever details based upon personal experiences I have given here or might be able to give in a continuation of this rough report, I should like to emphasize: they are not intended to build up a legend but rather to destroy one; Namely: that a man who like Napoleon stirred up the world, inflicted so much hardship, torture and death upon Germany and the rest of Europe, must have appeared a monster at first sight. I even doubt whether he personally knew all about the concentration camp atrocities to the last shocking detail. But I am honestly convinced that he would have approved them following his general philosophy that the end justifies the means. Things like that were merely trifles to him, the great man who had to lay the foundation for centuries ahead regardless of cost of lives, be it those of his own people whom he pretended to love or his enemies whom he hated. There were moments of actual rage when he was reported that this or that town - like Heidelberg - had been surrendered before the last shot had been fired, the last building destroyed into mere dust and the last man died. As far as I can judge, this man was always right in predicting what would follow if that and that happened: if the Crimean peninsula is evacuated, that will mean the loss of Roumania, Bulgaria and Hungary..... and so on up to the last consequences. But whenever such an event eventually took place he would act as if nothing at all had happened, as if the war just could be started anew from that new basis. He liked himself being considered a great architect. Sometimes during the period I could closely watch him the idea struck me that this "architect" was like an insane, carefully and painstakingly erecting one building after the other out of a box of bricks, starting afresh, unmoved by every collapse and never noticing that he is building on alluvial sand and ^{an} inclined plane, that is to say: dreaming of a state of glory for all times to come but established on bluff and lies, torture and murder.

*To be continued some time to come.
Today with thanks for his kindness to
Capt. Hansen.*

Dachau, Germany, 13 Dec. 1945.

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H. Ewald Reymann

NOTES ABOUT MY CAREER AND MY IMPRESSIONS DURING MY ACTIVITY
IN THE FUHRER'S HEADQUARTERS.

I, Karl THOET, was born on 30 July 1906 in Saarbrücken (Territory of the Saar). After having attended the Oberrealschule (grammar school) at Saarbrücken I studied modern languages (English and French) at the universities of Tübingen (Wurtemberg) and Berlin.

Already during my schooltime I had learned shorthand and, passing the final examination at the grammar school at Saarbrücken in 1925, I had received several certificates concerning my special ability of writing shorthand. While I was studying in Berlin I was, towards the end of 1925, called to Darmstadt (Hesse) as a verbatim reporter of the Hessian Diet and in the following time to the Diet of Baden in Karlsruhe and the Provincial Diet of Hesse-Nassau in Wiesbaden, too. In 1927 I became a member of the verbatim reporters' office of the German Reichstag in Berlin. Only very few sessions of the Reichstag taking place after 1933 we were charged with the official reports about sessions of high governmental offices, of the Reichsgericht (Highest Court of Justice) in Leipzig, and of law-suits the government was particularly interested in.

After the war had broken out I was drafted to the Wehrmacht in April 1940, to which I belonged until my being detached to the Führer's headquarters in my capacity as verbatim reporter of the German Reichstag together with some of my colleagues. That happened in Sept. 1942.

In the Führer's headquarters we had to take down in shorthand the daily meetings of the Führer and his general staff, the so-called "Lage-Besprechungen", in which only military problems were discussed. This military meeting took place two times a day, during the first time of our being on duty there, about noon and about 1900 hours. Later on, since about the end of 1944, the first meeting started in the afternoon, and the second one in the night, very often not before midnight. The meeting at noon resp. afternoon usually lasted for 2 to 3 hours, whereas the meeting in the evening resp. the night generally did not take more than 1 to 2 hours. Now and then discussions took place about matters not directly concerning the military situation, but mere technical questions, especially concerning the manufacturing of new weapons.

Beside the Führer himself the military meetings were generally attended by fieldmarshal KEITEL, general JODL (who was the chief of the general staff referring to the westeuropean, Italian and Balkan theatre, whereas general ZEITZLER and later on general GUDERIAN were only competent for the eastern theatre), the commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe (in the beginning of the war general JESCHONNEK, after his death general KORTEN, until he became a victim of the attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July 1944, later on general KREIPE, and towards the end of the war general KOLLER), further on representatives of the navy, mostly vice admiral VOSS and rear admiral v. PUTTKAMER, this one being at the same time one of the Führer's adjutants. Each of the afore named personalities was accompanied by 1 or several assistant officers. Moreover there were present the various adjutants of the Führer as repre-

senting the Army, the Luftwaffe, the Navy, and the SS. From time to time Reichsmarshal Hermann GOERING and admiral of the fleet DOENITZ attended the meetings.

As far as we could state later, the Führer had ordered official reports of the "Lage meetings" to be taken down in shorthand after the first defeats of the German Army in the Russian campaign. He was of opinion that some of his generals had failed in carrying out his orders or even resisted~~ed~~ them. Thus he wished to have his orders given in the daily meetings fixed.

The contents of one of the first meetings there which I attended was the dismissal of general HALDER, up to that time chief of the general staff. Participators ~~of this meeting~~ were, beside the Führer, field-marshal KEITEL, general HALDER, my colleague Dr. REYNITZ, and myself. Nobody else was present. - It was a strange situation. The Führer wanted to get rid of HALDER, because HALDER was an old man, delivering the daily report about the military situation in a somewhat doctrinaire manner which did not accord to the Führer's temper. This meeting, however, consisted only of a monologue of the Führer, in which he declared that ~~according~~ in his opinion HALDER was in need of rest and a younger man was to take his place. Besides, he stated that in the general staff he did not want to have officers whose political inclination did not totally agree with the ideas of the NSDAP. General HALDER did not make any objections, and, as far as I recollect, fieldmarshal KEITEL, too, remained silent. At the end HITLER gave HALDER his thanks for his military merits which he nevermind appreciated very much.

The successor of HALDER was general ZEITZLER who before had been commander-in-chief of the 3rd armored army in Russia* and later on on special duty in France. He was a man of about 50 years of age, but of a very youthful temper. It was striking in which way ZEITZLER's own ideas were in conformity with those of the Führer. He had also a special talent concerning all problems of organization and overcoming difficulties in matters of transport and supply, so that one could have the impression the Führer had now found the man equivalent to his proper ideas. In the course of time, however, general ZEITZLER got more and more familiar with the ideas of the general staff contrary to his own original meaning, and thus also divergences of opinion between him and the Führer were no longer to be avoided. After the attempt on HITLER's life on 20 July 1944 - on which occasion one of my colleagues by name of BERGER lost his life - general ZEITZLER was replaced by general GUDERIAN who up to that date had been the inspector of the German armored troops. GUDERIAN remained chief of the general staff until about February 1945, when the Führer ordered him, on account of his having failed, too, to rest for a while to cure his heart disease. From that time on until close of war general KREBS, deputy chief of the general staff, took over the command.

At the time when we were detached to this duty in fall 1942 the Führer's headquarters, called "Wehrwolf", were in a forest near Winniza, Ukrainia, Russia, since 1 November 1942 in a forest near Rastenburg (East Prussia), called "WOLFSCHANZE", and since the end of 1944 until close of war in the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, only interrupted by a stay of some weeks in a headquarters near Bad Nauheim, western Germany,

* No. Zeitzler was Chef der 1. Panzer Armee, then
Chef d. St. des OB West. - D. Irving

called "Adlerhorst", during the "battle of the Bulge". Sometimes the Führer went to his house in Berchtesgaden in order to rest for a while. Even then, however, short daily meetings took place. When King BORIS of Bulgaria or MUSSOLINI or HORTHY or TISO or any other representative of an allied country came to see HITLER during his stay at Berchtesgaden the daily meetings were held at the castle of Klessheim near Salzburg.

