

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

Karl Wolff

SS Obergruppenführer and General der Waffen SS; Chef des Personlichen Stab Rfss; Mitglied des Reichstages

Wolff was born on 13 May 1900 in Darmstadt. Information on his family and background is lacking. He served in World War I and ended the war as a lieutenant. From December 1918 to May 1920 he was a member of the Freikorps Hessen and later of Reichwehrs["]chutzeregiment 35.

According to Frischauer (see list of sources) he joined the Nazi Party and the SS in 1931 (his Party no. was 695131, his SS no. 14235). The SS Dienstaltersliste records that he became an Untersturmführer (2/Lt.) in February 1932 and was promoted Hauptsturmführer (Captain) in January 1933. In July of that year he joined Himmler's Personal Staff of which he eventually became the Chief. For two years previously he had been A.D.C. to General Ritter von Epp, the Reichsstatthalter of Bavaria.

His progress in the SS officer corps was rapid. He was promoted Sturmbannführer (Major) in November 1933, Obersturmbannführer (Lt.Col.) in January 1934, Standartenführer (Col.) in April 1934, Oberführer (Brigadier) in July 1934, Brigadeführer (Major-General) in November 1935, Gruppenführer (Lt. General) in January 1937 and, finally, Obergruppenführer (General) in January 1942.

In addition to his varied duties as Himmler's principal adjutant and close confidant, he was also appointed the Reichsführer's personal liaison officer at Hitler's Field Headquarters on the outbreak of war. He was replaced in that capacity by Hermann Fegelein in 1943 on his posting to Italy. In July of that year Wolff set up an advanced staff in Munich to prepare an operational SS and Police Command in Italy in the event of the possible defection of Badoglio, and in September he was appointed Senior Commander of the SS and Police in Italy, in addition to his existing function as Chief of Himmler's Personal Staff. The usual title of these SS/Police supremos in, and outside, the Reich was Höhere SS und Polizeiführer, but Wolff was created Höchste SS PF, a distinction shared only by Prutzmann, who held the same post in the Ukraine.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE		ins	1	1	2
Ref: NO 208/4517			107410					

Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.

2

Wolff remained in Italy until the capitulation in which he played a leading role, except for a brief period from the end of May to the beginning of July 1944 when he took the cure in Karlsbad and was temporarily replaced by Prutzmann. His principal task was to coordinate and conduct anti-partisan operations, except in the area of military operations. Whilst nominally under the OB Sudwest (Kesselring) he was primarily responsible to Himmler. In July 1944 he was also appointed the Military Plenipotentiary (Bevollmächtigter General der Deutschen Wehrmacht in Italien) replacing General Toussaint. In this capacity too he was subordinate to Kesselring. At the same time he was police adviser to Mussolini and was concerned with the recruiting of Italian volunteers for an Italian SS force: according to Deakin (p.602) about 10,000 men were organised in SS battalions, of which two existed at the end of the war (Graziani: Processo, 1948).

Wolff was handed over by the Americans to the British occupation authorities, but no charges were preferred against him in connection with war crimes in Italy. He was, however, sentenced on another charge by a Hamburg denazification court in 1949. He was released from Werl prison in 1951 and thereafter set up as an advertising agent with a house by Starenberg lake in Bavaria. The chance discovery of a document dealing with anti-Jewish measures among the captured records in Alexandria, the contents of which were made available to the German judicial authorities in 1960, caused him to be re-arrested in January 1962 for alleged complicity in the deportation and liquidation of Jews in the East in 1941 and 1942. On 30 September 1964, after a trial lasting more than ten weeks he was sentenced by the Munich Assizes to 15 years hard labour for his part in the mass murder of at least 300,000 Jews in Poland.

Fraenkel, who visited Wolff in prison while gathering material for his book, describes him as 'a man of some charm and humour'.



Book No. 18A
Page No. 1669

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 139

Copy No. 31.....

The following are the relevant details of the PW mentioned in this report.

Name	Rank	Appointment.
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer and General der Waffen-SS	Military Plenipotentiary and Hoechstler SS und Polizeifuehrer in ITALY.
POHL	General der Luftwaffe	GOC German Air Force in ITALY.
HARSTER	SS Gruppenfuehrer and Generalleutnant der Polizei	BdS ITALIEN.
LEYERS	Generalmajor	Head of RUK in ITALY (Military Economics and Armaments Staff.)
EUELOWIUS	Generalmajor	Inspector of Fortifications in ITALY.

If the information contained in this report is required for further distribution, prisoners' names should NOT be mentioned and the text so paraphrased as to give no indications of the methods by which it is obtained.

F.G. Adams, Capt

Per (W.S. VALENTINE.)
Lt. Col.
Comd, CSDIC., CMF.

C.S.D.I.C.,
C.M.F.
14 Jul 45.

DISTRIBUTION BY WZ13(A).

DDMI(P)	ISSB.	GS SH. EF.
M.I.3.	JIS.	FW.D. SHAEF.
M.I.5.	ISI.	EDS. SHAEF.
M.I.6.	P.D. F.O.	EDS. SHAEF.
M.I.7.	F.O.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.8.	21 A.Gp.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.9.	Armour Corps.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.10.	S.S. Gp.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.11.	AAA Command.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.12.	1st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.13.	2nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.14.	3rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.15.	4th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.16.	5th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.17.	6th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.18.	7th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.19.	8th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.20.	9th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.21.	10th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.22.	11th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.23.	12th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.24.	13th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.25.	14th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.26.	15th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.27.	16th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.28.	17th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.29.	18th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.30.	19th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.31.	20th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.32.	21st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.33.	22nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.34.	23rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.35.	24th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.36.	25th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.37.	26th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.38.	27th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.39.	28th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.40.	29th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.41.	30th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.42.	31st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.43.	32nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.44.	33rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.45.	34th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.46.	35th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.47.	36th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.48.	37th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.49.	38th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.50.	39th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.51.	40th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.52.	41st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.53.	42nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.54.	43rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.55.	44th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.56.	45th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.57.	46th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.58.	47th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.59.	48th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.60.	49th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.61.	50th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.62.	51st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.63.	52nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.64.	53rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.65.	54th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.66.	55th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.67.	56th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.68.	57th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.69.	58th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.70.	59th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.71.	60th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.72.	61st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.73.	62nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.74.	63rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.75.	64th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.76.	65th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.77.	66th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.78.	67th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.79.	68th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.80.	69th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.81.	70th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.82.	71st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.83.	72nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.84.	73rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.85.	74th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.86.	75th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.87.	76th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.88.	77th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.89.	78th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.90.	79th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.91.	80th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.92.	81st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.93.	82nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.94.	83rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.95.	84th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.96.	85th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.97.	86th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.98.	87th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.99.	88th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.100.	89th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.101.	90th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.102.	91st Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.103.	92nd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.104.	93rd Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.105.	94th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.106.	95th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.107.	96th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.108.	97th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.109.	98th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.110.	99th Div.	GS SHAEF.
M.I.111.	100th Div.	GS SHAEF.

-1-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 189

CONTENTS

Page

1. NAZI PERSONALITIES.

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| A. | WOLFF - POHL | 1 |
| B. | WOLFF - HARSTER | 2 |
| C. | WOLFF - POHL - LEYERS - BUELOWIUS | 3 |

2. THE FUTURE OF GERMANY, AND PW's PART IN IT.

- | | |
|---|---|
| WOLFF - POHL - LEYERS - BUELOWIUS | 5 |
|---|---|

Identified personalities mentioned in the text:

Name	Appointment.
CANARIS, Constantin	SS Standartenfuehrer. On special mission to ITALY for KALTENBRUNNER and SCHELLENBERG. PW.
HEYDRICH, Reinhardt	SS Obergruppenfuehrer. Chief of the Sipo and SD before KALTENBRUNNER. Reich Protector of BOHEMIA and MORAVIA till killed in 1942.
HOETTL	SS Sturmbannfuehrer. Personal adjutant of KALTENBRUNNER.
KALTENBRUNNER, Ernst	SS Obergruppenfuehrer. Chief of the Sipo and SD.
LANG	Official in German Embassy to ITALY.
RAINER, Dr. Friedrich	Gauleiter and Reichsstatthalter of CARINTHIA.
RAHN, Rudolf	German Ambassador in ITALY.
SCHELLENBERG	SS Brigadefuehrer and Generalmajor der Polizei. Head of Amt VI and the Militaerisches Amt of RSHA.
SPEER, Albert	Reich Minister for Armaments and War Production.
STRECKENBACH	SS Gruppenfuehrer and Generalleutnant der Polizei. Commander of an SS Division in the East. Till early 1942 Head of Amt I of RSHA.

