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An investigation into the trial of a Nazi war criminal : Joachim Von Ribbentrop at Nuremberg, Germany, 1945-1946

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE TRIAL OF A NAZI WAR CRIMINAL: JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP AT NUREMBERG, GERMANY, 1945-1946

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

"C" an abbreviation for "Crimes" and which means that the document was jointly processed by British and American teams.

"D" an abbreviation which simply denotes a filing reference.

"EC" an abbreviation for "Economic Case" as processed by the Economic Section of the Office of the Chief of Counsel at Frankfurt.

"L" an abbreviation for "London" and means that such documents so marked were handled under the Chief of Counsel there.

"NCAA" used extensively throughout the manuscript, this abbreviation refers to a set of documents prepared by the United States Office of the Chief of Counsel For The Prosecution Of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression. 8 vols., Supplement of 2 vols, as listed in the Bibliography.

"USOCC" abbreviation for the United States Office of the Chief of Counsel.

"PS" an abbreviation for "Paris-Storey" and denotes documents which although found in Germany were processed in Paris by Colonel Robert G. Storey's staff, with headquarters later at Nuremberg.

"TC" abbreviations for "Treaty Committee" and denotes documents selected by a Foreign Office Committee which assisted the English prosecution.

"TMWC" also used extensively throughout the manuscript to denote a document series: Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 14 November 1945 - 1 October 1946. 42 vols., as listed in Bibliography.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It has been eighteen years since the holocaust of World War II ended, and perhaps it is now possible for a new generation of young historians to approach the Hitler era of German history minus much of the immediate post war bitterness. Much has been written which has attempted to explain the conditions which caused the rise of Nazi Germany, but much remains to be written about the personalities within it. This report was written in the hope that by examining one of these men in his last days, and on trial for his life, a little more will be added which may help in explaining more about this era. One such personality on trial for his life, may act as a mirror for this era; I hope that this analysis of a part of his trial for his life will serve such a purpose.

I. THE IMMEDIATE SETTING

One of the outstanding historical events of the present century was the decision by the Allies of World War II to prosecute, upon the conclusion of hostilities, the major leaders of the "aggressor" nations. The decision to take such action was the subject of much careful negotiation between the major powers.[1] As a result of these discussions, the first International Military Tribunal came into being, and Justice Robert H. Jackson was appointed by President Harry S. Truman as Chief of Counsel for the United States at these trials. This was the first time in history that any such decision had been reached with regard to holding individuals responsible for their actions, as well as the actions of their respective governments.[2] That these trials and the volumes of evidence submitted, testimonies given,

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[1] See Sheldon Glueck's excellent work on the decision to try war criminals, The Nuremberg Trial And Aggressive War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946.)

[2] An attempt to try Kaiser Wilhelm II was made, but he was granted diplomatic asylum in the Netherlands and was soon forgotten.

and commentaries should be of immense value for the historian need not be reiterated here. Literally tons of evidence was captured by the Allies; the record of the Nazi actions have been scrupulously recorded for future generations. The Nazi period of German history may well stain it for many years, and the memory of the Nuremberg trials may help to deter future dictators in Germany.

Excellent works have been written by some of those who actually participated in the trial proceedings.[3] Yet, no one has attempted to collect the data, testimony, and other evidence submitted against just one of the Nazi criminals and to follow the development of one case throughout the trial. This is precisely the task of this research. However the results of this work offers more than just an examination into legal methodology. Only as one shifts through the mass of documents and testimonies of the various witnesses, can one really begin to see how the government of Hitler's Germany was organized. Of course, if one were to believe all the witnesses, it would appear that the only one in Germany from 1933-1945 who was a Nazi was the Fuehrer himself and "the others," everyone it seemed but the witness on the stand! Yet the actual power controlled by Hitler over every minute branch of the Nazi regime is beyond Western comprehension.

Nowhere was this more true than in the area of foreign affairs and the control of the armed forces.[4] By close examination of the defendant's statements it is possible to bring a somewhat truer picture of Nazi Germany into perspective, and thus to allow the modern historian an opportunity to recapture much of the truth behind this era. This aim was behind the decision to examine the trial of one of its participants --Joachim von Ribbentrop. The reasons which finally led to the

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[3] See either Gustavo M. Gilbert, Nuremberg Diary New York: Farrar, Straus, 1947; or Whitney R. Harris, Tyranny On Trial The Evidence at Nuremberg (Dallas, Texas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954.)

[4] See the testimony of Reichsmarshal Goering (18 March 1946), International Military Tribunal, Trial Of The Major War Criminals Before The International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg: Allied Control Authority of Germany, 1947-49), IX, 400. [hereafter referred to as simply TMWC]

selection of this individual were many: von Ribbentrop was one of the top-ranking officials in the government, especially in his later capacity as Reich Foreign Minister; he was an intimate advisor to his Fuehrer on a variety of questions; he remained loyal to his Fuehrer to the end of the trials; he was not a military man, but a political opportunist who came much closer than any of the other defendants to typifying the average German's "belief" in their Fuehrer; and he thus comes as close as anyone could to being a case study in the German split-personality of the Hitler era. This study is not however a work on the Nazi government, since that has been well covered by modern historians and journalists, but rather, of one man's trial for the role he played in that government.

II. JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP, A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joachim was born on April 30, 1893, at Wesel on the Rhine as the son of an artillery officer, Lieutenant Robert Ribbentrop. According to his only known biographer, his family lineage could be traced back quite a distance.[5] His first recorded ancester was a Heinrich Meyer who lived in the small principality of Lippe in northwest Germany. The name "Ribbentrop" was taken from the name of the plot of ground on which they farmed--Ribbentrup--but with a minor changing of the "u" to an "o." The aristocratic designation of the prefix "von" was first given to the family name in February, 1823, in the person of Friedrich Wilhelm Christian Johann Ribbentrop then a quartermaster in the Prussian Army.[6] Joachim was not however of this particular branch of the family tree; but the later Lieutenant-General Karl Barthold Sigismund von Ribbentrop was, and it was his daughter Gertrude Charlotte von Ribbentrop who "adopted" Joachim on May 15, 1925, thereby allowing him

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[5] Paul Schwarz, This Man Ribbentrop, His Life And Times (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1943), pp. 26-39.

[6] Ibid.

the use of the "von."[7] Although he was born into the sixth generation of an army officer family, Joachim refused to consider a military career. And with the aid of "Aunt" Gertrude, he went to school in Switzerland and became proficient in languages--French and English. He then went to Canada in 1910 "as a business man and merchant," to quote Ribbentrop, where he worked on the Quebec Bridge as a timekeeper. The construction work ended in 1911 and he spent the remainder of his time as a young socialite among the Canadian upper-class society, and apparently he was a smashing success.[8] He also spent his time at playing minor roles in the local theaters with local drama groups. With the outbreak of World War I, he returned to Germany via a Danish ship and enlisted in the Torgauer Hussarenregiment Nr. 12 as an ensign. He spent the first year of the war on the Western front, but was shipped later to various theaters of action, finally ending his military career as Adjutant to the Plenipotentiary of the Ministry for War in Turkey.[9] He also mentioned later that he was Adjutant to General von Wresberg during the Paris peace talks.[10] He finally retired from military life with the rank of Lieutenant and decorated with the Iron Cross First and Second Class. He returned to the life of a merchant now dealing in the import and export of wines and other spirits.

In July, 1920, he married Anna Elisabeth Henkell, the daughter of a prominent wine manufacturer and a family of very high social status. Anna was apparently a good wife, although just as ambitious as Joachim, and they had a good marriage by raising five children. Even after the verdict of the Nuremberg Tribunal was in, Anna sent an appeal to them requesting leniency for her husband. But at this earlier date, Joachim was well on his way up the social ladder, and he soon had his own

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[7] Office of United States Chief of Counsel For Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), VII, p. 114. [hereafter referred to simply as NCAA]

[8] Schwarz, op. cit., pp. 40-50.

[9] Translation of Document D-744-A (22 May 1933) signed by von Ribbentrop, NCAA, VII, pp. 197-98.

[10] Ibid.

firm of Ribbentrop & Company doing a profitable business. It was here in an international bootleggers ring that Ribbentrop met his later "prominent" people of European society. The early social life in Ottawa and now Berlin made a deep impression on him. Ribbentrop was a social climber of the first rank. However one of the first things any promising young socialite had to do was to associate with the diplomatic corps, and soon the Ribbentrop villa was swamped by the younger members of the diplomatic service--since he served the finest, and freest champagne.[11] In fact, the first embassy into which he got a foothold was that of the prohibitionist United States of America.[12] However, socially, the highpoint of his career was his adoption by "Aunt" Gertrude and his adding of the "von" to his name in 1925. This increased his obsession with being socially conscious and would lead ultimately to his downfall. His home now became an even greater center of lavish entertaining. By a strange coincidence many of his friends and party guests included a large number of Jewish people, and he in turn was a frequent visitor in their homes.[13] It was also at this time that he acquired his hatred of Bolshevism since to converse intelligently with German industrialists such knowledge was extremely useful; it is certainly doubtful that he understood the subject however. It was far easier to repeat someone else's ideas than to determine his own. Ribbentrop was a follower, not a leader.

Ribbentrop was first brought into the National Socialist movement by Graf Wolf Heinrich von Helldorf and met Hitler at his own request. Their association resulted largely from Hitler's desire to find someone who could keep him posted on the English and French pulse by reading the Times and Le Temps to him.[14] The result of this first meeting was that Herr Hitler became a frequent guest at the Ribbentrop's villa at Dahlem.

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[11] Schwarz, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

[12] Ibid., p. 60.

[13] Ibid., p. 66.

[14] Ibid., p. 71; Testimony of von Ribbentrop (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 227.

> ...I had the impression that I was facing a man who knew what he wanted and who had an unshakable will and who was a very strong personality. I can summarize by saying that I left that meeting with Hitler convinced that this man, if anyone, could save Germany from these great difficulties and that distress which existed at the time.[15]

Yet whenever Herr Hitler came to call at the Ribbentrop home, it was not Joachim but Anna who apparently captured the Fuehrer's attention.

> From its very beginning, Annelies [Anna Ribbentrop] reciprocated the affection that Hitler felt for her. She personally attended to the man with the funny mustache and the long monologues. He was served the best asparagus, mushrooms [Hitler was a militant vegetarian], and his favorite sweets heavy with rich whipped cream. When 'He' was the guest, Rollenhagen in Berlin's Tauentzienstrasse, and Borchardt, in the Behrenstrasse, delivered the most succulent fruits available. Chocolate was served in place of coffee. Even the flowers and other table decorations were arranged according to his taste. Annelies hinted occasionally, with a wink at her favorite guest, that this fork should be used or that spoon would be more correct. She had educational ability, and Hitler was an attentive pupil.[16]

It was at these informal dinners that Joachim listened to Hitler's views on the world situation, and he in turn assured Hitler that he knew "prominent" people abroad who shared their opinions--especially in England where there also was a fear of Bolshevism. As the political situation of Germany worsened, a long series of party intrigues began and it was at Dahlem where a number of compromises on the future state of German politics was ironed out.[17] Ribbentrop placed his house at Hitler's disposal so that he might be of help in the creation of a "national front," as he called it.[18] The result of these dinners and political conversations was that von Ribbentrop became National Socialist Party member number 1,199,927 on May 1, 1932.[19] "What drew me to the Party, as I recognized at the time, was the fact that the Party wanted a strong, flourishing and socialistic Germany. That was what I wanted too. For that reason, in the year 1932, I did, after thorough deliberation, become a member

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[15] Testimony of von Ribbentrop (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 228.

[16] Schwarz, op. cit., pp. 78-79.

[17] Statement of Franz von Papen (3 May 1945), NCAA, Supplement A, pp. 469-70.

[18] Ibid.; TMWC, X, p. 228.

[19] NCAA, VII, pp. 199-202.

of the NSDAP."[20] In 1933 Ribbentrop's interest in politics quickened when he became a member of the Reichstag, a position he held until 1945. Also in 1933 he was made an advisor on foreign policy to Hitler, as well as Representative of the NSDAP on Foreign Policy. However his first important international position was that of a "special Commissioner for Disarmament Questions" to which he was appointed by Hitler on April 23, 1934--and in which capacity he served until 1937. The following year he was appointed Ambassador at Large, a demand he insisted upon because he refused to be of inferior rank to any of the professional diplomats in the country to which he was sent by Hitler. His constant demand for titles and ranks had by now become a complete obsession with the former wine merchant, especially after his nasty experience with one of the regular professional diplomats the year before.

> On one occasion Ribbentrop and his wife left cards at the Paris Embassy. They had heard that the Ambassador [Roland Koester, an anti-Nazi] had sent out invitations to a dinner party for one of the following days and they expected to receive an invitation. But nothing of the sort happened. Ribbentrop was infuriated. He called Constantin von Neurath [the Foreign Minister] in Berlin, in the middle of the night. It was absolutely necessary that he be present at the dinner in order to further his contacts. The surprised von Neurath, who knew neither about Ribbentrop's visit to Paris nor about Koester's dinner, telephoned Koester the next morning. The Ribbentrop's received their much desired invitation. Only through this incident did Koester learn from von Neurath that 'Ribbentrop acted for the Fuehrer as an official observer on certain questions of political importance.'[21]

This appointment also allowed him the use of the government treasury now--surprisingly enough Ribbentrop never used money for his own personal gain, and refused to take a salary, only expenses! Thus he was able to expand his own personnel entourage into the Dienststelle Ribbentrop, or "Buero Ribbentrop."[22] This project had been sanctioned by Hitler and was the earliest attempt by Ribbentrop to openly meddle in the conduct of foreign affairs.[23] He took over the old office space

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[20] TMWC, X, p. 241.

[21] Schwarz, op. cit., P. 101.

[22] See Constantin von Neurath's statements concerning this private bureau run by Ribbentrop and paid for by Hitler, NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1491.

[23] TMWC, XVII, p. 73.

of the Prussian Prime Minister's building at 63 Wilhelmstrasse--just across the street from the German Foreign Office at 76 Wilhelmstrasse. It was from here that various reports, all independent of the Reich Foreign Office, were sent directly to Hitler on foreign problems. Franz von Papen recalled that:

> Hitler was by nature skeptical about all reports of the Foreign Office. He mistrusted all people whom he did not know personally, or who were not followers of his Party. After all, what could ambassadors or envoys accomplish who were either descendants of reactionary noble families, or, anyway, had no idea of the Nazi ideology! It was Herr von Ribbentrop who complied with this desire of Hitler to supplement or prove false the reports of the Foreign Office.[24]

After 1935, the Foreign Office was placed more and more in the background as Hitler and Ribbentrop made their own foreign policy.

The groundwork was now laid for Ribbentrop's only real diplomatic triumph. Against the repeated warnings of the professionals in the Foreign Office, Hitler sent Ribbentrop to England in June, 1935. Within two weeks after his arrival, the famous Anglo-German Naval Agreement was published--June 18, 1935. Hitler was overjoyed at the achievement of his Ambassador at Large, for England had now given its open consent to German rearmament. That the Foreign Office had been wrong, and that he, Hitler, and Ribbentrop had been right would lead in the end to serious differences with the old guard of the Foreign Office. But, much more tragically, it would eventually lead both Hitler and Ribbentrop--especially after Austria and Czechoslovakia--to assume that only they were capable of correctly reading the English pulse, and to them the English declaration of war on September 3, 1939, came as a complete shock.[25]

The next major step on the Ribbentrop social ladder came the following year when in April, 1936, the German Ambassador to England, Leopold von Hoesch, died. This post was the highest foreign post in the diplomatic trade, and Joachim and Anna wanted it. His appointment

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[24] Statement of Franz von Papen (3 May 1945), NCAA, Supplement A, p. 470.

[25] Testimony of Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt, Hitler's interpreter, (28 March 1946), TMWC, X. pp. 200-201.

to the Court of St. James was not made however until August 11, and he did not begin his work in London until October 30.[26] Ribbentrop convinced Hitler that he needed to be a special type of Ambassador to England, in order that he could also "help" with affairs at home. The arrangement finally worked out was that Ribbentrop kept his title of Ambassador at Large in addition to his new one of Ambassador to England. His professed purpose was explained by Ribbentrop:

> . . . Then in 1936, when the German Ambassador von Hoesch died, I said to myself, that on behalf of Germany one should make one last supreme effort to come to a good understanding with England. . . .Hitler had a very definite conception of England's balance of power theory, but my view perhaps deviated somewhat from his. My conviction was that England would always continue to support her old balance of power theory, whereas Hitler was of the opinion that this theory of balance of power was obsolete, and that from now on, England should tolerate, that is, should welcome a much stronger Germany in view of the changed situation in Europe, and in view of Russia's development of strength. In order to give the Fuehrer a definite and clear picture of how matters stood in England--that was at any rate one of the reasons why the Fuehrer sent me to England. Another reason was that at that time we hoped, through relations with the still very extensive circles in England which were friendly to Germany and supported a German-English friendship [headed by Lord Halifax], to make the relations between the two countries friendly and perhaps to reach a permanent agreement.[27]

So the Ribbentrops, accompanied by one hundred and twenty smiling SS men and staff members, headed for London. The Ribbentrop's first problem was that of space, since the small embassy building, which had been quite adequate for the bachelor von Hoesch, would not do. Ribbentrop soon had spent over three million marks in remodeling the buildings, a flagrent display of ostentatious living in a country which prided itself on its thrift. As if that were not enough, von Ribbentrop considered building a gigantic Fuehrerhaus or large barracks type structure for the SS complete with all the Nazi trappings and illuminated on top by a large swastika. The British government protested against such attempts and the whole matter was finally dropped. A former professional diplomat in the German Foreign Office concluded:

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[26]Von Ribbentrop was busy at this time laying plans for the famous Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan, signed November 25, 1936.

[27]TMWC, X, pp. 236-37.

> He is the prize exhibit of what the Nazis think constitutes wisdom on the international stage. In the long line of outstanding Ambassadors who have served Germany in London, Ribbentrop represents complete retrogression. He is the antithesis of how, according to the legitimate Wilhelmstrasse, Anglo-German relations should be handled.[28]

Then on February 5, 1937, in an audience before King George VI, Ribbentrop greeted his majesty with, "Heil Hitler!" The British regarded his surprising salute as simply, "naive ignorance of British susceptibilities to tradition."[29] Hermann Goering described Ribbentrop's actions to one of the Nuremberg prison psychologists by saying in part:

> I tried to advise Hitler to remove him for two reasons: First of all, he was persona non grata to the British, and even Hitler wanted to keep on good terms with the British. They dislike Ribbentrop because of that stupid tactlessness.
>
> He had hardly gotten off the train when he went on his mission to London before he started giving them expert advice on controlling the balance of power against Russia, completely insensitive to the fact that the British considered themselves experts on power politics and were always trying to give us advice on how to protect Germany in the East.
>
> Then, upon presentation to the King, he greeted him with 'Heil Hitler.' The British, of course, regarded it as an insult to the crown. I was even able to make Hitler see the point. 'Suppose Russia sent a good-will ambassador to you,' I said, 'and he came and greeted you with "Long Live the Communist Revolution!" '[30]

The next step in the Ribbentrop diplomatic career was the coveted post of Foreign Minister. The old professional, von Neurath, was beginning to question some of Hitler's demands and was repeatedly urging caution, and Hitler wanted somebody who would not haggle with him over the details.[31] Yet von Neurath, although he officially "resigned" in February, 1938, remained at his post until after the Anschluss--however Ribbentrop signed the document, along with Hitler, officially incorporating Austria into the German Reich. Dr. Douglas Kelley, American Prison Psychologist, concluded that:

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[28] Schwarz, op. cit., p. 187.

[29] Richmond, Virginia Times-Dispatch, February 6, 1937, 2:4

[30] Reichsmarshal Goering to Major Kelley (11 November 1945), Douglas M. Kelley, 22 Cells in Nuremberg (New York: Greenberg, 1947), pp. 99-100.

[31] Statements of Constantin von Neurath, NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1491.

> The ideal man for the job [Reich Foreign Minister] had to possess unique qualifications: He must be a fanatical Hitlerite. He must make a good surface impression. Because he would be expected to sell not only the product but the customer, he must be facile in employing varying approaches (depending on the war potential of the customer). Finally, he must not have an original thought in his head but be limited to parroting the Fuehrer's words, driving for the Fuehrer's ends.
>
> Hitler chose for this task Joachim von Ribbentrop. It was a choice eminently satisfactory to both.[32]

The now ex-Foreign Minister von Neurath was then made President of the newly created Secret Cabinet Council, an organization of little importance under Hitler's method of government.[33] Ribbentrop's ambition in climbing the diplomatic ladder was well summarized by Franz von Papen.

> . . . Certainly Herr von Ribbentrop must have thought highly of his efforts in Hitler's rise to power. For shortly after 30 January 1933 he approached me with the request to help him to get the position of a State Secretary in the Foreign Office. I was rather astonished. For, as every initiated man knows, a state secretary requires an extensive knowledge of all foreign problems and also, of course, a thorough familiarity with the entire circle of people who are employed in any and all foreign posts of the Reich. It would be much easier to change a Foreign Minister than his State Secretary, for the latter must be the fixed pole of the ministry. I knew Herr von Ribbentrop had social ambitions. Frequently he had invited the ambassadors of foreign powers to fine dinners at his house. But it was news to me that he thought himself qualified for the part of a Secretary of State in the Foreign Office. . . . But Ribbentrop's intimate relations with Hitler permitted an early attempt.[34]

Another member of the old school from the Wilhelmstrasse school of German diplomats was even more bitter in his analysis of Ribbentrop.

> . . . The coveted splendour of metropolitan society became his daily bread. There is nothing particularly reprehensible in snobbery. Nearly everyone goes through times when to have a group of heavily titled or otherwise prominent personalities around the dinner table appears more meritorious than to listen to the Moonlight Sonata in solitude. But Ribbentrop was a snob with a vengeance. To twist his stomach with caviar in the presence of the Duke of Devonshire or the American Ambassador he would walk more than a mile. He considered this sort of thing the supreme manifestation of Weltanschauung [a world view or perspective]. This man, who in vain tried to out-plutocrat the plutocrats of Berlin under the Weimar Republic,

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32 Kelley, op. cit., p. 93.

33 For a complete list of the Council see, NCAA, III, p. 913.

34 NCAA, Supplement A, pp. 469-70.

> used a movement that stank of the vulgar herd he dispised in order to attain the social triumphs which he so naively paraded throughout Europe. There is no genuine trait in him. All of his life is an attempt to 'get even' with someone or something; to vent his spleen against one social group after the other where his ambitions and gifts were not appropriately recognized.[35]

Joachim von Ribbentrop was therefore in the last analysis a political opportunist who, attempting to use the National Socialist movement as a means toward furthering his own search for glory and recognition, became so deeply enmeshed in the Hitler regime that he could never have gotten out--even if he had secretly wanted to, but any such thoughts were soon overruled by a blind devotion to Hitler. His activities immediately prior to the war years, and during the war itself will be treated in the subsequent pages on the trial itself. Ribbentrop was captured during the last week of June, 1945, by British agents--in the Hamburg apartment of a 35-year-old divorcee--wearing a pair of pink and white pajamas, a rather tragic end to a tragic career.[36]

It is therefore necessary to examine the exact nature of the charges brought against Ribbentrop, as well as the other defendants. Also, the exact charges of the indictment as specified by the International Military Tribunal, the testimony presented in his behalf by defense witnesses, and Ribbentrop's own statements before the Tribunal must be considered.

III. THE INDICTMENT

The trial itself officially began in the Palace of Justice at Nuremberg, Germany, on November 20, 1945, and would have four hundred and three open sessions before its final session on October 1, 1946. The indictment as issued (October 6, 1945) to the defendants had been accepted by the court on June 7, 1945. In addition to each of the individual defendants, seven organizations or groups were also indicted as being criminal, or assisting in the common conspiracy.[37] Thus each

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[35]Schwarz, op. cit., pp. 294-95.

[36]Time, June 25, 1945, p. 40.

[37]Die Reichsregierung [Reich Cabinet]; Das Korps Der Politischen Leiter Der Nationalsozialtischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei [Leadership Corps of the Nazi Party]; Die Schutzstaffeln Der Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei [the SS and the SD]; Die Geheime Staatspolizei [Gestapo]; Die Sturabteilungen Der N.S.D.A.P. [the SA, or Storm Troops]; and the General Staff and High Command of the German Armed Forces. NCAA, I, p. 14.

of the defendants was to be tried not only on his own individual responsibility, but also as a member of any of these organizations under the provisions of Article Nine of the Charter of The International Military Tribunal.[38]

There are four charges stated in the Indictment, the first one being of a general nature and of wide interpretation, and the other three being the statement of crimes for which individual responsibility was held. Count One, with which this paper is concerned, was appropriately titled, "The Common Plan or Conspiracy."

> . . . The common plan or conspiracy embraced the commission of Crimes against Peace, in that the defendants planned, prepared, initiated, and waged wars of aggression, which were also wars in violation of international treaties, agreements, or assurances. In the development and course of the common plan or conspiracy it came to embrace the commission of War Crimes, in that it contemplated, and the defendants determined upon and carried out, ruthless wars against countries and populations, in violation of the rules and customs of war, including as typical and systematic means by which the wars were prosecuted, murder, ill-treatment, deportation for slave labor and for other purposes of civilian populations of occupied territories, murder and ill-treatment of prisoners of war and of persons on the high seas, the taking and killing of hostages, the plunder of public and private property, the indescriminate destruction of cities, towns, and villages, and devastation not justified by military necessity. The common plan or conspiracy contemplated and came to embrace as typical and systematic means, and the defendants determined upon and committed, Crimes against Humanity, both within Germany and within occupied territories, including murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against civilian populations before and during the war, and persecutions on political, racial, or religious grounds, in execution of the plan for preparing and prosecuting aggressive or illegal war, many of such acts and persecutions being violations of the domestic laws of the countries where perpetrated.[39]

This general statement of the offenses was then followed by a much longer list of particulars.[40] Thus according to Count One, as each defendant became a member of the NSDAP he automatically assumed partial responsibility for that organization's activities because he knew of their espoused aims and purposes and was willing to serve as an instrument in furthering such aims and goals. They were willing to help in intimidation, fraud, deceit, threats, propaganda, fifth column activities, and the threatening of agressive war. This was done first by acquiring totalitarian control in Germany; the planning of, and mobilization of all resources for, aggressive war; acceptance of certain "doctrines" such as: the

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[38] NCAA, I, pp. 4-12; TMWC, I, pp. 10-16.

[39] TMWC, I, p. 29.

[40] Ibid., pp. 30-41.

"master race" theory, the "Fuehrer" principal of leadership, war as a noble and necessary part of Natzi life; and, finally, the utilization of their absolute control for wars of aggression against the rest of the world. In order that there could be no doubt by any of the defendants, with regard to specific "agreements or assurances" as mentioned in Article Six, a complete list of German pledges was provided -- beginning with the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes as signed at the Hague 18 October 1907, up to the violation of the German assurances given to Yugoslavia on 6 October 1939.[41] In summary, the general charges brought against each defendant were: a) the Common Plan or Conspiracy, b) Crimes against Peace, c) War Crimes, and d) Crimes against Humanity.