The Führer was of an extreme severity concerning officers of all ranks who, in his opinion, had proved to be traitors and whose number increased during the second half of the war, especially towards its end. That is the reason for his cancelling the court martials and establishing a special court under Gen.Maj. HUEBNER whose task was to condemn every offence of that kind on the spot. On the other hand he highly appreciated every brave soldier no matter whether he was friend or enemy, officer or enlisted man. For instance he repeatedly praised the Jugoslavian marshal TITO who formerly had been a simple shoemaker's journeyman, as far as we were told, and now had proved to be a man of highest qualities which he compared to those of many a German general. He likewise did not deny his respect to marshal STALIN who, in his opinion, was the only opponent equivalent to him.

The Führer's own conditions of life or mode of life were very modest. Outside of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, i.e. in his various headquarters, he lived in relatively simple and small rooms and in a really modest way, as far as we could see from some occasions. There always seemed to be a big difference between his mode of life and that

of the Reichsmarshal GOERING, and that in every respect. It cannot be denied, however, that the Führer's most intimate attendance, his adjutants and persons being present at his meals, as for instance Professor Heinrich HOFFMANN, did not like this modest way of living, but on the contrary seemed to appreciate nothing more than drinking and doing useless or even worse work. Even when the military situation of Germany turned out more and more bad, they did not stop their habits, so that we often were disgusted.

The Führer was a very energetical and fanatical man. He was a demoniac, possessed by the idea to secure a happy future to the German people, not minding any resistance and using all his power to break it. When he finally had to recognize, that his ideas were wrong and that the power of the allied nations was stronger than his own will, there was only one way left to him, the way to die, because for a man like him it must have been impossible to survive the total defeat of his ideas.

Being bombed out in Berlin and since having no own apartment any notes or letters could be sent from you to me via the address of Dr. REYNITZ, Berlin - Lankwitz, Kaiser Wilhelm-Str. 71.

Karl Thoen.

H E I N Z B U C H H O L Z

My home-address is: BERLIN-FRIEDENAU, Bachestr. 8 III

I am 39 years old (born on 14 March 1906 in Berlin).

I attended the Elementary school from 1912 till 1915, the Public school from 1915 till 1924. From 1924 to 1929, I studied for the laws at Berlin University. Besides that, I was employed as verbatim reporter at the Prussian Diet, starting 1 September 1925.

After Hitler took over, I was transferred to the stenographers office of the German REICHSTAG. There I was employed till 1945 as Reichstagsstenograph, i.e. an official of senior civil service, with the title "Regierungsrat".

Since October 1939, I was a member of the Wehrmacht (air force, air base troops), at last as Sgt. on the Eastern front. In August 1942, I was ordered to Field Marshal MILCH's headquarters in Berlin as verbatim reporter.

In December 1942, I was detached to the stenographic service in the FUHRER's headquarters, although I was not a member of the Party or SS; but there were no other stenographers who could do this difficult work of noting down the military discussions verbatim and accurately.

I was present at the briefing on 20 July 1944 when an attempt on HITLER's life was made. I refer to the special report I gave about this attempt. (attached)

Dachau, 13 Dec 1945

Heinz Buchholz
VK

The treatment of political prisoners in concentration camps was never discussed in the briefings with Adolf Hitler at which I was present. The reason lies in the fact that this question did not immediately concern the conduct of the war but was of a police and administrative character. Therefore, the Führer did not mention this matter to his military. It was unimaginable that one of the briefing participants should have opened this question, in view of the entire character of these briefings.

The deeper reason probably lies in the fact that -- as, since 1933, in the entire German public -- a veil of silence had been spread intentionally about the question of political prisoners and their treatment, which also was not lifted in the closer surroundings of the Führer. The basic order of the Führer that no one was to receive knowledge of a secret matter of which he did not have to have knowledge was also valid for this case and with special emphasis. The circle of those in the know had been kept very small, and the topic was not ~~also~~ touched upon unofficially, for reasons which I fully understand only now. I am convinced that such questions have always been treated between the Führer and Reichsführer SS Himmler in strict confidence. Especially in the last half year, such conversations between these two often took place, usually before or after a briefing at which Himmler appeared.

Within the frame of his general political discussions, Hitler had occasionally made remarks to the effect that an entire collapse could not take place during this war because the "criminal elements", the "underworld" had remained in certain safe-keeping and that he had the unconditional trust of Himmler that the latter guaranteed him internal safety. At a special occasion, he remarked somewhat clearer that he would order Himmler to exterminate these elements before they could become dangerous if Germany ever were to get into a critical position. It does not appear doubtful that not only criminals had been meant, who had been sentenced according to the general criminal law, but also at least a part of those in prison because of political reasons, whom he considered "political criminals", which would be in accordance with his basic principles. When the critical situation for Germany emerged more and more in the beginning of 1945, the Führer did not refer to this thought; at least not in briefings in which I was present. However, I believe that Himmler had already issued definite directives for this case.

During a briefing in the beginning of 1945, the Führer came to speak about the treatment of shot-down enemy airmen for the last time. If I remember correctly, he made some general remarks about the Geneva Convention and had come to speak of the Luftwaffe; he criticized it for being afraid of unconditional proceeding against enemy airmen in order to evade reprisals on its own members in Allied captivity. The Luftwaffe still wanted to conduct the war in a "gentleman's fashion" and had not yet been convinced that in this fight of life and death any false considerations had to be abstained from. The Russian had shown what could be reached by a consequential, inconsiderate proceeding. The German airmen could not be brought over Moscow or Leningrad "for their lives", after the Russians started to "liqui-

date". German airmen and in such cases simply published that "enemy paratroopers had been found and exterminated". Hitler again asked when this would penetrate deeper also into the heads of the German military authorities. More and more, getting into a state of strong enragement, he finally ordered, categorically, that all recently captured enemy pilots were to be "transferred to the SD.". I certainly ~~remember~~ remember that the Chief of the RSHA, Kaltenbrunner, was present at this discussion, ~~but~~ however, he neither caused this order nor remarked anything about it. -- I had the impression that most of the participants had been uncomfortably jolted by this strict order, and I personally considered it as an outbreak of a mental collapse. -- I do not remember that the execution of this order was ever reported to the Führer. The Führer did not mention this matter again. In conversations, I overheard that the order actually had not been executed, - I do not know whether, upon later direction of the Führer or without his knowledge.

Stein Buchholz

THE ATTEMPT ON ADOLF HITLER'S LIFE ON 20 JULY 1944

Eye witness account by Reichstagsstenograph, Regierungsrat BUCHHOLZ, ex-member of the Stenographic Service in the FÜHRER Hq.

The attempt on the life of Adolf HITLER on 20 July 1944 took place in the FÜHRER Hq. "Wolfsschanze", a compound of bunkers and barracks in a forest, about 6 km. east of RASTENBURG in East Prussia. The scene of the attempt was a barracks in which one room was used for the daily situation discussions.

On 20 July 1944 the time for the briefing had been set at 1230 hours. It began punctually with a briefing on the situation on the Eastern Front by Gen. HEUSINGER of the Army General Staff. At the beginning all participants were not yet present. About 1235 hours Field Marshall KEITEL arrived, accompanied by a few men, among them Col. Count STAUFFENBERG, who did not belong to the regular participants. STAUFFENBERG had to draft the activation of a new type of divisions, the "VOLKSGRENADIER" divisions for the Commander of the Replacement Army in Berlin and had been ordered into the Hq. for a report to the FÜHRER. The FÜHRER did not recognize STAUFFENBERG, because until then, STAUFFENBERG had been at the briefings only once among a larger number of people. Field Marshall KEITEL introduced STAUFFENBERG to the FÜHRER with the following words: "Col. Count STAUFFENBERG, the man who is working on the new activations". As usual, the Field Marshall stepped to the left of the FÜHRER, while STAUFFENBERG remained to the right, somewhat in the background.