+++++

1. NAZI PERSONALITIES

A.	Name.	Rank	Appointment
	WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer and General der Waffen-SS.	Military Plenipotentiary in ITALY and Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer.
	POHL	General der Luftwaffe	GOC German Air Force in ITALY.

+++++

-2-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/OMF/X 189

Conversation held on 29 Jun 45.

WOLFF : HIMMLER was far too much under the Fuehrer's thumb. Too much of a yes-man - just like KESSELRING.

POHL : If anybody had been able to bring off the 20th of July without HIMMLER ..

WOLFF : If HEYDRICH and I had been there .. I could have done it with KALTENBRUNNER too, but I could never have risked doing it without HIMMLER. HIMMLER was always too undecided about everything. He could have put GOERING out of the way, and he could still have saved a great deal, in the Air Force too.

POHL : The man who succeeded in murdering HITLER would have been a hero in my eyes. It's terrible what that man has brought on us.

WOLFF : If we had only known !

POHL : We at least guessed it, but we refused to believe it. We looked on while he threw ourselves and our children into the melee. We couldn't say what we wanted or find out the truth during the war. HIMMLER and KEITEL and all those people knew everything that was going on, and they are the guilty ones.

+++++

B.	Name	Rank	Appointment.
	WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer and General der Waffen-SS	Military Plenipotentiary and Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer in ITALY.
	HARSTER	SS Gruppenfuehrer and Generalleutnant der Polizei.	BdS ITALIEN.

+++++

Conversation held on 1 Jul 45.

WOLFF : You know of course that CANARIS was sent down here by SCHELLENBERG to find out if I had gone to SWITZERLAND again about the negotiations. The Reichsfuehrer covered me up with the Fuehrer, but it was preferable for the whole scheme to fall through and for me to be sent to the gallows rather than that I should undertake anything which did not come from SCHELLENBERG's Amt VI ! CANARIS told me that he felt very badly about his mission; he saw that what I was doing was for GERMANY's good, and he did not want to intervene. KALTENBRUNNER intervened on the 10th of April.

HARSTER: HOETTL said to me at the end of April, in BOLZANO: "You will find yourself in serious trouble because of your relations with WOLFF", or something like that.

WOLFF : KALTENBRUNNER always appeared to me to be a very reserved type, who was hard to get near as man to man. HEYDRICH was like that too, only more cynical.

HARSTER: HEYDRICH had more heart than KALTENBRUNNER.

WOLFF : All the same he had certain human qualities. He was pretty well played out, of course. He never succeeded in getting on the same level as the Reichsfuehrer or the Fuehrer, mentally. After HEYDRICH's death I tried to transfer my friendship to him, as HEYDRICH's successor, because the WOLFF-HEYDRICH friendship was one of the pillars of the original SS. I offered

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: NO 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 189

him my friendship, and even used "Du" to him, but he never made any use of my offer.

HARSTER : KALTENBRUNNER's hardness was an overcompensation of his basic weakness. He never said anything worthwhile. That was his most noticeable characteristic. He never succeeded in suiting his abilities to his position. And he had a completely unjustified animosity towards STRECKENBACH. There was only one man as far as KALTENBRUNNER was concerned, and that was SCHELLENBERG, the former illegal SS man.

WOLFF : But SCHELLENBERG was very much in the Reichsfuehrer's bad books. Do you know why ?

HARSTER : I know that the Reichsfuehrer demanded that STRECKENBACH should be promoted to Major-general on the 30th of January, and SCHELLENBERG said: "I won't do it, no man can be a Major-general at 32 years old".

WOLFF : I never knew with KALTENBRUNNER and SCHELLENBERG which one of them controlled the other. SCHELLENBERG was certainly inordinately ambitious. Anything that did not originate from him was of no importance to him.

+++++

C.	Name	Rank	Appointment.
WOLFF	SS Obergruppen-	fuehrer and General der Waffen-SS.	Military Plenipotentiary and Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer in ITALY.
POHL	General der Luft-	waffe.	GOC German Air Force in ITALY.
LEYERS	Generalmajor		Head of RUK in ITALY (Military Economics and Armaments Staff.)
BUELOWIUS	Generalmajor		Inspector of Fortifications in ITALY.

+++++

Conversations held from 7 - 11 Jul 45.

(Not all the speakers were present at each conversation).

LEYERS : The disgusting part of it was that everything was watched and supervised from two different quarters at once. You couldn't do anything about it in ITALY, it was all directed from the Reich, according to the good old principle of "Divide et Impera". In the economic field there were always at least two organisations, and towards the end far more, with which one had to contend. First it would be HIMMLER and SPEER, then the Military Command, and of course the SD - yes, sometimes there were four different organisations which one had to argue with. All the same, things were not in fact so bad as they sound. These people never worked directly against the RUK. But then the Foreign Office used to put its oar in, Herr RAHN and his various posts. The others understood us well enough for us to be able to work with them, but it was quite impossible with Herr RAHN and the people under him. They removed my RUK representative (Ruestungskommandanten) in TURIN. LANG and RAHN wouldn't rest until the man was forced to leave; on no grounds at all either, just because they wanted to make mischief.

+++++

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

TOP SECRET

-4-

CSDIC/CMF/X 189

LEYERS : I was once having a celebration at home in BERLIN, when I got a phone call from SPEER. "I should like to see you tomorrow morning. You are my personal representative in ITALY, and you will be leaving at twelve o'clock tomorrow for MILAN by air". Imagine that, a civilian could send off a General somewhere without even asking my OC ! The way we soldiers allowed that to happen to us ! However, I used to take advantage of this imposition, because if anybody wanted something out of me I could always say: "I am SPEER's representative, and can do nothing without his permission", and the man could do nothing about it.

+++++

LEYERS : Did you know that RAHN, RAINER and WOLFF all looked on themselves as successors to RIBBENTROP ?

BUELOWIUS : WOLFF too ?

LEYERS : Yes, with HIMMLER's blessing. It was a bad state of affairs; we had a dozen foreign ministers, and not one of them could achieve a thing. Everything was done behind the people's back. I tell you, I am tired of being dragged into a mess because of these people. They are the ones who have got us into this mess, and they should now be paying for it. The SS always poked their noses into everything, and now they should be left to get out of it as best they can, just as we have to.

+++++

(reading about General FRITSCH)

LEYERS or POHL : What a disgusting business !

LEYERS or POHL : To think things like that could happen !

WOLFF : May I say something, gentlemen ? In 1938 there was sworn evidence available that FRITSCH, who was a well-known bachelor, was a homosexual. This evidence, which was irrefutable, was shown by the Reichsfuehrer personally to the Fuehrer. The Fuehrer then ordered that the evidence should be destroyed, and that nothing was to be done in the matter. The Reichsfuehrer and HEYDRICH obeyed him, and destroyed all the material. A little later the order came to take proceedings against FRITSCH, and an attempt was then made to reconstruct the case from memory, but of course it was naturally incomplete. It was well-known that FRITSCH had done all kinds of sadistic and masochistic things, but nothing could be done now because the Reichsfuehrer had faithfully carried out the original order to destroy the evidence against him.

LEYERS or POHL : But they were always trying to saddle Army men with accusations of that kind.

LEYERS or POHL : Yes, there was a system behind it.

LEYERS or POHL : Far worse things went on in the Party. Think of STREICHER, and ROEHM.

LEYERS or POHL : Why did they have to bring up such things before the Fuehrer ?

LEYERS or POHL : Disgraceful !

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: WD 208/4517 10740						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-5-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 189

LEYERS or POHL : We have missed FRITSCH in this war.

WOLFF : Yes, we should have fared better in the war if we had had him.

+++++

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Appointment.</u>
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer and General der Waffen-SS	Military Plenipotentiary and Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer in ITALY.
POHL	General der Luftwaffe.	GOC German Air Force in ITALY.
HARSTER	SS Gruppenfuehrer and Generalleutnant der Polizei	BdS ITALIEN.
LEYERS	Generalmajor	Head of RUK in ITALY (Military Economics and Armaments Staff.)
BUELOWIUS	Generalmajor	Inspector of Fortifications in ITALY.

+++++

2. THE FUTURE OF GERMANY, AND PW's PART IN IT.

(Not all speakers were present at each conversation.)

Conversation held on 7 Jul 45.

WOLFF : These people here are ice-cold, very different from ourselves.