With regard to Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Tribunal set down a brief statement of his individual responsibility in Appendix A of the Indictment.

> The defendant RIBBENTROP between 1932 and 1945 [all charges were up to May 8, 1945] was: A member of the Nazi Party, a member of the Nazi Reichstag, Advisor to the Fuehrer on matters of foreign policy, representative of the Nazi Party for matters of foreign policy, special German delegate for disarmament questions, Ambassador extraordinary, Ambassador in London, organizer and director of Dienststelle Ribbentrop, Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, a member of the Secret Cabinet Council, member of the Fuehrer's political staff at general headquarters, and General in the SS. The defendant RIBBENTROP used the foregoing positions, his personal influence, and his intimate connection with the Fuehrer in such a manner that: He promoted the accession to power of the Nazi conspirators as set forth in Count One of the Indictment; he promoted the preparations for war set forth in Count One of the Indictment; he participated in the political planning and preparation of the Nazi conspirators for Wars of Aggression and Wars in Violation of International Treaties, Agreements, and Assurances as set forth in Counts One and Two of the Indictment; in accordance with the Fuehrer principle he executed and assumed responsibility for the execution of the foreign policy plans of the Nazi conspirators set forth in Count One of the Indictment; and he authorized, directed, and participated in the War Crimes set forth in Count Three of the Indictment and the Crimes against Humanity set forth in Count Four of the Indictment, including more particularly the crimes against persons and property in occupied territories.[42]

Dr. Fritz Sauter was Ribbentrop's defense counselor until January 5, 1946, after which time he was replaced by Dr. Martin Horn who served throughout the remainder of the trial. On November 21, 1945, Ribbentrop, as well as the other defendants, entered a plea of "not guilty." However, his answer to the Tribunal's question was quite indicative of what was to come: "I declare myself in the sense of the Indictment not guilty."[43]

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[41] Ibid., pp. 84-92; See also Appendix A

[42] Ibid., p. 69.

[43] Ibid., II, p. 97.

CHAPTER II

COUNT ONE, THE COMMON PLAN OR CONSPIRACY

The instrument of the Common Plan or Conspiracy, under Count One of the Indictment, was the National Socialist German Worker's Party founded by Adolf Hitler in 1920. As the Party increased in membership the defendants became the exponents of the Nazi doctrines and were therefore instrumental in influencing others to join with them in the conspiracy, the Indictment stated concerning the Nazi Party:

> . . . The Nazi Party, together with certain of its subsidiary organizations, became the instrument of cohesion among the defendants and their co-conspirators and an instrument for the carrying out of the aims and purposes of their conspiracy. Each defendant became a member of the Nazi Party and of the conspiracy, with knowledge of their aims and purposes, or, with such knowledge, became an accessory to their aims and purposes at some stage of the development of the conspiracy.[44]

The first goal of the conspirators was the abrogation of the Treaty of Versailles; the second goal was the acquiring of the "lost" German territories; and, thirdly, the pursuit of even greater territory within Continental Europe itself under the pretext of Lebensraum.[45]

1. RIBBENTROP JOINS THE NAZI PARTY

The first major step toward their goals came when Adolf Hitler acquired control of the German government with his appointment as Chancellor on January 30, 1933. Immediately prior to this von Ribbentrop had placed his villa at Dahlem in Berlin at the disposal of Hitler for a series of governmental conferences. It was Ribbentrop's role as middle-man between the various factions, which helped in the final decision to bring Hitler in as Chancellor. Ribbentrop, in an interrogation session prior to the trial, explained his role at the time by saying in part that:

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[44] TMWC, I, p. 30.

[45] Ibid., pp. 30-31; NCAA, I, pp. 16-17.

> Papen [Franz von], was, in August 1932, Chancellor to Hindenburg, and some other people tried in August 1932 to make Hitler Chancellor. I didn't participate in the negotiations but I watched them because I got the view during 1932 that the only possibility for Germany to avoid chaos and civil war would be to follow the patriotic front consisting of National Socialists, Nationalists, down right to the central party--that was my view then. People tried in August to bring that about, but Hitler came to Berlin. I then went to see Papen at the instigation of Helldorf [Count von] and I asked Papen what really had happened. He told me that Hitler had asked to become Chancellor; that Hindenburg wouldn't do that. I told him, of course, that is a different situation, but what about if I went to try and see Hitler and talked with him whether things could be arranged in some way--perhaps in some other way--that he may not become Chancellor; and Papen quite agreed, quite willing, and so Helldorf had asked me whether I would make intermediate talk and try to bring Papen and Hitler together again, and they prepared an interview for me which was the first time I saw Hitler personally, in August 1932, at the Berghof. I had a lengthy discussion with him, and I saw that Hitler was very disappointed and had a great distrust in von Papen. I tried to eliminate that, but the essence of my whole situation really was that I found that it was practically [only] conversation, because I could not eliminate this distrust of Hitler's; and I went away, telling the Fuehrer that I would try as far as I could to get Papen again to see him or come into communication again. Meantime, I think Hitler had met Papen in the house of Baron von Schroeder and they had a talk there, and I don't know what happened there because I was not a party to it. About a week or ten days later it must have been, I was approached whether I would not try again to bring Hitler and Papen together, and so I did. And the meeting at my house--I think it was two or three times during January, and I believe that these conversations at my house have contributed to the fact that later on the Hitler Government was formed. I personally did not take part in the material side of the discussions, but my activities as intermediary were only the fact to put my house at their disposal, to bring them together and let them discuss.[46]

Although Ribbentrop thus stated that he was only an "intermediary," he was at this time already a member of the Nazi Party, having joined in May of 1932. Also, immediately after the Hitler Government was formed, von Ribbentrop applied for membership in the SS organization in May of 1933.[47] It thus appears that von Ribbentrop was one of the first to apply for a position on the Nazi bandwagon. He soon received quick promotions within the SS organization: on May 20, 1935, he was appointed Oberfuehrer; on June 18, 1935, (immediately after the Anglo-German Naval Agreement) he was appointed Brigadefuehrer; on September 13, 1936, he was appointed Gruppenfuehrer; and on April 20, 1940, he was appointed Obergruppenfuehrer.[48] In addition to these ranks, he applied for and was

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[46] Interrogation by Col. H. A. Brundage, OUSCC, (29 August 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1177-1178.

[47] See the numerous application forms filled out by Ribbentrop for membership, Documents D-744 (a) and D-744 (b), NCAA, VII, pp. 199-202.

[48] Ibid., pp. 202-206.

admitted to the famous "Death's-Head Division" of the SS.[49] He later denied this latter appointment on the witness stand. His concept of the SS organization was very interesting, for Ribbentrop, under the questioning of his counselor Dr. Horn, said that he considered the various positions to which he was appointed as purely honorary! He then went on to describe for the Tribunal his interpretation of the SS itself: ". . . I considered the SS idea at that time [1936] the possible basis for producing and creating an idealistic class of leaders, somewhat like that existing in England, and such as emerged symbolically through the heroism of our Waffen-SS during the war. But the Fuehrer bestowed this rank on me because he wished that within the Party and at the Party meetings, I should wear the Party uniform and have a Party rank."[50] Thus Ribbentrop asserted that all the applications for membership; the various promotions within the organization itself; the awarding of the ceremonial dagger and the "Death's Head" ring were all Hitler's idea. With his love of pageantry and obsession with the paraphernalia of rank this seems difficult to believe. Even more so when he commented upon his role within the Nazi Party.

> May I at this time state briefly my attitude toward the Party. Yesterday or the day before, I believe, the question was raised as to whether I was a true National Socialist. I do not claim to be competent to judge this question. It is a fact that it was only in later years that I joined Adolf Hitler. I did not pay very much attention to the National Socialist doctrines and program nor to the racial theories, with which I was not very familiar. I was not anti-Semitic, nor did I fully understand the church question, although I had left the church a long time ago. . . .
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> . . . . . .
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> It was in 1930 when in the large Reichstag election National Socialism obtained more than 100 seats in the German Reichstag. I set forth yesterday, and perhaps do not need to go into detail any more, what conditions in Germany were at the time. However, during the years 1930, 1931, and 1932 I gradually came nearer to the Party. Then from 1932 on--I believe I entered the Party in August May 1932--from that moment on until the end of this war I devoted my entire strength to National Socialist Germany and exhausted my strength in so doing.

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[49] TMWC, X, p. 387.

[50] Testimony of von Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), Ibid., p. 241.

> I wish to profess before this Tribunal and before the world that I have always endeavered to be a good National Socialist and that I was proud of the fact that I belonged to a little group of men, idealists, who did not want anything else but to re-establish Germany's prestige in the world.[51]

What exactly then has Ribbentrop said to the Tribunal? First of all, he stated that he was only an "honorary" member of the SS--membership number 63,083. It seems rather incredible that such an honorary member who had reached the rank of Obergruppenfuehrer and General in the SS did not "pay very much attention to the National Socialist doctrines"; and that he was also "Not anti-Semitic" in an organization which prided itself on being able to handle the "Jewish question." He tried to have the Tribunal believe that he was not anti-Semitic, while in the same breath he prided himself on his sacrifices for National Socialist Germany, along with the rest of his "idealists." That such statements were in direct contradiction to each other apparently never dawned on him. Under interrogation by Col. Brundage, U.S.A., Ribbentrop stated that with regard to the interpretation of the German word Weltauffassung, which was a central doctrine of the Nazi Party, that:

> Q. Do you have a definition for Weltauffassung?
> A. Weltauffassung?
> Q. Yes. When you say 'World perception' what do you mean by that?
> A. That is very difficult really. I have always translated it as world perception, but I don't know whether that is the right translation.
> Q. I have heard the term used so many times, and I cannot find anybody yet, who can tell me what it is. As a matter of fact, I have had some people tell me that that is the reason for the present disaster that has come upon Germany. Still nobody can tell me what it is.
> A. Well, to be quite frank, I think that it is to a certain extent right. I couldn't tell you myself. I mean really, definitely, I have so often thought about this during these last months, how this really all came about. I don't know. I think if you ask a dozen Party people to give you a definition of the word Weltauffassung, you would get different opinions. I mean you would get from everyone a different one. Of course, some fundamental things are quite clear: It is a question to have the National tendencies and; secondly, to have Socialistic tendencies. I mean these are the good parts of the Weltauffassung, national states.
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> . . . . . .

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[51] Ibid., pp. 241-242.

A. What the Fuehrer and the Party meant, and were aiming at, I could not tell you. I couldn't give you an answer. But what sectors it composed, of course, there is the racial question, the religious question, socialism, nationalism, and so on. I mean those are vague sections, which are comprised, were meant by this word, but a definition, what is really meant as to these various sectors, I could not tell you. I don't know. I never have known and I never could find out.[52]

Although he thus stated in the preceeding excerpts that he did not really understand the interpretations of the basic National Socialist doctrines, he had stated prior to that that he had had "basic differences of opinion in basic doctrine" with the Fuehrer.[53] In other words, although he himself admitted that he did not know what the Fuehrer and the Party were aiming at, he asserted at the same time that he disagreed with Hitler over basic doctrinal lines. One is constantly astounded at the contradictory statements that Ribbentrop would make. Yet through all his gross contradictions, absolute lies, and generally long, confused and ambigious answers, there ran one consistent theme: he knew what Hitler said on the subject; he knew what various party leaders said; and somewhere amid this verbal nightmare Ribbentrop managed to find a line of thought which he considered his own. Upon examination of the evidence, von Ribbentrop was a National Socialist not because he understood the ideology itself, but because of his great admiration for Adolf Hitler. Ribbentrop put his hope and his faith not in any idea or mass movement, but in the personality of one man--his Fuehrer.

II. RIBBENTROP AND HITLER

Perhaps the only thing consistent in Ribbentrop's testimony was his loyalty to Hitler, a relationship bordering on absolute worship. "I was always loyal to Hitler, carried through his orders, differed frequently in opinion from him, had serious disputes with him, repeatedly tendered my resignation, but when Hitler gave an order, I always carried out his instructions in accordance with

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[52] Interrogation by Col. Brundage (17 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1255-1256.

[53] Ibid., p. 1226.

the principles of our authoritarian state."[54] It is interesting to note that Ribbentrop stated that he had "serious disputes with him, repeatedly tendered my resignation." Earlier in his cell he had told an American prison psychologist, Dr. Douglas Kelley that:

> In 1941, Hitler and I had a disagreement. It was really a very simple sort of thing--over a decoration. I had a decoration for service in the Foreign Office, and Hitler was bringing out a new decoration which would have made mine only a second-class one.
>
> Really it wasn't very important. However, we argued and I lost my temper and stated that if my opinion wasn't good enough, I would resign. . . .
>
> Hitler looked at me, walked up and down, got white, sat down in a chair, held his hands, and muttered I was killing him.
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> . . . . . .
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> 'I became very upset,' Ribbentrop went on. 'He looked like death. He seemed unable to breathe. He was very pale and you could see the veins stand out on his forehead. I thought he would die, and I seized his hand and took an oath that I would never do this again, that I would always stand behind him, no matter what he might plan to do.'[55]

It was not over any such thing as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the violation of neutral territory, or the Jewish atrocities over which he was willing to resign; but over such a trivial matter as a medal. The importance of this fact, besides a glimpse into his personality, however was that later Ribbentrop tried to convince the Tribunal that he had indeed done just that, as well as submitting his resignation on a number of occasions.[56] Fraulein Blank, his personnel secretary since February 1935, did state that he repeatedly requested that he be given a command at the front, but that he had only attempted to resign once that she knew of.[57] However the Fuehrer declined his requests, and Ribbentrop immediately went back to his old job. Yet while always willing to assert that he had stood loyally by his Fuehrer, he was quick to add that he himself had nothing to do with determining the policies, nor was he guilty of any "crimes."

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[54] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), cross-examined by M. Faure of France, TMWC, X, p. 416.

[55] Kelley, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

[56] NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1227.

[57] Kelley, op. cit., pp. 107-108; testimony of Fraulein Blank, questioned by Dr. Horn (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 187.

During the morning session of the trial on December 11, 1945, a film had been shown which covered the rise of Hitler to power. At lunch that noon, Dr. Gustavo Gilbert discussed the movie--during which von Ribbentrop had been completely overwhelmed and was moved to tears--with him, and Ribbentrop said: 'Can't you feel the terrific strength of his personality? Can't you see how he swept people off their feet? I don't know if you can, but we can feel it. It is erschutternd [deeply moving]!'[58] Later that evening Dr. Gilbert visited Ribbentrop in his cell #7, and during the course of the conversation Ribbentrop remarked: 'Do you know, even with all I know, if Hitler should come to me in this cell now, and say "Do this!"--I would still do it.--Isn't it amazing? Can't you feel the terrific magnetism of his personality.'[59] . Dr. Douglas Kelley had a similar experience.

> One day during the trial, motion pictures were shown, including several scenes of Hitler. Afterward in his cell Ribbentrop, whose eyes were literally aglow with remembered glory, seized me by the arm and shook it. 'Can't you feel his personality?' he asked breathlessly. I was silent, and he cooled for a moment. 'Perhaps it is not conveyed through the screen. But I can feel him myself--his strong, vital personality.'[60]

Ribbentrop absolutely refused to renounce the man whose guilt was established beyond the shadow of a doubt. During another evening conversation with Dr. Gilbert, the American psychologist said that if he had been in Ribbentrop's shoes he would have denounced Hitler, or even better, have killed Hitler. To which the shocked Ribbentrop replied in astonishment: "Oh, no! I simply could never have thought of that. I could never have brought myself to do it."[61] Dr. Gilbert then asked him if it would have been like killing his father? "Yes, something like that.--And because he became for me the symbol of Germany.--I told you, after we saw the Nazi film in court, if he came to me now, I simply could not renounce him.--I might not follow him any more, but repudiate him--no, I just could not do it. I don't know why."[62] Witnesses called by Dr. Horn to testify on behalf of

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[58] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 66.

[59] Ibid., p. 68.

[60] Kelley, op. cit., p. 111.

[61] Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 235-236.

[62] Ibid.

the defense also substantiated these reactions by Ribbentrop.[63] Thus, Joachim von Ribbentrop was clearly guilty of a blind devotion to the "Fuehrer principal" of leadership under Count One of the Indictment.

III. RIBBENTROP'S PART IN THE CONSPIRACY

In order to understand Ribbentrop's role in the Common Plan or Conspiracy, it is necessary to return from his part in the Nazi consolidation of power and his views on Hitler to the actual physical beginnings of the conspiracy itself. Under Count One it was not necessary to show that the defendant participated in the individual cases, but only that the defendant participated as an organizer, instigator, or accomplice either in the formulation of the plan or in its final execution. The first part of the plan, upon assuming power in Germany, was the renunciation of the Treaty of Versailles. Ribbentrop, although wanting a modification of the Treaty, was not as vehement as Hitler on the subject; however he remarked upon questioning by Dr. Horn that, "It was precisely Hitler's opposition to Versailles that first brought me together with him and the National Socialist Party."[64] He then added that he did however think it would be possible to reach some sort of an understanding with England and France regarding the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. According to von Ribbentrop, both he and Hitler were only after "equality" with regard to armaments. But by 1935, the arms clauses of the Treaty were already a dead letter.

The next phase was the pursuit after the "lost" German colonies of World War I. The Saar Basin was returned to Germany by a plebicite vote in 1935. The remilitarization of the Rhineland

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[63] See the testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (27 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 135; testimony of Fraulein Blank (28 March 1946), Ibid, pp 186-194; or Affidavit of Otto Meissner, Document PS-3309, NCAA, Supplement A, p. 512.

[64] Testimony of Ribbentrop (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 228-229.

(7 March 1936) was defended by Ribbentrop on the German necessity for defense.[65] With the successful completion of this step, it was only a matter of time before Hitler and the other conspirators --including Joachim von Ribbentrop--set their sights a little higher. It was now necessary to add Austria to the Reich camp.

Throughout the preliminary negotiations over the Austrian question, Ribbentrop was in London in his capacity as Ambassador, or when he was in Berlin, working or gaining more signatories to the Anti-Comintern Pact--his pet project. Austria however had been the subject of increasing Nazi pressure, beginning with the latter part of 1936 and through 1937. On November 5, 1937, Hitler held a conference--at which the Reich Foreign Minister was mentioned as being in attendance, but which Ribbentrop denied--at which Hitler laid his policy of Lebensraum for Europe openly before all, and which would require the use of force for implementing it.[66] It was at the Berchtesgaden Conference in February 1938 that Ribbentrop was active in the diplomatic arrangements "agreed upon." Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg of Austria agreed to meet Hitler in an effort to come to some understanding with the Nazis, and they jointly issued a communique which said in part that:

> Both statesmen are convinced that the measures taken by them constitute at the same time an effective contribution toward the peaceful development of the European situation.[67]

Yet, in his affidavit on this meeting submitted to the Nuremberg Tribunal, Schmuschnigg--who had spent seven years in a Nazi concentration camp--stated that Hitler had been most demanding at the time.

> I furthermore state and affirm that, immediately after arriving at the Berghof, I commenced a conference with Hitler. Hitler and I were alone for two hours. Hitler attacked in a violent

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[65] Interrogation of Ribbentrop by Col. M. I. Gurfein, OUSCC, (24 August 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1176-1177.

[66] Notes on the conference of Hitler (5 November 1937) signed by Hitler's Adjutant, General Friedrich Hossbach, Document 386-PS, NCAA, III, pp. 295-304.

[67] Official German communique (12 February 1938), Document 2461-PS, NCAA, V, p. 206. ; ibid.,

manner the policies of Austria, both of the past and present. He furthermore informed me that he, Hitler, had 'decided to bring the Austrian question to a solution so-or-so, even if he had to immediately use military force.' At no time during the first two hours of our conversation did Hitler ever make any precise demands or requests of me, but spent the whole of the two hours accusing me and menacing me as a traitor to Austrian politics. Especially he informed me that, according to his knowledge, Austria could no longer reckon with any assistance from other European Powers, and that Austria now stood alone in the world.

. . . . . .

I furthermore state and affirm that I was next called before Joachim von Ribbentrop with my secretary of Foreign Affairs, Guido Schmidt, and, in the presence of Franz von Papen, Ribbentrop exhibited to me a typewritten draft containing the conditions and demands made by Hitler upon me and Austria. He furthermore added that Hitler has informed me, Ribbentrop, 'that these demands that I now offer you are the final demands of the Fuehrer and that he, Hitler, is not prepared to further discuss them.' He further stated that 'you must accept the whole of these demands herein contained.' Ribbentrop then advised me to accept the demands at once. . . .[68]

This affidavit is quite interesting for a number of reasons. Of course, it placed the defendant Ribbentrop squarely in the middle of the whole affair. Ribbentrop, in response to his counsel's questions about this event, went into his usual long and ambigious answer about the circumstances of the situation. He asserted first of all that Hitler himself had actually handled the negotiations on the Austrian "question."

Hitler informed me--I recalled this was on 12 February 1938--that he was going to meet Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg at the Obersalzberg. I do not remember the details. I see from my notes that this was on 12 February. One thing I know is that he told me that the solution to be achieved was that, in some form or other, the German National Socialists in Austria must be given assistance. Difficulties of all sorts had arisen there, the details of which I no longer recall. At any rate, I believe, there were a great many National Socialists in jail, and, as a consequence of the natural efforts of these Austrian people to bring about a closer contact with the Reich, this Austrian problem threatened to become a really serious problem between Germany and Austria.[69]

Dr. Horn then asked von Ribbentrop whether it was true that at the time of the conference, any "political pressure" had been put on Schuschnigg?

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[68] Affidavit of Kurt von Schuschnigg on the Berchtesgaden Conference (12 February 1938), Document 2995-PS, Ibid., pp. 709-713.

[69] Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 244-245.

No, that is not true. I remember very clearly my conversation with Schuschnigg, whereas the other details of what was going on at the Obersalzberg are not so clear in my memory, since I was not present at either the first or the second meeting [a morning and evening session] between Schuschnigg and Hitler. My discussion with Schuschnigg proceeded in a very amicable fashion. I felt that Schuschnigg obviously was very greatly impressed by the Fuehrer and the Fuehrer's personality. I wish to say first that I do not know exactly the details of what Hitler wanted to achieve or discuss with Schuschnigg, so that on this subject matter I could say to him very little, or rather nothing. Our discussion therefore was confined to more general subjects. I told Schuschnigg that in my opinion these two countries must come into closer contact and that perhaps it was his historical task to assist in this and to co-operate; that the fact was undeniable that both nations were German, and two such German nations could not forever be separated by artificial barriers [Versailles].[70]

Thus Ribbentrop asserted that no political pressure was exerted on the Austrian Chancellor, but that he simply succumbed to ". . . the dominating personality of the Fuehrer and the arguments that he presented made such an impression on Schuschnigg that he finally agreed to Hitler's proposals."[71] The prosecution's evidence on this point however directly contradicted Ribbentrop's statements. Franz von Papen, also present at the conference and with Ribbentrop during his talk with Schuschnigg recorded: ". . . I reminded him [Schuschnigg] that despite this talk he had not seen his way clear to make any concessions, and I asked him whether without the pressure he would have been ready to make the concessions he made late in the evening. He answered: 'To be honest, no!' It appears to me of importance to record this statement."[72] Also an entry into the diary of General Jodl stated that: "In the evening and on 12 February General K. [Keitel] with General V. Reichenau and Sperrle [General Hugo Sperrle, Commander of the Luftwaffe] at the Obersalzberg. Schuschnigg together with G. Schmidt are again being put under heaviest political and military pressure. At 2300 hours Schuschnigg signs protocol."[73] It seems Ribbentrop's memory was a bit hazy! Ribbentrop went on

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[70] Ibid., p. 245; see also Ibid., (1 April 1946), pp. 324-332.

[71] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), cross-examined by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe of England, Ibid, p. 324.

[72] Notes of Franz von Papen (26 February 1938), Document 1544-PS, NCAA, IV, p. 103.

[73] Exerpts from the diary of Generaloberst Jodl (11 February 1938), Document 1780-PS, TMWC, IV, p. 560; see also General Sperrle, Ibid., XXI, p. 385.

to add his impressions of Schuschnigg's attitudes as he remembered them, as well as reasserting that there had been no pressure put on Schuschnigg that he knew of.

> . . . As I said, my discussion with him was very amicable, and I might mention that, when I suggested to Schuschnigg that the two countries would have to get into closer contact, Schuschnigg showed an altogether positive attitude towards the idea so that, to a certain extent, I was even surprised by his positive attitude at that time. There can be no talk of any pressure exerted on Schuschnigg during our discussion. However, the Fuehrer's discussion with him, I believe, was conducted in very clear language, because the Fuehrer wanted to reach some improvement in relations in order to solve the problems between the two countries, and to achieve this it was necessary for the two statesmen to reveal their thoughts openly. I have heard here, and I think this from an entry in General Jodl's diary, that heavy political and military was exerted. I believe I can testify here that I knew nothing of any military or strong pressure at this meeting between Hitler and Schuschnigg. I may reiterate that I am sure the Fuehrer used clear and frank language with Schuschnigg, but I certainly did not notice any pressure of a military or a political kind, or anything in the nature of an ultimatum. . . .[74]

Schuschnigg, in his affidavit, stated further that when he returned to see Hitler in the evening, that Hitler "was very excited" and threatened him with actual invasion within three days. When he said that he would have to discuss the matter with the rest of his government, Hitler became infuriated, and asking him to wait outside, "flung open the door and yelled, 'Keitel.'" How much more political pressure could he have exerted than to have the Chief of Staff come running in the moment Schuschnigg hesitated?[75] The fact remains that there were extensive military preparations undertaken, of which von Ribbentrop--although he returned to London immediately after the conference--could not have helped but be aware.

> I would like to point out again that I did not know anything about military measures and, if I had known, I could not have the slightest reason not to say here that it was not so. It is a fact, however, that in the days before and after the conversations between the Fuehrer and

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[74] Ibid., X, pp. 245-246.

[75] See document relating to "Case Otto" in Jodl's diary (entry for 10 March 1938), Ibid., II, p. 410; and also the military directive signed by Hitler (11 March 1938), Document C-102, NCAA, VI, pp. 911-912.

> Schuschnigg. I was so busy taking over the Foreign Office that I treated the Austrian problem, at that time, merely as a secondary matter in foreign policy. I did not play a leading role in the handling of the Austrian problem. . . .[76]

The meeting which he himself had earlier described as "historic" he now asserted was only "a secondary matter in foreign policy!" Ribbentrop also testified that he did "not know exactly the details of what Hitler wanted to achieve," yet Schuschnigg's affidavit clearly stated that Ribbentrop read him Germany's demands from a typewritten page.