A few minutes later, about 1240 hours, STAUFFENBERG was called to the telephone and thereupon left the barracks with the remark that he had to go to another office in the camp, as was later on established by the testimony of the switchboard operator in one of the ante-rooms.

About 1245 hours an explosion took place in the conference room. I remember it as a thundering connected with a bright, yellow flame and developing of thick smoke. Glass and wood splintered through the air. The large table on which all the situation maps were spread and around which the participants were standing -- only the stenographers were sitting -- collapsed. After a few seconds of silence, I heard a voice, probably Field Marshall KEITEL, calling: "Where is the FÜHRER?" Then further calls and expressions of pain arose.

Like several other participants, I left the room through the window located behind me, because the exit through the door was barred to me. I saw HITLER; supported, I believe, by Field Marshall KEITEL and his ~~servant~~ valet, walk from the barracks to his bunker quarters, approximately 75 meters distant. He had left the conference room through the door located immediately behind him and had rejected all attempts to carry him out. Following him came further participants, part of them quite injured, bleeding, hands and face blackened and burned, hair singed and dyed yellow, uniforms soiled and torn. The most serious injured were carried from the room and bedded on the lawn before the barracks by officials of the SD. The FÜHRER's physicians arrived immediately, further medical aid arrived shortly afterwards, the wounded were aided and transported to the Hospital KARLSHOF near RASTENBURG. After the attempt the conference room was a scene of complete disorder.

Most participants, even the FÜHRER himself, supposed that the bomb had been thrown into the ground level room from the outside through the opened window. The second thought was that the explosive had been planted under the floor. It was eliminated by the fact that the explosive floor boards had been pressed down and not torn up by the explosion. The investigations on the same afternoon brought out that the explosive had been brought into the conference room in a brief case by Col. Count STAUFFENBERG. It was usual that the participants brought along documents, maps, etc. in brief cases. It was not conspicuous, therefore, to the security guard in the ante-room that STAUFFENBERG was carrying a brief case.

He had placed the brief case under the table around which the participants were standing and had himself called away by a prearranged telephone call from his adjutant. He had gone to the parking lot, a few hundred meters distant, had waited for the explosion there and then was driven to the air field, fifteen minutes distant, in RASTENBURG, with his adjutant. Through the arrangement of one of the officers on the staff of the camp commandant, he could still pass the gate guards although an alarm had already been sounded. At the air field, a courier plane had been waiting for him with which he flew to BERLIN. There he went to the office building of the Commander of the Replacement Army and reported the success of the attempt to the assembled co-conspirators. Thereupon started the attempt to take over the government in Berlin.

After the failure of the attempt, STAUFFENBERG was shot in the building of the Commander of the Replacement Army by a high-ranking officer, who was said not to have any part in the conspiracy; I believe I heard it was Col. Gen. FROMM, the Commander of the Replacement Army, himself.

STAUFFENBERG could expect the attempt to have succeeded for two reasons:

First: He had placed the brief case with the explosive under the map table at the inside of the right table support, hardly two meters away from ADOLF HITLER's feet (see a on appended sketch). Col. BRANDT, who was standing at that place and who was disturbed by this brief case at his feet placed it somewhat further to the right to the outside of the support (see b on the appended sketch) after STAUFFENBERG's leaving, so that now the strong wooden table support was between the place of explosion and the FUHRER's abdomen. Towards the ceiling the impact of the explosion was stopped by the thick, massive table plate, which completely broke up into splinters.

In the second place, STAUFFENBERG may not have known that the building, which looked like a bunker from the outside, really was no bunker, but only a wooden barrack provided with splinter protecting measures. The barracks had been surrounded by stone walls and a weak concrete layer had been lain over the roof. However, under it the original barrack had remained unaltered. The blast of the explosion thus did not stay in the room like in a bunker but continued through the entire barracks after breaking the wooden walls, ceiling and floor; thus, no limitation was present.

The consequences of the explosion were smaller, also, because it was not a bomb, but an explosive without metal coat. It lacked the iron splinter effect, like, for instance, a hand grenade. An iron bomb in the brief case might perhaps have been discovered because of the form and weight, especially, because STAUFFENBERG, whose lower arm had been amputated, had to count upon the case being carried by an orderly occasionally.

The type of explosive and the time delay fuse mechanism could be found out later from a second piece of the same explosive which was found in the woods on the way to the air field. STAUFFENBERG had thrown it out of the moving vehicle there, according to the statement of the driver. The time delay fuse was not a clock work mechanism but some-

thing like this -- I received knowledge of this from an investigator --: Out of a small pipe which could be opened by a pincers pressure, an acid poured upon a metal wire keeping a hammer spring tensioned. After the wire had been corroded by the acid, the spring became free and the hammer, similar to a pistol, stroke against an igniter, which exploded the charge.

ADOLF HITLER had suffered a strong shock of the right lower arm by the up-blasting table plate, on which he had supported himself when standing, further lighter burns and injuries on the right leg -- the uniform trousers had been torn and singed -- and slight scratches of the skin by splinters. Besides that both eardrums had been injured, as more or less with all participants; one eardrum had become perforated so that the hearing ability had been reduced for a longer period after the attempt. This was especially obvious at telephone conversations. The FÜHRER rejected an eight day rest in bed advised by the physician. Shortly after the attempt Reichsmarschall GÖRING and Reichsführer SS HIMMLER arrived for a conference on the measures to be taken. On the same afternoon, he received the DUCE and had a conference with him. In the evening he again presided over the daily evening briefing.

Of other ~~participants~~ participants, the following were most severely injured:

One of the stenographers on duty, HEINRICH BERGER, whose two legs were torn off up to the knees and whose face and hands were severely burned; he died on the same day.

Col., GSC, BRANDT, whose one leg was torn off; ^{he} also died during the night of the same day.

Gen., A.C., KORTEN, whose abdomen was pierced and penetrated by a large wood splinter; he died on the following day.

Maj.Gen. SCHMUNDT, who received a serious shank injury and had lost an eye through a splinter; he died after several weeks on the hospital.

A part of the other participants suffered serious injuries, especially burns on their hands and faces, which required hospital-

ization for several weeks or several months. Some escaped with lighter injuries. Those who died and those who were seriously injured had all stood at the right half of the table, that is, to the right of ADOLF HITLER; those who were lightly injured had stood to his left, for the most part.

Altogether, the attempt affected the following:

1. Died of their injuries:

Gen., A.C., KORTEN, Chief of the General Staff of the Luftwaffe,
Maj.Gen. SCHMUNDT, Chief Wehrmacht adjutant to the FÜHRER,
Col. GSC BRANDT, Assistant G-3 of the G-3 Section of the Army
General Staff,

BERGER, stenographer on duty

2. Seriously injured:

Maj.Gen. HEUSINGER, AC of S, G-3 of the Army General Staff,
Lt.Gen., A.C., BODENSCHATZ, Representative of the Reichsmarschall
Bjrg.Gen. SCHERFF, Military Historian,
Vice Admiral VOSS, Representative of the Navy,
Capt.(Navy) ASSMANN, " " " "
Rear Admiral VON PUTTKAMMER, Wehrmacht adjutant to the FÜHRER,
Col. VON BELOW " " " "
Lt.Col. BORGMANN " " " "

3. Less seriously injured:

Gen. JODL, Chief of the Wehrmacht Leadership Staff,
Lt.Gen. BUHLE, in the Wehrmacht Supreme Command,
Gruppenführer (Lt.Gen.) FEGELEIN, Representative of the Reichs-
führer SS
Maj. JOHN VON FREYEND, Adjutant of Field Marshal KEITEL,

4. Slightly injured:

Field Marshal KEITEL, Chief of the Wehrmacht Supreme Command,
Maj.Gen. WARLIMONT, Deputy Chief of the Wehrmacht Leadership
Ambassador VON SONNLEITHNER, Representative of the Foreign ^{Staff}
Lt.Col. WAIZENEGGER of the Wehrmacht Leadership Staff, ^{Office}
Maj. BÜCHS " " " "
Hauptsturmführer (Capt.) Günsche ~~mixxxxWehrmachtLeadership~~
Personal Adjutant of the Führer ~~Staff~~
Regierungsrat BUCHHOLZ, Stenographer on duty.