Outwardly they are conciliatory, but in practice they are quite unyielding. I believed in them, and trusted them, and now I've been over two months, without my family - it will all be settled later, I'm sure, but it was shattering at first. I suppose they say to themselves: Because of this and that fact, we don't want to risk endangering our Alliance because of WOLFF or von VLETINGHOFF or POHL; too much is at stake in the Far East.

POHL : I don't think their attitude is surprising, there is quite a simple explanation of the mystery. They haven't yet got very far in deciding on their policy, and they don't want to reveal themselves prematurely. Besides, we are looking at it from the wrong viewpoint; it's not at all such an important question to them.

WOLFF : No, it scarcely affects them at all. And yet it is an important piece in a big game. We are like a bishop or a knight in a game of chess. The Italian game is already over, and it remains to be seen what they are going to do in the next game, the game for GERMANY. The play in the Italian game, which ended in their getting the harbours of GENOA and TRIESTE undamaged, and the industries intact, and the future Premier of ITALY, whom I could have certainly condemned to death, was very elegant and pleasant and honourable. But don't forget that the greatest success of all, the capitulation, and the prevention of all this stupidity, that has not yet been honoured, and I shall fight against that, even if it costs me my life, with

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-6-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 189

just the same obstinacy and directness. There is absolutely no question that they shall do us out of what is our due. I shall create a scandal about it in the highest quarters. But they won't do that, they don't need to do that, they have so much, as the victors. We must have decent conditions; the least should be that we and those under us, the Army Group, are given privileged treatment. And that will happen. We were the means of the capitulation, and it is not to be thought of that we should be made use of, and no more. When we have achieved that, then comes the next step: they are now in a similar position in GERMANY as they were here in ITALY in February. Think for a moment, where we have got people, what we can do, what our policy will be; it will have to depend on whom we have got, and with whom we carry it out. Do we want to do it all alone, do we want to be always in the foreground, and act as a buffer? Or are we to undertake a civilian administration, I don't mean the premiership, but rather "Chief of civilian administration" (Chef der Zivilverwaltung)? Of course, with the help of the Allies: they will give us foodstuffs, as far as is necessary, and raw materials to set up our industries again, and so on. We have shown that we are capable of managing things, we administered this difficult country here, and with success. We shall naturally play a decisive part ourselves in the administration at the beginning. When all is said and done, we have always shown ourselves to be true to our commitments, efficient and incorruptible, and where are they going to find others with such qualifications?

Conversations held on 9 Jul 45.

LEYERS : Now that Bolshevism is knocking at our door, and we are despised and hated by the whole world, something must be done to set German industry on its feet again. Of course we shall hardly be in the position ourselves for some years to have any influence on the other nations, and bring about any improvement in the present low standard of living of the German people. And then it is the intention of the Allies to lead our youth into completely different ways of thinking, and they have already started printing new school books - they are determined to drum the Teutonic spirit out of the heads of our young people with every means at their disposal.

WOLFF : What can be done about it?

LEYERS : Nothing at all for the present. And we daren't complain about it either, or else they will bring up the question of Jew-baiting, quite illogically, of course. No, we just have to allow the grass to grow over the excellent education our sons and heirs have received, and we can't even offer passive resistance.

WOLFF : Yes, we are in for some very pleasant times.

POHL : The Americans will have to supply every country in EUROPE with foodstuffs, but they need their shipping for the Far East, and there isn't enough shipping space. God knows what will happen when we and all the rest of the troops get back home!

LEYERS : It just can't be helped. We mustn't lose courage because of it.

POHL : When you remember that after the last war a great many prisoners were not sent home for two years you get an unpleasant feeling in the stomach.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-7-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/OMF/X 189

WOLFF : Both the Russians and the English are trying to outdo one another in the number of arrests they are making, but so long as they are only suspected, and nothing can be proved against them, that's all right. In two or three years all the political prisoners, more or less, will have been released, and we shall get home.

LEYERS : You were always an optimist, sir. May God grant it is only two years - I think we shall all be banished, a la-Napoleon.

BUELOWIUS: Have you noticed from what the papers say how the Russians appear to be doing more for the population in GERMANY than we expected they would? And they seem to be much more friendly than the English, too. The Russians don't treat the German people as enemies, and find it much easier than the English to have contact with individuals - with women, that means.

WOLFF : Well, we ourselves are quite helpless for the moment. We must wait till the elections in ENGLAND are over, and till after the Big Three meeting. We must wait too till the hatred against the SS has died down a bit, and they have stopped showing these photographs and films. Public opinion is against us at the moment. For a few months we can't do anything, or for a month at least.

+++++

LEYERS : I am for absolutely free trade. It would be absurd to introduce the same old bureaucratic system again, that is the reason for our failure to make good. The people of FRANKFURT, for instance, will have to arrange with the people of MUNICH for an exchange of goods. The Bavarian Government will have to take a hand in it. And for the same reason it is most important that there should be a Government in the English zone as well.

? : What people should be in it?

LEYERS : I should exclude everyone from Kreisleiter and upwards, and all men who have been in concentration camps, because they would be too embittered, and all the old Nazis too, of course. We need people ready to work from morning to night, and have no particular politics. Basically it would be a sort of National Socialism, but very much watered down. One thing above all must go, and that is centralisation. That was a disaster for us. The Bavarian Chamber of Commerce must be in MUNICH, and not in BERLIN. It must be work, work, work, because we shan't only be working for ourselves, but shall have to give up at least two thirds to other countries. It is certain in any case that the English cannot manage anything alone.

? : Obviously if they are going to ban the whole General Staff, they are going to lose the best heads of the nation.

LEYERS : That is too personal a view. We have seen that there are actually very few really good heads.

WOLFF : I think the Western Powers have already decided to allow the Germans to administer their country - under Allied supervision and with the advice of the Allied Commission. I think that an administrative staff will have to be formed, without any titles, a quite simple affair, who should develop the plan and submit it for approval to the Allied Commission. After a certain time we shall have the chance of being taken up among the nations of the world, just like ITALY under PARRI. It's not true that the right people are not to be found - that either foreigners will have to come into it, or else Nazi officials will have to be used. I had no experience of administration when I started, but I am certain that one does not need to be an expert in administration in order to be a good Buergermeister.

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

Copy No. 4222

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Unit</u>
WOLFF	SS Obergруппenfuehrer und General der Waffen-SS	Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer ITALIEN.
HUEGEL	SS Sturmbannfuehrer	In charge of Abt. VI B.d.S ITALIEN.

If the information contained in this report is required for further distribution, prisoners' names should NOT be mentioned and the text so paraphrased as to give no indication of the methods by which it is obtained.

C. S. D. I. C.,
C. M. F.

26 May 45.

DISTRIBUTION FY M.I.19 (A).

D.D.M.I. (P)	I.S.S.B.	G-2, S.H.A.E.F.
M.I.3.	J.I.S.	P.W.D. SHAEF.
M.I.5.	I.P.I.	E.D.S. SHAEF.
M.I.6.	P.I.D., F.O.	E.O.U. SHAEF.
M.I.8.	F.O.	G-5, SHAEF.
M.I.9.	Et. A. Corp.	C.C.M.S.
M.I.10.	Airborne Corps.	G-2, ETOUSA.
M.I.14.	S.A.S. Tps.	MIS, Washington.
M.I.15.	A.A. Command.	BIS, Washington.
M.I.16.	C.C.O.	G-2, AFHQ.
M.O.I (S.P.)	I.S.S.B.	G-2, GHQ, ME.
M.O.2.	M.E.W.	

2001/8

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-1-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

SS Obergruppenfuehrer WOLFF, on the evening of his arrival at CSDIC, CMF, was granted an interview with HUEGEL, with whom he was previously acquainted. In the course of the conversation - virtually a monologue - reproduced below, WOLFF gave an animated and breathless account of the vicissitudes through which he passed during the final stages of the capitulation negotiations in Northern ITALY.

+++++

Personalities mentioned in the text

<u>Name</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
BEELITZ	Colonel. C of S, 10th Army.
DESSLOCH	Col. General. GOC 4th Air Fleet.
DOLLMANN	SS Oberfuehrer. SS LO to C-in-C SOUTH-WEST.
HERR	General. GOC 14th Army.
HOFER Franz	SA Obergruppenfuehrer. Gauleiter of Reichsgau TIROL-VORARLBERG.
LEMELSEN	General. GOC 10th Army.
MENZEL	Major General. C of S to Gen. SCHULZ.
MOLL	Lt. Gen. On staff of 4th Air Fleet.
POHL Ritter von	General. GOC GAF in ITALY.
ROETTIGER	Lt. Gen. C of S, Army Group C.
RUNKEL	Colonel. C of S, 14th Army.
SCHULZ	Major Gen. Successor to VIETINGHOFF as C in C SOUTH-WEST. Formerly GOC 1 Para Div.
SCHWEINITZ von	Lt.Col. Ic/Abwehr, O.B.S.W. Plenipotentiary at the capitulation negotiations.
VIETINGHOFF	Col. General. C in C SOUTH-WEST until shortly before the capitulation in Northern ITALY.
WENNER	SS Obersturmbannfuehrer. Adjutant to SS Obergruppenfuehrer WOLFF and plenipotentiary at the capitulation negotiations.
WESTPHAL	Lt. General. C of S to KESSELRING.