One other thing of interest, Schuschnigg stated that Hitler had informed him that "Austria could no longer reckon with any assistance from other European Powers." It would be interesting to discover who had informed Hitler that this was the case--could it perhaps have been the German Ambassador to England? From the evidence submitted to the Tribunal, it seems without a doubt that Ribbentrop played a role--though not a major one--in the course of events leading to the Anschluss. He had read the ultimatum to the Austrian Chancellor, and then denied knowing exactly what Hitler's real aims had been. He was nevertheless delighted at the turn of events within Austria and the subsequent entering of German troops.[77] To have admitted that he knew of any military preparations would have meant his immediate guilt. At any rate he certainly didn't appear too surprised at it. But the success in Austria wetted Hitler's appetite for further attempting to solve the problem of German Lebensraum. When the law was drawn up bringing Austria into the Reich, Ribbentrop's signature was affixed to the document.

The next step was of course to come to the relief of the "suffering" Germans in the Sudetenland. In fact the Austrian question had just been settled when Ribbentrop was involved in politics within

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[76] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), cross-examined by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, TMWC, X, p. 329.

[77] Transcript of telephone calls for the Air Ministry (13 March 1938), Document 2949-PS, Ibid., II, p. 424; or the testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), Ibid., X, p. 249.

Czechoslovakia.[78] On March 29, 1938, Konrad Henlein was in Berlin for conferneces with the Reich Foreign Minister.

> The aim of the negotiations to be carried out by the Sudeten German Party with the Czechoslovakian Government is finally this: to avoid entry into the Government extension and the gradual specification of the demands to be made. It must be emphasized clearly in the negotiations that the Sudeten German Party alone is the party to the negotiations with the Czechoslovkian Government, not the Reich Cabinet (Reichsregierung). The Reich Cabinet itself must refuse to appear toward the Government in Prague or toward London and Paris as the advocate or peacemaker of the Sudeten-German demands. . . .
>
> Following these general explanations of the Reich Minister the demands of the Sudeten German Party from the Czechoslovak Government as contained in the enclosure were discussed and approved in principle. For further cooperation, Konrad Henlein was instructed to keep in the closest possible touch with the Reichsminister and the Head of the Central Office for Racial Germans (mit dem Leiter der Volksdeutschen Mittelstelle), as well as the German Minister in Prague, as the local representative of the Foreign Minister. . . .[79]

Ribbentrop, after his usual long discussion of the hardships created for the German minorities under the Versailles Treaty, recalled Henlein's visit by saying in part that:

> . . . As I said before, I tried to get the foreign policy affairs under control. At the time I received Konrad Henlein--I believe once or twice, I do not exactly remember--and asked him not to do anything, as far as Prague was concerned, in the persuit of his political goals that might put German foreign policy into a state of emergency. This was perhaps not always so easy for Henlein either, and I know that the leaders of the Sudeten German Party could naturally approach and be received by other offices of the Reich; also Adolf Hitler himself, who was interested in this problem, occasionally received these leaders. The crisis, or rather the whole situation, developed more and more critically, because on the one hand the Sudeten Germans insisted on their demands in Prague more and more openly and stubbornly and because the Czechs, the Government in Prague, opposed these demands, which resulted in excesses, arrests, and so on. Thus the situation became even more critical . . . .[80]

Even though Ribbentrop himself admitted that the situation had become "even more critical," the German Foreign Office increased its financial support to the Henleinists.[81] Ribbentrop seemed to

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[78] Telegram of congratulations from Konrad Henlein to the "Most honored Minister of Foreign Affairs," (17 March 1938), Document 2789-PS, NCAA, V. p. 424.

[79] Notes on the conference in the Foreign Office (29 March 1938), Document 2788-PS, Ibid., pp.422-423.

[80] Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X,p.251.

[81] Memorandum of the German Foreign Office (19 August 1938), Document 3059-PS, NCAA, V. p. 855.

have confused the meaning of secrecy with the keeping of foreign affairs "under control." In his testimony Ribbentrop simply passed it off as being an open secret and then went on to add that nothing "was done on the part of the Foreign Office and by me to direct these efforts in such a way that a really serious problem might arise."[82] One can only speculate as to what he thought his actions would eventually lead to; it certainly would not however lead to any restraint on the part of the Sudeten Nazis as Ribbentrop claimed. That he expected the possibility of difficulties in negotiations over the Sudetenland was brought out in a letter to General Keitel.

> I have many doubts about such negotiations. In case we should discuss with Hungary possible war aims against Czechoslovakia, the danger exists that other parties as well would be informed about this.[83]

Within a very short time Ribbentrop and the Reich Foreign Office were making extensive plans to control the Sudeten Nazis by directing their activities, and by preventing Czechoslovakia from reaching some sort of compromise in its internal affairs. The German Minister in Prague wrote the Foreign Office that with regard to policy arrangements and Henlein's activities: "The line of German foreign policy, as transmitted by the German Legation, is exclusively decisive for the policy and tactics of the Sudeten German Party."[84] When Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe asked Ribbentrop if this did not mean that he was in effect directing the Sudeten German Party, Ribbentrop replied "no." According to Ribbentrop, what he was really doing was attempting to patch up the breaches in relations that had occurred between some of the other agencies of the Reich and the Sudeten Germans.[85] He then asserted that what he was trying to do at the time was thus to direct German-Czech relations into "right and sensible channels." But he refused to equate this with directing their policies.

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[82] Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 250.

[83] Letter from Ribbentrop to General Keitel, (4 March 1938), Document 2786-PS NCAA, V. p. 419.

[84] Dispatch from the German Minister in Prague to the Foreign Office (16 March 1938), Document 3060-PS, Ibid., p. 856.

[85] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 333-334.

Although he admitted that he knew that Hitler had made certain military preparations, he stated also that he himself "did not know in what form and to what extent." However a captured document with the heading "For the Reichsminister only" indicated that on July 18, 1938, the Italian Ambassador Attolico requested that Italy be informed of Germany's intentions: "Attolico added that we had made it unmistakably clear to the Italians what our intentions are regarding Czechoslovakia."[86] Apparently Mussolini had sensed what was in the air, even if the German Foreign Minister hadn't! Then on August 23, 1938, Ribbentrop discussed the Czechoslovakian problem further with Ambassador Attolico.

> On the voyage of the Patria Ambassador Attolico explained to me that he had instructions to request the notification of a contemplated time for German action against Czechoslovakia from the German government.
>
> In case the Czechs should again cause a provocation against Germany, Germany would march. This would be tomorrow, in six months or perhaps in a year. However, I could promise him, that the German government, in case of an increasing gravity of the situation or as soon as the Fuehrer made his decision, would notify the Italian Chief of Government as rapidly as possible. In any case, the Italian government will be the first one who will receive such a notification.[87]

Four days later Ribbentrop received another request from Attolico asking for the probable date of "Case Green" so that Italy might have time to prepare the "necessary measures on the French frontier."[88] Again Ribbentrop replied that Italy would be the first to know.

At the same time Ribbentrop was also busy in attempting to collect allies to join with Germany in case of an armed conflict. During the month of August a Hungarian delegation just happened to be in Germany. Ribbentrop explained, " . . . I told these gentlemen that the possibility of a conflict was present and that in such a case it would be advisable if we reached an

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[86] German Foreign Office notes of conversation with Attolico (18 July 1938). Document 2800-PS, NCAA, V, p. 442.

[87] Captured Foreign Office document relating to the conversation between Attolico and Ribbentrop (23 August 1938), Document 2791-PS, Ibid., p. 426.

[88] Conversation between Attolico and Ribbentrop (27 August 1938), Document 2792-PS, Ibid.

agreement regarding our interests."[89] At the conference (23 August 1938) which was held Hitler and Ribbentrop suggested to Admiral Horthy, Minister von Kanya, and Mr. Imredy that Hungary join Germany in an attack on Czechoslovakia.

> Von Ribbentrop inquired what Hungary's attitude would be if the Fuehrer would carry out his decision to answer a new Czech provocation by force. The reply of the Hungarians presented two kinds of obstacles: The Yugoslavian neutrality must be assured if Hungary marches towards the North and perhaps the East. Moreover, the Hungarian rearmament had only been started and 1 or 2 more years' time for its development should be allowed.
>
> Von Ribbentrop then explained to the Hungarians that the Yugoslavs would not dare to march while they were between the pincers of the Axis Powers. Rumania alone would therefore not move. England and France would also remain tranquil. England would not recklessly risk her Empire. She knew our newly acquired power. In reference to time, however, for the above-mentioned situation, nothing definite could be predicted since it would depend on Czech provocation. Von Ribbentrop repeated that whoever desires revision must exploit the good opportunity and participate.[90]

This document had Ribbentrop as the key figure in the preparations for a future aggressive war against Czechoslovakia. On August 25, 1938, Ribbentrop had another conversation with the Hungarian delegation, which reported to the Reich Foreign Minister that Hungary would be ready by October 1st.[91] Thus Ribbentrop not only planned to have the Hungarians "ready" for any future emergency, but knew the exact date on which Germany could act with full Hungarian support. On the witness stand, he insisted that he did not know anything about such a term as "Case Green."

> I repeat again that I read about Fall Gruen [Case Green] and heard the conception of Fall Gruen here for the first time in the documents. I did not know that term before, nor was I interested. That the Fuehrer envisaged a more far-reaching solution became, of course, clear to me later in the course of the subsequent developments and by the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.[92]

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[89] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 339.

[90] Foreign Office notes taken by Ernst von Weizsacker, State Secretary, (23 August 1938), Document 2796-PS, NCAA, V, pp. 430-432.

[91] German Foreign Office memorandum of conversation between Ribbentrop and von Kanya (25 August 1938), Document 2797-PS, Ibid., p. 432.

[92] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 341.

The situation never reached the point of war, for the Western Powers joined Italy at Munich to prevent open war. Ribbentrop's part in these conferences prior to Munich was minimal, although he himself claimed that it was through his efforts that the negotiations did not fail, of course he meant negotiations satisfactory only to Germany! At the Godesberg Conference (22 September 1938) he recalled that the Fuehrer had thanked him for his efforts. He then proceeded to describe the Fuehrer's intentions:

> . . . It only shows that the basis of the whole policy of the Fuehrer was the sentiment that all these vital German questions, the Sudeten question, also the Corridor and Danzig, that these questions which were of no concern to England, having almost a third of the surface of the world at her disposal, that these were vital problems of Germany and that England had no business to interfere there.[93]

The agreement finally arrived at in Munich was handled by Hitler, and Ribbentrop's part in the negotiations prior to that event was that he sought to secure help for Germany's aggression if it was needed.

The ink was hardly dry on the Munich Agreement than Hitler began his movements for the including of all that remained of Czechoslovakia--except the area of Slovakia, which proclaimed itself independent at Hitler's insistance. There thus emerged the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia on the new map of Europe and which was included in the German Reich on March 16, 1939--and, of course, Ribbentrop signed this too in violation of Article 81 of the Versailles Treaty and of the Munich Agreement.[94] For Ribbentrop it was not a question of Czechoslovakia--a product of Versailles--but simply the including of two autonomous geographical areas within the Reich.

The first step along this line was to get the territory of Slovakia to declare its independence from Prague. The German Foreign Office was soon making large sums of money available to

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[93] Interrogation of Ribbentrop by Col. Howard A. Brundage (10 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1251-1254.

[94] Law incorporating the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia into the Reich (16 March 1939), Document TC-51, Ibid., VIII, p. 404.

Franz Karmasin, another Konrad Henlein, who was able to maintain the front of a Slovak patriot while being paid by Germany.

> On the question of payments to KARMASIN. Karmasin receives 30,000 Marks for the VDA (People's League for Germans Abroad) until 1 April 1940; from then on 15,000 Marks monthly.
>
> Furthermore, the Central Office for Racial Germans (Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle) has deposited 300,000 Marks for Karmasin with the German Mission in Bratislava (Pressburg) on which he could fall back in an emergency.
>
> Furthermore, Karmasin has received money from Reich Minister Seyss-Inquart; for the present it has been impossible to determine what amounts had been involved, and whether the payments will continue.
>
> Therefore it appears that Karmasin has been provided with sufficient money; thus one could await whether he could put up new demands.
>
> Herewith presented to the Reich Foreign Minister.[95]

The State of Slovakia was a German--and a von Ribbentrop--creation. Early in February, 1939, a Slovakian delegation was in Berlin where both Hitler and Ribbentrop pledged them Germany's assistance in their cause. Of course the Slovaks returned these assurances by saying: "The Slovakian people will gladly fight under the leadership of the Fuehrer for the maintenance of European civilization."[96] Ribbentrop did play the major role in encouraging the "independence" of Slovakia.[97] On March 13, 1939, a Slovakian delegation again met with Hitler and Ribbentrop, as well as Field Marshall Keitel, State Secretaries Dietrich and Keppler, and Minister of State Meissner. Hitler told the Slovaks that either they should declare their independence at once, or Germany would leave them alone to face a revisionist Hungary. Ribbentrop then discretely showed them a report which he had

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[95] Foreign Office memorandum on payments to Karmasin (29 November 1939), Document 2794-PS, NCAA, V, p. 429; see also the telegram from the German Legation in Prague to Consulate in Bratislava (22 November 1939), Document 2859-PS, Ibid., p. 523.

[96] Foreign Office minutes of conference between Hitler, Ribbentrop, and Karmasin (12 February 1939), Document 2790-PS, Ibid., p. 425.

[97] Treaty of Protection between Slovakia and the Reich (18 March 1939), Document 1439-PS, Ibid., IV, p. 18; and Document 2793-PS, Ibid., V, pp. 427-429.

which confirmed the massing of Hungarian troops near the Slovak border, and at the same time handed Tiso, Slovakian Foreign Minister and later President, a draft of the Slovakian Declaration of Independence already written in Slovak--strongly reminiscent of Schuschnigg's conference.[98] The next day, Slovakia proclaimed itself independent. The same day Ribbentrop telegraphed the German Embassy in Prague: "In case you should get any written communication from President Hacha, please do not make any written or verbal comments or take any other action on them but pass them on here by cipher telegram. Moreover, I must ask you and the other members of the Embassy to make a point of not being available if the Czech government wants to communicate with you during the next few days."[99] Ribbentrop claimed in his testimony that the reason for this telegram had been that Hitler himself had wanted to conduct these negotiations, and that he therefore did not want any "interference" on the part of the diplomatic people in Prague.[100] In any case, he certainly couldn't claim that he had kept the negotiations open as he had done during the negotiations prior to Munich.

It was not long before the Czechoslovakian leaders were forced to march to their Canossa. President Hacha and Foreign Minister Chvalkovsky arrived in Berlin on the 14th of March. Late that evening they were brought into the Reichs Chancellery where they met with Hitler, Ribbentrop, Goering, and Keitel. Hitler spoke about the very apparent hostile attitude of Czechoslovakia toward Germany as well as the immense army still mobilized for such a small state as Czechoslovakia. He then went on to inform Hacha that he had ordered German troops to cross the frontier at 6 o'clock in the morning--it was then between 1 and 2 o'clock A.M.--but that he intended to give Czechoslovakia full autonomy within the Reich. However, in order to have such autonomy, there would have to be

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[98] Foreign Office notes of Conference between Hitler and Tiso (13 March 1939), Document 2802-PS, Ibid., p. 443; TMWC, X, pp. 342-344.

[99] Ribbentrop's instructions to the German Embassy (13 March 1939), Document 2815-PS, NCAA, V, p. 451.

[100] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 342.

no resistance to German troops, as he could not be expected to give such a position to those who fired on his soldiers. It was therefore up to Hacha to "prevent the extreme" and under the circumstances Hacha did agree that resistance was useless.[101] The result was that Hacha signed--at 4:30 A.M.--a document on March 15, 1939, that said in part: "The President of the Czechoslovak State. . . entrusts with entire confidence the destiny of the Czech people and the Czech country to the hands of the Fuehrer of the German Reich."[102] Czechoslovakia was incorporated the next day.

Joachim von Ribbentrop was therefore a vital part in the planning and in the execution of Count One of the Indictment. He participated in the various steps leading to foreign aggression. He participated in the various conferences which applied political and military pressure on the Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg; he also aided the subversive activities of the Sudeten Nazis with open encouragement and financial assistance. He sought to enlist the aid of Hungary behind German ambitions, and he informed the diplomatic representative of Italy that when Germany began her pressures that Italy would be informed first. With regard to Czechoslovakia, he actively plotted to have internal elements cause disturbances; and he sought to have Slovakia declare its independence on the strength of German aggressive intents; and he participated in the conference which pressured President Hacha under the threat of bombing Prague into signing the declaration of March 15, 1939. Under cross-examination by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, Ribbentrop explained:

> A. Undoubtedly Hitler used very clear language. However, to that I must add that President Hacha, on his part, had come to Berlin in order to find a solution, together with Hitler. He was surprised that troops were to march into Czechoslovakia. That I know, and I remember it exactly. But he agreed to it eventually and then contacted his government and his chief of staff, so that there would be no hostile reception for the German troops. He then concluded with Hitler, with the Czech Foreign Minister and me, the agreement which I drafted.

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[101] Minutes of the Foreign Office on the meeting between Hitler and President Hacha (15 March 1939), Document 2798-PS, NCAA, V, pp. 433-442.

[102] Agreement signed by Hitler, Ribbentrop, Hacha, and Chvalkovsky (15 March 1939), Document TC-49, Ibid., VIII, p. 402.

Q. Will you agree with me that the agreement was obtained through a threat of aggressive action by the German Army and Air Force?

A. It is certain, since the Fuehrer told President Hacha that the German Army would march in, that naturally, this instrument was written under that impression. That is correct.

Q. Don't you think you could answer one of my questions directly? I will ask it again. Will you agree with me that that document was obtained by the most intolerable pressure and threat of aggression? That is a simple question. Do you agree?

A. In that way, no.

Q. What further pressure could you put on the head of a country except to threaten him that your army would march in, in overwhelming numbers, and your Air Force would bomb his capital?

A. War, for instance.[103]

At this point in the proceedings the entire courtroom burst forth with a tremendous roar of laughter. After qualifying his statements, he then added that these threats were lighter than the ones under which Germany had suffered since the Versailles Treaty and then added:

A. It was obtained under a pressure, that is under the pressure of the march into Prague; there is no doubt about that. However, the decisive point of the whole matter was that the Fuehrer explained to President Hacha the reasons why he had to do this, and eventually Hacha agreed fully, after he had consulted his government and his general staff and heard their opinion. However, it is absolutely correct that the Fuehrer was resolved to solve this question under any circumstances. The reason was, that the Fuehrer was of the opinion that in the remainder of Czechoslovakia there was a conspiracy against the German Reich; Reich Marshal Goering had already stated that Russian commissions were said to have been a Czech airdromes. Consequently the Fuehrer acted as he did because he believed that it was necessary in the highest interest and for the protection of the German Reich. I might draw a comparison: For instance, President Roosevelt declared an interest in the Western Hemisphere; England has extended her interest over the entire globe. I think that the interest which the Fuehrer showed in the remainder of Czechoslovakia was, as such, not unreasonable for a great power; about the methods one may think as one pleases. At any rate one thing is certain, and that is that these countries were occupied without a single drop of blood being shed.[104]

It was not the threat to bomb Prague which persuaded Hacha to sign, said Ribbentrop, but "the personality of the Fuehrer, his reasoning, and finally the announced entry of the German troops." The next day in response to questions on "aggression" from General Rudenko of the Soviet Union, Ribbentrop answered by saying that "aggression" was a very difficult word to define.

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[103] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 347.

[104] Ibid., p. 348

Q. Do you consider the Anschluss as an act of aggression?

A. Austria?

Q. Yes.

A. No, it was no aggression. It was the accomplishment of a purpose.

. . . . . .

Q. Do you consider the seizure of Czechoslovakia as an act of aggression?

. . . . . .

A. No, it was not an act of aggression by Germany. I consider, according to the words of the Fuehrer, and I believe he was right, that it was a necessity resulting from Germany's geographical position. This position meant that the remaining part of Czechoslovakia, the part which still existed, could always be used as a kind of aircraft-carrier [Goering's phrase] for attacks against Germany. The Fuehrer therefore considered himself obliged to occupy the territory of Bohemia and Moravia, in order to protect the German Reich against air attack--the air journey from Prague to Berlin took only half an hour. The Fuehrer told me at the time that in view of the fact that the United States had declared the entire Western Hemisphere as its particular sphere of interest, that Russia was a powerful country with gigantic territories, and that England embraced the entire globe, Germany would be perfectly justified in considering so small a space as her own sphere of interest.[105]

Dr. Gilbert later discussed this point of "aggression" with Ribbentrop in his cell one evening. "'You mean it is better to threaten war than to wage it.' I suggested, offering a logical explanation of the point. He agreed. 'But, when they call your bluff you have war anyway, don't you?--and threatening war is gangsterism anyway, isn't it?' He mumbled something about diplomacy being very difficult to understand but diplomats understand such things."[106]

Count One of the Indictment also contained a listing of Nazi aggressions after Czechoslovakia: the conspiracy against Poland; the expansion of the war into Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Yugoslavia, and Greece; as well as the preparations for and violations of Russian territory; and also Germany's role in the aggressive intent of Japan toward the United States. It was therefore possible for specific charges to overlap from Count One into Count Two, Crimes against Peace. It is therefore necessary that Count Two, and Ribbentrop's role in it, be examined next.

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[105] Ibid., pp. 425-427.

[106] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and von Ribbentrop (6-7 April 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 246.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCTION TO COUNT TWO

Count Two of the Indictment was very specific. "All the defendants with divers other persons, during a period of years preceding 8 May 1945, participated in the planning, preparation, initiation, and waging of wars of aggression, which were also in violation of international treaties, agreements, and assurances."[107] Appendix A of the Indictment further explained the exact particulars of the charges and listed some twenty-six specific examples with regard to the German violations of international and unilaterial agreements.[108] These particular violations ranged from the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes signed at the Hague (29 July 1899) to the violation of the German Assurance (6 October 1939) given to Respect the Neutrality and Territorial Integrity of Yugoslavia (see Appendix A).

I. RIBBENTROP AND THE POLISH QUESTION

The first German aggressive action after the incorporation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia into the Reich was the action taken in regard to the city of Memel in March, 1939--in violation of Article 99 of the Versailles Treaty.[109] However the focal point of the German demands next turned to the port of Danzig and the minorities question. Ribbentrop had begun to work on the Poles as soon as the Munich Agreement had been signed; and had suggested that in exchange for a Polish-German Agreement for twenty-five years, a guarantee of the Polish-German frontiers, and extensive trade and travel

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[107] TMWC, I, p. 42.

[108] NCAA, I, pp. 73-81.

[109] Charge V, section (3) of Count Two, Ibid., p. 75.

right that Poland should agree to a reunion of Danzig with Germany.[110] Of course the Polish government politely but firmly refused such a proposal, however they did agree to discuss these problems further. On January 5, 1939, Polish Foreign Minister Beck met with Hitler and von Ribbentrop, who together assured him that they had no aggressive intentions toward Danzig.[111] The next day Beck met with Ribbentrop alone and remarked that he was quite pessimistic over the chances for negotiating a settlement of their differences. To which Ribbentrop replied that, "The basis of their policy towards Poland was still a desire for the further building up of friendly relations. It was necessary to seek such a method of clearing away the difficulties as would respect the rights and interests of the two parties concerned."[112] In order to further impress upon the Poles Germany's peaceful intentions, Ribbentrop went to Warsaw and on January 25th told them that:

> In accordance with the resolute will of the German National Leader, the continual progress and consolidation of friendly relations between Germany and Poland, based upon the existing agreement between us [a Non-Aggression Pact of 26 January 1934], constitutes an essential element in German foreign policy. The political foresight, and the principles worthy of true statesmanship, which induced both sides to take the momentous decision of 1934, provides a guarantee that all other problems arising in the course of the future evolution of events will also be solved in the same spirit, with due regard to the respect and understanding of the rightful interests of both sides. Thus Poland and Germany can look forward to the future with the full confidence in the solid basis of their mutual relations.[113]

Some time later, Ribbentrop again met with Ambassador Lipski but the tone of the conversations was quite a bit sharper. Ribbentrop complained of the anti-German reports in the Polish press and other incidents detrimental to German prestige. He also urged that perhaps a meeting on a higher plane might be of mutual benefit because the Fuehrer was concerned over the fact that Poland was rejecting

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[110] Official Polish White Book, notes of the conversation between Polish Ambassador Lipski and von Ribbentrop (25 October 1938), Document TC-73 No. 44, Ibid., VIII, p. 483.

[111] Official Polish White Book, notes on the conversation between Beck and Hitler in the presence of Ribbentrop (5 January 1939), Document TC-73 No. 48, Ibid., pp. 468-488; testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 262; Document for the defense Rib-149, Ibid., XLI, pp. 96-99.

[112] Official Polish White Book, notes on the conversation between Beck and von Ribbentrop (6 January 1939), Document TC-73 No. 49, Ibid., p. 488; Document Rib-150, TMWC, XLI, pp. 100-102.

[113] Speech by Ribbentrop in Warsaw (25 January 1939), as quoted in the Voelkischer Beobachter (1 February 1939), Document 2530-PS, NCAA, V. 267.

his offers.[114] In response to Lipski's questions about the Memel problem, Ribbentrop replied that he had "discussed" it with the Lithuanian Foreign Minister--the next day (22 March 1939), German troops occupied it. Poland now needed no encouragement to seek some guarantee of her security other than any assurances from Hitler. The result of the tensions created by German troop movements in March of 1939 was the Anglo-Polish Joint Communique of April 6th. It is interesting to note that only three days earlier Hitler had issued the directives for Fall Weiss, "Case White," the code name for military preparations against Poland, which "can be carried out at any time from 1st September onwards."[115] Under questioning by his counselor, Ribbentrop answered that he could not remember the exact date of this Anglo-Polish Communique, but that it must have been around the latter part of March. Dr. Horn then asked him if he understood at that time that the provisions of such an agreement with regard to any territorial changes against Poland would have meant war.

> Yes, that is correct. That was a great surprise to us. I know that I read the memorandum, and for a moment I simply could not believe that such an answer had been given, when one considers that for months we had tried to find a solution [Memel?], which--I wish to emphasize this--only Adolf Hitler, at that time, with his great authority over the German people could bring about and be responsible for.
>
> I do not want to get lost in details, but I do want to say that the Danzig and Corridor problem, since 1919, had been considered by statesmen of great authority the problem with which somehow the revision of Versailles would have to start. I should like to remind you of the statement of Marshal Foch and other statements by Winston Churchill, who also elaborated on this subject, as well as by Clemenceau, et ceteras. All these statesmen were undoubtedly of the opinion that a territorial revision of this Corridor would really have to be undertaken. But Hitler, for his part, wanted to make it an over-all settlement [Case White] and reach an understanding with Poland on the basis of his putting up with the Corridor and taking only Danzig back into the Reich, whereby Poland was to be afforded a very generous solution in the economic field. That, in other words, was the basis of the proposals which I had been working on for 4 or 5 months on Hitler's orders. All the greater was our surprise when, suddenly, the other side declared that

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[114] Official Polish White Book, conversation between Ambassador Lipski and von Ribbentrop (21 March 1939), Document TC-73 No. 61, Ibid., VIII, pp. 489-492; also Rib-154, TMWC, XLI, pp. 102-105.