All injured were decorated with "Wounded Insignia" (Cf. to Purple Heart Medal) in Gold, Silver or Black, in a special design with the inscription "ADOLF HITLER" and the date, 20 July 1944.

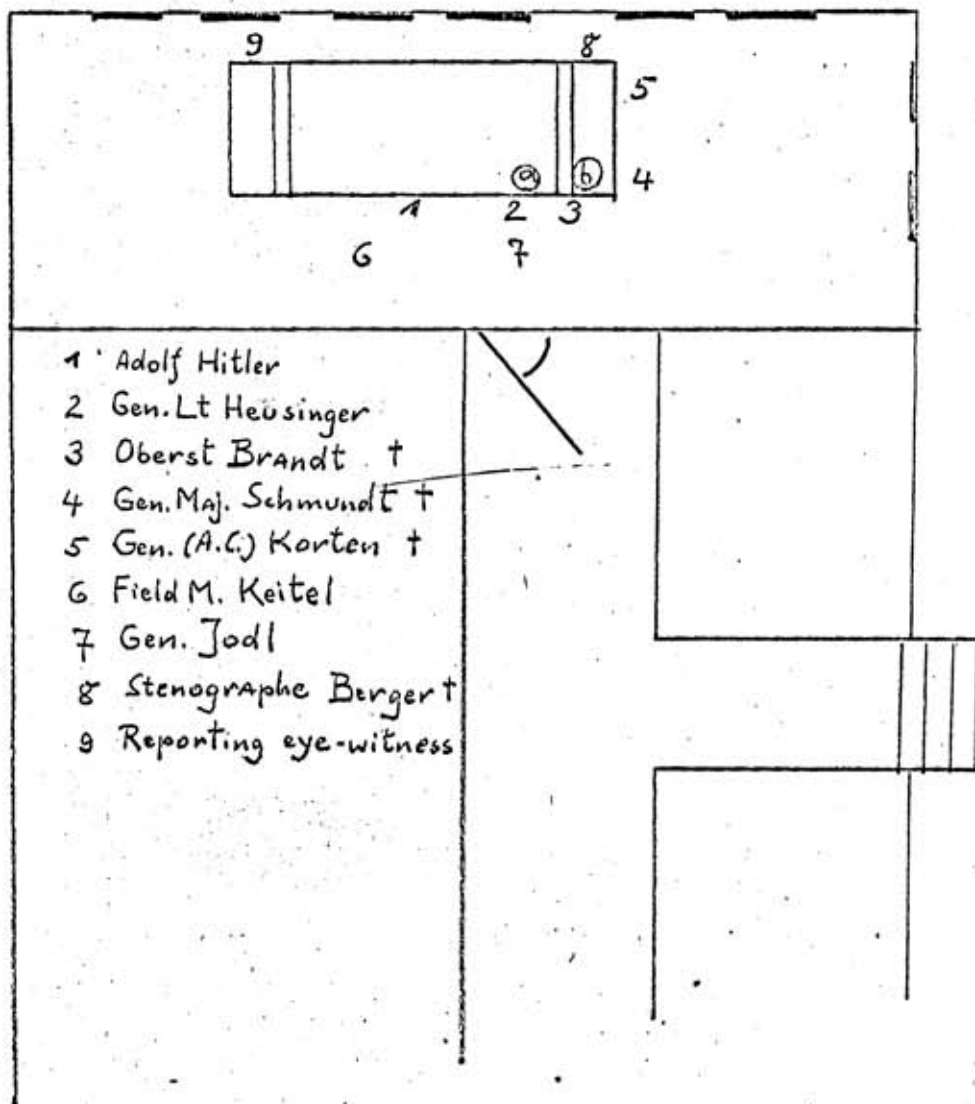
Up to the time of the attempt the men who appeared before the FÜHRER were not examined. By order of the FÜHRER, all participants had to submit their brief cases for a search after the attempt, the persons who did not belong to the regularly present conference par-

ticipants, even high-ranking officers, had to submit to a short search of their bodies. Only a few of the highest military and Party leaders were excepted.

I remember the perpetrator, Count STAUFFENBERG, as a tall, slender appearance, dark-haired and dark-complexioned. Among other decorations he wore the German Cross in gold, and he had been seriously injured during the war. As I heard, he had driven on a mine during the Africa Campaign. He had one of his lower arms amputated and, I believe, an artificial eye. When I made his acquaintance on the "Berghof" in early summer 1944, his staring view struck me. On the day of the attempt he wore a black patch over one of his eyes.

Be rechtsgaden, 14 July 1945

Heinz Puchholz



Translation

Berchtesgaden, 20th June, 1945

T e s t i m o n y

of

Mr. Erich Kempka on the last days of Hitler:

- 1) I, Erich Kempka, was born on 16. 9. 1910 at Oberhausen/Rhine-land as the son of a miner. I have 9 brothers and sisters. Whereas my father died in January 1945, my mother is living at Oberhausen. I attended the elementary school up to my 14th year of age and served an apprenticeship as electrician. After my apprenticeship I worked for one year as a practical apprentice with the automobile-distributors of DAW at Essen. Then I got a position as a driver with the "Essener National-zeitung", which position I held until 1932. Being a member of the NSDAP since May 1930 I came as a chauffeur to Adolf Hitler by recommendation of Gauleiter Terboven for whom I had done very much driving. In the years of 1932 to 1936 I, besides Brigadeführer Schreck, was a chauffeur for about 95 % of all the trips of the Führer. Since 1936 I was the sole chauffeur of the Führer. The Führer himself never drove a car.

When Hitler stayed in Berlin with his headquarters I was supervisor of the Reichs-Chancellery garage, to which about 40 vehicles belonged. I was in charge of about 60 drivers. Already in the days before 20th April 1945 I also passed the nights in the garage situated in the basement of the Reichs-Chancellery. On 20th April 1945 I went for about one quarter of an hour to the Führer's bunker in order to congratulate the Führer upon his birthday. There was no special ceremony in the Führer-bunker.

- 2) In the evening of 20th April 1945 I got the order to get ready about 12 vehicles by means of which persons belonging to the Führer's headquarters and partly their relatives were taken to the Berlin airfields Staaken, Tempelhof, Schönewalde, Gatow. These were about 80 persons, among them rear-admiral v. Puttkamer (adjutant of the navy with the Führer), SS-Sturmabannführer Göhler (representative of SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein), Miss Schröder and Miss Wolf (two personal secretaries of the Führer). Also on 21st April 1945 a number of vehicles was readied with which were driven 40 to 50 persons to several airfields. Cars for a direct drive from Berlin to

Munich were not dispatched by me before or after this date. During the night of 22 to 23 of April 1945 the personal physician of the Führer, Prof. Dr. Morell, two stenographers of the Führer, the consulate-secretary Döhler and several women were driven to the airfield of Gatow.