+++++

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: NO 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-2-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

Conversation held on 18 May 45.

WOLFF : HOFER asked me to go and see him at his estate, and the Archduke of HUNGARY and AUSTRIA - I can't remember his name now - got me a car and I drove over to MERANO. I arrived there at two o'clock completely exhausted. GRAF, SCHIPPENHAUER, ROETTIGER, MOLL from Army Group, then ROLF, HOFER and a Major REICHNITZ (?) a military adjutant, were there. It was a frightful meeting which lasted from two to half past seven - the most depressing thing you can imagine, because not a single practical decision was arrived at and everybody was shaking with fear. HOFER was bitterly disappointed that I did not support all his political demands and that the others seemed quite unmoved by them. He wanted to go on being the leader and feudal lord of the Maria Theresian Reich of his dreams - which, incidentally, was to include BOHEMIA-MORAVIA, SILESIA, BAVARIA, BADEN and WUERTEMBERG v..

Eventually there was a big row between ROETTIGER and MOLL on one side and HOFER on the other. HOFER made all sorts of demands and said that he was there by order of the FUEHRER, that it was he who shaped the political will of the population, and that the military commanders were only there to enforce the political trends he indicated. Well, his fine hopes were dashed by the rest of us, and he became very despondent.

My representatives, in the meantime, had been given full power to act on my behalf and I told them to take any measures they considered necessary. I gave SCHWEINITZ a kick in the pants and told him not to dare to come back without the signatures I wanted. I thought to myself: we must bring this thing off somehow. We arrived home again at half past seven in the morning and I was so exhausted that I went to sleep for two hours. Then all sorts of other talks went on. At two in the afternoon the partisan leader, a CLN man, who commanded the whole operational zone, came to see me. His name is Dr. DE ANGELIS. I don't know whether you've ever heard of him. Well, to begin with he was very mild and tried the gentle approach, giving in to points here and there and putting his own demands very tentatively and always based on orders he had received from MARK OLARK to take the government more or less into his own hands - or at least to have a share in it. He wanted to post a mixed guard at the town hall and a combined administration, or at least an Italian, in the post of vice president, even if the vice prefect was a German. In short, his conditions were very obscure. Then there were more discussions during the night between half past one and two and I said: "Very well, I am willing to agree. In the first place, because I think it right to choose the way which will avoid further bloodshed. Secondly, I am also willing to receive a representative of MARK OLARK provided he has been given plenary powers, and I shall discuss everything with him whether the terms are generous or not. But the other demands are of such far-reaching political importance that I cannot discuss them". My reason for saying this was partly just that I wanted to teach these partisans to come back the following morning at ten, or at some reasonable time; I had already been conferring with them since two o'clock in the afternoon and I thought that that wasn't the right way to treat a Highest German Police Commander and Army Group Commander - bothering him between half past one and six o'clock in the morning. Apart from everything else, the phone rang every

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: NO 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-3-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

half hour. Finally Army Group declared that they were in a desperate position and absolutely dependent on the cessation of hostilities. In the meantime, the news from the various Armies had got steadily worse. So I said: "Well and good, if Army Group can no longer hold out for purely military reasons, then I can no longer hesitate; but on the other hand, I want it to be perfectly clear that in that case Army Group will have to bear full responsibility. All right, we'll do it". I was exhausted after everything I had been through and went to sleep, unfortunately without ascertaining first, although I really took it for granted, whether VIETINGHOFF had spoken to HOFER. But he had not done it, and when HOFER heard the news early next morning he felt that he had been tricked by Army Group and got in touch with Field Marshal KESSELRING. KESSELRING was furious and agreed to go and see HOFER on his estate.

HUEGEL : In MUNICH ...

WOLFF : In the meantime, while we had been away, he had become Supreme Commander in Chief for our Army Group and Army Group SOUTH-EAST as well. An appointment which, pleasing as it seemed at first, later had the most catastrophic consequences ...

When I last went to BERLIN I called in on KESSELRING on the way and made our position perfectly clear to him and tried to find out what his attitude would be. He made a very good impression on me and seemed quite ready to fall in with our plans, provided that the thing was done openly, either with the consent of the FUEHRER, or after his death. He didn't want any conflicts, or anything that would mean breaking our oath. Knowing KESSELRING as I do, I was able to see that he would have liked to fall in with our plans, and that he might even have been quite glad if someone took the matter out of his hands; but he himself, both then and afterwards, wanted to keep a clean record. I realised that there might be a way of achieving something. Well, I went on to BERLIN then and got a fairly clear picture of the position. Before I left again I sent DOLLMANN and my other adjutant WIESEL (?) to KESSELRING. I had put WIESEL into the picture first, admittedly only in broad outlines - you know his way, he's a Franconian and they're all like that, very polite, very friendly, very particular about form - not like the Swabians who always like to use brute force. Well, he understood what it was all about, without knowing every detail or even the fact that WENNER and SCHWEINITZ had already gone off with authority to conclude the negotiations. They didn't tell KESSELRING that at all, because he was very nervous of the whole thing and we had no intention of burdening him with all the facts, especially as officially it was not within his province. However, they just hinted at the true state of affairs. Well, when they came back they told me and everybody else that the Field Marshal was highly pleased and thought it marvellous that in the meantime I had had the courage to present all these facts to the FUEHRER, who very seldom learnt the truth about anything that was going on. Well, we all felt that things were going very well indeed, when HOFER got in touch with KESSELRING and poisoned his mind against us by some accusations - I don't know what they were - and amongst other things revealed all the things to him which he had sworn by a solemn oath to keep to himself. He betrayed everything, including the facts that our representatives were on their way with plenary powers to conclude a treaty. Under some pretext of getting KESSELRING to inspect his estate he got him to come down there and again did everything to incite him against us. Unfortunately, the

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: WO 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-4-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

Army Group commander, who had always been very much against ROETTIGER, MOLL and SCHWEINITZ, also arrived at HOFER's place, or was summoned there by him, and also helped to put KESSELRING against us. The result was that KESSELRING was infuriated and, a thing he had never done before, without ringing me up or asking me what was happening, he summoned VIETINGHOFF, gave him a tremendous dressing down, and relieved both him and ROETTIGER of their commands. VIETINGHOFF returned immediately with his successor, the infantry general SCHULZ - just a plain, straight-forward soldier, holder of the Oak Leaves with Swords. SCHULZ's Chief of Staff was Major General MENZEL who used to be with the 14th Army. SCHULZ, MENZEL and the sacked VIETINGHOFF returned to headquarters, and there did not appear to be much one could do. We had arranged previously - after we had been isolated and when we realised that we should have to act independently, as the REICH virtually no longer existed and the government could no longer give us support or orders - we had made an arrangement amongst ourselves that if any of us should be replaced by a successor, he would be taken aside, acquainted with the facts and asked whether he would co-operate with us in this matter or not. If not, he was to be very politely but purposefully put on side as long as was necessary to conclude the negotiations. That is what had been decided on, and we had shaken hands on it. What did VIETINGHOFF do? He came back and formally handed over to SCHULZ, and all attempts to keep him to his promises failed, to say: look here, you can't turn your back on us now and refuse to honour the signature of your representative. He disappeared - his courage had given out completely, just as it had done once before when he had also betrayed me, and ROETTIGER and I were left alone with the new Commander in Chief. I now tried very carefully to bring him into the plot. He appreciated the military and political situation very intelligently and even agreed with my estimate of it, but he refused point-blank, as he had been ordered to do by KESSELRING, to take any action whatsoever without KESSELRING's consent. So there we were. KESSELRING did not telephone; I tried to get in touch with him, but although I got through to his headquarters he had me told that he was not available. It was impossible to establish contact with him. So now we had to think what to do next. In the meantime, in the course of this night, WENNER and SCHWEINITZ arrived after a difficult journey. Signals that had been despatched by Field Marshall ALEXANDER saying that they had concluded an honourable armistice and asking whether we would honour the terms, had been undecipherable, so that we had to wait till they finally arrived before we could send our reply. They arrived during the night of the 30th April at about half past twelve, completely exhausted. We made them tell us the whole story and conferred right through the night; and in the morning, between six and half past, we came to the following conclusions:- That it was of no use; SCHULZ wouldn't play VIETINGHOFF's game and it was impossible to get hold of him; if the signature of VIETINGHOFF's representative wasn't honoured, then the whole game would be up, the capitulation would fall through, and in that case the last vestige of our own personal reputation with the Anglo-Americans would be gone; all our hopes of a future active part in the reconstruction would be ruined, and the same applied to the political game that was involved; that it would be madness not to conclude the negotiations; and that therefore we would take action. And in the morning - that's to say, half an hour later, when they woke up - SCHULZ and MENZEL would be taken aside and put under arrest. No sooner said than done. They were taken into

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-5-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

"honourable custody" (Ehrenhaft) till four o'clock in the afternoon and therefore ceased to play any practical part. It wasn't without danger of course. After that had been done we ourselves disconnected our telephones so that Supreme Command would be unable to get in touch with us.