[115] Directives issued to the Armed Forces 1939-40 for "Fall Weiss", Document C-120, NCAA, VI, pp. 916-928.

> a further pursuit of these plans and solutions, which we regarded as very generous, would mean war. I informed Hitler of this, and I remember very well that Hitler received it very calmly.[116]

The immediate German official reaction to this communique was to rescind the Polish-German Non-Aggression Pact of 1934 because "the Polish government arbitrarily and unilaterally rendered this document null and void."[117] The occasion also called for one of Hitler's famous speeches on Poland in which he termed any intention on Germany's part to attack as being "invented by the International Press." Throughout the early spring military and diplomatic preparations were made, and culminated in a meeting in the Reichschancellery on May 23rd. Hitler informed those present--which did not include Ribbentrop--thatt

> Danzig is not the subject of the dispute at all; it is a question of expanding our Lebensraum in the East and of securing our food supplies and of the settlement of the Baltic problem. Food supplies can be expected only from thinly populated areas. Added to the natural fertility, the German, through cultivation, will enormously increase the surplus. There is no other possibility for Europe.[118]

Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, British prosecutor, then asked Ribbentrop if he had not been told similarly by Hitler. Ribbentrop of course said that Hitler never told him of any such policy, and then added: "Yes, I think this was kept back deliberately, as had been done in other cases, because he always wanted his diplomats to stand wholeheartedly for a diplomatic solution and to bring it about."[119] In other words, Hitler wanted his diplomats to lie well, and Ribbentrop accommodated him. Ribbentrop then continued to state that even though Hitler had said that it was his intention to "isolate" Poland, he himself never knew about it. And of course the language in the document

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[116] Testimony of von Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 264.

[117] For the complete text of the German memorandum renouncing the 1934 agreement see the British Blue Book, Document TC-72 No. 14 (28 April 1939), NCAA, VIII, pp. 441-445.

[118] Minutes of the conference (23 May 1939) on "Indoctrination on the political situation and future aims," Document L-79, Ibid., VII, p. 849.

[119] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 358.

submitted by the British prosecutor was "firm" only because Hitler "had to talk with military men as if war was about to break out here or there on the next day."[120] But he never had known that Hitler had planned any military action against Poland. At this point the British prosecution introduced two documents into evidence which directly contradicted him. At a conference with the Hungarian Foreign Minister (29 April 1939), Ribbentrop had told him, ". . . that it was his firm conviction that, no matter what happened in Europe, no French or English soldier would attack Germany. Our relations with Poland were gloomy at the moment."[121] And again Ribbentrop was quoted as saying, ". . . that Poland presented no military problem for us. In case of a military clash the British would coldly leave the Poles in the lurch."[122] These were rather strong terms for someone who knew nothing of any military preparations, and certainly were designed to bring Hungary in on their aggressive plans. Nevertheless Ribbentrop explained that, provided he had actually said such a thing, it was nothing but "diplomatic talk."

> It is perfectly conceivable that I said something like that, and if it has been said it was done in order not to alarm the Hungarians and to keep them on our side. It is quite clear that that is nothing but diplomatic talk.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> That was not the point [telling the truth]; the point was to bring about a situation which made it possible to solve this and the Polish question in a diplomatic way. If I were to tell the Hungarians today, and this applies to the Italians also, that England would assist Poland and that a great war would result, then this would create a diplomatic situation which would make it impossible to solve the problem at all. There is no doubt that during the entire time I had to use very strong language, just as the Fuehrer had always ordered, for if his own Foreign Minister had hinted at other possibilities, it would naturally have been very difficult, and I venture to say, it would have meant that this would, in any case, have led to war. But we wanted to create a strong German position so that we could solve this problem peacefully.

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120 Ibid., p. 359.

121 Document GB-289, as submitted by the British prosecution (1 April 1946). Ibid.

122 Document GB-290, as submitted by the British prosecution (1 April 1946). Ibid., p. 360; or Document D-738, NCAA, VII, p. 194.

> I may add that the Hungarians were somewhat worried with regard to the German Policy, and that the Fuehrer had told me from the start to use particularly clear and strong language on these subjects. I used that kind of language also quite frequently to my own diplomats for the same reason.[123]

It was not a question of "lies" but of diplomacy, "very strong language" does not mean that one has to deliberately lie! Ribbentrop however failed to see any distinction. If he hadn't used such language, asserted Ribbentrop, it would have led to war; yet it was exactly his constant lying that helped prepare the groundwork for just that war. This was his whole view on how to conduct foreign policy in a nutshell.

As the Polish crisis gradually worsened, Hitler and Ribbentrop finally decided to let their allies in on their plans. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs was summoned to Obersalzberg for a conference on the 12th of August. Arriving a day early, he went to see Ribbentrop and recorded the following interview in his diary.

> In the summer of 1939 Germany advanced her claim against Poland, naturally without our knowledge; indeed, Ribbentrop had several times denied to our Ambassador that Germany had any intentions of carrying the controversy to extremes. Despite these denials I remained in doubt; I wanted to make sure for myself, and on August 11th I went to Salzburg. It was in his residence at Fuschl that Ribbentrop informed me, while we were waiting to sit down at the table, of the decision to start the fireworks, just as he might have told me about the most unimportant and commonplace administrative matter. 'Well, Ribbentrop,' I asked him, while we were walking in the garden, 'What do you want? The Corridor, or Danzig?' 'Not any more,' and he stared at me through those cold Musee Grevin eyes, 'We want war.'
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . Ribbentrop is evasive every time I ask him for particulars of the forthcoming German action. He has a guilty conscience. He has lied too many times about German intentions toward Poland not to feel embarrassment now over what he must tell me and what he is preparing to do.
>
> The will to fight is unalterable. He [Ribbentrop] rejects any solution which might satisfy Germany and prevent the struggle. I am certain that even if the Germans were given everything

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[123] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 361.

> they demanded they would attack just the same, because they are possessed by the demon of destruction.[124]

At his trial Ribbentrop emphatically denied having made these statements because, ". . . it is clear to every diplomat, those things are just not said, not even to the very best and most trusted ally, but most certainly not to Count Ciano."[125] But then, Ribbentrop was not the usual type of diplomat! At the conference the next day it was discovered that Ribbentrop's continual lying had been so good that Italy had believed him, and that therefore the Duce was not prepared to fight a major war at that time.

> Count Ciano then explained, with the aid of a map, the Italian position at the outbreak of a general conflict. Italy believes, he said, that a conflict with Poland would not be restricted to that country, but would grow into a general European war.
>
> The Fuehrer remarked that opinions differ on that point [Ribbentrop's perhaps?]. He personally is firmly convinced that the western democracies will in the end shy away from precipitating a general war.[126]

The entire conference was one in which war plans were discussed--the Italians were also encouraged to attack Yugoslavia--and a target date was also given them, since Italy had to have some idea so that they could prepare for any eventuality. But Hitler was distressed about postponing military operations because from mid-September until May Poland was "one big swamp." Hitler and Ribbentrop's opinion that England would in all probability leave Poland in the "lurch" was dramatically contradicted by a letter from Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to Hitler.

> It has been alleged that, if His Majesty's Government had made their position clear in 1914, the great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, His Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no tragic misunderstanding.

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[124] Entry into the diary of Count Ciano (August 11, 1939), Document 2987-PS, NCAA, V, pp. 689-690.

[125] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 362.

[126] Minutes of the conference between Hitler, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Reich Foreign Minister at Obersalzberg (12 August 1939), Document 1871-PS, NCAA, IV, p. 512.

> If the case should arise, they are resolved, and prepared, to employ without delay all the forces at their command, and it is impossible to foresee the end of hostilities once engaged. It would be a dangerous illusion to think that, if war once starts, it will come to an early end and even if a success on any one of the several fronts on which it will be engaged should have been secured.[127]

As the situation began to reach its climax, Ribbentrop journeyed to Moscow and concluded his famous pact with the Russians. Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the trial was his subsequent account of this pact--signed August 23, 1939. This was at times a very delicate and embarrassing situation because of the Soviet Union's position on the Tribunal.[128] But Ribbentrop himself still asserted that this agreement was reached with the Russians only "in case of an armed conflict." This was quite amusing since he had been at the conference on August 12th at which time the exact details of the whole attack had been given to the Italian Foreign Minister. Ribbentrop later (1941) bragged to the Japanese Ambassador Oshima that: "Then when it came to war the Fuehrer decided on a treaty with Russia--a necessity for avoiding a two-front war."[129] Nevertheless Ribbentrop explained the circumstances as he remembered them to the Tribunal.

> To understand the whole situation I think it is better to tell you the whole story. But it was in 1939 when I proposed to the Fuehrer to come to an arrangement with the Soviets. The Fuehrer was not very pleased with this proposal on account of his fundamental views of Bolshevism, but after awhile he agreed that we should try. My view, in doing this was, finally, I personally have always held the view that it should be possible also to find some sort of bridge between what our doctrine of National Socialism and Bolshevism is. Secondly, I held the view that on account of this difficulty with Poland--you know Poland was always lying between ourselves and Russia--I considered, and this was also the view of the Fuehrer, that an understanding with Russia might on the diplomatic field help to bring about an easier understanding between ourselves and Poland. And, furthermore, it was, of course, important also to know, in case of a hostile development [Case White] between ourselves and Poland, to know where the Russians and where we stood toward each other. . . .[130]

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[127] Neville Chamberlain to Adolf Hitler (22 August 1939), British Blue Book, Document TC-72 No. 56, Ibid., VIII, p. 453.

[128] See the testimony of Fraulein Blank, under questioning by the defense counselor, and resulting Soviet objections, TMWC, X, pp. 190-192.

[129] Notes on a conference between Ribbentrop and Ambassador Oshima (February 23, 1941), Document 1834-PS, Ibid., III, p. 329.

[130] Ribbentrop on the negotiations with Stalin and Molotov, NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1186-1187.

This idea of his about a "bridge" between National Socialism and Bolshevism is all the more interesting, since Ribbentrop had asserted earlier that he was never quite sure what the fundamental doctrines of the Nazi movement were! How in the world did he think he could create a bridge with a foreign ideology, when he himself admitted that he was never quite sure what his own was? However later in a conversation with Dr. Gilbert he asserted that one had to keep such things as this in their proper perspective. He then continued by saying, "I wanted to arrive at a peaceful understanding with the Russians. Do you know what I planned? I wanted to include them in our three-power pact, and make it a four-power pact." Dr. Gilbert, who was rather taken back by his proposal, remarked, "A four-power Anti-Comintern Pact, including Russia?" Ribbentrop, pausing for a moment of confused silence, then answered, "Well--er, no. The Anti-Comintern Pact ceased to operate as such as soon as we made our pact with Russia."[131] Here was the man who since November of 1936 had enlisted numerous signatories to a pact specifically aimed at Russia, who now said that his views were toward some type of accommodation with her! The testimony soon reached a discussion of the secret clauses of the treaty, at which point Ribbentrop outdid himself in clarifying Germany's peaceful intentions.

> . . . I described Hitler's desire that the two countries should reach a definitive agreement, and, of course, I also spoke of the critical situation in Europe. I told the Russian gentlemen [Stalin and Molotov] that Germany would do everything to settle the situation in Poland and to settle the difficulties peacefully in order to reach a friendly agreement despite everything.
>
> However, I left no doubt that the situation was serious and that it was possible that an armed conflict might break out. That was clear anyway. For both statesmen, Stalin as well as Hitler, it was a question of territories which both countries had lost after an unfortunate war. It is, therefore, wrong to look at these things from any other point of view. And just as Adolf Hitler was of the opinion which I expressed in Moscow, that in some form or other this problem would have to be solved, so also the Russian side saw clearly that this was the case.
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> . . . . . .

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[131] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop (12 February 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 149-150.

> It is known that later, after the outbreak of war, these zones were occupied on the one side by Germany and on the other side by Russian troops. I may repeat that at that time I had the impression, both from Hitler and Stalin, that the territories--that these Polish territories and also the other territories which had been marked off in these spheres of interest, about which I shall speak shortly--that these were territories which both countries had lost after an unfortunate war. And both statesmen undoubtedly held the opinion that if these territories--if, I should like to say, the last chance for a reasonable solution of this problem was exhausted there was certainly a justification for Adolf Hitler to incorporate these territories into the German Reich by some other procedure. . . . This was a great settlement of the interest of two great powers providing for a peaceful solution as well as for a solution by war.[132]

This was the peaceful solution Ribbentrop had in mind; either France and England force the Poles to meet Hitler's demands or Hitler was justified in taking any action he saw fit, simply because the whole problem stemmed from the Treaty of Versailles! With regard to the prearranged partitioning of Poland, Ribbentrop replied that of course "in the case of an armed conflict:"

> . . . A line of demarcation was agreed upon, as is known, in order that in the event of intolerable Polish provocation, or in the event of war, there should be a boundary, so that German and Russian interests in the Polish theater could and would not collide.[133]

Dr. Gilbert asked him the same question one evening in Ribbentrop's cell and the defendant assured him that such prearranged partitioning for aggressive purposes was not the case at all.

> 'No--that is not so,' Ribbentrop said with his usual lack of conviction. 'you know, diplomacy is not as simple a matter as it sometimes seems.--Of course, the possibility of a war with Poland was recognized and discussed at that time.--But the pact was signed in absolutely good faith by Hitler and me. There are, of course, those who claim that the Russians purposely entered into the pact to serve their aggressive purposes.--I do not know about that, but that is what some people say.[134]

Ribbentrop returned from Moscow on August 24th and upon his return to Berlin a number of incidents had occurred which evidently caused both Hitler and Ribbentrop to reconsider their plans. On the 25th an Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance was signed in London, in which each signatory promised to come to the immediate aid of the other in the event of an attack by a third power.[135]

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[132] Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 268-269.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop 92-3 March 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 177-178.

[135] Official Polish White Book, Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance (25 August 1939), Document TC-73 No. 91, NCAA, VIII, pp. 492-494.

> When I received this press dispatch, of which I was informed once more when I came to the Chancellery, I went immediately to Hitler and asked him to stop at once the military measures, whatever they were--I was not familiar with military matters in detail--and I told him that it was perfectly clear that this meant war with England and that England could never disavow her signature. The Fuehrer reflected only a short while and then he said that this was true and immediately called his military adjutant, and I believe it was Field Marshal Keitel who came, in order to call together the generals and stop the military measures which had been started. . . .[136]

Ribbentrop therefore claimed that it was his influence which stopped the military measures, even though he himself did not know what they were. Generaloberst Jodl supported Ribbentrop's claim to having restrained Hitler on the 25th. As far as he knew the decision to halt the military operations scheduled for August 26th had been due to Ribbentrop.[137] It was also however on this date that Hitler and Ribbentrop learned that Italy would not be able to march at this time and if Germany did take aggressive action she did so at her own risk. It may also have been at this time that Ribbentrop first learned of Chamberlain's letter to Hitler. At any rate there was enough pressure at the moment to cause a delay--not a postponement. In the diplomatic negotiations which followed, the prosecution submitted documents to prove that Ribbentrop had deliberately prevented any chance of a successful compromise being reached. One such document was the famous "Midnight Conference" of August 30-31, 1939, between the defendant Ribbentrop and the British Ambassador Sir Neville Henderson.

> I [Henderson] told Herr von Ribbentrop this evening that His Majesty's Government found it difficult to advise the Polish Government to accept procedure adumbrated in the German reply, and suggested that he should adopt normal contact, i.e., that when German proposals were ready to invite [the] Polish Ambassador to call and to hand him proposals for transmission to his Government with a view to immediate opening of negotiations. I added that if basis afforded prospect of settlement His Majesty's Government could be counted upon to do their best in Warsaw to temporize negotiations.

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136 Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 271.

137 Testimony of Generaloberst Jodl (5 June 1946), TMWC, XV, p. 422.

Herr von Ribbentrop's reply was to produce a lengthy document which he read out in German aloud at top speed. Imagining that he would eventually hand it to me I did not attempt to follow too closely the 16 or more articles. . . .

. . . . . .

. . . When then, I asked, could he not adopt the normal procedure and give me a copy of the proposals, and ask the Polish Ambassador to call on him just as Hitler had summoned me a few days ago, and hand it to him for communication to the Polish Government. In the most violent terms [Ribbentrop reportedly used the word "damned"] Ribbentrop said that he would never ask the Ambassador to visit him. He hinted that if the Polish Ambassador asked him for [an] interview it might be different. I said that I would, naturally, inform my Government so at once. Whereupon he said, while those were his personal views, he would bring all that I had said to Hitler's notice. It was for the Chancellor to decide.[138]

However no copy of the German final proposals was given either to the British or to the Poles, but were broadcast late the next evening for propaganda purposes.[139] On the witness stand, Ribbentrop told his side of the story about the last few days of peace and why the negotiations ultimately failed.

. . . The decisive thing in these crucial days of the 30th and 31st is, therefore, the following: The Fuehrer had drafted these conditions, England knew that the possibility of arriving at a solution existed. All during the 30th of August we heard nothing from England, at least nothing definite. Only at midnight, I think, did the British Ambassador report for this discussion. In the meantime I must mention that at 7 o'clock in the evening news of the general mobilization in Poland had been received, which excited the Fuehrer extremely. Through that, the situation had become extraordinarily acute. I still remember exactly the situation at the Chancellery where almost hourly reports were received about incidents, streams of refugees, and so forth. It was an atmosphere heavily charged with electricity. The Fuehrer waited all through the 30th; no definite answer arrived. Then, at midnight of the 30th, that conversation took place. . . . I did more than I was allowed to do, in that I had read the entire contents to Sir Neville Henderson. I was hoping that England perhaps might do something yet. The Fuehrer had told Sir Neville Henderson that a Polish plenipotentiary would be treated on equal terms [Schuschnigg, Tiso, Hacha?]. . . . It was necessary, during the 30th or the 31st, until late that night, or the next morning when the march began, for the Polish Ambassador Lipski to have authority at least to receive in his hands the German demands. Had this been done, the diplomatic negotiations would in any case have been under way and thus the crisis would have been averted at least for the time being.

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138 Conversation between Henderson and Ribbentrop (30 August 1939), British Blue Book, Document TC-72 No. 92, NCAA, VIII, pp. 472-473; for the defense's case see the testimony of Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt, Ribbentrop's official recorder and interpreter, who testified that Henderson never asked for any translation of the document since he spoke German and that Ribbentrop did not read it fast to prevent comprehension. TMWC, X, pp. 196-197.

139 Polish White Book, Document TC-73 No. 113, NCAA, VIII, pp. 495-499.

> I also believe, and I have said before, that there would have been no objections. I believe the Fuehrer would have welcomed, if the British Ambassador had intervened [Munich?]. . . .One hint from the British Government during the 30th or the 31st, and negotiations would have been in course of the basis of these reasonable proposals of the Fuehrer, termed reasonable even by the British themselves. . . .[140]

Ribbentrop expected the British to either force the Poles to meet the German demands at another Munich, or perhaps withdraw their guarantee to Poland. In talking with Dr. Gilbert, Ribbentrop further explained what he and Hitler wanted: '. . . But really, England could have prevented the war by merely saying one word.' One word? 'Do it.--That is all.--If they just told the Poles to do it--the whole war would have been avoided. Our demands were so reasonable.--It wasn't necessary to go to war over it.'[141] Later when asked by General Rudenko of the Soviet prosecution staff if thought that the attack on Poland constituted an act of aggression on the part of Germany, Ribbentrop replied:

> No, I must again say 'no.' The attack on Poland was rendered inevitable by the attitude of the other powers. It might have been possible to find a peaceful solution to the German demands [Case White], and I think the Fuehrer could have trodden this path of peace, had the other powers taken this path with him. As matters stood, the situation had become so tense that Germany could no longer accept it as it was, and as a great power Germany could not tolerate Polish provocations any further. That is how the war arose. I am convinced that primarily the Fuehrer was never interested in conquering Poland.[142]

Ribbentrop, who had been at the conference that explained the war plans to the Italian Foreign Minister and had told him the day before "We want war," now stated that the Fuehrer never was interested in conquering Poland at all! In addition to such a preposterous story such as this, he added that World War II had really been England's fault. He later elaborated on his theories to Dr. Gilbert.

> '. . . We wanted a peaceful solution--a counterbalance to England's balance-of-power politics. They were constantly oppressing us.--Just imagine going to war over Danzig--such a world catastrophe, just to prevent Germany from getting a piece of territory that belonged to it--because Britain was afraid Germany was getting too strong.'

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[140] Testimony of Ribbentrop, cross-examined by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 368-609; see also Ribbentrop's communique on the Polish rejection, Document Rib-213, Ibid., XLI, pp. 121-122.

[141] Conversation with Dr. Gilbert (23-24 February 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 169.

[142] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 426-427.

'Oh, come now, you know perfectly well it wasn't over a little piece of territory. It was just the last straw in a series of aggressions and broken pacts which had already violated the peace and the sovereignty of peaceful nations. If you wanted peace, why did you break the Munich Pact? England certainly conceded more than enough to appease German demands. Did Hitler intend to break it even while he was signing it?--Or did he decide to break his word later?'

'Oh, Hitler didn't break the Munich Pact!'

I looked at him incredulously. He didn't even seem to be joking. 'How in the world do you figure that? You swallowed all of Czechoslovakia even after you were handed over the Sudetenland and made it clear to the whole world that Hitler's word was worthless, and German aggression knew no bounds.'

'Oh, but Czechoslovakia was a state that had been merely created by the Treaty of Versailles. Anyway, Hitler made a Protectorate out of Czechoslovakia.--I'll admit he exerted some pressure on Hacha . . . legally we did not break the Munich Pact.' The sheer bare-faced hypocrisy of this man is incredible.[143]

Only after reading such comments as this it is possible for anyone to see why Hitler chose Ribbentrop for the position of Reich Foreign Minister. Successful lying is an art, but combined with Ribbentrop's loyalty to Hitler was his many years of experience. And also, the fact remains that Ribbentrop never really understood the significance that other countries placed in their written pledges. "Why all this fuss about breaking treaties? Did you ever read about the history of the British Empire? Why, it's full of broken treaties, oppression of minorities, mass murder, aggressive wars, and everything."[144] Ribbentrop's position was concisely summed up by another of the defendants at lunch on April 1st: "It all boils down to this: he knew that there was going to be a war over Poland, and he did nothing to prevent it! --That is the simple crux of the matter--all the rest is hot air!"[145] All of Ribbentrop's evasions, self-contradictions, arguments, analogies, and use of "diplomatic language" was just the

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[143] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop (12 February 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 151.

[144] Ribbentrop to Dr. Gilbert (November 20, 1945), Gilbert, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

[145] Hjalmar Schacht to Dr. Gilbert (1 April 1946), Ibid., p. 232.

confused testimony of a confused witness. Some sly comments were whispered among the other defendants with regard to Ribbentrop's testimony that morning, and all of them held the ex-Foreign Minister in contempt--especially von Papen and von Neurath, who remarked that Ribbentrop apparently hadn't even had "the faintest conception of foreign affairs when he took over the Foreign Office." Artur von Seyss-Inquart leaned over to Dr. Gilbert at lunch and remarked: "Psst! Don't say anything now, but I suspect our Foreign Minister of not even knowing that the Bulgarian question refers to the Treaty of Trianon."[146]

All of Ribbentrop's testimony seemed quite unbelievable upon close examination; that he could not have known what was actually being planned was utterly out of the question. Ribbentrop was indeed slow to grasp the significance of events, but he was not that slow! Hitler had said in a conference on August 22nd that: "The destruction of Poland is in the foreground. The aim is elimination of living forces, not the arrival at a certain line: Even if war should break out in the West, the destruction of Poland shall be the primary objective. Quick decision because of the season."[147] Yet Ribbentrop, who had participated in the August 12th conference with Count Ciano, continued to dangle the prospects of peace before his world audience. Diplomacy is a give and take proposition, but Ribbentrop was only willing to negotiate in order to "take." He and Hitler expected that once again England would come to the only satisfactory terms available--theirs! Even in his later testimony before the Tribunal, he still persisted in maintaining that if England had only listened to Hitler everything would have been settled--in fact he even offered to help reconstruct Europe and advise the English on how to do it! More will be said about this offer later. He knew only the superficial basis for conducting any foreign policy, and thus though he knew about the terms used in diplomacy--

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[146] Von Seyss-Inquart to Dr. Gilbert, Ibid., p. 233.

[147] Speech of Adolf Hitler (22 August 1939), Document 1014-PS, NCAA, III, p. 665.

such as England's balance-of-power theory--he did not know how to conduct a foreign policy designed to cope with it. According to Ribbentrop, since Germany was now a great power that simply meant that she was to have her own way--all according to any principle laid down by Hitler. The very fact that six years of war and total defeat failed to change his views on foreign policy indicates perhaps how completely his personality had become centered around the old lies.

II. AGGRESSION AGAINST DENMARK AND NORWAY

With the completion of the Polish campaign Europe was granted a few months of comparative peace. However, early in April 1941, the German steamroller again was on the move--crushing a long list of treaties, agreements, and assurances. The Germans had previously signed a Treaty of Non-Aggression with Denmark on May 31, 1939, which pledged in Article I that: "The Kindgom of Denmark and the German Reich shall in no case resort to war or to any other use of force one against the other."[148] This pact was signed for Germany by von Ribbentrop, and was accordingly violated before one year had lapsed. In response to a question from General Rudenko, Ribbentrop explained why the subsequent German attack on Denmark was really not "aggression."

> No, the 'invasion' of Denmark, as it is called, was, according to the Fuehrer's words and explanation, a purely preventive measure adopted against imminent landings of British fighting forces. How authentic our information was is proved by the fact that only a few days later English and German troops were engaged in Norway. That means that it was proved that these English troops had been ready for a long time for fighting in Norway, and it came out from the documents discovered later on and published at the time, and from orders issued, that the English landings in Scandinavia had been prepared down to the smallest detail. The Fuehrer therefore thought that by seizing Scandinavia, he would prevent it from becoming another theater of war [???]. I do not therefore think that the invasion of Denmark can be considered as an act of aggression.[149]

Ribbentrop thus offered the Tribunal the substitution of the words "preventive intervention" in place of such an unpleasant term as "aggression." The former, according to Ribbentrop, was justified by

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[148]Treaty of Non-Aggression between the German Reich and the Kindom of Denmark (31 May 1939), Document TC-24, NCAA, VIII, p. 374.

[149]Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 427; and also for (30 March 1946), Ibid., pp. 281-283.