Though I did not get any definite statement from authorized sources, I supposed that the Führer would remain in Berlin after the 22.4.1945. During the days before 20 April 1945 I often heard the utterance of the Führer that he would remain in Berlin in any case. In the days after 20 April 1945 I repeatedly asked Sturmbannführer Günsche (adjutant of the Führer) whether I was to secure the vehicles because they were gradually destroyed by artillery-fire. SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche told me that would not make any difference, we had to go on with the vehicles as long as possible; the Führer at any rate would stay at the Reichs-Chancellery. I do not know very much about the military situation in the town-district because I did not leave the Reichs-Chancellery. The buildings of the Reichs-Chancellery in the days after 22 April 1945 were repeatedly set afire. The fires were extinguished only very primitively. Communications to the outside were cut since about 25 April 1945. In these days a story was distributed by the German press-bureau that Himmler had turned to the western powers and had stated the Führer was suffering from a cerebral hemorrhage, was completely ill and would not be able to live for much longer. I had not read myself this story which was said to have been printed in the newspapers. As far as I could see, Himmler did not appear in the Reichs-Chancellery during the days around 20 April 1945 or later.

(Remark of reporter: Himmler wanted to see the Führer on 22.4.1945. The Führer who did not want to be swayed from his resolution to stay in Berlin by anybody, declared that Himmler should not come.)

Only on the 1 May 1945 I heard that the Russians had infiltrated into the Tiergarten on which the Reichs-Chancellery borders and had advanced to the Reichstag.

The minister of foreign affairs von Ribbentrop did not see the Führer as far as I recollect at any rate not after the 20.4. 1945.

After 22.4.1945 the following still stayed with the Führer: General Krebs (chief of general-staff of the army), General Burgdorf (chief adjutant of the Wehrmacht and chief of the army personnel department), vice-admiral Voss (representative 33

of Grand-Admiral Dönitz), Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels with his wife, secretary of state in the ministry for propaganda Dr. Naumann, SS-Hauptsturmführer Schwegermann as adjutant of Dr. Goebbels, SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein (representative of Reichsführer SS with the Führer), SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche (adjutant of the Führer), SS-Sturmbannführer Linge (valet of the Führer), SS-Gruppenführer Rattenhuber (leader of the SD in the Führer's headquarters), SS-Standartenführer Dr. Stumpfegger (the Führer's first physician after Prof. Dr. Morell had left). I personally saw Reichsleiter Martin Bormann several times up to the morning of 2 May 1945. It is impossible that he could have been at Berchtesgaden or vicinity between 22 April 1945 and 2 May 1945. The children of Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels who were brought to the bunker of the Reichs-Chancellery on 22.4.1945, were taken away with a nurse only on 1 May 1945 from the Reichs-Chancellery.

Fieldmarshall Keitel and Col.General Jodl according to what I have seen and heard must have left Berlin already on 22 April 1945.

SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein telephoned me, I believe, in the afternoon of 23.4.1945 and asked me to come to see him in the Führer-bunker in the evening in order to receive there important papers concerning the Führer, the Reichsführer SS and himself personally in order to destroy all or to hide them so well that they could not be found in case the Russians should come through ^{to} the Reichs-Chancellery. I went to the Führer-bunker towards evening in order to meet SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein. I did not meet Fegelein. Reichsleiter Martin Bormann asked me where Fegelein were. I could tell Reichsleiter Bormann that SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein had ordered a car and had driven to his dwelling. They endeavoured to find Fegelein. Later on I heard that SS-Gruppenführer Fegelein had reappeared at the Reichs-Chancellery in civilian clothes and had been interrogated there by a SS-Gruppenführer Müller whom I had never seen before and who was said to belong to the SS-Hauptamt or to the SD. Fegelein is said to have admitted before Müller that he before several times had been at Nauen in order to meet the Reichsführer SS there; he had endeavoured to get out of the Reichs-Chancellery and let the Russians

pass him and try to get through to the Reichsführer SS in civilian clothes. According to what I had been told Fegelein was declared guilty of high treason and shot by order of SS-Gruppenführer Müller.

In the days after the 20.4.1945 I have still seen Hitler several times in his bunker in the Reichs-Chancellery. He had not changed in his behaviour and gave a quiet impression. Eva Braun stayed with the Führer. After 28.4.1945 there were rumours in the Reichs-Chancellery that the Führer had been married during the night from 28. to 29.4.1945 to Eva Braun. A Regierungsrat or Oberregierungsrat of the ministry for propaganda had performed the official ceremony. At the same time two orderlies had been married. There was no publication of the marriage of the Führer to Eva Braun. I also did not congratulate the Führer. Only on 1 May 1945 secretary of state Dr. Naumann confirmed the fact of the marriage of the Führer.

I spoke to the Führer for the last time on 29 April 1945. I reported to him that I was engaged in bringing food into the inner part of Berlin in order not to let the food fall into the hands of the Russians and in order to provide the hospitals situated in the government-district. In the Reichs-Chancellery itself there was an Hauptverbandsplatz (Battalion aid-station). The hotel "Adlon", the building of the Gauleitung of the NSDAP of Berlin, and other buildings had been converted into hospitals. The bunkers of the Reichs-Chancellery where several hundreds of wounded had been quartered, had not suffered any damage by the artillery-fire. There was no enemy infantry attack against the Reichs-Chancellery until the morning of 2 May 1945.

- 3) On 30 April 1945 at 1430 hours SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche telephoned me and asked me to come to the Führer-bunker. Besides that I was to take care that 5 cans of gasoline, that is to say 200 ltr., were brought along. I at once took along two or three men carrying the cans. More men were following because it took some time to collect 200 ltr. of gasoline. By order of SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche the cans were brought by these men to the entrance of the Führer-bunker located in the garden of the Reichs-Chancellery, which was next to the so-called tower-home and about 20 m beside the so-called Haus Kempka, my quarters (see drawing annex number 1). The men at once

returned after depositing the cans. There was a sentry of the SD at the entrance of the bunker. I then went into the antechambre of the briefing-room (see room III, annex 2) where I met Sturmbannführer Günsche. Günsche told me that the Führer was dead. He did not tell me any details about the death of the Führer. He only explained he had got the order from the Führer to burn him at once after his death, so that he would not be exhibited at a Russian freak-show. A short time after that SS-Sturmbannführer Linge (valet of the Führer) and an orderly whom I do not remember came from the private room of the Führer (see room I, annex 2) carrying a corpse wrapped in an ordinary field-gray blanket. Based on the previous information from SS-Obersturmbannführer Günsche I at once supposed that it was the corpse of the Führer. One could only see the long black trousers and the black shoes which the Führer usually wore with his field-gray uniform jacket. Under these circumstances there was no doubt that it was the corpse of the Führer. I could not observe any spots of blood on the body wrapped in the blanket. Thereupon came Reichsleiter Martin Bormann from the living-room of the Führer and carried in his arms the corpse of Mrs. Eva Hitler, née Braun. He turned the corpse over to me. Mrs. Hitler wore a dark dress. I did not have the feeling that the corpse was still warm. I could not recognise any injuries on the body. The dress was slightly damp only in the region of the heart. Behind Reichsleiter Bormann there came also Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels. SS-Sturmbannführer Linge and the orderly now went upstairs with the corpse of the Führer to the bunker exit towards the garden of the Reich-Chancellery (see annex 1, Turmhäuschen). I followed with the corpse of Mrs. Hitler. Behind me came Reichsleiter Bormann, Dr. Goebbels and SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche. Reichsleiter Martin Bormann wore uniform. According to my recollection Dr. Goebbels also wore uniform. It was shortly before 1500 hours, if I remember that I received the first notice from Günsche at 1430 hours and needed 5 to 10 minutes to reach the Führer-bunker. SS-Sturmbannführer Linge and the orderly carried the corpse of the Führer from the ~~westwardly directed~~ bunker exit in the tower-house and put the wrapped corpse on the flat ground in a small depression which was