HUEGEL : ROETTIGER was still with you ?

WOLFF : Yes. So far, so good. A troop of officers was patrolling the place to guard SCHULZ. Then NAUMANN (?) raised all sorts of objections and we had to arrest him too. The atmosphere had become very unpleasant and I expected the whole show to collapse at any moment. The night before, when we had come to our decision, Colonels BEELITZ and RUNKEL, Chiefs of Staff of the 10th and 14th Armies, had assured us that their commanders would support us to the end; but suddenly when they heard that we had put SCHULZ under arrest, they decided not to give their support, because, they said, the whole thing was illegal and they could not approve of such an act. Then ROETTIGER broke down, and the whole trio packed up. ROETTIGER was in such a state that I had to hurry down from my quarters to prevent him from blowing out his brains. Then I sat down to lunch with SCHULZ and MENZEL and for two whole hours explained to them what it was all about and what was at stake. I told them that we could not carry on as we were, and asked them whether they didn't want to join us again voluntarily. I told them that this was an opportunity for them to do their duty by their Fatherland and that they had already hinted to me that they did not lack understanding for my plans; that their judgement of our positions was very similar to mine; and whether they would not now join me in presenting these views in the strongest possible form to the Field Marshal. At last I got them so far that they said that they were prepared to acknowledge the honourable motives which had guided my action, although they themselves had been bitterly hurt by it - they had arrived on one day and on the next day they had been put under arrest. After a great deal more talk they at last said: "All right, we are with you again, we shall raise no personal or official objections". SCHULZ is actually a very decent and practical man, and MENZEL also said that he was at my disposal. I said: "Look here, my children, don't let's waste any more time, it's GERMANY that's at stake, and not individuals. You know all these Army Commanders, I don't. Please see this thing through with me. Get in touch with the Commanders and tell them that my orders are to be strictly carried out". They rang them up and a conference of senior commanders was called for 1800 hrs, including General POHL and LOEBITSCH and myself - that's to say, everybody responsible for this theatre. In the meantime, I got POHL to come, too, and told him that the capitulation terms were already much less favourable because of the delay: firstly, because the Russians had made big advances, secondly, because the English and Americans had advanced, and thirdly because the concentration camp atrocities had become known. POHL was very despondent when he heard all that and said: "Oh, heavens, we really are in a mess. And now you've got us into it, too". I said: "No, POHL, I didn't get you into it, and however difficult this step may be, you have got to admit that it's the only sensible and the only possible way out. Leave it to me". He said: "All right, I'm with you and I'm quite sure that if you let me go to LEMELSEN and let me talk to him, I'll get him over to our side too". In the meantime some of the others had arrived and were arguing one way and the other and I was worried that MENZEL might change his mind again, because two uncertain people who've got to make up each others' minds are hopeless. I said: "Look here, POHL, you've

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: <u>WD 208/4517</u> <u>107410</u>						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-6-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

been so decent, you won't betray me or stab me in the back, do your very best to get LEMELSEN on to our side". And he was as good as his word. So as soon as we'd released SCHULZ and put him in command again, so that the whole business was above board, HERR gave his support, and LEMELSEN and POHL, too. LOEBITSCH was standing in a corner like a weeping willow and said that the Admiral would never give his consent and no, we shouldn't for heaven's sake force him to do it - all this in his silly, affected way. I let him stand there and treated him as if he didn't exist. Especially as I had the three Army Commanders and POHL on my side. I thought, never mind LOEBITSCH, we've still got SCHULZ. In the meantime all the complaints from the Armies arrived. Some of them had only two guns. The infantry had just about enough ammunition to last them one day, with luck; they didn't even have enough to defend themselves against the partisans in their rear. Then all the gentlemen came to the conclusion that the position of our armies was desperate; that they accepted the arguments put forward by Obergruppenfuhrer WOLFF and guaranteed the honourable acceptance and execution of the terms as they were signed; and that they would issue the necessary orders to the effect that on the following day, at 12 o'clock Greenwich Mean Time the Cease Fire should be sounded. But then SCHULZ said: "All right, this is all very well and good, and I agree fully; I'll see what there is to be done. But without the consent of KESSELRING, no!" We tried to get through to KESSELRING: he wasn't there. Who was there? What are we to do now? Another iron we had had in the fire, with the aid of a middle-man to KESSELRING - BLASGOWITZ (?) - had also failed, because he was too cowardly and clumsy and too interested in his own gain, to have the strength and the courage to get KESSELRING on to our side. And time was passing. It struck eight. We tried again to get through. No good. Half past eight. ALEXANDER had been waiting for our confirmation since 12 o'clock. It was high time to let him know, so that he could give the necessary orders to his tank spearheads and stop them in time. Nothing happened. At a quarter past nine there was a signal from ALEXANDER written in a really very soldierly and tactful form, "I must again ask for an urgent decision whether the signatures are to be honoured or not, as otherwise it will be impossible to hold up my tanks". I sent a signal back: "Will try to let you have decision by ten o'clock". Half past nine. What was I to do? Another signal to ALEXANDER: "Many thanks for tactful reminder. Decision will follow within next hour". It struck ten. In the meantime I'd again tried to get through to KESSELRING at half past nine. With no result. It struck eleven and again ALEXANDER's time limit had been exceeded. We had another discussion and SCHULZ and MENZEL still insisted on having KESSELRING's consent. But then LEMELSEN, HERR, POHL and myself said: "Well, SCHULZ and MENZEL are again shirking the issue, there seems to be no-one who has sufficient guts to make an independent decision even when it is a question of hundreds and thousands of soldiers' lives and of thousands of German families. Therefore we shall make the decision, let them do what they like about it, and KESSELRING too". There was a Major von SPITZ present when we made this decision, he rolled his eyes with fury, he was one of those typical wild General Staff officers. At eleven o'clock, when WESTPHAL had not made good his promise to contact us, my orders were issued. Orders to my 10th Army, orders to my 14th Army, orders to my Air Force, orders to all units of the SS in ITALY: "From to-morrow, twelve o'clock Greenwich Mean Time, fourteen hours Italian time: armistice. Further orders will follow". The major's eyes bulged out of his head. So did SCHULZ's.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-7-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

At a quarter past eleven the reply telegram was sent to General ALEXANDER. At half past eleven we were still waiting for word from KESSELRING - we were all completely finished by then - it was so pitiful to witness this tragedy of German obedience and the lack of moral courage and the fear of responsibility.