Germany when Hitler had decided that any situation warranted such measures, but such actions were not "aggressions." He then asserted that of course he had reminded the Fuehrer of the non-aggression pact with Denmark, but upon learning the circumstances from Hitler, he had agreed that Hitler was right. As far as knowledge of the military plans, Ribbentrop asserted that he had not known of any until right up to the last minute, and had only begun to draft the notes to be handed to the individual governments on the 8th--Germany marched on the 9th.[150] Perhaps one of Ribbentrop's most interesting illusions was the fact that German occupation meant that the war would not spread! Also at the same time of the Danish campaign plans had been laid for the seizure of Norway. Norway along with Denmark had had a German assurance to respect their neutrality, dated April 28, 1939, and also signed by von Ribbentrop. In fact, the day after the invasion of Poland the German government handed Norway another assurance of its intention to respect her neutrality.

> The German Government is determined, in view of the friendly relations which exist between Norway and Germany, under no circumstances to prejudice the inviolability and integrity of Norway and to respect the territory of the Norwegian State. In making this declaration the Reich Government naturally expects, on its side, that Norway will observe an unimpeachable neutrality towards the Reich and will not tolerate any breaches of Norwegian neutrality by any third party which might occur. Should the attitude of the Royal Norwegian Government differ from this so that any such breach of neutrality by a third power occurs, the Reich Government would then obviously be compelled to safeguard the interests of the Reich in such a way as the resulting situation might dictate.[151]

This assurance specifically pledged the Reich Foreign Office to maintain and uphold this neutrality until after there had occurred a violation--not just any supposed intent--of Norway's neutrality by a third party And Hitler himself had said in late August that: "Another possibility is the violation of Dutch, Belgian, and Swiss neutrality. I have no doubt that all these states, as well as Scandinavia,

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[150] Entry in the diary of General Jodl (3 April 1940) mentioned that Ribbentrop had been informed on this date, Document 1809-PS, NCAA, IV, p. 396; and also a Letter from Field Marshal Keitel to Ribbentrop (3 April 1940), Document D-629, Ibid., VII, p. 99.

[151] German Assurance to Norway (2 September 1939), Document TC-31, NCAA, VIII, p. 380; see also German assurances given 6 October 1939, Document TC-32, Ibid., p. 381.

will defend their neutrality by all available means. England and France will not violate the neutrality of these countries."[152] Yet this is exactly the reason Ribbentrop gave to the Tribunal.

> The situation was rather different in Norway. Resistance had developed. We tried to keep the King of Norway in the country and to induce him to stay there. We negotiated with him but we had no success. He went north, I believe, to Narvik; and so there was no longer any possibility of negotiating with Norway. Norway was occupied, as you know, and a civil administration established. After this date, Norway was no longer any concern of the Foreign Office; but one thing I should like to add: that the Fuehrer told me repeatedly that the measures he had taken were extremely necessary, and that documents found after the landing of British troops in Norway, and published at a later date, showed that the occupation of these countries and the landing in Norway had doubtlessly been planned for a long time.[153]

Ribbentrop forgot to mention that orders had been issued to the German High Command for operations against Denmark and Norway as early as October 7th and 9th, 1939--one and three days after the second assurance to Norway had been signed by Ribbentrop! But Hitler had always been very anxious that Great Britian not be allowed to cut off the German supply lines in the Baltic.

Today when one mentions the position of Norway in the Second World War, the first name that comes to mind is Vidkun Quisling. Although the principal instigator of the famous "Quisling Plot" was Rosenberg, the Reich Foreign Office was also involved. In January, 1940, a conference was held between Rosenberg and Ribbentrop at which time 200,000 Goldmarks was appropriated for "Quisling's Fund," and a letter from Rosenberg to Ribbentrop the next month also involved the handling of money by the Foreign Office for the activities of Quisling in Norway.[154] Nevertheless, Ribbentrop asserted on the witness stand that he knew the name "Quisling? only slightly and that his activities had been only to help sponsor a Nordic Movement, "a perfectly natural thing to do." The Foreign Office, he said,

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[152]Statement of Hitler (22 August 1939) cited by the British prosecutor Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe (1 April 1946), Document 798-PS, TMWC, X, p. 371.

[153]Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 282; see also Ribbentrop's release to the foreign press (9 April 1940), Document Rib-217, Ibid., XLI, pp.123-124.

[154]Report submitted by Rosenberg to Deputy of the Fuehrer on the Political Preparation of the Norway Action (15 June 1940), Document 004-PS, NCAA, III, pp. 19-27; Letter from Rosenberg to Ribbentrop (24 February 1940), Document 957-PS, Ibid., p. 641.

only provided the finances for newspapers, propaganda, and some minor political activity. "At these discussions, I remember this distinctly, no mention was ever made of seizing of any political power through certain circles in Norway, or of any military operations."[155] Ribbentrop stated again that: "Neither I nor anybody else in the Foreign Office had any idea that an operation against Norway was to take place."[156] This seems rather hard to believe, that Ribbentrop never considered that Hitler would take such steps; hoever, it appears that he was telling the truth with regard to having had only a very short notice officially. Yet he himself stated that he had not had any proof of any English intent to violate the neutrality of Norway until Hitler told him about the operations. A letter to Ribbentrop from Field Marshal Keitel however stated that: "The military occupation of Denmark and Norway has been, by command of the Fuehrer, long in preparation by the High Command of the Wehrmacht."[157] Yet Ribbentrop still insisted that it had been England's intent to violate Norway's neutrality which had caused the German action, it was again "preventive intervention" and not aggression!

III. AGGRESSION AGAINST BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG AND THE NETHERLANDS

The occupation of Denmark and Norway was followed in May by German troops moving against Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It was by this move that Germany, and therefore the Reich Foreign Office, added to its total of treaties and agreements violated: with regard to Belgium--violation of German Assurances given 30 January 1937, 28 April 1939, 26 August 1939, and 6 October 1939, as

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[155] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 283; and cross-examination by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe (1 April 1946), Ibid., pp. 369-370.

[156] NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1174; testimony of Nikolas von Falkenhorst, Commander-in-chief of German Armed forces in Norway substantiated his position, for security reasons, Ibid., p. 1542.

[157] See footnote number 44; and also testimony of Field Marshall Keitel (5 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 598.

well as a long list of international multilaterial agreements; and with regard to Luxembourg--violation of German Assurances given 28 April 1939, 26 August 1939, and additional multilaterial agreements; and with regard to Holland-- violation of German Assurances given on 30 January 1937, 28 April 1939, 26 August 1939, and 6 October 1939.[158] Of course the Germans handed these various countries an ultimatum explaining their actions after the attack had started, which stated that such action was taken to "ensure the neutrality" of these countries. The excuse was the same as had been used by Germany in her actions in April. Ribbentrop explained the circumstances behind this decision to Dr. Horn, and concluded by adding this particular phase of the action "cost me many a sleepless night." Perhaps his conscience was troubled over this particular aspect of Hitler's policy?

> In any event, Adolf Hitler believed that an attack on the Ruhr district, which was Germany's most vital area, was a possibility that had to be reckoned with at all times. I had a good many discussions with the Fuehrer about that time, regarding the importance of Belgian neutrality for the world in general; but I knew, too, that we were involved in a struggle, a hard struggle of larger dimensions where completely different standards would have to be applied.
>
> In the course of events, in the spring of 1940, our intelligence reports about an attack of this kind became more and more concrete, and I may mention that documents belonging to the French General Staff, et cetera, which were found later and published by the German Foreign Office, proved conclusively that the reports which Germany had received were absolutely true and that an attack on the Ruhr area had actually been repeatedly considered by the enemies of Germany, that is, by those who were her enemies at the time.
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> . . . . . .
>
> The situation before the offensive in the West on which the Fuehrer had decided was therefore such that an attack by the enemy through these areas had to be expected at any time. For this reason he decided to attack across this area, across these two neutral territories, and I believe that after the attack--the military authorities will confirm this--further documents were found and facts established, which as far as I remember, showed that the closest cooperation had existed between the Belgian and I believe also the Dutch General Staffs, and the British and French General Staffs.

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[158] See the general charges as listed in Appendix A, and the particulars of each charge as found in, NCAA, I, pp. 73-81.

> Of course it is always a very grave matter in such a war to violate the neutrality of a country, and you must not think that we dismissed it, so to speak, with a wave of the hand. . . .[159]

Ribbentrop's whole argument centered around the fact that the Fuehrer had not wanted the war to spread; and since it was France who had declared war on Germany, Hitler took "preventive measures" against Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands--a rather unique way to prevent the war from spreading! Ribbentrop refused to accept such actions as being aggressions. After these countries were then occupied by the German Army, according to Ribbentrop, all influence on the part of the Foreign Office was removed. His whole argument is so weak that it needs no restatement.

IV. AGGRESSION AGAINST GREECE AND YUGOSLAVIA

The next countries to have their neutrality violated were Greece and Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia had had two assurances from Germany that her neutrality would be respected in all cases--28 April 1938, and 6 October 1939, both signed for Germany by Ribbentrop. Greece was in a somewhat different position as Italy had already launched an attack upon her in November of 1940. However it is interesting to note that a "Top Secret Directive" issued by Hitler (12 November 1940) had already laid plans for the occupation of Greece in order to protect the Rumanian oil fields.[160] Ribbentrop was also informed early in January, 1941, of operations which were soon to be commenced against Greece by another directive sent out by Field Marshal Keitel.[161] This was then followed by a conference between Hitler and Mussolini, with Ribbentrop in attendance, on January 19th and 20th at which Hitler was quoted as saying, "The tendency will be to cross the Danube at the last possible moment and to line up

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[159] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 284-285; the defense submitted the following documents, which were accepted in evidence to substantiate their view: Rib-220, TMWC, XLI, pp. 125-126; Rib-221, Ibid., pp. 126-127; Rib-223, Ibid., p. 128; Rib-225, Ibid., pp. 129-130; Rib-228, Ibid., pp. 130-133; Rib-232, Ibid., pp. 134-135; Rib-233, Ibid., pp. 135-136 and Rib-243, Ibid., pp. 136-137.

[160] Directive No. 18 from the Fuehrer's Headquarters concerning plans for prosecution of the war in the Mediterranean Area (12 November 1940), Document 444-PS, NCAA, III, pp. 403-407.

[161] Order No. 22 (11 January 1941), Document 448-PS, Ibid., pp. 413-415.

for attack at the earliest possible moment."[162] Yet in March Ribbentrop urged Yugoslavia to sign as a participant in the Three-Power Pact, and at the same time he also signed another assurance with Yugoslavia which said in part that: "On the occasion of the Yugoslavian entry today into the Tri-Partite Pact, the German Government confirms its determination to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia at all times."[163] This pact lasted only eleven days! And within three days after the signing of the pact with Yugoslavia, Hitler and Ribbentrop jointly sent Mussolini a telegram advising him to be ready for a move against Yugoslavia as soon as everything was in order. Ribbentrop had in fact "been added" to those on a list who were to receive the notes of a top secret military conference on the 27th, at which time Hitler had stated that he intended to destroy Yugoslavia and which was to be accompanied this time without the usual bother of an ultimatum![164] Ribbentrop, under questioning by Dr. Horn, explained that here again the situation warranted "preventive intervention" in order to keep the war from spreading. He even went so far as to remark that Hitler had "wished in all circumstances to keep the Balkans out of the war," which was in glaring contrast to his directives--Nos. 18 and 22--as well as the notes of the conference back in August, 1939, at which time Count Ciano had remarked that both Hitler and Ribbentrop had wanted Italy to attack Yugoslavia. But Ribbentrop testified on this question by saying in part that:

> As for Greece, the situation was as follows: Greece had accepted a British guarantee. Also, there were close links between Yugoslavia and England and, especially, France. Through the Fuehrer's intelligence service and through military channels we repeatedly heard about staff conferences between Athens, Belgrade, London, and Paris, which were supposed to be taking place. . . .

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[162] Letter by General Jodl on the conference (20 January 1941), Document C-134, Ibid., VI, p. 243.

[163] Letters from Ribbentrop published in the Voelkischer Beobachter (26 March 1941), Document 2450-PS, Ibid., V, p. 186; defense documents Rib-272, TMWC, XLI, p. 138; and Rib-273, Ibid., pp. 138-139.

[164] Notes on the conference (27 March 1941), Document 1746-PS, NCAA, IV, pp. 275-279.

However, further intelligence reports came in to the effect that Britain had been given permission to establish naval bases in Greece. I believe--and this led up to the intervention of Italy, which we did not desire at all--I believe Reich Marshal Goering had already discussed this topic. It was impossible to prevent this intervention, for when I arrived in Florence--I was with Adolf Hitler at the time--for his conference with Mussolini, it was too late and Mussolini said: 'We are on the march.'

The Fuehrer was very much upset and depressed when he heard this news. We then had to do everything in our power so that the war between Greece and Italy might at least be prevented from spreading. Yugoslav policy was naturally the decisive factor here. I tried in every possible way to establish closer links with Yugoslavia and to win her over to the Tripartite Pact which had already been concluded then. It was difficult at first, but with the help of the Regent Prince Paul and the Zvetkovitch Government, we finally succeeded in inducing Yugoslavia to join the Tripartite Pact. We knew very well, however, that there was strong opposition in Belgrade to the adhesion of Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact and to any kind of closer connection with Germany. . . .[165]

Ribbentrop asserted under further questioning by his own counselor that Greece had been occupied because she had conducted herself in an "unneutral" manner; and Yugoslavia because of a change in government (March 26, 1941), which was deemed by Hitler as an unfriendly gesture at the time and which they asserted had been plotted by British agents. These arguments are quite flimsy, when the documents, relating to the military preparations Hitler had ordered begun prior to the incidents which Ribbentrop cited as causing the German actions, are examined. When asked by the British prosecutor, Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, if he considered such actions "right," Ribbentrop answered that he could not reply either "yes" or "no" without qualifying his answer, and the British prosecutor wisely refrained from allowing him to "explain" the situation in his usual manner. Under further cross-examination by the Soviet prosecutor, Ribbentrop managed to summarize his position as to whether the German action constituted "aggression" or not.

No, and I consider that the measures adopted in Yugoslavia and the measures taken by Greece in granting bases, et cetera, to the enemies of Germany justified the intervention of Adolf Hitler,

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[165] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 287-288; defense documents submitted were: Rib-277, Ibid., XCI, pp. 139-142; Rib-278, Ibid., pp. 142-147.

> so that here too one cannot speak of aggressive action in this sense. It was quite clear that British troops were about to land in Greece, since they had already landed in Crete and the Peloponnesus, and that the uprising in Yugoslavia by the enemies of Germany, in agreement with the enemies of Germany, as I mentioned yesterday, had been encouraged with the intent of launching an attack against Germany from that country. The documents of the French General Staff discovered later in France showed only too clearly that a landing in Salonika had been planned. . . .[166]

Ribbentrop's testimony on the Greek and Yugoslavian campaigns seems very inadequate when one considers that since August of 1939 an attack on Yugoslavia had been discussed with Italy. Also the military orders left no doubt but that Yugoslavia was a menace to German oil supplies; and that Greece was a particular thorn in Mussolini's side if the Mediterranean was to become an Italian mare clausum. It was Ribbentrop who signed the assurances which were violated--one as early as eleven days after he had signed it--and which in each case pledged Germany "to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity" of Yugoslavia. Yet according to him all this was quite justified simply on the basis of "preventive intervention." Both the note to Greece and to Yugoslavia handed to the respective governments as German troops marched in bore Ribbentrop's signature. One certainly had to admire the way in which he attempted to keep the war from "spreading."

V. AGGRESSION AGAINST SOVIET RUSSIA

The next major campaign to be launched was against the Soviet Union. The Russo-German Non-aggression Pact of 23 August 1939 had provided in Article One that: "The two contracting parties undertake to refrain from any violence, any aggressive action, or any attack against one another, whether individually or jointly with other powers."[167] Of course, it was signed by Ribbentrop on

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[166] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., X, pp. 428-429.

[167] Treaty of Non-aggression between Germany and USSR (23 August 1939), Document TC-25, NCAA, VIII, pp. 375-376.

behalf of Germany. Ribbentrop was again in Moscow after the conclusion of the Polish campaign at which time, after the dividing lines were agreed upon, he attempted "to enlarge this basis of understanding between the Russians and ourselves on the casual sector."[168] It was also at this time that Hitler renounced any interest in Lithuania in order to lessen any source of friction with the Russians. Ribbentrop explained to the Tribunal the various events which caused Hitler concern over the ultimate Russian intentions, and his own view on the subject.

> Various things made the Fuehrer a little skeptical about the Russian attitude. One was the occupation of the Baltic States, which I have just mentioned. Another was the occupation of Bessarabia and North Bukovina after the French campaign and of which we were simply informed without any previous consultation. . . . In addition, the war with Finland in 1940 caused a certain uneasiness in Germany, among the German people who had strong sympathies for the Finns. The Fuehrer felt himself bound to take this into account to some extent. There were two other points to consider. One was that the Fuehrer received a report on certain communist propaganda in German factories which alleged that the Russian trade delegation was the center of this propaganda. Above all, we heard of military preparations being made by Russia. I know after the French campaign he spoke to me about this matter on several occasions and said that approximately 20 German [Russian] divisions had been concentrated near the East Prussian border; and that very large forces--I happen to remember the number, I think about 30 army corps--were said to be concentrated in Bessarabia. The Fuehrer was perturbed by these reports and asked me to watch the situation closely. . . . In any case, he now proposed to take countermeasures. I pointed out the danger of preventive wars to the Fuehrer, but the Fuehrer said that German-Italian interests must come first in all circumstances, if necessary. I said I hoped that matters would not go so far and that, at all events, we should make every effort through diplomatic channels to avoid this.[169]

Dr. Horn then addressed the Tribunal and attempted to prove that Ribbentrop's role throughout the interval between the Non-aggression Pact and the attack was one of holding open diplomatic negotiations, and that they wanted to eliminate "as far as possible any differences which might lead to a conflict." Yet Ribbentrop admitted before his own defense counselor's questions that Hitler had discussed with him in the summer of 1940 the possibility of taking "countermeasures," which in every

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168 Ibid., Supplement B, p. 1187; also defense document, Rib-282, TMWC, XLI, pp. 147-148.

169 Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 289-290.

other case had been another case of preventive intervention.[170] A conference between Hitler, Molotov, and Ribbentrop was held on November 12-14 in Berlin at Ribbentrop's invitation in order to iron out any difficulties. It is interesting to note however that on the opening day of the conference, General Jodl had sent from the Fuehrer's Headquarters a top secret directive which said in part: "Political discussions have been initiated with the aim of clarifying Russia's attitude for the time being. Irrespective of the results of these discussions, all preparations for the East which have already been verbally ordered will be continued."[171] Ribbentrop however concluded his testimony by saying that after the conclusion of the Russo-Yugoslav Non-aggression and Friendship Pact (5 April 1941), he had been forbidden by Hitler to negotiate any further with Russia. He later testified, under cross-examination by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, that all through his negotiations with Russia he had no idea of any military preparations being made. "I knew that Hitler had apprehensions but I knew nothing about an attack. I was not informed about military preparations, because these matters were always dealt with separately."[172] If Ribbentrop did not know about any forthcoming attack, it is interesting to see who did: Generals Jodl, von Hanacken, Thoma, and the other staff and supply officers; State Secretaries Koerner, Neumann, and Becker; Reichs Marshal Goering and Alfred Rosenberg --who as early as April 2nd had been making plans for the invasion and had drafted a memorandum on the Russian occupation, which mentioned working with the Foreign Office.[173] Ribbentrop, under cross-examination by the Soviet prosecutor General Rudenko, replied to the question of whether or not this action constituted "aggression" explained that Germany's action was not aggression, in the 'literal sense of the word.'

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[170]The fact that Hitler had indeed begun to consider such preparations was proven by a number of documents introduced by the prosecution in the case of General Jodl's "The Strategic Position at the Beginning o the 5th Year of War," a lecture delivered by him at Munich (7 November 1943), Document L-172, NCAA, VII, pp. 920-931.

[171]Original Directive No. 18 from the Fuehrer's Headquarters (12 November 1940), Document 444-PS, Ibid., III, p. 406.

[172]Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 377; and also again his denial of any knowledge, NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1193-1194.

[173]Memorandum entitled "Memorial No. 1 regarding USSR," (2 April 1941), Document 1017-PS, NCAA, III, pp. 674-681.

> The concept of 'aggression' is a very complicated concept, which even today the world at large cannot readily define. That is a point I should like to emphasize first. We are dealing, undeniably, with a preventive intervention, with a war of prevention. That is quite certain, for attack we did. There is no denying it. I had hoped that matters with the Soviet Union could have been settled differently, diplomatically, and I did everything I could in this direction. But the information received and all the political acts of the Soviet Union in 1940 and 1941 until the outbreak of the war, persuaded the Fuehrer, as he repeatedly told me, that sooner or later the so-called East-West pincers would be applied to Germany, that is, that in the East, Russia with her immense war potential, and in the West, England and the United States, were pushing towards Europe with the purpose of making a large scale landing. [Ribbentrop had confused the dates: Russia was attacked 22 June, but Germany did not declare war on the U. S. until December 11th, 1941]. It was the Fuehrer's great worry that this would happen. Moreover the Fuehrer informed me that close collaboration existed between the General Staffs of London and Moscow. This I do not know; I personally received no such news. But the reports and information which I received from the Fuehrer were of an extremely concrete nature. At any rate, he feared that, one day, Germany, faced with this political situation, would be threatened with catastrophe and he wished to prevent the collapse of Germany and the destruction of the balance of power [???] in Europe.[174]

The Soviet prosecution also sought to prove that Ribbentrop had discussed the plans for an attack on Russia earlier with Field Marshal Keitel. Ribbentrop naturally denied that such had been the topic of conversation, but stated that both he and Keitel had wished for an improvement in Russo-German relations and that both had had "doubts as to the wisdom of any conflict" in the East.[175] However after the war with Russia had started, Ribbentrop had telegraphed the German Ambassador in Tokyo and instructed him to induce Japan to enter the war against Russia--another example of Ribbentrop's attempts at limiting the "spreading" of the war. The document quoted Ribbentrop as saying in part that:

> It is, of course, also in our interest that Japan wants to secure for herself further possessions in the South, Indo-China, etc., just as every measure of Japan direct [ed] toward expansion is principally welcomed by us. . . . However I ask you to employ all available means in further insisting upon Japan's entry into the war against Russia at the soonest possible date, as I have mentioned already in my note to Matsuoka. The sooner this entry is effected, the better it is. The natural objective still remains that we and Japan join hands on the Trans-Siberian railroad, before winter starts.[176]

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[174] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 429.

[175] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., p. 438; and the testimony of Keitel (1 April 1946), Ibid., pp. 317-318.

[176] Telegram from Ribbentrop to the German Embassy in Tokyo (10 July 1941), Document 2896-PS, NCAA, V, pp. 564-565.

Throughout the preparations for the eventual campaign against Russia, Ribbentrop asserted that he knew nothing of the plan to attack. Yet he admitted that he and Keitel had agreed a year or so in advance of the actual invasion that they should both recommend to Hitler that such a course was extremely dangerous. Other evidence introduced proved beyond doubt that military plans were being considered immediately after the French campaign, as well as the drafting of military orders in November, and the final plans for Operation Barbarossa which was drafted on December 18, 1940. By early spring, 1941, practically all the major offices within the government were preparing for a break with Russia, all--according to Ribbentrop-- except the Foreign Office! In discussing the war with Russia, and his alleged attempts at keeping the peace, he finally said to Dr. Gilbert:

> 'Well, the war guilt does not lie entirely on one side.--I believe that Hitler feared just what has, after all actually taken place.' He seemed to have a bright idea. 'And what is that?' I asked. 'The destruction of Germany,' Ribbentrop beamed, as if he had proven his point with a reductio ad absurdum. 'Wasn't that all the more reason to avoid war instead of precipitating it?' He weighed the argument in confused silence for a while, wondering where he had left the loophole. Finally he sighed weakly, 'Well--history will have to decide that.'[177]

VI. RIBBENTROP AND AGGRESSION IN THE FAR EAST

In addition to Ribbentrop's negotiations in Europe, he also played an active part in the diplomacy within the Far East. This position was in glaring contrast to his previous statements about attempting to limit the war; for although England and the other colonial powers were in the war, the United States officially was not. At Ribbentrop's castle home of Fuschl, he attempted to bring Japan into the war against England, in addition to Russia, by offering her rich territory in the British possessions, as well as hinting at the Philippines, since he doubted that America would declare war. The whole series of conferences with Japanese representatives was a clear attempt by Ribbentrop to promote

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[177] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop (23-24 February 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 170.

aggressive war.[178] Ribbentrop explained his intentions to the Tribunal by saying in part that:

> . . . In the summer of 1940 we therefore tried to achieve closer collaboration with Japan. Japan was trying to do the same with us and that led to the signing of the pact [Three-Power Pact of 27 September 1940]. The aim, or substance, of this pact was a political, military, and economic alliance. There is no doubt, however, that it was intended as a defensive alliance; and we considered it as such from the start. By that I mean that it was intended in the first place to keep the United States out of the war; and I hoped that a combination of this kind might enable us to make peace with England after all. The pact itself was not based on any plan for aggression or world domination, as has often been asserted. That is not true; its purpose was, as I have just said, to arrive at a combination which would enable Germany to introduce a new order in Europe and would also allow Japan to reach a solution acceptable to her in East Asia, especially in regard to the Chinese problem.
>
> That is what, I had in mind when I negotiated and signed the pact. The situation was not unfavorable; the pact might possibly keep the United States neutral and isolate England so that we might all the same arrive at a compromise peace, a possibility of which we never lost sight during the whole course of the war, and for which we worked steadily.[179]

How in the world did Ribbentrop expect Japan and Germany to bring about their "new order" without at the same time initiating a war for world domination? He also asserted that this pact would "enable us to make peace with England;" it seems a rather odd behavior to collect allies in order to make peace! His statements seemed all the more hypocritical when the text of his interviews with the Japanese Ambassador were disclosed. Especially interesting is his "compromise peace." Ribbentrop's plan--although he claimed Hitler had outlined it to him--was such that England would only have signed it under the actual condition of a German occupation: first of all, Hitler was ready to recognize "the existence of the British Empire"; secondly, England was to recognize Germany as the "greatest continental power" (Ribbentrop knew the English balance-of-power theory???); thirdly, England was to return one or two of Germany's old colonies; and lastly, England was to sign a permanent alliance with Germany.[180] This then was what Ribbentrop expected England to sign, and throughout the trials was

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[178] Report of the conference of the Reich Foreign Minister with Ambassador Oshima, for example, (13 February 1941), Document 1834-PS, NCAA, IV, pp. 469-475.

[179] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 295.