about 4 to 5 m distant from the bunker exit (see the spot marked by two crosses on annex 1). There was no lawn rather bare sand; in the last period construction work was being done in the Reichs-Chancellery. I put the corpse of Mrs. Hitler next to the Führer's. Immediately ~~SS-Sturmbannführer~~ ^{by telephone} Günsche poured the complete contents of the five cans over the two corpses and ignited the fuel. Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels, SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche, SS-Sturmbannführer Linge, the orderly and I stood in the bunker entrance, looked towards the fire and all saluted with raised hands. The stay in the bunker exit lasted only a short time because the garden of the Reichs-Chancellery was under heavy artillery-fire. The short-lasting leaving of the bunker exit already meant a danger to our lives. The ground of the garden of the Reichs-Chancellery was ploughed by shell holes. Besides us the event could only have been observed by the tower post of the SD. This one however was not notified of what had happened.

Upon returning into the Führer-bunker no words were exchanged. Günsche, Linge and another person went into the living-room of the Führer. In order to return to the garage I had to pass through the Führer-bunker and wanted to look once more at the rooms in which the Führer had lived last. I followed the personnel mentioned into the living-room of the Führer. Opposite the entrance of the room the dimensions of which are only 3 x 4 m stood a narrow sofa (see drawing annex 3). Before the right front leg of the sofa (compare a) lay a Walther-Pistol, 6.35 mm cal., which, as I knew, belonged to Miss Eva Braun. Also on the floor approximately before the middle of the sofa lay a Walther-Pistol, 7.65 mm cal. I supposed that this pistol belonged to the Führer. I myself did not touch anything in the room, but silently stood there only for a few seconds. I did not put any questions and no one else spoke to me. According to the situation it was clear to me that the Führer and Miss Eva Braun shot themselves. From the location of the two pistols I concluded that the Führer sat about on the middle of the sofa before firing the shot and that Eva Braun had set on the right part of the sofa.

After returning to the garage I notified my men that the Führer was dead. A ceremonial was not held. I cannot say for which reason the date of death of the Führer was given as 1 May 1945 over the radio. I cannot say with complete sureness that the death of the Führer, as previously described, took place on 30 April 1945. For on the same evening General Krebs had lead negotiations for the return of the wounded with the Russian general Tschukow. It may be expected, that general Krebs regarded the continuation of the fight after the death of the Führer as futile. So far as I know nothing was done later on to remove any traces of the corpses at the place of their burning. This also was not necessary, because the traces had been wiped out by the uninterrupted artillery-fire on the gouvernement district.

- 4) In the late afternoon of 1 May 1945 I received official notice from SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche, who was the commandant of the Reichs-Chancellery, that on the same evening at 2100 hours the break from the Chancellery was to take place. All men who were able to walk and wanted to go along as well as the women who had belonged to the Führer's surrounding were to take part. SS-Brigadeführer Mohnke was destined as the leader of the group to break out: he had previously a combat-group within the government district. The persons included in the break assembled at 2100 hours in the coal-bunker of the new Reichs-Chancellery, before the Hauptverbandsplatz. The number of persons assembled there may have amounted from 500 to 700, among them a number of women. All available weapons, rifles, submachine-guns, pistols, automatic carabins, light-machine-guns and Panzerfäuste were distributed to the combat-groups 1 to 6. Brigadeführer Mohnke took the lead and lead combat-group 1. Ambassador Hewel (representative of the Foreign-minister in the Führer's headquarters), SS-Sturmbannführer Günsche as well as the ^{Mrs.} ~~Kissman~~ Christian (wife of Brig. Gen. Christian of the Luftwaffe), Mrs. Junge, Miss Krüger, the secretaries of the Führer, belonged to combat-group 1, about 50 to 60 persons. The men and women singly left the Chancellery through a narrow hole in the wall along Wilhelm-Straße near the corner of Wilhelm-Straße and Voss-Straße. Because of the heavy artillery-fire everyone ran as

quickly as possible to the next entrance of the subway in reach. The next entrance of the Kaiserhof-stop about 50 m from the building of the Reichs-Chancellery had collapsed after a direct artillery-hit. Therefore we went to the entrance approximately 200 m distant from the Reichs-Chancellery which was located opposite the Hotel Kaiserhof. This entrance was open. At the subway-station the single groups gathered again and went to the subway-station Friedrichstraße along the tracks of the subway. There were many civilians on the platforms of the subway-station Friedrichstraße, soldiers sat around on the stairs of the station. As leader of my group which consisted of approximately 60 drivers I left the subway-station through one of the exits which are located north of the city-railway-station Friedrichstraße in the Friedrichstraße. Outside everything was quiet. Without danger I went about 200 m up to the road-block on the Weidendammer bridge (about 300 m north of the railway-station Friedrichstraße). A few meters behind the road-block I came upon a group of soldiers who told me, that shortly before a group of 50 to 60 persons had passed this spot towards north. This was the leading-group Mohnke. The soldiers declared, that they had already tried to break through, but that they had been beaten back. Russian troops had occupied the houses and basements to both sides of the Friedrichstraße north of the Weidendammer bridge. I now returned and fetched my men from the subway-station in order to let them take cover in the Admiralspalast which was located in front of the subway-exit. After several groups had arrived in the meantime another break-through was decided upon. I made one break-through-attempt with my group. Without being fired upon we came through the second road-block on the Weidendammer bridge. But 10 or 20 m behind the second road-block we received strong machine-gun-fire from all sides and had to retreat again. Further break-out-attempts which failed were undertaken. The break-through of the first group probably succeeded only because of the surprise of our opponents. Later on I met Mrs. Junge on a march. She told me, that the leading-group under Brigadeführer Mohnke had had to start after a few hundred meters. About 0530 hours a negotiator appeared and had made known that general Tschukow wished a temporary armistice until 0615 hours.

women had left the basement. Ambassador Hewel had taken poison. SS-Gruppenführer Rattenhuber who also belonged to group 1 had received a serious injury.

During our stay in the Admiralspalast Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, Brigadeführer and State's secretary Dr. Naumann, the adjutant of Dr. Goebbels, Schwegermann, and other higher personalities appeared about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. I declared Reichsleiter Bormann that it was impossible to push through without heavy weapons. Later on 5 to 6 tanks and armoured recogn. cars arrived which were manned by soldiers. It was decided that the tanks were to attempt the break-through and that the men who had broken out of the Reichs-chancellery were to advance under the protection of the tanks. Behind one tank State's secretary Dr. Naumann went as the first in the top of the tank-turret, behind him Reichsleiter Martin Bormann followed by SS-Standartenführer Dr. Stumpfegger. I went behind Dr. Stumpfegger. More men joined us. After the tank had gone about 30 to 40 m he received a direct hit with a Panzerfaust. The tank flew apart. I saw a short flash of lighting and flew to the ground where I remained lying unconsciously. My last impression was that Dr. Naumann, Bormann and Dr. Stumpfegger fell together and remained lying. I could no longer recognize any injuries. ~~Because~~ Because Dr. Stumpfegger who preceded me was 30 cm taller than I he protected me from the full blast and I escaped with splinter injuries at my thigh and my upper arm. After an undetermined period I regained consciousness saw only fire around me and crept back on the ground. I got up behind the road block and sat down on the street because just then I could not see correctly. SS-Standartenführer Beetz (after SS Gruppenführer Baur the second command pilot of the Führer) was the first whom I saw. He had a serious head injury. Just then I saw that a new attack started from our side, but I decided not to go along any more because of its futility. I returned to the Admiralspalast, assembled my men and declared them that they were dismissed. Each one could go on on his own, join a combat group or go home. I also advised them to procure for themselves civilian clothes. I myself returned to the Friedrichstraße railway station with 7 men, among them the lieutenant of the armoured troop Jörke who had been assigned to us with 3 armoured ~~and~~ half tracks. We crossed the Spree river on the foot path directl