Well, then fate herself came to our help with the news of the FUEHRER's death. DOENITZ was to be his successor. Before we had sent the telegram to ALEXANDER at about half past nine, when I had been through to WESTPHAL at his headquarters, I had implored him, in the presence of two other generals, to realise that the situation was desperate and that so many things were at stake. I had told him that this was the last chance; but that neither he, nor General SCHULZ, nor the others, were in a position, or were prepared and willing to take the responsibility". There are four Army commanders standing here", I said, "who demand that you give one of us the power to do what is necessary. Not one of us has any personal ambition, none of us has the intention of seeking the protection of the enemy, we are prepared to defend our action and will submit to the Field Marshal's judgement. But this matter must be carried through to the end. The decision must be made now, otherwise it will be too late and the fight will go on. Well, then at about a quarter past eleven came the news of the FUEHRER's death. We breathed a sigh of relief. You know, there were tears in our eyes, because after all the difficulties we had been through and all the wrestling we had had to do with so many people, fate had been kind to us and, according to the agreement I had reached with KESSELRING when I had last seen him, had removed the last obstacle. Now we could go straight ahead. But what happened? A message from KESSELRING's headquarters: "No, it's out of the question. DOENITZ is the FUEHRER's successor, KESSELRING has put himself under his command, the fight goes on". As SCHULZ, in spite of this new development still did not want to support our decision, we became rather more pressing with him, and suddenly, because he felt himself cornered, he became very angry, and showed us the door. "Gentlemen", he said, "up to now I have used a comradely tone, I have given my conditional consent to your decision, I have tried to make the best of a bad bargain. But don't forget the scandalous way in which I was treated this morning and that in spite of it I gave you my moral support. I was ready to fall in with your ideas. But I am bound to obedience. The Field Marshal especially told me that he trusted me and I cannot abuse his trust. I cannot and may not, you have got to understand that. How dare you come here and bribe me and bring pressure to bear on me. Now get out of here, I'm tired of this, do you understand? I'm still the Supreme Commander in this place. If you choose to go your own way, well and good; but then it's on your own responsibility; and for God's sake don't expect me to do the same". And then he showed us out. We lost our temper and told him to go to hell and proceeded to get out ourselves. In the meantime, the passage leading from the house to the tunnel was absolutely swarming with people, officers were standing guard everywhere and were preparing to barricade off the tunnel and take everybody inside - that's to say, us as well - prisoner. Evidently SCHULZ had betrayed the fact that we had already given orders for the cease fire. Now the question was how to get out. We got out through the back and side doors, which I happened to know. All my men and the others who had supported me got out somehow and we returned to my castle, ROETTIGER and his secretary, who had walked up in the rain without hat and coat, eventually arrived too, completely soaked. In the meantime an order had been given for POHL's arrest.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

-8-

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

DESSLOCH, the Col. General of the 6th (?) Air Fleet, had telephoned POHL's GI and ordered him to arrest his general. Fortunately the GI was a very decent chap and did nothing of the sort. POHL came up to my castle and put himself under my protection, and later he and LEMELSEN drove off to the latter's headquarters. Then it became apparent that new orders were out for the arrest of VIETINGHOFF, ROETTIGER and General KAEMPF, the signals officer who had disconnected our communications, and MOLL. When we realised that we were all to be arrested we went indoors and I ordered my tanks and my assault troops to assemble to defend me. The Army Commanders, who had really intended to spend the night with me, drove off in a great hurry to get back to their armies, under whose protection they would feel more safe. I was implored to escape as well, everybody told me it was not safe to remain so close to the paratroops, who by calling in their units could assemble a whole division in that area. I had no chances against them with my seven tanks and two hundred and fifty men, I should only get them shot to pieces, and I should have to escape. But I wanted to stay. Well, then, at two o'clock, as all the excitement was mounting to fever pitch and our emergency luggage was standing in the hall ready and packed for flight - into the middle of all that, came a phone call from KESSELRING. This conversation lasted for two whole hours during which I implored KESSELRING again and again to see reason and once more explained the whole position to him. All to no avail. KESSELRING was furious and stormed at me "How dare you do anything of the sort, you are not only tearing my own Army Group to pieces, but owing to this wilful and egoistic action on the part of Army Group SOUTH-WEST, which just decides to give up the fight, you are tearing all my defensive plans to pieces and causing the whole carefully built up edifice to totter". I said: Three times in these past months I have offered my help, and that of my Armies, to you and to the REICH, and if you had made use of this offer a lot of human blood need not have flowed and a great deal of destruction would have been avoided. Here in ITALY things cannot go on any longer. We bear the responsibility for our actions, and I can assure you that it was in your interests as well. I could even, if you gave me your permission, get the same terms of surrender for Army Groups G and SOUTH-EAST. I need only send out a signal and the thing is done. And moreover, you seem to have completely forgotten that I kept you in the picture from the very beginning and told you exactly what our position was, although I had no reason for doing so. You knew what was at stake, and now you stab us in the back by removing VIETINGHOFF. It's out of the question that the agreements we have made should not be honoured; we have taken action and we are ready to stand by it and we are at the same time willing to submit to your judgement later. But first this thing has got to be carried through to the end. I am convinced history will vindicate us. Also, I don't think you ought to forget that so far you have always done well to follow my advice. You will do well to do so again this time. You don't seem to realise what is at stake". Then he asked me "Is the result of the capitulation that you are to return to the REICH, and immediately, together with Anglo-American units, continue the fight against RUSSIA?" I said: "Field Marshal, I don't know whether your thoughts are running away with you, but as far as that thought is concerned, it's entirely out of the question. I have at least been able to conclude the negotiations under the best conditions possible with the Anglo-Americans - admittedly in the presence of a Russian, but he simply stood there and neither signed, nor spoke

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208 4517 1074D						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

TOP SECRET

-9-

CSDIC/CMF/X 168

a single word. I have managed to save a lot of my men; they won't go to SIBERIA or to the BALKANS or to NORTH AFRICA or heaven knows where else; and I could probably do the same for many of the others. The question is whether you will be able to answer to history or to our enemies for continuing the fight after our lines have collapsed. Particularly now that the death of the FUEHRER has become known and you, too, are released from your oath, it is your duty to refuse to transfer this oath to any other person. No oath of personal loyalty is transferable, anyway. I am not in the least interested in Herr DOENITZ. I feel in no way bound to obedience to Herr DOENITZ. Herr DOENITZ means less than nothing to me. Whoever goes on fighting now is the greatest of war criminals; to go on is irresponsibility itself. It is a highly debatable question whether the FUEHRER's final battle had to be fought in BERLIN, and whether the whole population, the women and the innocent children, had to be sacrificed for this piece of cheap heroism - whether it was justifiable that the whole town should have been destroyed. It is a matter for history to judge whether it would not have been possible for him to go fifty kilometres to the East or to the West and to fight and fall there, or whether it had to be BERLIN. But even if you believe that he was justified, even if you didn't feel that his action there released you from your oath - you are released now by his death. And if you don't act now, then I want you to realise that you are one of the biggest and worst war criminals of all time. That is what I have to tell you". Well, that seemed to put the wind up him at last. It lasted for two hours and I was absolutely finished. At times WENNER had had to speak for me, because it was a frightfully bad connection, and all the more difficult to hear anything because MENZEL and SCHULZ, and every single telephone exchange were listening in to this highly interesting conversation and refused to get off the line. Well, half an hour later SCHULZ rang me up, by that time I didn't care a damn what he had to say. The Field Marshal had rung him up and given him permission for the confirmation of the terms of surrender.

Before KESSELRING's call had come through, at about half past one, I had sent another signal to ALEXANDER and made it quite clear to him that although, as a result of HOFER's betrayal, KESSELRING had deprived VLETINGHOFF of his command and he was not therefore in a position to honour the signature of his representative, the General Officers Commanding the 10th and 14th Armies and POHL and myself had given the order for the cease fire on our own responsibility and in spite of KESSELRING's opposition. I had informed him that there were orders out for our arrest and that although we were determined to carry out his terms, our own lives were in danger and there was still doubt as to whether our orders would be obeyed. At half past four I was able to send him another signal to say that the terms would be honoured, and then I fell into an exhausted sleep.

Every action I took during all this time I took knowingly and I feel certain that history will prove me right. KESSELRING, of course, continued the fight for another week and then had to do exactly the same, and under worse conditions than I could have got for him. However, I think he realised his mistake, because for my birthday on the 13th of May he sent me the friendliest possible greetings.

-----000000000000-----

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

*CP North
CK. Reading*

*GZA M
K.
D.C.
the*

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 169

Copy No :- 75

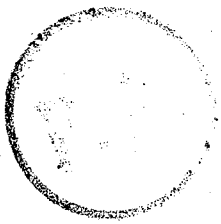
The following are the relevant details of the PW mentioned in this report.

Name	Rank	Appointment
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer und General der Waffen-SS	Hoechster SS und Polizeifuehrer ITALIEN.
KLAPS	Lieut Commander	On staff of Mil Amt Fuehrungsstelle ITALIEN, formerly Abwehr I (Marine)

*file
copy
dossier*

If the conversations contained in this report are required for further distribution, prisoners' names should NOT be mentioned and the text so paraphrased as to give no indication of the methods by which it is obtained.

C.S.D.I.C.,
C.M.F.
26 May 45.



RW Snelling Capt
for (W.S. VALENTINE),
Lt-Col,
Comd, CSDIC, C.M.F.

DISTRIBUTION BY M.I.19 (A).