[180] Ibid., 287.

still dismayed that England had not accepted the German "peace" terms! Within two weeks after the February 23rd conference, Hitler ordered the military to collaborate with the Japanese in order to help them "take active measures in the Far East." Ribbentrop conferred again with the Japanese Foreign Minister Matusoka, in late March. Once again he attempted to induce the Japanese to enter the war against England, and also told them "not to carry the discussions with the Russians too far." Ribbentrop also at this conference discussed the question of Singapore, the fact that this was an opportune time for any action since the English fleet would be busy at home, and that America could be expected to do nothing. Then on the subject of possible German assistance to Japan over the attack on Singapore, Ribbentrop was quoted as saying in part:

> The RAM [Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs] replied that he had already discussed these with Ambassador Oshima. He had asked him to procure maps of Singapore in order that the Fuehrer--who probably must be considered the greatest expert on military questions at the present time--could advise Japan on the best method of attack against Singapore. German experts on aerial warfare, too, would be at their disposal; They could draw up a report, based on their European experiences, for the Japanese on the use of dive-bombers from airfields in the vicinity against the British fleet in Singapore. Thus the British fleet would be forced to disappear from Singapore immediately.[181]

One can only speculate as to how impressed the Japanese were with the thought of another European telling them how to prepare a surprise attack, a subject on which they considered themselves quite expert. It seems what they had in mind at the time was material support, such as anti-aircraft guns.

The first week in April, Ribbentrop again met with Matsuoka and continued to emphasize the necessity of Japan's entry into the war if she wanted a place at the conference table, for Ribbentrop asserted that Germany had already won the war. After the opening of the Russian campaign,

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181 Report on conversation between Ribbentrop and Matsuoka in Berlin (29 March 1941), Document 1877-PS, NCAA, IV, pp. 521-522.

Ribbentrop began demands on Japan for assistance by attacking Russian possessions also, even as late as 1943.[182] Ribbentrop's efforts at keeping the war from "spreading" were really quite remarkable!

Of course any attempt to establish the Japanese new order in the Far East was bound to run afoul of American interests. Ribbentrop's policies seemed to indicate that he was for keeping the United States neutral as long as possible, but not to the extent that Japan would not complete her designs. Ribbentrop admitted, both to his own counsel and in the British cross-examination, that he had indeed worked for the Japanese to attack either Singapore or Hong Kong, however he was always quick to add that both he and Hitler wanted to keep America neutral.[183] However, according to an intercepted Japanese message, Ribbentrop had told the Japanese Ambassador in part that:

> 'If this is indeed the fact of the case [no hope of any negotiation between Japan and America], and if Japan reaches a decision to fight Britain and the United States, I am confident that will not only be to the interest of Germany and Japan jointly, but would bring about favorable results for Japan herself.' [184]

Ribbentrop, under cross-examination by the British prosecutor, denied having said any such thing. The fact remains however that the documents submitted by the prosecution, covering the period prior to Pearl Harbor, prove conclusively that both Hitler and Ribbentrop tried to push Japan into further aggressive actions in the Far East and they also promised to stand by Japan when she did ultimately become involved in war--either with Russia or the United States. When the Japanese did finally attack, Ribbentrop was reported by Count Ciano as being extremely jubilant.

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[182] Telegram from Ribbentrop to German Ambassador Ott in Tokyo (10 July 1941), Document 2896-PS, NCAA, V., pp. 564-566; telegram from Ott to Ribbentrop (13 July 1941), Document 2897-PS, Ibid., p. 566; telegram from Ott to Ribbentrop (30 November 1941), Document 2898-PS, Ibid., p. 567; notes on conversation between Ribbentrop and Oshima (9 July 1942), Document 2911-PS, Ibid., p. 580; notes on conversation between Ribbentrop and Oshima (18 April 1943), Document 2929-PS, Ibid., p. 603; and minutes of conversation between Ribbentrop and Oshima (6 March 1943), Document 2954-PS, Ibid., p. 658-659.

[183] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 295-296; Ibid., pp. 379-380; and interrogation by Col Brundage (31 August and 10 September 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1196-1201.

[184] Message from Japanese Ambassador (29 November 1941), Document D-656, NCAA, VII. p. 160.

> A night telephone call from Ribbentrop; he is overjoyed about the Japanese attack on America. He is so happy about it that I am happy with him, though I am not too sure about the final advantages of what has happened. . . .[185]

Ribbentrop was also present when Hitler ordered German military units to commence hostilities against the United States as of December 8th, a formal declaration of war was not issued--by Ribbentrop--until December 11th. In response to a question about this by the British prosecutor, Ribbentrop replied that: "That was an order of Adolf Hitler's to attack America who, as everyone knows, had been attacking our ships for months. This is an altogether different affair."[186] He finally passed off the incident by denying any knowledge of the document, as well as the entry in Ciano's diary. Ribbentrop's part in the execution of Hitler's plans was dramatically emphasized by his own Fuehrer.

> I can not finish this honoring without finally thanking the man who has for years past put into effect my directives in the field of foreign politics in faithful, untiring and self-sacrificing work.
>
> The name of Party Member von Ribbentrop will for all time be linked up as Reich Foreign Minister, with the political rise of the German Nation.[187]

Hitler did not know how true his words would become later on!

VII. RIBBENTROP AND GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

The logical question to follow all the previously cited examples of Ribbentrop in his capacity as Foreign Minister, is to examine just as close as possible how much Ribbentrop actually did. What exactly was his role in foreign affairs? Upon examination of the documents and various testimonies, it appears that Ribbentrop certainly never actually determined any of it. As a matter of fact, Ribbentrop asserted under questioning by Justice Jackson that he had been familiar with only a "certain part" of

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[185] Entry into the diary of Count Galeazzo Ciano (8 December 1941), Document 2987-PS, Ibid., V. p. 692.

[186] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 381.

[187] Extract from a speech by Hitler to the Reichstag (19 July 1940), Document D-744-B, NCAA, VII, p. 207.

Hitler's foreign objectives and that parts of it had been concealed from him. He had also been convinced that Hitler wanted to get all the vital problems for Germany settled "diplomatically," and that he had not known that Hitler had intended war. He then explained further:

> I must tell you quite frankly that apart from that which I just told you now, all the further aims of the Fuehrer which he might have had and which I only heard during these interrogations here, and all the documents which were supposed to be in there, the Fuehrer never disclosed to me any of his definite big policy, or the future formation of the Reich. There was the question occasionally--not often, but once or twice he mentioned it, the idea of creating the German Reich, the greater German Reich was the idea, but he never revealed to me what this conception really meant, or what he understood under this conception. And I may say I have had the feeling all along that he was during the war--he said that once or twice--the military time-table of the General Staff came up, and he was driven to one decision after another. His conception later on was a very much larger one.[188]

The German Foreign Minister denied knowing what much of Germany's foreign policy was! Ribbentrop--continued by saying that the Fuehrer had always entertained the idea of reaching some accommodation with England--even as late as April 1945! He then complained further that Hitler made a habit of delivering speeches on foreign affairs without showing them to his Foreign Minister in advance. ". . . I would like to say once the war is started the political people, the diplomatists, had matters kept out of their hands and the general staffs dictated really the necessities of war then."[189] That this was all the more reason to avoid wars never seemed to dawn on him. Hitler really dominated the conduct of the Foreign Office, Ribbentrop merely carried out his wishes and elaborated on them. Adolf Freiherr Steengracht von Moyland, State Secretary in the Foreign Office after May 1943, testified that Ribbentrop's influence had been quite limited in the conduct of foreign affairs.

> The foreign policy, not only on its basic lines, but also usually down to the most minute details, was determined by Hitler himself. Ribbentrop frequently stated that the Fuehrer needed no Foreign Minister, he simply wanted a foreign political secretary. Ribbentrop, in my opinion, would have been satisfied with such a position because then at least, backed by Hitler's authority,

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[188] Interrogation of Ribbentrop by Justice Robert H. Jackson, OUSCC, (5 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1224.

[189] Ibid., p. 1185.

> he could have eliminated partly the destructive and indirect foreign political influences and their sway on Hitler. Perhaps he might then have had a chance of influencing Hitler's speeches, which the latter was accustomed to formulate without Ribbentrop, even in the foreign political field.[190]

Reichsmarshal Goering, who had nothing but contempt for Ribbentrop, did however in his cross-examination by Dr. Horn reveal more light on the influence of Ribbentrop on Hitler's decisions.

> As far as influence on Hitler, on the Fuehrer, is concerned, that is a problematical subject. I should like first to confine myself to the question of Herr von Ribbentrop's influence. Herr von Ribbentrop definitely had no influence in the sense that he could have steered Hitler in any direction. To what extent arguments of an objective nature may perhaps have definitely influenced the Fuehrer sometimes to do this or that in respect to foreign political affairs, or to refrain from doing it, or to change it, would have depended entirely on the strength of the arguments and the facts. To what extent that may sometimes have played a role I cannot say, for I was not present at 99 percent of the Fuehrer's conferences with Herr von Ribbentrop. But Herr von Ribbentrop had at no time such influence that he could have said, 'Do this' or 'Do not do it; I consider it a mistake,' when the Fuehrer was convinced of the correctness of the matter.[191]

With such testimonies as these, one might wonder why Ribbentrop remained at his post, ever faithful. The defendant himself explained his reasons.

> I would just like you to understand. In the first place, you see, I have been a loyal supporter of the Fuehrer to the end. I did not agree with the policy in many respects. In 1941 I had a great difficulty and I gave a promise, a word of honor, that there would be no more difficulty with the Fuehrer. Since then I have followed up and stood behind the Fuehrer all these years of the war. . . .[192]

Perhaps from his distorted point of view, he must at least in a lifetime of lying, follow one great truth and be loyal to one symbol--the one great truth was a new Germany, and its symbol was Adolf Hitler. He had been so devoted for so long that he had forgotten how to act in any other way.

Was Ribbentrop guilty on Count Two of the indictment? The answer is an uncompromising "yes." He played an active part in the diplomatic lying prior to the opening of hostilities; he

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[190] Testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (26 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 107.

[191] Testimony of Hermann Goering (18 March 1946), Ibid, p. 401.

[192] NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1183.

personally had signed most of the treaties, agreements and assurances to respect the territorial integrity of the neutral countries, which was soon violated; and played a major role in attempting to enlist other countries behind his aggressive policies. All this he then attempted to justify on the theory of "preventive intervention." "So far as aggression is concerned, I can tell you something, which the Fuehrer once told me quite frankly, that he was worried. I think it was during the time of the Serbian-Greek business, he said, 'Here I am. I wanted to settle my new Germany, with the minorities and so. Here the enemy forces me to go everywhere in Europe, there and there, where I don't want to go at all.' "[193] This was Ribbentrop's answer: the enemy 'forced' Hitler to go everywhere in Europe! This really had been his answer throughout his various statements in the trial--Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Yogoslavia, Greece, and Hungary. For Ribbentrop each was a case of "preventive intervention" rather than any such an unpleasant term as "aggression." He also played a significant part in assuring the Japanese that they could count on German support for any action they might wish to take in the Far East. From all the evidence submitted to the Tribunal, he was guilty not only by association, but by direct participation in the instigation of wars of aggression and in waging them as well as crimes against peace.

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[193] Ribbentrop to Col. Brundage, OUSCC (10 September 1945), Ibid., p. 1202.

CHAPTER IV

WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Count Three of the Indictment concerned the committing of "War Crimes" and was defined by the Tribunal under Article 6 (b) in the Charter as:

> WAR CRIMES: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but not be limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labor or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity.[194]

It was the Nazi conspirators who first initiated the concept of "total war" as an instrument of attaining their specified goals. Such methods naturally were in contradiction to all existing international conventions, as well as being violations of the general principles of all local criminal and penal laws. In addition to the cases cited above, there were additional incidents also subject for trial: conscription of laborers, forcing civilians in occupied territories to swear allegiance to a hostile power, and attempts at "Germanization" in the occupied areas.[195]

I. RIBBENTROP AND WAR CRIMES

One of the principal agreements violated by the Nazis was the Geneva Convention. Ribbentrop was quite emphatic in asserting that the Foreign Office had always "held the Geneva Convention up as much as we possibly could." In response to his counselor's question as to his own attitude, Ribbentrop again reaffirmed this position.

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194 TMWC, I, p. 29.

195 Ibid., pp. 42-62; pp. 62-65.

> I believe, and many people will and could confirm it, that from the beginning of the war the Foreign Office and I have always supported the Geneva Convention in every way. I should like to add that the military authorities showed much understanding for these things--at least, for the affairs I had to deal with. If, later on, this no longer held good in every respect, it was due to the rigors of war, and possibly to the harshness of the Fuehrer.[196]

Yet, the prosecution brought forth evidence that involved Ribbentrop in the "terror fliers" incident. There had been specific provisions set pertaining to downed enemy fliers--as found in the Prisoner of War Treaty of 27 July 1929--which gave prisoners of war the same rights before the enemy courts as the enemy armed forces had, and which also said that death sentences could only be carried out after three months internment and notification of the sentence to the protective power. While the Reich Foreign Office could not condone an actual open repudiation of this treaty, it was willing to accept provisions for the re-classification of fliers so that they never received the status of "prisoner of war." A secret memorandum sent by Ambassador Ritter of the Foreign Office to the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces explained in part how such a step could be handled.

> An emergency solution would be to prevent suspected fliers from ever attaining a legal Prisoner of War status, that is, that immediately upon seizure they be told that they are not considered Prisoners of War but criminals, that they would not be turned over to the agencies having jurisdiction over Prisoners of War; hence not to go to a Prisoner of War Camp; but that they would be delivered to the authorities in charge of the prosecution of criminal acts and that they would be tried in a summary proceeding. . . . Naturally, not even this expedient will prevent the possibility that Germany will be accused of the violation of existing treaties and maybe not even the adoption of reprisals upon German prisoners of war. At any rate this solution would enable us clearly to define our attitude, thus relieving us of the necessity of openly having to renounce the present agreements or of the need of having to use excuses, which no one would believe, upon the publication of each individual case.[197]

Under such a provision as this, it was possible to side-step the real issue and therefore, ". . . the German authorities are not directly responsible, since death [lynching] had occurred, before a German

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196 Ibid., X p. 301

197 Memorandum No. 444 from Ambassador Ritter to Chief of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (20 June 1944), Document 728-PS, NCAA, III, p. 527.

official became concerned with the case."[198] Ribbentrop, when asked by the British prosecutor, if such was his view replied that:

> No, that is not my view. . . . This document is an expert opinion of the Foreign Office, which was submitted to me. I do not know how it originated, upon my order or upon a statement of the military authorities. I did not approve this expert opinion as it is submitted to me here, but I did send it to the Fuehrer and asked him to decide about it. The Fuehrer then called this document 'nonsense,' I believe, and therewith this expert opinion of the Foreigh Office was rejected and did not come into effect.[199]

Although Ribbentrop denied having had such views at the time, the evidence was against him. According to a memorandum drawn up by General Warlimont and intended for the Armed Forces, Ambassador Ritter had said on June 29 that "the Minister of Foreign Affairs has approved this draft [Document 728-PS]," but before it was to be issued it had to be approved by the Fuehrer.[200] Ribbentrop was also present earlier at a conference between Hitler and Japanese Ambassador Oshima (27 May 1944) at which time, "The Fuehrer advised Oshima that the Japanese should hang--not shoot--every American terror pilot; then the Americans would think it over before making such attacks."[201] Ribbentrop was also present at a meeting early in June at which time the subject of "terror fliers" was again discussed. The minutes of the meeting recorded that:

> Obergruppenfuehrer Kaltenbrunner informed the deputy Chief of WFSt in Klessheim on the afternoon of 6.6, that a conference on this question had been held shortly before between the Reich Marshall, the Reich Foreign Minister and the Reichsfuehrer SS. Contrary to the original suggestion made by the Reich Foreign Minister who wished to include every type of terror attack on the German civilian population, that is, also bombing attacks on cities, it was agreed in the above conference that merely those attacks carried out with A/C armament, aimed directly at the civilian population and their property, should be taken as the standard for the evidence of a criminal action in this sense. Lynch law would have to be the rule. On the contrary, there has been no question of court martial sentence or handing over to the police.[202]

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[198] Ibid., p. 526.

[199] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 383-384.

[200] Memorandum from General Warlimont to the Chief of Supreme Command of Armed Forces (20 June 1944), Document 740-PS, NCAA, III, p. 538.

[201] Record of the Fuehrer's conference (27 May 1944), Document 3780-PS, Ibid., VI. p. 655.

[202] Minutes of a meeting at Klessheim (6 June 1944), Document 735-PS, Ibid., III, p. 533.

Ribbentrop of course denied that such a document portrayed his views, in fact he questioned as to whether or not such a conference had ever taken place. What it meant of course was that Ribbentrop--if the minutes are correct, and assuming that they were prepared with the usual German thoroughness--was that Ribbentrop favored a broad interpretation in order to include as many airmen under this heading as possible. In another case involving fifty British airmen, Ribbentrop admitted knowing that they had been shot "while trying to escape," but forgot who told him.[203] The day prior to these statements, Ribbentrop had explained to his counselor what he remembered concerning the "terror fliers" incident, and also explained further the circumstances of the question. His testimony brought out how very deeply the arrival of the war in Germany had affected him at the time.

> As to the terror-fliers I must state that in 1943 and 1944 the English and American air raids gradually became a terrible threat to Germany. I saw this for the first time in Hamburg, and I remember this event because I was with the Fuehrer at the time and I described to him the terrifying impression I had received. I do not believe that anyone who has not experienced such a raid and its results can imagine what it means. It is evident that we Germans, and especially Adolf Hitler, continually sought means to master this menace.
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> . . . It was, therefore, self-evident that the problem of terror-fliers had to be solved somehow by the Fuehrer. This was in contrast to our view insofar as we wanted to find a solution which would not infringe upon the Geneva Convention, or at least a solution which could be publicly proclaimed to our enemies. My department was not directly concerned with the question [Ambassador Ritter?], for we had nothing to do with defense problems which were taken care of by the military authorities, the police and those responsible for home policy. But we were indirectly concerned where the matter was affected by the Geneva Convention, and my point of view, which I frequently expressed, was that if any steps were taken an official proclamation should be published, giving a definition of a terror-flier, and stating that these terror-fliers convicted or airmen suspected of an attack upon the civilian population would be tried by courts-martial. . . . But this was never carried out in practice. It was not a suggestion by me but an idea which I expressed to Hitler in the course of conversations on one or two occasions and which was not put into practice because, in practice, it was impossible to find a definition for these raids. I believe some mention was also made of a conference supposed to have taken place in Klessheim during which I was said to have proposed or supported farther-reaching measures. I remember quite clearly that this conference did not take place. . . . I do know one thing that if allusion is made to a more thorough-going proposal emanating from me it can refer only to the following: At the time we were anxious to arrive at a clear definition of these attacks, such as

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[203] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, 385.

> machine-gunning from the air, as terror attacks. It is possible that this note [Document 735-PS], or whatever it was, came into being in this way: That the person in question knew my views, that is, the person trying to find a practical solution--if one was arrived at--to agree officially with the Geneva Convention or could, at least, have been officially discussed with Geneva.[204]

He then continued and denied further the other documents which involved the Foreign Office in this question. The language Ribbentrop used in his testimony perhaps revealed the extreme feelings he had on the bombing of Germany. Could he have said what the one document suggested? With Ribbentrop, it was possible for him to say almost anything. However, from the tone of his testimony and the documents available, it would appear that he probably did favor a broad interpretation of "terror fliers". During May and June of 1944 the bombings were undoubtedly quite severe in preparation for the Allied landings. His concern about upholding the Geneva Convention was sincere, however it came a little late. Ribbentrop's former Foreign Office Secretary Adolf von Steengracht testified that Ribbentrop had spoken to Hitler about the sparing of Rome and Florence from German aerial attacks.[205] However, it appears that Ribbentrop's interest in the Geneva Convention rose proportionately to the number of Allied air raids on German cities. Ribbentrop never denied having suggested taking countermeasures of some nature, he denied only those which he described as "far-reaching." It was a matter of official procedure for the Foreign Office.[206] Ribbentrop was a very sensitive individual and the Allied bombings affected him greatly. His part in the "terror fliers" question was that he did at various times assert that a vigorous policy should be followed, and that he did know of and participate in the various conferences which discussed how to solve this problem. Although he stated that he was against the bombing of London and Warsaw, he was present at the conference with the Japanese Ambassador at which time Hitler had proposed the lynching of American pilots downed over Japan.[207]

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[204] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), Ibid., pp. 301-302; 303.

[205] Testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (26 March 1946), Ibid., p. 116.

[206] General Jodl, under cross-examination by Dr. Horn, testified (5 June 1946) that the Foreign Office had told him that: "We could no longer consider certain acts of terror as belonging to regular warfare." Ibid., p. 424.

[207] Interrogation of Ribbentrop by Justice Robert H. Jackson, USOCC, (5 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1241-1242.

Another War Crime under Count Three of the Indictment was the treatment of civilians in occupied territory. Ribbentrop himself had no active part in killing of civilians, but he was involved in the determination of German policies on the matter. Once again the documents produced one impression and Ribbentrop's testimony another. The documents, said Ribbentrop, only showed that he had used "harsh language," and that this was different than what the documents implied. Nevertheless, at a conference in December 1942--attended by Hitler, von Ribbentrop, Count Ciano, Marshall Cavellero, and Field Marshall Keitel--it was suggested that any village which harbored partisans was to be burnt to the ground.[208] Ribbentrop, under cross-examination by Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, defended such a policy on the grounds that: ". . . It was a struggle for life and death. One should not forget that it was war."[209] He then continued by explaining his opinion on those who fought behind the lines against German troops. "I am of the opinion that the partisans who attack the troops in the rear should be treated harshly. Yes, I am of that opinion, I believe everyone in the Army is of that opinion, and every politician."[210] This statement however concerned only the partisans, yet Ribbentrop had indicated to the Italian Ambassador Alfieri in 1943 that stronger measures should also be taken against whole civilian populations as well.

> Continuing, the Reich Foreign Minister emphasized that the conditions which Roatta's [General Roatta, Chief of the Italian General Staff] policy had helped to produce in Croatia were causing the Fuehrer great concern. It was appreciated on the German side that Roatta wished to spare Italian blood, but it was believed that he was, as it were, trying to drive out Satan and Beelzebub by this policy. The gangs had to be exterminated, and that included men, women and children, as their continued existence imperiled the lives of German and Italian men, women and children.[211]

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[208] Minutes of conference at the Fuehrer's HQ (19 December 1942), Document D-735, Ibid., VII, p. 190.

[209] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 390.

[210] Ibid., p. 391

[211] Memorandum on the discussion between the Reich Foreign Minister and Ambassador Alfieri (21 February 1943), Document D-741, NCAA, VII, p. 197.

Ribbentrop's reply to this statement was that such things must have been said only "under great excitement," and he reasserted that his other actions during the war were different. He in fact stated further that he and the Foreign Office had always worked "toward compromise" in occupied areas. Ribbentrop offered the Tribunal the following reason for his actions at such a conference as this; and thus asserted that although the text of the conversation might be rather harsh, he really had not meant what he had said, but intended it only to get action. It was another case of using "diplomatic language" to accomplish a purpose. Thus, in response to the British prosecutor's question of why he had said such things, Ribbentrop recalled that it had been necessary at the moment.

> Because at that time, on the commission of the Fuehrer, I had to keep the Italians' noses to the grindstone, since there was complete chaos in some of the areas and the Italians always attempted to cause complete confusion in the rear areas of the German Army by some of the measures they took there. That is why I occasionally had to speak very harshly with the Italians. I recall that very distinctly. At that time the Italians were fighting together with the Chetniks partly against German troops; it was complete chaos there and for this reason I often used rather earnest and harsh language with the diplomats--perhaps an exaggerated language. But things actually looked quite different afterwards.[212]

If Ribbentrop had confined his use of "harsh" language solely to the Italians, perhaps one might have believed at least part of his story; however, another document--the notes of the conversation between the Reich Foreign Minister, Secretary of State Bastianini, Ambassador von Mackensen (deputy to Ribbentrop and Ambassador to Budapest), and Ambassador Alfieri--recorded that Ribbentrop had said roughly the same thing about many of the occupied territories. After suggesting "merciless action" on the part of the Italian government toward its social dissenters, Ribbentrop was quoted as saying further:

> . . . He [Ribbentrop] wished to say generally that, should reverses occur, energetic action would have to be taken. This had been seen particularly in Russia, where, after the Russians' defeats, Stalin had enforced his will with a really barbaric want of consideration and even

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[212] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 393.

> cruelty. He did not want to discuss Italy, but rather the occupied territories, where it had been shown that one could not get anywere with soft methods on the endeavor to reach an agreement. The Reich Foreign Minister then exemplified his train of thoughts by a comparison between Denmark and Norway. In Norway, brutal measures had been taken which had evoked lively protests, particularly in Sweden. . . . The strict regime in Norway had been of great service to that country, as it would very largely have become a theatre of war if Germany had not thrown out the British. In Denmark he had, with the assistance of the very clever Dr. Best, who had been appointed as German representative and who had at one time been one of Heidrich's collaborators, tried an experiment to ascertain the effect of the method of the gentle hand and of agreement. The result was that no more acts of sabotage took place in Norway, whilst they were increasing in number in Denmark.
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> In Greece too, brutal action would have to be taken if the Greeks got fresh. He was of the opinion that the demobilized Greek army should be deported from Greece with lightning speed, and that the Greeks should be shown in an iron manner who was master in the country. Hard methods of this kind were necessary if one was waging a war against Stalin, which was not a gentleman's war but a brutal war of extermination.[213]

Ribbentrop's list of countries was then expanded to also include Holland, France, and other occupied territories. There was more involved than just simply keeping "the Italians' noses to the grindstone."

Another of the War Crimes which directly involved Ribbentrop was that referring to the plunder of public and private property. Immediately after the opening of the Russian campaign, there was created a Ribbentrop Batallion, or "Special Purpose Battalion," for the collecting of cultural treasures in Russia and the Eastern territories. The Soviet prosecutor General Rudenko produced a document which was the sworn statement of an SS officer, Dr. Norman Paul Foerster, who served with this battalion and had been captured by the Soviet Army in 1942. His statement revealed the purposes of the Ribbentrop Battalion, and Ribbentrop's role as he remembered it.[214]

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[213] Memorandum of the conversation at Klessheim Castle in the afternoon (8 April 1943), Document D-740, NCAA, VII, pp. 194-195.

[214] The confession it must be remembered was taken from a prisoner of war who had been captured by the Russian Army. The Soviets are noted for their ability to gain confessions from prisoners, and no doubt this was a factor here. However the statement is the only one available on the Ribbentrop Battalion, and was not questioned by the Tribunal.