under the city railroad, we were able to reach a house on the northern bank of the Spree river without being fired upon and from there across several elevations up to a spot in the region of Albrechtstraße, Karlstraße or Ziegelstraße. The city railroad runs along there. We reached a band of the city railroad in which a dump of medical equipment was located. There we met two Yugoslavs and 2 Russian civilians who had chosen the city railway band as their quarters. These at once sympathized with us and promised to procure civilian clothes for us. When a part of us had already civilian clothes the first Russian soldiers arrived at the yard. Lieutenant Jörke who still had no civilian clothes was hidden by us. The others quickly changed clothes. The Russians demanded that we come into the yard. A Yugoslav woman introduced me as her husband, while the others were designated as camp labourers. We decided to form small groups and thus to go into the street. At this attempt I was recognised by a Russian soldier and had to return again. The Russian soldiers procured food and drinks. I have participated at this ceremony which lasted until 2 o'clock of the following night. After the ceremony the Yugoslav woman left, but returned in the morning and brought me a coat. In this disguise I was able to leave the house and walked via Tegel to Hennigsdorf.

In Hennigsdorf I was stopped by Russian soldiers and brought in to a yard. There were German soldiers who all wore civilian clothes. We spent a few hours there. We were asked for papers. Nine tenths of the men had no papers. Nevertheless all of us were dismissed. I joined three men who walked towards Kremmen. In the afternoon we were again arrested in a village before Kremmen and locked up in a chicken stable. We were not given any food. On the next morning about 5 o'clock we were brought before the commanding officer of the troops. The commander was told that we had been arrested at night as partisans with weapons in a forest. We were then brought to Velten to the regional commandant there, a colonel. He was told the same thing. One of my German escorts understood Russian and notified the commandant that we had not been in the forest that night, but had been arrested without weapons in the afternoon at 6 o'clock in the middle of a village. The commandant had sent for an interpreter. The negotiation

lasted about half an hour. Probably inquiries were made. Then we were searched. All articles of ordinary use, knives, razors, fountain pens, pencils etc. were taken away from us. We were then dismissed with a pass in the direction of Bernau. However, we four men again marched off in the direction of Kremmen. 2 men went ahead. With my escort I passed north of Fehrbellin via Neustadt a.d. Dosse towards Havelberg. About 10 km before Havelberg in the village of Kümmeritz, we were again stopped by a sentry beside whom a closed car was standing. He asked us whether we were "Wehrwolf". We denied it. After he had asked several times he went to the car and brought a carbine. He took it off safety, aimed at us and once more repeated ^{his} ~~the~~ question. Then we were loaded upon a car. We were driven through the vicinity for a long time. About six times we were taken out of the car and interrogated like before with rifles aimed at us. Again we were searched. Things that could be used were kept. Other things were thrown away. My wallet which at first was taken from me was returned. We were told that we could go. Before leaving a Russian soldier gave me a cigarette. With the uncertain feeling that one would fire at us we left.

In the evening of 8th May 1945 we arrived in Havelberg. We looked for the next best barn in order to sleep. On the next morning we were again thrown out very early; this was a camp for various foreigners. These were led to work in the morning. We were able to leave with the water carriers. We went through Havelberg to a farm. There we received milk and went to sleep. We awoke at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. 2 other Germans who wanted to cross the Elbe river, but could no longer cross it, had been living with this farmer for one or two days. We conferred to make an attempt to cross the Elbe river together in the following days. We remained with the farmer for one or two days.

In the morning of 11th May 1945 we crossed the Havel river near Havelberg in the direction of Sandau and reconnoitered the situation there. Boys declared us that the Elbe was situated behind the woods. We would only have to go through

in a swamp. When we came there on the next morning about 11 o'clock the woods were heavily occupied. However, we crept through the woods and landed in the swamp. All the day long until about 2 o'clock at night we stayed in the swamp. Then we crossed the dam, went into the water at once and swam to the other side. After we had dressed we were stopped by the Russians about 300 m farther. This had really been only one arm of the Elbe river. We were returned to Havelberg to a camp. In Havelberg we were held for 16 days together with 30 to 40 men and transported to Kyritz via Clöwen. On the next day I left Kyritz again with a Marine. We walked to the next railway station and from there rode with a workers' train to Wittenberge. In Wittenberge we tried to receive permission to stay for three days. However we were denied it with the reason that Wittenberge could not feed itself and that for the time being no food would be provided for transients. We continued in the direction of the Elbe river. On our way we were stopped by a Cossack. There we worked for a whole day, carted dung, swept the yard and cleaned dishes. On the same day we left the Cossack and went to the edge of the city of Wittenberge where we spent the night with Germans.

On the next day we looked at the situation on the Elbe river and agreed to swim across the Elbe river at the point of this house. We procured the upper part of a baby car in order to store our things in it while swimming across the Elbe river. Thus we ^{swam} ~~ran~~ across the Elbe river at 0130 hours. We reported to the Bürgermeister in Gottberg. The locality was occupied by Americans. The Bürgermeister told us that a change of command between Americans and English was just taking place and advised us to move on until a new command had been established. We then went to Vorsfelde. There I received a march order to Salzburg from an English command post.

As I still remember the following details. On the morning of 2. May 1945 SS-Hauptsturmführer Schwegermann notified me that Dr. Goebbels and his wife were dead. They had both died in the Führer's bunker. Thereupon the Führer's bunker had

been ignited. I did not ask any further question, but I suppose that Dr. Goebbels and his wife had committed suicide.

General Burgdorf and SS-Sturmabannführer Schädle of the Führer Escort Command still remained in the Reichs-Chancellery. Schädle told me that he would shoot himself if the Russians were to push through to the Reichs-Chancellery. So far as I know further members of the Führer Escort Command did not remain there. It is possible that some returned after futile break-through attempts.

After 20. April 1945 Reichsminister Speer came to the Reichs-Chancellery with a Stork (compare to US L - 5) which was flown by Thea Rasche. I expect that the plane had landed on the Hofjägerallee (a cross road to the ~~East~~ East West axis). However, the Führer at once sent Speer away. I do not believe that aircraft have landed and started on the East West axis. Soon after 22th April 1945 heavy artillery fire was laid on the East-West axis.

As reporter

/s./ Herrgesell
Amtsgerichtsrat

/s./ Erich Kempka

D E C L A R A T I O N

Concerning the treatment of parachuted Allied air crews I have experienced the following:

1) In 1943 or, at the latest, in the first half of 1944 HIMMLER as chief of the German police issued a secret order to all departments which told them not to initiate any police or court measures against compatriots (Volksgenossen) who commit acts of violence against parachuted Allied air crews. This secret order was also issued to the SS- and Police Courts. In May 1945 the AMTSRICHTER of BERCHTESGADEN told me that he, too, had knowledge of this order. From that I conclude that this order was also transmitted to all German prosecution agencies (STAATSANWALTSCHAFTEN) and courts.