D.D.M. (P)	L.S.S.B.	G-2, S.H.A.E.F.
M.I.3.	J.I.S.	P.W.D. SHAFF.
M.I.3.	I.P.I.	E.D.S. SHAFF.
M.I.3.	P.I.D., P.O.	E.O.U. SHAFF.
M.I.3.	P.O.	E.D.S. SHAFF.
M.I.3.	Chief of	G-2
M.I.10	Airbase ops	C.O.M.S.
M.I.14	S.A.S. ops	G-2, ETUSA.
M.I.14	3 A Command.	M.I.10 Washington.
M.I.18	C.M.D.	BAS. Washington.
M.O.1(S.P.)	I.S.D.	G-2, ANHQ.
M.O.2	M.B.W.	GS(1) GHQ, ME.

*66/1
200/1*

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: NO 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 1 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 169

When Lieut-Commander KLAPS showed unwillingness to answer I.Os' questions SS Obergruppenfuehrer WOLFF undertook to talk to him and tell him that he must do so. The conversation reproduced in this report shows how he did this.

Personalities mentioned in the text.

EPP von	SA Obergruppenfuehrer Reichsstatthalter for BAVARIA.
FEGELEIN	SS Gruppenfuehrer. LO to Reichsfuehrer SS at HITLER's GHQ.
HEWEL	SS Brigadefuehrer. Chief of the Personal Staff of the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, Plenipotentiary of the Foreign Office with HITLER.
HOFER	SA Obergruppenfuehrer. Gauleiter of Reichsgau TIROL-VORARLBERG.
KAPPLER	SS Obersturmbannfuehrer. LO to Italian Police. Formerly OC Sipo und SD Einsatzkommando ROME.
KRANEBITTER	SS Sturmbannfuehrer. Head of Abteilung IV, B.d.S. ITALIEN.
RAHN	German Ambassador to the Fascist Republican Government.
SCHUSTER	Cardinal. Archbishop of MILAN.
VIETINGHOFF	Col General. C-in-C SOUTH-WEST until shortly before the capitulation.

Conversation held on 21 May 45

WOLFF : I understand so well how you are feeling, because I had more or less the same conflict with my conscience myself, and I still have. I shall have to digress a little so that you can understand why I think it necessary that you should come to clear terms with your conscience, and at least in a certain, shall we say, limited degree meet their demands. The world collapse after the last war was terrible. I remained a regular till 1920, because I had been assured that I should be given a vacant posting, but when my former commanders could not retain me any longer, I came out, because I was the youngest, and my mother was in a position to give me an education or allow me to study. It was years before I stopped wanting to listen to the German National Anthem, but in the end I came to feel that way because of the Social Democrats and because it was all such a bitter disappointment.

KLAPS : It was the same with me. I was in the Austrian Navy in the last war.

WOLFF : Then you know what it was like. Then people pulled themselves together and took up the battle again of their own accord, because they felt that things were not right, and that this half and half business could not go on - the time had come for a clear decision, either Communism or National Socialism - something would have to happen. In the meantime I had acquired a business of my own, put everything I had into it, and of course

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 2 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 169

suffered under the same boycott as all the others - I had put my last penny into it, willingly and confidently. I was glad I took the one and only SS course at the SA Commanders School a year before the coming to power, and on my own accord swore loyalty to the FUEHRER, and did not wait till later when there was already something to inherit and appointments were to be had. After the coming to power I was appointed Adjutant to General von EPP by the Reichsfuehrer SS, who had met me at the Commanders School, and three months later, in May, almost exactly twelve years ago, the Reichsfuehrer took me on as his own Adjutant and later made me his chief Adjutant, and in the new year I became chief of his personal staff. I can honestly say that I volunteered again for service for GERMANY because I believed that every decent available man ought to serve this new GERMANY that was being born, and as I had been in the Guards in the last war I was glad to be serving this time too in the elite of the Movement, the SS. All my activities were for that end, and if there is anyone who happens to know me and my work as chief of personal staff of the Reichsfuehrer, he will know that my work was of a positive nature, and, thank God, had nothing to do with police matters; on the contrary, I was in the fortunate position, in my capacity as constant and trusted adviser to the Reichsfuehrer, to clarify and settle all cases of injustice or unfair treatment.

I tell you quite honestly, that up to the end of January of this year I still believed in victory, on the grounds of the promises that the FUEHRER had made, which he spread through GOEBBELS, and the promises which came from the Ministry of Defence; I thought that we were engaged in a terrible struggle against time until our improved Air Force was ready, and our superior naval units, because our U-boats were going into action again, as you know, and above all I believed in all the new secret weapons which were much better and more effective than the V-2, and in our counter-offensive. It was only at the end of January that I realised the rottenness of our position, after I had spoken to some friends of mine in the Leibstandarte who had been in the West sector of the ARDENNES offensive. They told me that 3,000 aircraft had been promised to take part in the offensive, and that they had in fact not seen a single one of them because the enemy had succeeded in putting up an umbrella over the RHINE and none of our aircraft was able to get away from their superior new types. After that I grew very impatient and went to the Reichsfuehrer's GHQ, on 4th February, and asked him what there was to be done about withdrawing. However, I received no definite information, and requested the Reichsfuehrer to arrange an interview for me with the FUEHRER so that I could make a clean breast of my difficulties and my view of the situation. I proceeded to the FUEHRER's GHQ, and made a report on the situation. RIBBENTROP was there, and so were Gruppenfuehrer FEGELEIN and the Ambassador HEWEL. I told the FUEHRER everything, and represented to him among other things that an increasing number of feelers were being put out to me from the Allies, partly through the Church in Cardinal SCHUSTER, and all the rest of it, and suggested to him that this time the offer should not be turned down, as before, but that one should listen to what they had to offer. I said "My FUEHRER, I know, it is obvious from interrogations for one thing and from evidence I have from my particular field, that there are naturally differences among these unnatural Allies, but please do not be offended if I say that I do not believe the Alliance will split up of itself without our own active intervention. Before that happens we shall be dead or beaten to the ground, and that must not happen - we must do something first." The FUEHRER, who nevertheless did not agree with talk of this kind because he was

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208 4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 3 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CNF/X 169

afraid that something might get to the ears of the troops and so seriously impair their will to fight, was very nice to me on this occasion, and very frank, because I had presented the case to him in a calm, reasonable manner, and both RIBBENTROP and I inferred from the fact that he appeared to agree in general with what I had said that he was authorising that something should be attempted, though without giving any specific directives.

RIBBENTROP then took the matter up in his own way, through official channels. Perhaps you have heard of the HESSE affair in STOCKHOLM? RIBBENTROP sent an emissary HESSE of the Foreign Office to STOCKHOLM, and HESSE pumped some unknown secretary of the British Legation to try to get into touch with the right quarters through him. Of course the result was that the Americans realised something was in the wind, and so did the Russians, so that in the first place there were jealousies started among the Allies and in the second place they were not ready to negotiate with RIBBENTROP or with the official German Government - they saw in RIBBENTROP, in any case, the main responsibility for the war because he had kept the FUEHRER wrongly informed.

So much for that. Now for my own efforts. Of course DULLES, ROOSEVELT's special representative in SWITZERLAND, had noticed with interest that since I arrived in this theatre on 9th September 43 there was none of the usual brutal, hateful round of shooting of hostages and executions, arrests and bloodshed, such as went on in FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, NORWAY and in the RUSSIAN territories; and he had noticed that I put down strikes without recourse to bloodshed. I had to deal with three general strikes, with 300,000 workers involved, in TURIN, MILAN and GENOA (?), and I put them down by granting demands which were socially justified, without any shooting, though I could have done so; I merely had the ringleaders rounded up and arrested. He noticed that there was no concentration camp and that nothing ever happened that could be compared in any way with what is causing the hubbub in GERMANY at the present time, and that in fact I had followed a different line entirely. Accordingly he sent people to get in touch with me, and I acted on my own responsibility, as I had seen that the people up there in BERLIN no longer had their feet planted on the ground, and that they were forcing themselves to believe by deliberate optimism that all was not yet lost. I carried on negotiations, with constant danger to myself, and the result was finally that I had two interviews in March, one with the Reichsfuehrer and one with the FUEHRER himself, about the promises made by DULLES, ALEXANDER, and EISENHOWER, which came to a head before the big offensive opened in ITALY. It was above all made clear, because that had been agreed upon among the Big Three, that there would have to be unconditional surrender, but on the other hand we should not be taken into captivity but would be allowed to withdraw freely and retain sidearms and probably also light weapons; in view of our hopeless position that was the maximum, I don't need to tell you, that we could obtain from them. The FUEHRER was very pleased in one way - of course I personally had to take my life in my hands on these two occasions, because actually what I had done, opening negotiations with the enemy without the assent of the FUEHRER, could be interpreted as high treason and might have led to a court martial and execution, or at any rate to imprisonment. Thank God, I was held in such personal esteem that they did not do the first, and they did not have the courage to imprison me either, because everything in GERMANY was run on half and half lines. I was told "Yes, well, nothing final has been done ...". I was given no plenary powers, was not authorised to do anything officially, but on the other hand - "Carry on, keep the doors still open for negotiation, because they are the only doors available to us."