> In August 1941, while I was in Berlin, I was detached from the 87th Antitank Division and assigned to Special Task Battalion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the help of Dr. Focke, an old acquaintance of mine at Berlin University, who was then working in the Press Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This battalion was formed on the initiative of Foreign Minister Ribbentrop, and acted under his direction. . . . The task of this Special Task Battalion consisted in seizing, immediately after the fall of large cities, their cultural and historical treasures, libraries of scientific institutions, selecting valuable editions of books and films, and sending all these to Germany.[215]

Ribbentrop, in answering this document presented by the Soviet prosecutor, objected to it. He contended that this agency had been set up prior to the Russian campaign in order to confiscate any French documents which might be of value to the Foreign Office, under Dr. von Kunsberg of the SS. Ribbentrop also stated that von Kunsberg had had orders to prevent the destruction of any art treasures, and then said further that: "In no circumstances did he [Kunsberg] receive from me orders to transport these things to Germany or to steal any of them. I do not know how this statement [Foerster's] came to be made; but in this form it is certainly not correct."[216] General Rudenko then produced another document--a letter from Goering to Rosenberg--which said in part:

> After all the fuss and bother I very much welcomed the fact that an office was finally set up to collect these things, although I must point out that still other offices refer here to authority received from the Fuehrer, especially the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs, who sent a circular to all the organizations several months ago, stating amongst other things, that he had been given authority in the occupied territories for the preservation of cultural treasures.[217]

Ribbentrop again asserted that neither he personally nor the Foreign Office confiscated any cultural treasures; but added, "It is possible that these art treasures were temporarily placed in safe-keeping."[218] Ribbentrop concluded his testimony on this subject by saying that he had finally dismissed Kunsberg from the Foreign Office and he had never heard from him again.

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[215] Statement by Obersturmfuehrer Dr. Norman Paul Foerster of the 4th Company, Special Task Battalion of the SS (14 February 1946), Document USSR-445, TMWC, VIII, pp. 57-59; exerpts cited by Soviet prosecution, Ibid., X, pp. 441-442.

[216] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., X, pp. 442-443.

[217] Letter from Goering to Rosenberg, cited by Soviet prosecutor, Document 1985-PS, Ibid., VIII, p. 62.

[218] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., X, p. 443.

In the last analysis, Ribbentrop did play a significant role in the committing of War Crimes. Although he himself never murdered anyone, he was active in encouraging the governments in the occupied territories to take harsh measures against anyone who resisted. He also was active in the plundering of private and public property in the occupied territories. He was not active in the deportation from these territories of slave laborers to work in the factories within Germany, although he admitted that he knew of such practices--not as slave laborers however, but only "workers." He then added that:

> . . . According to what I heard, all these foreign workers are supposed to have been well treated in Germany. I think it is possible, of course, that other things might have happened, too; but on the whole, I believe that a good deal was done to treat these workers well. I know that on occasion departments of the Foreign Office co-operated in these matters with a view to preventing those possible things. Generally speaking, however, we had no influence in that sphere, as we were excluded from Eastern questions.[219]

He also did not participate in the military destruction brought on enemy cities. Ribbentrop's position with regard to the War Crimes was therefore mainly in three areas: his position on the "terror fliers," his encouraging of retaliation against partisans and the harsh methods to be imposed in the occupied territories, and his relationship to the Ribbentrop Battalion and the confiscation "for safe keeping" of various cultural treasures looted from the occupied areas--mainly in the East, but also through the actions of subordinates in the Western territories as well.

II. RIBBENTROP AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

Count Four of the Indictment concerned the committing of "Crimes Against Humanity" and was defined by the Tribunal, under Article 6 (c), in the Charter.

> CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war; or

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219 Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., p. 441.

persecution on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of domestic law of the country where perpetrated.[220]

Of the many brutalities and crimes attributed to the Nazi regime, none could compare with their policy of extermination against the Jews. Ribbentrop, although he asserted again and again that he was not anti-Semitic, supported and encouraged the Nazis in their handling of the Jewish question.

The most effective way to handle the Jewish question, according to the Nazi records, was through the use of a concentration camp. The French prosecution introduced into the courtroom a large map, on which each of the concentration camps was marked by a red mark, one of these was near Ribbentrop's home at Fuschl--Mauthausen camp which reportedly had around 100,000 internees. Ribbentrop contended that prior to his internment, he had only known of three camps: Dachau, Orahienburg, and Theresienstadt--the latter which he describes as "an old people's home for Jews."[221] Ribbentrop explained to the British prosecutor that even though all these camps existed, that one was near his home, and that he had heard of three camps: ". . . These things were kept absolutely secret and we heard here, for the very first time, what went on in them. Nobody knew anything about them. . . ."[222] During an interrogation session earlier, Ribbentrop had explained that: "One heard occasionally the talk that there were things going on which were not in order, and so on, but this was so much closed up that one really never heard anything definite about it. It was entirely closed up, and I think very many other people can confirm that to you. I heard vague rumors, and things like that, but we never heard anything definite of what was really going on."[223] Ribbentrop admitted that he knew people were put to hard labor, but firmly denied having any knowledge of the extermination program. He defined a concentration camp for an American interrogator as, ". . .a con-

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[220] NCAA, I, p. 5.

[221] Testimony of Ribbentrop (1 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 387-389.

[222] Ibid., p. 389.

[223] Interrogation of Ribbentrop by Justice Robert H. Jackson, USOCC, (5 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B. pp. 1231; 1255-1256; 1190-1191.

centration camp to me was--my conception of what I always figured out--people put in there in order--I mean, working like, let us say, like a prison--but some sort of a prison."[224] However, his testimony was rather flimsy, since clippings from American newspapers were sent regularly to the Foreign Office both prior to and during the war. It was not until the Russians captured the camp at Maidanek in Poland, late in 1944, that Ribbentrop claimed he had found out anything about the concentration camps. Ribbentrop's only answer for the lack of his knowledge about the concentration camps was that the whole affair was so completely hushed up "to an extent that was hardly believable to you." Ribbentrop even claimed in one instance that a boy on the street or a porter in a hotel knew more about the domestic situation than he, since he was working 14, 16, and 18 hours a day on "foreign political questions."[225] The question was also raised as to whether or not Hitler had ordered the extermination policy to be carried out in the concentration camps. Ribbentrop's answers on this question were quite interesting, for if Hitler controlled everything concerning policy then he must have ordered these measures, but Ribbentrop refused to believe that Hitler could have done such a thing.

Q. . . . Either Hitler was not responsible for everything that went on or he was.

A. Responsible, of course, but whether he knew that or not, I don't know.

Q. Not only that he knew it but ordered it?

A. I don't know. I can't imagine it.

Q. I am not talking about your imagination. I am saying, using that assumption, assuming that to be true, assuming there were two million Jews killed in concentration camps in Germany, whether sick or well, could that have been done without Hitler's orders?

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[224] Interrogation by Justice Robert H. Jackson, USOCC, (5 October 1945), Ibid., p. 1234.

[225] Ibid., p. 1190.

A. It is very difficult to answer that. I really don't know.

Q. What is so difficult about it?

A. He must have known it but whether he ordered it--

Q. Could anybody else have ordered it without getting authority from Hitler for such a program?

A. It is hard to believe.

Q. Isn't it a fact that Hitler must have ordered it?

A. I don't know.

Q. If you don't know, it certainly destroys your theory that it was a one-man government.

A. It certainly was a one-man government. That is certainly true.

Q. If you stand by that, then there is no other answer you can give to that question except that he did order it?

A. It is very difficult for me to believe that. That he ordered that? Things were done in a queer way sometimes.[226]

That Ribbentrop really refused to believe that Hitler could have ordered the exterminations in the concentration camps was brought out again in a conversation with Dr. Gilbert: ". . . I can't conceive of Hitler ordering such things. I can't believe that he knew about it. He had a hard side, I know--but I believed in him with all my heart. He could really be so tender. I was willing to do anything for him."[227] In the last analysis, it must have been Heinrich Himmler who ordered such things, said Ribbentrop, Hitler simply could not have done so. Ribbentrop's answers to the concentration camp question were very weak. Such things as a concentration camp being similar to a prison was totally unrealistic; and his comment about the camp at Theresienstadt being "an old people's home for Jews" was too much for anyone to accept. Did Ribbentrop know of the concentration camps and their policies? The answer to this question seems to be in two parts. He himself admitted that he knew the camps existed; what seems apparent is that he did not know exactly on what scale. It seems

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[226] Interrogation of Ribbentrop (10 September 1945), Ibid., p1207.

[227] Conversation between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop, Gilbert, op. cit., p. 89.

it was this large scale extermination within the camps that disturbed him, since he was never quoted as being against this policy until after 1944.

With regard to Ribbentrop and the Jewish question, the Tribunal had ample evidence at its disposal for a conviction. Ribbentrop remarked to Dr. Gilbert one evening that, "Oh, I may have made certain remarks agreeing with the policy--after all, I was working for an anti-Semitic government. --But I have never myself been anti-Semitic."[228] The evidence conclusively proved that he had done more than make remarks "agreeing with the policy." A telegram sent by the United States Ambassador in England, Kennedy, to the State Department in 1938 portrayed Ribbentrop as being an ardent anti-Semite.

> During the day we had a telephone call from Berenger's office in Paris. We were told that the matter of refugees had been raised by Bonnet [French Foreign Minister] in his conversation with von Ribbentrop. The result was very bad. Ribbentrop, when pressed, had said to Bonnet that the Jews in Germany without exception were pick-pockets, murderers and thieves. The German Government had therefore decided to assimilate them with the criminal elements of the population. The property which they had acquired illegally would be taken from them. They would be forced to live in districts frequented by the criminal classes. They would be under police observation like other criminals. They would be forced to report to the police as other criminals were obligated to do. . . .[229]

With the opening of hostilities, Ribbentrop's attitude hardened toward the Jews. Under cross-examination by the French prosecutor M. Faure, Ribbentrop was implicated in the removal of Jews from Denmark for the purpose of extermination.[230] Ribbentrop replied to the charges that such a document was "pure fantasy." Ribbentrop seemed to be quite heavily involved in the solving of the Jewish question within the occupied territories however. This was confirmed by a note on Ribbentrop's instructions which was sent from Undersecretary of State Martin Luther to the State Secretary von Weizsaecker.

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[228] Ibid., p. 324.

[229] Telegram from American Ambassador Kennedy to the Secretary of State, (8 December 1938), Document L-205, NCAA, VII, p. 1042.

[230] Testimony of Ribbentrop, cross-examined by M. Faure of France, (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 396-397; defense document Rib-320, TMWC, XL, pp. 164-167.

> The RAM [Reich Foreign Minister] has instructed me today by telephone to hasten as much as possible the evacuation of Jews from different countries in Europe since it is certain that Jews incite against us everywhere and must be made responsible for acts of sabotage and attacks. After a short lecture on the evacuations now in process in Slovakia, Croatia, Rumania and the occupied territories, the RAM has ordered that we are to approach the Bulgarian, Hungarian and Danish Governments with the goal of getting the evacuation started in these countries.
>
> In respect to the regulation of the Jewish question in Italy, the RAM has reserved further steps to himself. This question is to be discussed personally either at a conference between the Fuehrer and the Duce or between the RAM and Count Ciano.[231]

Ribbentrop's first response when confronted with such evidence was to avoid the issue by explaining the Fuehrer's plans on the subject. The Fuehrer, asserted Ribbentrop, intended to deport European Jews to Madagascar or North Africa; and Ribbentrop claimed that he had been ordered to ". . . Approach various governments with a view to encouraging the emigration of the Jews, if possible, and to remove all Jews from important government posts."[232] Such a scheme was apparently invented by the defendant in order to maintain his illusion of Hitler's not having ordered the extermination policy. Ribbentrop, who usually went into great detail on such trivial subjects, failed to explain how such a plan was to be executed when there was fighting in North Africa, and the British controlled the routes to Madagascar. Ribbentrop was also involved in attempts to solve the Jewish question in Vichy France as well as with Jews of Austrian or German descent residing in France. Copy No. 2 of a telegram from Ambassador Abetz was sent to Ribbentrop stating in part that: "The measures proposed above [expatriation] are to be considered as merely the first step toward the solution of the entire problem."[233] Ribbentrop's response to this evidence was that this was the first time he had seen this document as well as concluding that, "It probably represents one of the routine measures dealt with by the Foreign Office in the course of the day's work, but which were not submitted to me."[234]

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[231] Note from Luther to Weizsacher (24 September 1942), Document 3688-PS, NCAA, VI, p. 403; cited by M. Faure of France, TMWC, X, pp. 397-398.

[232] Testimony of Ribbentrop, cross-examined by M. Faure of France (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 398.

[233] Telegram from Abetz prepared in 19 copies (1 October 1940), Document EC-265, NCAA, VII, p. 375.

[234] Testimony of Ribbentrop, cross-examined by M. Faure of France (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 401.

The fact remained that the German Embassy played a significant role in the handling of the Jewish question. This fact was brought out at a conference in February 1943 between Ribbentrop, Mussolini, and Italian diplomats in Rome. After discussing the military situation, Ribbentrop was quoted as saying in part:

> Further, the Reich Foreign Minister dealt with the Jewish question. The Duce was aware that Germany took up a radical position on the question of the treatment of the Jews. As a result of the development of the war in Russia it had gained even greater clarity. All Jews had been transported from Germany and from the territories occupied in the East. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) knew that this measure was described as cruel, particularly by the enemies. But it was necessary, in order to carry the war through to a successful conclusion. It could still be called relatively mild, considering its enormous importance. Experience had taught that wherever there were Jews, no pacification took place. The Jews were the propagators of the Anglo-American news and of other rumors, and spread all around them such defeatism that one was forced to apply special measures against them, not only for general ideological considerations, but also for purely practical ones.
>
> France also had taken measures against the Jews [Ribbentrop stated in his testimony that such reports were not submitted to him], which were extremely useful. They were only temporary, because here too the final solution would be in the deportation of the Jews to the East.
>
> He (the Reich Foreign Minister) knew that in Italian military circles--just occasionally amongst German military people too--the Jewish problem was not sufficiently appreciated. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Referring to his discussions with Alfieri [Italian Ambassador to Germany], the Reich Foreign Minister stressed the fact that the Jew was Germany's and Italy's greatest enemy. The British were perhaps sometimes somehow still decent people.
>
> But the Jews hated National Socialist Germany and the Fascist-Italy fanatically. If one was to allow 100,000 Jews to remain in Germany or Italy or one of the territories occupied by them, then--with the Jews skill--this would be roughly equivalent to letting 100,000 Secret Service agents into one's country, giving them German nationality as camouflage and top of that equipping them with inexhaustible financial means.[235]

Ribbentrop explained to the Tribunal that there was a "large-scale" espionage system at work and he had said these things to Mussolini in order that he would adopt "suitable measures" to prevent the Jews from furnishing information to the Allies.

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[235] Conversation notes between the Reich Foreign Minister, the Duce, and in the presence of von Mackensen, Alfieri, and Bastianini (25 February 1943), Document D-734, NCAA, VII, pp. 189-190.

Ribbentrop's statements about the Jews as espionage agents for the Allies was soon overshadowed by his part in the Klessheim conference in April 1943. It was at this meeting between Hitler, Ribbentrop and the Hungarian Regent Horthy that the Jews were called "pure parasites" that "have to be killed so that no harm is caused by them."

> . . . He [Horthy] had so far been unable to master the black market. The Fuehrer replied that it was the fault of the Jews who considered hoarding and profiteering as their main sphere of activity even during a world war, in exactly the same way as in England sentences for rationing offenses and like now chiefly concerned Jews. To Horthy's counter-question as to what he should do with the Jews now that he had deprived them of almost all possibilities of livelihood, he could not kill them off--the Reich Foreign Minister declared that the Jews must either be exterminated or taken to concentration camps. There was no other possibility. . . . Where the Jews were left to themselves, as for instance in Poland, the most terrible misery and decay prevailed. They are pure parasites. In Poland this state of affairs had been fundamentally cleared up. If the Jews there did not want to work, they were shot. . . . They had to be treated like tuberculosis bacillae, with which a healthy body may become infected. . . . Nations which did not rid themselves of Jews, perished. . . .[236]

Under the cross-examination by the French prosecutor, Ribbentrop replied that the minutes of this conference had misquoted him. He had only told Horthy that Hungary must do something about this problem, some centralization was required because Hitler was deeply concerned over reports of the Jews in Budapest--and Himmler had volunteered to handle the situation if Hitler would allow it. He therefore denied having said that the Jews "were either to be exterminated or sent to the concentration camps." According to Ribbentrop such a phrase "was 100 percent contrary to my personal convictions."[237] Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt, who had signed the minutes of this conference, testified that Horthy had said, 'But what am I supposed to do? Shall I perhaps beat the Jews to death?'..Whereupon there was rather

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[236]Notes on the discussion between the Fuehrer and the Hungarian Regent Horthy at Klessheim Castle (17 April 1943), Document D-736, Ibid., p. 191.

[237]Testimony of Ribbentrop, cross-examined by M. Faure of France (2 April 1946), TMWC, X, p. 410; Ibid., pp. 409-412; see also the account given by Dr. Gilbert for a conversation with the defendant (30-31 March 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 229.

a lull, and the Foreign Minister then turned to Horthy and said, 'Yes, there are only two possibilities--either that, or to intern the Jews.'[238] The interesting thing to note was that Schmidt had been called as a defense witness, and had testified that Ribbentrop had indeed given Horthy only two choices. Such a turn of events was to frequently plague the defense's case for Ribbentrop. In addition to his obviously anti-Semitic attitude brought out by this document, it also indicated that Ribbentrop was quite familiar with the concentration camp idea for solving the Jewish problem. Ribbentrop refused to admit that he had really meant concentration camp, but stated that what he had actually meant was that the Jews in Budapest were to be "concentrated," which was not the same thing! However, the same Schmidt who had testified as a defense witness that Ribbentrop had said the incriminating words to Horthy, also stated to the British prosecutor Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe that Ribbentrop had sent one member of the Foreign Office staff to a concentration camp in 1943 for telling Himmler that he, Ribbentrop, should be replaced.[239]

Another incident which implicated Ribbentrop in the anti-Semitic movement was the proposed Anti-Jewish Congress which was to be held in Cracow, Poland. Ribbentrop's name was listed as an "honorary member." The document also indicated that the responsibility for contacting "prominent European people" was handled by the Foreign Office. Adolf von Steengracht, in response to a question on this subject from Dr. Horn, replied that:

> Regarding the convocation of an anti-Jewish congress I know something; I believe our liaison man with Hitler informed us that, on a suggestion of Bormman, Hitler had ordered the calling of an anti-Jewish congress through the Rosenberg office. Ribbentrop did not want to believe this; but nevertheless he had to accept this too as true, once he had spoken with our liaison man. Then, since on the basis of this decision we could do nothing more officially to prevent the thing, we nevertheless worked our way into it, and we made efforts by a policy of hesitation, delay, and obstruction to render the convocation impossible. . . .[240]

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[238]Testimony of Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 203-204; also, Richmond (Virginia) Times-Dispatch, March 28, 1946, p. 4, col. 3.

[239]Testimony of Dr. Paul Otto Schmidt (28 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 213-214.

[240]Testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (26 March 1946), Ibid., pp. 115-116.

The opening session of this congress had been set for July 11, 1944, but the Allied landings in June caused the congress to be abandoned.[241] Ribbentrop summed up his position by telling the French prosecutor, "I repeatedly said at the very beginning of my examination, that in that sense I have never been anti-Semitic. But I was a faithful follower of Adolf Hitler."[242] He was not anti-Semitic, the government was.

It seems quite clear that the testimony on the extermination of the Jews as well as other evidence introduced before the Tribunal on the German atrocities against them affected Ribbentrop very much. On the afternoon of November 29, a film showing the scenes at one of the concentration camps was shown and Ribbentrop closed his eyes and looked away. He later told Dr. Gilbert that, "Hitler couldn't even have looked at such a film himself.--I don't understand.--I don't even think that Himmler could have ordered such things.--I don't understand."[243] Later on in the trial, Colonel Rudolf Franz Ferdinand Hoess, Commandant at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, testified that Himmler had ordered him to begin the extermination of the Jews in 1941--under direct orders from Hitler. Ribbentrop was stupefied. Dr. Gilbert recorded Ribbentrop's reactions in his diary.

> Ribbentrop held his head in his hands and repeated in a descending whisper, '--41--'41--'41. --My God! --Did Hoess say in '41?'
>
> Yes, transports started arriving right after he got the Fuehrerbefehl [Fuehrer's order]. From all over occupied Europe--men, women, and children who had been living a perfectly peaceful family life. They were undressed, led into the gas chambers and murdered by the thousands. Then the gold rings and teeth were removed from the corpses, the hair was cut off the women's heads, and the bodies were burned in the crematory--
>
> 'Stop! Stop! Herr Doktor--I cannot bear it! --All those years--a man to whom children came so trustingly and lovingly. It must have been fanatic madness--there is no doubt now that Hitler ordered it? I thought even up to now that perhaps Himmler, late in the war, under some pretext--.

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[242] Testimony of Ribbentrop (2 April 1946), Ibid., p. 412.

[243] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 49.

But '41, he said? My God! My God!'

What did you expect? You were all making reckless statements about solving the Jewish problem. There is no reasonable limit to human hatred when you have whipped it up to such a fury as you Nazi leaders did.

'But we never dreamed it would end like this. We only thought they had too much influence--that we could solve the problem with a quota system or that we would transport them to the East or Madagascar. . . '.[244]

Ribbentrop was by now completely demoralized. He had tried his best to perhaps pass off such brutalities to Himmler, but now his symbol of Germany was nothing more than a mass murderer.

The persecution of the Jews was not the only example of a religious problem involving the Foreign Office and von Ribbentrop. The Vatican also sent complaints, both verbal and written, to the German Foreign Office regarding the treatment of priests and nuns in the occupied territories. Ribbentrop's excuse for not seeing the harsh measures carried out against the Roman Catholic Church was that he was busy working 14 to 18 hours a day on foreign political matters; and although such reports were received by the Foreign Office, this was in most cases an "internal matter."[245] The fact that these protests were from the Secretary of State at the Vatican didn't seem to make any difference. Yet the Church's protests to the German government were handled through the German Embassy in Rome and were continually sent throughout the war.[246] Ribbentrop on one occasion in 1943 admitted in a letter to the Apostolic Nuncio in Berlin that one of the Vatican's protests had been received, translated by the language department for State-Secretary von Weizsaecker, and was also the

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[244] Discussion between Dr. Gilbert and Ribbentrop (19-22 April 1946), Ibid., pp. 283-284.

[245] Interrogation of Ribbentrop (5 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, p. 1235.

[246] See notes from the Vatican to the German Embassy: Document 3261-PS (18 January 1942), Document 3262-PS (27 June 1942), Document 3263-P.S (8 October 1942), Document 3264-PS (2 March 1943), Ibid., V. pp. 1009-1029.

subject of special instructions from the Foreign Office.[247] But these special instructions were to do nothing about any future protests, even to the point of not opening the communications themselves.[248] Ribbentrop himself recalled:

> The policy towards the churches was--I only overlooked it in a large way, and in a way because I was not very much informed about internal matters, but I saw it when it came through the Nuncio, or we heard it occasionally through the connections we had with Protestant churches in foreign countries, and so on. The general policy was in that direction in order that the tendency--the Fuehrer was of the conviction, I would like to put it that way, that the churches--and this was also his conviction about the Jews--in his big struggle which he always considered his main struggle, that was always his conception he had in his mind. There were disintegrating elements in the fight of the nation states against the dissolution through communism. That was the big conception which the Fuehrer had, and everything probably was based on this one big conception always, and at the end of the war he focused always entirely on this point and he was of the opinion that the churches also were a part--who were in the struggle against the dissolution of the German national people which was coming from the East--would play a part of weakening the German peoples in this mental and probably also physical fight. That is the way I would like to put it.[249]

What Ribbentrop's rather disjointed answer suggested was of course that the Catholic Church and the Communists were working together in order to bring about the downfall of Germany. This view, he later stated, was only what the Fuehrer had told him, but he himself was not of this opinion.[250] In other words, so long as Hitler had said that this was the case he had been willing to go along with it, now that the war was over however, he no longer believed what Hitler had told him. It was not so much a question of what to believe, as when to believe. Thus with the persecution committed against the Catholic Church, Ribbentrop could not argue that he had no knowledge of it as he had done with regard to the Jewish question. Under interrogation he had in fact admitted that he had heard of priests being sent to concentration camps, but added that he had tried to help the situation

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[247] Letter from Ribbentrop to Mgr. Cesare Orsenigo (25 May 1943), Annex No. 3 to Document 3269-PS, Ibid., pp. 1044-1046.

[248] Testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (27 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 145; notes of the Secretariat of State of His Holiness, the Vatican, (15-17 March 1943), Document 3269-PS, NCAA, V. p. 1041.

[249] Interrogation of Ribbentrop (5 October 1945), NCAA, Supplement B, pp. 1232-1233.

[250] Ibid., p. 1237.

by attempting to have some of them released. There was simply too much evidence against him for him to deny it. Ribbentrop was reported also to have attempted to induce Hitler to relax pressures on the Churches, but Hitler had refused to consider it.[251]

III. RIBBENTROP AND THE CRIMES

Ribbentrop's part in the committing of War Crimes and the Crimes Against Humanity was that he actively participated in the former, and encouraged--or did nothing to prevent--the latter of the charges. Ribbentrop emphatically denied throughout the trial ever having had any knowledge of what the conditions were in the concentration camps. He also insisted that although he himself was not anti-Semitic, he had had to work for a government that was, and therefore had to make in the course of his work certain anti-Semitic pronouncements and to pay lip service to Hitler's policy. The fact is that the Reich Foreign Office played a significant role in the furthering of the anti-Semitism policy--for example a memorandum from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued in 1938 was entitled, "The Jewish Question as a factor in German Foreign Policy in the year 1938."[252] Ribbentrop explained to his counselor about this circular that:

> I saw this circular here for the first time. Here are the facts: There was a section in the Foreign Office which was concerned with Party matters and questions of ideology. That department undoubtedly co-operated with the competent departments of the Party. That was not the Foreign Office itself. . . .[253]

Although he therefore denied ever having seen the documents before, he concluded by stating that he was willing to take "full responsibility for it." Yet other documents also had him within the movement of creating and strengthening anti-Jewish information abroad, as late as 1944 an "Anti-Jewish

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[251] Testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (26-27 March 1946), TMWC, X, pp. 115, 145.

[252] This document was quite long and detailed. It contained however many of the phrases Ribbentrop was later quoted as saying under different circumstances. It is doubtful that such an extremely controversial circular would have been issued to the Embassies without the Foreign Minister's approval. See text. Document 3358-PS (25 January 1939), NCAA, VI, pp. 88-95.

[253] Testimony of Ribbentrop (30 March 1946), TMWC, X. p. 301.

Action Abroad" program was set up under the direction of the Reich Foreign Minister.[254] This evidence, in addition to the documents already examined, was quite conclusive. Although Ribbentrop had not actually exterminated anyone on religious or racial grounds himself, he was involved in the Nazi attempt to spread their anti-Semitism abroad and refused to take any action toward preventing the atrocities committed as either War Crimes or Crimes Against Humanity. Ribbentrop was very definitely guilty on Counts Three and Four of the Indictment.