2) At an evening briefing in the FUEHRER Headquarters, about September 1944, at which I acted as a stenographer together with Mr. BUCHHOLZ and Dr. HAAGEN, the representative of the REICH Leader of the SS (HIMMLER) in the FUEHRER Headquarters, SS-GROUPPENFUEHRER FEGELEIN, reported that during an Allied day raid on MUNICH one or more Allied air crew members had parachuted within the city limits of MUNICH, that they had been assaulted by persons out of the mass of the people, that a soldier of the GAF and a party member had intervened and arrested the air crew members in order to make them Prisoners of War and at the same time to protect them from further acts of violence. SS-GROUPPENFUEHRER FEGELEIN, who according to his statement had received his knowledge from a member of the police, especially scorned the member of the GAF and declared that if he had been there, he would have liquidated the air crew members himself. I recall this evening more accurately since FEGELEIN was obviously intoxicated. Among other things, he often repeated that enemy aircraft had flown at an altitude of 5 m above the streets. This, however, does not necessarily indicate that FEGELEIN's statement in this case

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corresponded with his real point of view. I cannot recall any more which side HITLER took. Because of his general outlook upon this question, it may be assumed that he agreed with FEGELEIN's exclamations. At least Col. Gen. (US Gen) GUDERIAN was present at the evening briefing besides HITLER and FEGELEIN. Field Marshal KEITEL was probably also present. The total attendance probably amounted to at least 10 persons.

3) At subsequent dates HITLER discussed the event FEGELEIN had told him of. During a conference he declared that he no longer doubted what FEGELEIN had told him, because he, HITLER, had spoken with the member of the police - I believe he spoke of a KRIMINALRAT - himself or had read his own report. This repeatedly caused him to speak in strong words against the GAF. He criticized the GAF for preventing the civilian population from carrying out stronger measures against parachuted Allied air crews. The GAF were scared, it were cowardly in that it thought of the time it would fly over enemy territory again. In other conferences HITLER inquired what measures would be taken against GAF members who had protected enemy air crews from the "furious mass of the people." He did not receive a positive reply in my presence. An utter silence of the representatives of the GAF almost lent the impression that one did not share HITLER's opinion. HITLER also remarked that the above mentioned party member had been ousted from the party. Perhaps, he also reported that he had been shot. This would have corresponded with HITLER's mentality.

4) During an afternoon briefing, approximately on 10 April 1945, a message - probably from a GAU Leader - was submitted according to which a member of the WEHRMACHT had again protected parachuted Allied airmen against acts of violence of compatriots. After the reading of this message HITLER became furious and declared that from now on he require that the parachuted airman be delivered to the furious mass of the people or be subjected to an Allied bombing. He gave as his reason that they were criminals. ~~Before anyone could say a word to this he changed his mind~~ and said: "I want all American and English pilots liquidated."

Just at that moment I looked up from my writing and looked into the faces of the persons standing around HITLER in order to see the reaction of HITLER's words. I remember with complete certainty that Gen. (US Lt. Gen.) KOLLER, the Chief of the General Staff of the LUFTWAFFE, stood to the left of HITLER, who sat in a chair. He, who never excelled in discussions and almost regularly made a helpless stand against HITLER's reproaches, is the first to ask a question. "From when on?" he asked. With that he meant whether all parachuted Allied airmen were covered by this order of the FUHRER or only those who had parachuted since a certain date. HITLER's reply was: "Since I have issued the order." Since I have always paid special attention to the breaches of Interna-

tional Law which were ordered by tolerated by the leading element, I at once tried to think which order could have been meant. I had no knowledge of a further order than that mentioned under 1) and believed that it could only be this order. I cannot say whether KOLLER and the other participants of the briefing also thought only of this order. Neither Gen. KOLLER nor the rest of the participants asked any question for elucidation. Gen. KOLLER's attitude distinctly showed that he did not like this new order, and he probably remained silent because of that. HITLER soon turned around and addressed the chief of the Security Police and SD, SS-OBERGRUPPENFUEHRER Dr. KALTENBRUNNER, who was standing behind him. He ordered him to take care that the liquidation of the afore-mentioned airmen be executed and to report this to him. Dr. KALTENBRUNNER did not reply to this order and thus accepted it. I do not recall with certainty HITLER and the other briefing participants made any further remarks about this point immediately after the briefing. I recall only somewhat vaguely that the possibility of reprisals by the enemy side had been mentioned and that HITLER had ordered the arrest of 100,000 French civilian workers for that case. I believe that this directive was given in connection with the order concerning the parachuted Allied airmen, however, I cannot say so with certainty.

I do not recall with full certainty which persons were present in the above mentioned briefing, approximately on 10 April 1945, besides HITLER, KOLLER, and Dr. KALTENBRUNNER. The participants of the briefings, who usually amounted to 25 persons, changed not only daily but also during each briefing. It is therefore possible that one or the other participant, who was present at the beginning and whose name was listed, was not present in the War Room - an air raid shelter room of 4x4 m - during the decisive minutes. One may assume almost certainly that Field Marshal KEITEL was present. He has left the War Room only seldom. Of the better known personalities Col. Gen. (US Gen.) JOEL, Gen. (US Lt. Gen.) KREBS, perhaps Grand Admiral DOENITZ may be mentioned as possible further participants.

I expected that after the afore-mentioned briefing Dr. KALTENBRUNNER would take steps to carry out HITLER's order. It often occurred that HITLER declared what was to be done in this or that matter, but that these declarations were not really regarded as orders by his adjutants or the representatives of the WEHRMACHT. In this case there could be no doubt for anyone familiar with HITLER's mentality and considering the attitude of the men addressed by him that this was a strict order. Although the stenographers were strictly forbidden to discuss anything overheard in the briefings, even among themselves, I told this matter and my point of view to my colleague Dr. JONUSCHAT, whom alone I trusted, because I had convinced myself that he was an opponent on Nazism and was able to take a criticizing stand. Dr. JONUSCHAT shared my opinion that HITLER had become completely insane. I, myself, regarded it as my duty to undertake something in this matter. On the next day or the day thereafter, having completed the dictation of my stenographic notes, I went to a man I knew in BERLIN, in whom I could trust in every respect, and of whom I knew that he had good connections in BERLIN. He was the director of the GAUSS School

(for engineers) in BERLIN, Dr. KURT GEHLHOFF, BERLIN-TEGEL, MYRTENWEG 19. Dr. GEHLHOFF, whose acquaintance I made as the friend of a priest well known to me and who had connections with higher Protestant circles in BERLIN. I could not discover whether Dr. GEHLHOFF had been able to undertake anything in this matter, because the connections with TEGEL were interrupted a few days later, and I have not seen Dr. GEHLHOFF again. About 20 May 1945, Mr. Huss, the representative of the Hearst press with the Seventh U.S. Army told me that an American representative of the Red Cross had sent a report to a high American office, according to which HITLER had ordered the shooting of a great number of parachuted Allied airmen. I have made no statement to Mr. Huss concerning this matter.

I have not heard anything about the execution of HITLER's order in later briefings. I then lived in the hope that the ordered measure had become outdated by the unexpectedly quick run of events.

As a second stenographer, either Mr. HEINZ/BUCHHOLZ or Dr. KURT HAAGEN may be able to make further statements about the conversation reported under 4). About the attitude of the LUFT-WAFFE in this case Gen. KOLLER, who must be in captivity, and about possible measures by the GESTAPO SS-OBERGRUPPENFUEHRER Dr. KALTENBRUNNER, who, according to press reports, was captured by the Seventh U.S. Army, should be able to give information. BERCHTESGADEN, 19 July 1945.

/s/ GERH. HERRGESELL

/t/ AMTSGERICHTSRAT

(Judge)