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 4 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CME/X 169

After that HIMMLER began things, and tried to achieve something through Count BERNADOTTE in SWEDEN, though he must have been fully aware of the fact that with a man so loaded with propaganda as HIMMLER no Englishman or American would ever sit down at the same table and enter into negotiations, but would refuse to have anything to do with him. In that way valuable time was lost, and to all intents and purposes the channel which I had opened was not used. There was therefore nothing else for me to do, when I saw that there was nothing more to hope for from BERLIN, and after that the FUEHRER had said to me on 18th April, when discussing the military situation on both fronts; he told me that he could keep open for another two months a line through PRAGUE up to BERLIN. Well, I said to myself, when the gods strike and wish to destroy someone they strike him with blindness. I came back from seeing the FUEHRER, and the situation was so tense that I implored Colonel General von VIETINGHOFF, whom I had always kept informed, like Field Marshal KESSELRING, of the general developments, and also the Ambassador RAHN, in his capacity as State Plenipotentiary, and Gauleiter HOFER, to come to terms at least with regard to the hard-pressed Army Group SOUTH-WEST. It will be established later that I delayed for three weeks if not longer the big offensive in this theatre which was ready to be mounted, because they were hoping to be given our armies intact on a silver platter. My whole policy was based on preventing further destruction in the North Italian theatre, including the area round GENOA and TRIESTE, which would have been quite pointless, since it could no longer alter the course of the war and would only have caused further hatred and difficulties for us.

Accordingly I concluded the negotiations. It was an extremely dramatic story. The Americans announced it in their communique of 7th May, but it gave only a fraction of the real difficulties. My family were held virtually as hostages in GERMANY, and they were in deadly danger because I had risked my life five times for the higher purpose of putting an end to this obstinate wrong-minded obedience to orders, and to prevent the destruction of any more towns for which the FUEHRER saw no end but death along with a handful of his trusty followers, who also had no prospect but to die. He should have died outside BERLIN, at KUESTRIN or FRANKFORT, not in a city of millions of inhabitants, with hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children. But there was nothing to be done about it, everyone stuck by his oath. But that is no protection for them - "We have our orders from the FUEHRER, and we are bound by our oath." There is something higher than that. That is no protection for any Army Commander, because we had here for instance the lives of almost a million men for which we were responsible in Army Group SOUTH-WEST, and besides that is surely a one-sided form of loyalty, because after all whereas we swore an oath of loyalty to the FUEHRER, so did he swear to the President of the Reich to serve the well-being of the people. That well-being no longer existed, the man was no longer in the right, and rather than send a million soldiers to needless slaughter, I concluded the surrender, under hair-raising difficulties.

My intention was not only to put an end to further senseless resistance on the battlefield, but after so many failures and disappointments I was also anxious that there should be a reasonable cooperation on our part in the political field as well after the cessation of hostilities, and I did not want that to be obstructed. I don't need to remind you of the chaos. The war has been decided, and we have no intention of beginning another within any period we can conceive. I do not think we want our Austrian and German Fatherlands to become battlefields in the third World War, and our people to become cannonfodder.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WD 208/4517 1074D						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 5 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CIF/X 169

between the two groups, between ASIA and Bolshevism and Socialism on the one hand, and the democratic and liberal powers on the other. It is altogether clear that we must now do everything to see that the good will that the Allies have - quite apart from the understandable and just punishment of the real war criminals -, well to persist in being obdurate can only irritate them, and stir up the mistrust of the Jews and the Germanophobes, and increase it. These people here are afraid that we shall begin work again after a certain time, four weeks, four months, perhaps, and that there are certain nets that we are not willing to disclose. It is of the very greatest importance that the atmosphere should be cleared and that mistrust on their side should disappear, and that the good will of all decent people to make good what can be made good after having lost a war and been the losers in a tremendous game - after all, you are interested in the preservation of the territory and the economic and political institutions of your Austrian Fatherland. I should like to recommend to you on these grounds, or I am prepared, if it would help to relieve your moral conflict, not to request you as a friend who happens to be senior to you in rank, but to give you an order as your commanding general. I would give up my own life with pleasure or sacrifice my freedom to the end of my days if I could prevent the fate of our Homeland by doing so, but it cannot be prevented. I realise that the conflict you are going through is that of an honest man and officer, who refuses to betray his comrades. Believe me, I have gone through the same thing myself. I was asked to give the whereabouts of a certain woman, and it happened that I had been a guest in her house, even if several years ago. I made the people realise that, and fortunately on this occasion I was able to refuse to tell them. In the meantime, as always happens, they found out where she was, through the statement of someone else or other means, and so I was able to keep my hands clean. I had a terrible struggle with my conscience. That is why I understand so well your own feelings. But I must ask you, and can recommend you - or, if you feel that would be a protection for you, I am prepared to give you a statement in writing saying that I have given you a definite order to talk. Then, provided good will is shown - you can tell them a few names, which you can give with a really good conscience, so that we can be free of the matter. Your sacrifice, and your decency in refusing to say anything for the sake of the others, are putting you and me(?) in an inconceivable position, really inconceivable. These people here only see in this a sign of bad faith, and that is why I should like to do everything I can to lighten your conflict and show you the only proper path to follow, and the one which counter balances, shall we say, the interests of your Fatherland and of your comrades. You will not be endangering or harming them in vain, because by your present attitude you are actually doing harm in the other direction. You must consider my own case, how I was also bound by my sense of loyalty and comradeship towards the Fuehrer, who had always been extremely pleasant and friendly to me, but there are certain situations in which one must consider one's responsibility towards the larger issue, even when it goes so hard against one's human and personal feelings. As to what you remember now, and what you can tell them, I leave that to your conscience.

KLAPS : Yes, I see.

WOLFF : But of course once you have told them one or two things, you will feel relieved of your burden.

1	2	cms	PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	ins	1	2
Ref.: WO 208/4517 107410						
Please note that this copy is supplied subject to the Public Record Office's terms and conditions and that your use of it may be subject to copyright restrictions. Further information is given in the 'Terms and Conditions of supply of Public Records' leaflet displayed at and available from the Reprographic Ordering counter.						

- 6 -

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CME/X 169

KLAPS : Yes, and they told me that the men won't be shot, but that they will be well-treated, merely taken into custody, with freedom of movement.

WOLFF : I can tell you one thing, that all the promises which Field Marshal ALEXANDER and DULLES made to me have not only been carried out, but they have done far more than they needed, and far more than I had expected, in the spirit of gentlemanly fair play. When I was surrounded by the Partisans at CERNOBBIO they arranged for me to get away through SWITZERLAND and so down to BOLZANO. These gentlemen's word is worth more than a proper agreement with more indifferent parties. You see, we must, in my opinion, put an end to the matter. One or two of my men committed blunders, for instance the shooting of the 320 hostages in ROME last year - you have probably heard the name of KAPPLER? Well, KAPPLER had the chance, if he cared to take it, of going into the mountains round BOLZANO and disappearing, with money and a false identity document and rations, but he did not do so, he faced the situation clearly, and I think that like KRANEBITTER and one or two others I had not counted on he did the one correct thing open to him. He will be granted the full credit for that, and I believe that he will be treated with indulgence. If he is not, then he will still have a better existence than if he was running around in the mountains.

KLAPS : Yes, I see.

WOLFF : I am of the opinion that we have lost the war, and that we must now put all our cards on the table. I have done so myself, since I had nothing more to save or to conceal, and I have come out of it splendidly.

KLAPS : Yes, Sir. You see, at first I told them that I could never give away service matters, but probably it will protect the men themselves.

WOLFF : Exactly so.

KLAPPS : May I have a written order from you then, Sir, to this effect?

WOLFF : Certainly. I must first be assured myself how the men will be treated, so that I can give you the order with a good conscience, and then when you have the order, you are to tell them what they want to know.

KLAPS : I am very indebted to you, Sir.

WOLFF : There is no need to thank me. Good luck.