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[254] Secret circular from the Foreign Office to German diplomats (28 April 1944), Document 3319-PS, NCAA, VI, pp. 4-38.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Sir Hartley Shawcross summed up the British prosecution's case against Joachim von Ribbentrop by stating that, "No one in history has so debauched diplomacy. No one has been guilty of meaner treachery."[255] Justice Robert H. Jackson referred to the defendant in his final statement as, ". . . the salesman of deception, who was detailed to pour wine on the troubled waters of suspicion by preaching the gospel of limited and peaceful intentions."[256] M. Auguste Champetier De Ribes, Chief Prosecutor for France, declared Ribbentrop "one of the mainsprings of the Party and State machine."[257] General Rudenko of the Soviet Union was even less complimentary than his colleagues: "Ribbentrop was considered, not without reason, as the most qualified person for the realization of this criminal conspiracy. . . . And Hitler was not mistaken in his choice, for Ribbentrop fully justified his confidence."[258] Thus the four prosecutors concluded their case against the defendant von Ribbentrop, and after examination of the evidence, it seems that their statements were correct.

I. THE CASE AGAINST JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP

The defendant willingly and deliberately assisted in the rise to power of the National Socialist Party, which he had joined in 1932. His applications for membership in the SS showed that his enthusiasm was anything but "honorary" as he claimed under cross-examination. In his various capacities

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[255] Final statement of the British prosecution (27 July 1946), TMWC, XIX, p. 516.

[256] Final statement of the American prosecution (26 July 1946), Ibid., p. 415.

[257] Final statement of the French prosecution (29 July 1946), Ibid., p. 551.

[258] Final statement of the Soviet prosecution (29 July 1946), Ibid., pp. 587-588.

as Foreign Policy Advisor to Hitler, Delegate for Disarmament Questions, Minister Plenipotentiary at Large, Ambassador to England, and Reich Foreign Minister he acted with the express purpose of furthering the aims of Adolf Hitler. According to Ribbentrop Germany was not arming for any aggressive intentions, but in order to negotiate from a position of strength. His role was, however, to talk of peace while Hitler prepared for wars of aggression.

In addition to his part in the planning of a Common Plan or Conspiracy, Count One, he also participated in the committing of Crimes Against Peace, Count Two. While still serving in his capacity as German Ambassador to England, he had sent Hitler a memorandum indicating that, "A change of the status quo in the East in the German sense can only be carried out by force."[259] He had only been appointed Foreign Minister eight days when the Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg was forced into the spider's web at Berchtesgaden. Ribbentrop then lied to the British and French governments by telling them that no ultimatum had been given to Austria, even though Ribbentrop was reported to have read it to the Austrian Chancellor from a typewritten page. The excuse given by the defendant was the imminent danger of civil war within Austria, and Germany only entered the country in order to preserve order. When Austria was finally incorporated into the Reich, Ribbentrop's signature was affixed to the document. He also palyed a major part in securing possible German allies in case of a general European war over the Sudetenland, as well as using the Foreign Office as a base of operations in support of Konrad Henlein. After the Munich Pact he continued to work toward the final solution of the Czech problem by inducing the Slovaks to rebel, and he was present at the conference with President Hacha on 14-15 March, 1939, at which time Hacha was threatened with invasion at 6 o'clock that morning. Ribbentrop also signed the law incorporating the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia into the Reich. In addition to covering actual German intentions with the

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[259] Very Confidential Personal Only Memo for the Fuehrer (2 January 1938), Document TC-75, NCAA, VIII, p. 513.

prospects of peaceful negotiation over the Danzig and Corridor problems, he was present at the conference on 12 August 1939, at which time German war plans were explained to Italy--who was encouraged to join in the plot. Thus all of the defendant's attempts at negotiation were merely attempts to get the British to abandon their guarantee to Poland --not the settlement of the dispute itself. After the opening of hostilities, he issued the notes to the countries of Europe as their neutrality was flagrantly violated by Hitler--Denmark, Norwar, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Greece, and Yugoslavia. Ribbentrop's only explanation was his theory of "preventive intervention." This action on the part of Germany, and Ribbentrop, was in open violation of many existing international treaties, assurances, and guarantees which Ribbentrop himself had signed. He also was involved in the negotiations with Marshal Antonescu of Rumania in gaining permission for German troops to cross through on their way to attack Russia. After the attack had begun on Soviet Russia, Ribbentrop tried to enlist the support of Japan, who was to open hostilities against both Russia and England--and ultimately the United States.

The defendant von Ribbentrop was also convicted on Count Three of the Indictment, War Crimes. It was his position that any Allied airmen who attacked the civilian population instead of a definite military target were to be lynched. The Reich Foreign Office clearly recognized that they would have to break international law, but they were willing to violate it regardless. The Foreign Office was also involved in the murder of a high ranking French officer as well. He participated in the plundering and looting of cultural treasures within the occupied territories under the Special Task Battalion and diplomatic officers within these areas also aided in this task. And, he urged the governments in the occupied territories to use "harsh measures" in combating local hostility to the new government.

The most vicious crime for which the Nazi era will be remembered was Count Four, Crimes Against Humanity. Ribbentrop, through the Foreign Office officials in Vichy France and Denmark,

was held directly responsible for the anti-Semitic activities they used in the occupied countries. It has been proved during the trial that von Ribbentrop was informed about the practices used in these occupied territories, and yet helped in the execution of such practices. In 1942, he informed the diplomatic staffs in the occupied territories to aid in the deportation of the Jews to the East, which meant the concentration camps. In 1943, he discussed the Jewish question with Mussolini and protested against the Italians' practice of allowing Jews to remain within their territories. In 1944, he told the Hungarian Regent Horthy that the Jews were either to be exterminated or sent to the concentration camps. Yet, he claimed throughout the trial that he had known nothing about the activities within the concentration camps, when in his capacity as Foreign Minister other governments had repeatedly sent protests against such practices even before the war had started.

Dr. Martin Horn, Ribbentrop's counselor, began his summary for the defense on the afternoon of July 5, and concluded his presentation the following Monday morning, July 8, 1946. Dr. Horn, after discussing the many complications involved in defining such a term as "aggressive war," then proceeded to show how the injustice caused by the Treaty of Versailles had meant that Germany must seek the self-determination of the German people by means other than working with the Great Powers. Ribbentrop, asserted his counselor, therefore had done as any other patriotic "well-to-do man of nationalist leanings" would have done. The Austrians were "fertile soil" which the National Socialists merely cultivated, soil which had been "mutilated" by the Treaty of St. Germain. Dr. Horn next explained the Czech situation, which had come as a "surprise" to Ribbentrop, and that this action consolidated the virtual control over foreign policy matters in the hands of Adolf Hitler. He then quickly passed to the Polish crisis and the defendant Ribbentrop's last attempts at negotiation over the dispute; but it was too late, he added, because England, France and Poland "were determined to take action this time." Ribbentrop's actions in the Low Countries were justified because the defense's evidence had proved that these countries had not maintained their neutrality--they had had staff talks with England and France. The defendant, he asserted, had also never been informed about the pending military operations until immediately

before the operation itself; but once such an operation had begun, Ribbentrop continued to work for the good of the individual countries involved. However, continued Dr. Horn, this was deprived him in most cases because the military and interior officials controlled the direction of policies within these areas. It was Hitler who was responsible for the conduct of German foreign policy, not the defendant von Ribbentrop. The latter simply performed certain "tasks" within the government, there was only one expression of will in the German State--the Fuehrer's. Dr. Horn finished his presentation by stating that indeed Russia had "attacked" Japan in the last days of the war, so how can Ribbentrop be condemned by a court on which one of the countries sitting in judgement is itself really an "Aggressor?" Briefly stated, according to his counselor, Ribbentrop was a victim of circumstance.[260]

Psychologist Dr. Gilbert recorded that although Ribbentrop was satisfied with his counselor's defense on the question of his foreign policy, he was not entirely pleased with Dr. Horn's statement on his relationship to the Jewish question, which considering Ribbentrop's ambigious position was quite understandable.[261] In his final statement before the Tribunal, Ribbentrop sought to clarify his position, and of course take another opportunity to attack the source of Germany's problems. On August 31, 1946, he addressed the Tribunal and said in part:

> This Trial was to be conducted for the purpose of discovering the historical truth. From the point of view of German foreign policy I can only say:
>
> This Trial will go down in history as a model example of how, while appealing to hitherto unknown legal formulas and the spirit of fairness, one can evade the cardinal problems of 25 years of the gravest human history.

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[260] Summary for the defendant Joachim von Ribbentrop by Dr. Martin Horn (5-8 July 1946), TMWC, XVII, pp. 555-603.

[261] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 405.

If the roots of our trouble lie in the Treaty of Versailles--and they do lie there--was it really to the purpose to prevent a discussion about a treaty which the intelligent men even among its authors had characterized as the source of future trouble, while the wisest were already predicting from which of the faults of Versailles a new world war would arise?

I have devoted more than twenty years of my life to the elimination of this evil, with the result that foreign statesmen who know about this today write in their affidavits that they did not believe me. They ought to have written that in the interests of their own country they were not prepared to believe me. I am held responsible for the conduct of a foreign policy which was determined by another. I knew only this much of it, that it never concerned itself with plans of a world domination, but rather, for example, with the elimination of the consequences of Versailles and with the food problems of the German people.

If I deny that this German foreign policy planned and prepared for a war of aggression, that is not an excuse on my part. The truth of this is proved by the strength that we developed in the course of the Second World War and the fact how weak we were at the beginning of this war.

History will believe us when I say that we would have prepared a war of aggression immeasureably better if we had actually intended one. What we intended was to look after our elementary necessities of life, in the same way that England looked after her own interests in order to make one-fifth of the world subject to her, and in the same way that the United States brought an entire continent and Russia brought the largest inland territory of the world under their hegemony. The only difference between the policies of these countries as compared with ours is that we demanded parcels of land such as Danzig and the Corridor which were taken from us against all rights, whereas the other powers are accustomed thinking only in terms of continents.

Before the establishment of the Charter of this Tribunal, even the signatory powers of the London Agreement must have been different views about international law and the policy than they have today. When I went to see Marshal Stalin at Moscow in 1939, he did not discuss with me the possibility of a peaceful settlement of the German-Polish conflict within the framework of the Kellog-Briand Pact; but rather he hinted that if in addition to half of Poland and the Baltic countries he did not receive Lithuania and the harbor of Libau, I might as well return home.

. . . . . .

Now what has actually been proved in this Trial about the criminal character of German foreign policy? That out of more than 300 defense documents [322] which were submitted 150 were rejected without cogent reasons. That the files of the enemy, and even of the Germans, were inaccessible to the Defense. That Churchill's friendly hint to me that if Germany became too strong she would be destroyed is declared irrelevant in judging the motives of German foreign policy before this forum. A revolution does not become comprehensible if it is considered from the point of view of a conspiracy.

Fate made me one of the exponents of this revolution. I deplore the atrocious crimes which became known to me here and which besmirch this revolution. But I cannot measure all of these according to puritanical standards, and the less so since I have seen that even the enemy, in spite of their total victory, was neither able nor willing to prevent atrocities of the most extensive kind.

> One can regard the theory of the conspiracy as one will, but from the point of view of the critical observer it is only a make-shift solution. Anybody who has held a decisive position in the Third Reich knows that it simply represents a historical falsehood, and the author of the Charter of this Tribunal has only proved with his invention from what background he derived his thinking.
>
> I might just as well assert that the signatory powers of this Charter had formed a conspiracy for the suppression of the primary needs of a highly developed, capable, and courageous nation. When I look back upon my actions and my desires, then I can conclude only this: The only thing of which I consider myself guilty before my people--not before this Tribunal--is that my aspirations in foreign policy remained without success.[262]

On the second to the last day of the Nuremberg Trials, Joachim von Ribbentrop still believed that the only real "crime" of the Nazi era was defeat. His final statement before the Tribunal was simply a confused repetition of the same arguments, lies and analogies he had used before.

II. THE SENTENCE AND RIBBENTROP'S LAST DAYS

On the afternoon of October 1, 1946, the President of the Tribunal, Lord Justice Sir Geoffrey Lawrence, read the defendant Ribbentrop his sentence: "Defendant Joachim von Ribbentrop, on the Counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging."[263] Ribbentrop was of course convicted on all Four Counts. The Tribunal had earlier rejected the defense's contention that since no sovereign power had made aggressive war a crime, it was engaging in ex post facto law in handing out punishment. The Tribunal however based its contention on the fact that even though the Hague Convention had not designated violations of its provisions as "crimes," acts which had been outlawed were recognized by the Tribunal as such. Also, the defense's contention that heads of state were freed from responsibility under international law

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[262] Final statement of Joachim von Ribbentrop (31 August 1946), TMWC, XXII, pp. 373-375.

[263] Ibid., I, p. 365.

was similarly rejected by the Tribunal. The result was that Joachim von Ribbentrop was sentenced to be executed within two weeks. Ribbentrop's reaction was reported by Newsweek correspondents James P. O'Donnel and Toni Howard:

> In the worst shape of any man in the dock. Looks as if a noose literally was already around his neck. Even coughs with a shudder. His head has taken on a cadaverous appearance and his earphones, which once fitted, now appear about to drop off at any moment. He is continually sweating under the strong light and squinting in a tired fashion.[264]

His counsel made one last attempt for reprieve and sent an appeal to the Allied Control Council on October 2; however, it was rejected on October 10. American Prison Psychologist Dr. Gustavo Gilbert was in Ribbentrop's cell when he returned after hearing his sentence.

> Ribbentrop wandered in, aghast, and started to walk around the cell in a daze, whispering, 'Death! --Death! Now I won't be able to write my beautiful memoirs. Tsk! tsk! So much hatred! Tsk! tsk!' He sat down, a completely broken man, and stared into space. . . .[265]

Here was a man who had just been sentenced to die for his participation in the greatest war of human history bemoaning the fact that he wouldn't be able to write his memoirs! It was not so much out-of-keeping with his character as one might suppose, for he had yet to be concerned with anything of real importance. In the days prior to his execution, Ribbentrop was reported to have suffered from severe headaches and insomnia.[266] After a supper of potato salad, sausage, black bread, and tea the prisoners were returned to their cells still not knowing their exact time of execution--each prisoner was notified only one hour prior to it. Since Hermann Goering had cheated the hangman by taking poison the night before, Joachim von Ribbentrop was the first to be called--a possible source of comfort to a man who had tried to be "first" all his life. Whitney R. Harris, a member of the United States Chief of Counsel Staff, recorded the execution of von Ribbentrop.

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[264] James P. O'Donnel and Toni Howard, "Inside the Courtroom: How the Nazis Heard Their Fate," Newsweek, October 7, 1946, p. 49.

[265] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 432.

[266] New York Times, October 16, 1946, p. 13, col. 4.

At eleven minutes past one o'clock in the morning of October 16, the white-faced former Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, stepped through the door into the execution chamber and faced the gallows on which he and the others condemned to die by the Tribunal were to be hanged. His hands were unmanacled and bound behind him with a leather throng. Ribbentrop walked to the foot of the thirteen stairs leading to the gallows platform. He was asked to state his name, and answered weakly, 'Joachim von Ribbentrop.' Flanked by two guards and followed by the chaplain he slowly mounted the stairs. On the platform he saw the hangman with the noose of thirteen coils and the hangman's assistant with the black hood. He stood on the trap, and his feet were bound with a webbed army belt. Asked to state any last words, he said: 'God protect Germany. God have mercy on my soul. My last wish is that German unity be maintained, that understanding between East and West be realized and that there be peace for the world.' The trap was sprung, and Ribbentrop died at 1:29.[267]

III. JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP IN RETROSPECT

Joachim von Ribbentrop was an interesting case study in the Hitler era of German history. By the time of his trial however, he was a broken man, both physically and mentally, the fall of Hitler's Third Reich had simply been too much for his already poor health to endure. Then he was captured and tried by the Allies on having committed various "crimes." The trial itself soon had demoralized him even further. His witnesses for the defense were a great disappointment: for example, Adolf von Steengracht admitted to the American prosecutor Col. Amen that certain anti-Jewish activities by the Foreign Office must have been sent to Ribbentrop--because, asserted the prosecutor, if Ribbentrop hadn't ordered such thing, then he, Steengracht, must have. Of course Steengracht, in order to save his own skin, had to admit that since such a policy was "a basic matter it was put directly before Herr von Ribbentrop."[268] Another of the defense witnesses, Fraulein Blank, his personnel secretary, remarked that once Hitler gave an order Ribbentrop slavishly followed it. If he followed Hitler's orders, then he was responsible for them. At the beginning of his trial,

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[267] Whitney R. Harris, Tyranny On Trial, The Evidence At Nuremberg (Dallas, Texas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1954), p. 486; see also the account in New York Times, October 16, 1946, p. 19, col. 2.

[268] See the testimony of Adolf von Steengracht (27 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 132-135.

Ribbentrop had told psychologist Kelly that he had clashed with Hitler only once, in 1941, over the question of a medal and had given his oath that he would never do such a thing again; but by the end of the trial, he had changed his story so that he now told psychologist Gilbert that he had in fact had serious disagreements with Hitler on the Jewish question on at least four or five different occasions. If his mind was in the same condition as his cell, then it too was a chaotic mess. Thus, the witnesses called to testify on his behalf helped put the noose around his neck. However it was the documents introduced by the prosecution staffs that proved his "guilt"--the Anglo-American staffs primarily handled the preparation of the evidence for Counts One and Two, and the French and Soviet staffs handled the preparation of Counts Three and Four. Ribbentrop himself was so confused that his first attorney quit the case. Dr. Fritz Sauter explained to Dr. Gilbert the reasons behind his decision to leave Ribbentrop in January 1946.

> . . . He [Ribbentrop] drove me crazy with his double-talk! First he had to have this Gauleiter as an absolutely indispensible witness--then he decided after all the trouble in getting him that he'd better not have him after all. First he would say he said so-and-so at a meeting, and then he would say he wasn't even there.--I am glad I washed my hands of the whole thing.[269]

As the trial progressed, and his guilt became more and more conclusive, Ribbentrop gradually reached the point of complete confusion.

Was Joachim von Ribbentrop insane? It would seem so. It was an insanity that culminated in complete disillusionment and utter despair, and in which truth for him was a state of mind. Ribbentrop's only remaining ray of hope was his faith and devotion to Adolf Hitler; but even this final image had been shattered by the testimony of Auschwitz Commandant Hoess, and also the fact that Hitler's Will gave the position of Reich Foreign Minister to von Seyss-Inquart. The evening of

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[269] Conversation between Dr. Gustavo Gilbert and Dr. Fritz Sauter (24 March 1946), Gilbert, op. cit., p. 218.

von Steengracht's testimony, Dr. Gilbert again visited Ribbentrop in his cell and described his condition.

> Ribbentrop was just a tired old man awaiting death. He spoke in a subdued monotone. 'Ah, well, it makes no difference.--We are only living shadows--the remains of a dead era--an era that died with Hitler. Whether a few of us live another 10 or 20 years, it makes no difference. What could I do anyway, even if I were released, which, of course, will not happen. The old era died with Hitler--we do not fit into the present world anymore. On April 30th Hitler's suicide I should have taken the consequences. Yes, it is a great tragedy--a great tragedy, that is certain.--What can one do now.'[270]

This was a different portrait of the man who had offered in 1945 to help rebuild Europe now that the war was over--evidently Ribbentrop considered himself another Talleyrand. In a letter addressed to Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden--which was not dated, but written after Hitler's death and before the surrender on 8 May 1945--he indicated that he considered it his task to "inform" England of how things stood in the present world situation.[271] The text of most of the letter is the reported notes on a conversation between himself and Hitler, sometime late in April. Undoubtedly the whole thing was a creation of Ribbentrop's imagination--even he admitted that he had tried to get to Berlin in order to die with his Fuehrer but hadn't succeeded. But this letter really gives an insight into Ribbentrop's naivete and the utter absurdity of his confused concepts on foreign politics. Imagine, the Reich Foreign Minister offering to help in the reconstruction of Europe as late as the week of the German unconditional surrender! During June, 1946, Ribbentrop made another attempt to impress someone with his knowledge of foreign affairs, Dr. Gilbert recalled the incident in his diary.

> Stimulated by von Papen's self-portrayal as a statesman and man of culture [June 15, 1946], Ribbentrop started to impress me this morning with his qualities as a statesman and a man of culture

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[270] Ibid., p. 223.

[271] Letter from Ribbentrop to Churchill and Eden, to be conveyed by Field Marshal Montgomery (no date). Document L-74, NCAA, VII, pp. 839-847.

> too. He launched into a long, confused and abstruse speech on 'political dynamics': The dynamic of Russian one-party politics led inevitably to the spreading of Communism all over Europe, just as the National Socialist dynamic naturally had lead to the spreading of National Socialism in the conquered territories, but America, with its two-party system, had a better-balanced dynamic, whereas the dynamic of the British Empire naturally led dynamically to Empire politics, etc. etc. Finally he asked me if I understood what he was talking about. To avoid argument I said yes. Ribbentrop was so tickled he started to hic-cough. He obviously did not understand it himself.[272]

One central problem in the case of Joachim von Ribbentrop, is his role in and attitude toward Anglo-German relations prior to 1 September 1939. Did Ribbentrop believe at that time that England would, as he told the Hungarian Foreign Minister, leave the Poles "in the lurch?" Ribbentrop, under questioning by his own counselor, told the Tribunal:

> . . . It has often been asserted that I reported to the Fuehrer that England was degenerate and would perhaps not fight. I may and must establish the fact here, that from the beginning I reported exactly the opposite to the Fuehrer. I informed the Fuehrer that in my opinion the English ruling class and the English people had a definitely heroic attitude and that this nation was ready at any time to fight to the utmost for the existence of its empire. . . .[273]

What he did was to evade the central question, for England's fighting for her Empire and over the Polish question were two different things according to him. He in fact said that the Corridor and Danzig "were questions which were no concern of England," and again that, "England had no business to interfere there." Ribbentrop, during the Nuremberg Trial, stated that his part in telling the Hungarian delegation such things as "no French or English soldier would attack Germany" was simply "strong language." His whole position on this particular aspect of the diplomatic negotiations prior to the opening of hostilities seems to indicate that he had indeed held a very distorted view of the English balance-of-power theory. Ribbentrop stated in his testimony that Hitler had held Russia to be the object of English policy, but asserted that he himself had always warned the Fuehrer that it was Germany. This was of course an absolute lie, for some of his later defense testimony directly

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[272] Gilbert, op. cit., p. 381.

[273] Testimony of Ribbentrop (29 March 1946), TMWC, X, p. 239.

contradicted it--on Austria, Sudetenland, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Memel, and finally Poland. All his answers to these questions were direct contradictions to his assertion of correctly reading the English pulse. It is questionable that Hitler based his aggressive policies on his Foreign Minister's ideas, but at any rate they certainly must have been reassuring.

Ribbentrop was a political opportunist who was caught up in a movement which he really never understood, but which yet he willingly served for his own selfish purposes. Like most it catastrophicly backfired, and the man who sought to use the movement became instead only its tool.

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APPENDIX A

The following charges were listed by the International Military Tribunal as constituting the specific International Treaties, Agreements and Assurances, that were violated by the defendents in their attempts at planning, preparing, and initiating wars of aggression. The particulars of each charge may be found in Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression, I. pp. 73-81.

I.
CHARGE: Violation of the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes signed at The Hague, 29 July 1899.

II.
CHARGE: Violation of the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes signed at The Hague, 18 October 1907.

III.
CHARGE: Violation of Hague Convention III Relative to the Opening of Hostilities, signed 18 October 1907.

IV.
CHARGE: Violation of Hague Convention V Respecting the Rights and Duties of Neutral Powers and Persons in Case of War on Land, signed 18 October 1907.

V.
CHARGE: Violation of the Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany, signed at Versailles, 28 June 1919, known as the Versailles Treaty.

VI.
CHARGE: Violation of the Treaty between the United States and Germany Restoring Friendly Relations, signed at Berlin, 25 August 1921.

VII.
CHARGE: Violation of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy, done at Locarno, 16 October 1925.

VIII.
CHARGE: Violation of the Arbitration Treaty between Germany and Czechoslovakia, done at Locarno 16 October 1925.

IX.
CHARGE: Violation of the Arbitration Convention between Germany and Belgium, done at Locarno 16 October 1925.

X.
CHARGE: Violation of the Arbitration Treaty between Germany and Poland, done at Locarno, 16 October 1925.

XI.
CHARGE: Violation of Convention of Arbitration and Conciliation entered into between Germany and the Netherlands on 20 May 1926.

XII.
CHARGE: Violation of Convention of Arbitration and Conciliation entered into between Germany and Denmark on 2 June 1926.

XIII.
CHARGE: Violation of Treaty between Germany and other Powers providing for Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy, signed at Paris 27 August 1928, known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

XIV.
CHARGE: Violation of Treaty of Arbitration and Conciliation entered into between Germany and Luxembourg on 11 September 1929.

XV.
CHARGE: Violation of the Declaration of Non-Aggression entered into between Germany and Poland on 26 January 1934.

XVI.
CHARGE: Violation of German Assurance given on 21 May 1935 that the Inviolability and Integrity of the Federal State of Austria would be Recognized.

XVII.
CHARGE: Violation of Austro-German Agreement of 11 July 1936.

XVIII.
CHARGE: Violation of German Assurances given on 30 January 1937, 28 April 1939, 26 August 1939 and 6 October 1939 to Respect the Neutrality and Territorial Inviolability of the Netherlands.

XIX.
CHARGE: Violation of German Assurances given on 30 January 1937, 13 October 1937, 28 April 1939, 26 August 1939 and 6 October 1939 to Respect the Neutrality and Territorial Integrity and Inviolability of Belgium.

XX.
CHARGE: Violation of Assurances given on 11 March 1938 and of 26 September 1938 to Czechoslovakia.

XXI.
CHARGE: Violation of the Munich Agreement and Annexes of 29 September 1938.

XXII.
CHARGE: Violation of the Solemn Assurance of Germany given on 3 September 1939, 28 April 1939, and 6 October 1939 that they would not violate the Independence or Sovereignty of the Kindom of Norway.

XXIII.

CHARGE: Violation of German Assurances given on 28 April 1939 and 26 August 1939 to Respect the Neutrality and Territorial Inviolability of Luxembourg.

XXIV.

CHARGE: Violation of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and Denmark signed at Berlin 31 May 1939.

XXV.

CHARGE: Violation of Treaty of Non-Aggression entered into between Germany and U.S.S.R. on 23 August 1939.

XXVI.

CHARGE: Violation of German Assurance given 6 October 1939 to Respect the Neutrality and Territorial Integrity of Yugoslavia.

APPENDIX B

Source: Office of United States Chief of Counsel For Prosecution of Axis Criminality. Nazi Conspiracy And Aggression Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1946.

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APPENDIX C

The following documents were received in evidence for the defense in the case of Joachim von Ribbentrop. Other documents, which were referred to by the defense but not officially admitted, have not been listed. The texts of these documents admitted are found in the Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal as listed below; for a complete list of all documents relevant to the defense see the Document Index of this series, volume XXIV, pp. 221-231.

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