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By authority A. C. of S., G-2

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REPORT FROM CAPTURED PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL BRANCH
ISSUED BY THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION, U.S.
AIR DEPARTMENT BY COMBINED PERSONNEL OF U.S. AND
BRITISH SERVICES FOR USE OF ALLIED FORCES.

Information upon GAF airplane production
obtained from a German Field Marshal
captured 4 May. British Source. Re-
ceived in Britain 27 May 1945.

MILCH

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I cannot give more than a very rough idea of the state of aircraft production at the outbreak of the war. I should like to mention to begin with that I was connected with production until the end of 1937 and beginning of 1938. After that, the technical branch, in charge of my friend General Udet, was taken away from me and put directly under the Reichsmarschall. In 1941, when Udet died, I became connected with it once more. So though I know about the production in 1938, 39, 40 and the greater part of 41, I had no direct connection and therefore have no exact knowledge. After Udet's death I took it over until the middle of last year, as 'Generalluftzeugmeister'.* Previously it was a job subordinate to mine. Then it was taken from me and made equal to my post. Then I had to take it on again in combination with my job. I didn't want to, but was made to. I didn't feel I was the right man. I can only give you a rough idea. I compiled some private data. If you look at the statistics you see a rise in production, starting in 1935 until the end of 1937 and beginning of 1938. It then remained level until the beginning of the war. At the beginning of the war it rises a little and then remains stationary. When I took over at the end of 1941, production may have been slightly higher than at the beginning of the war. The total average monthly figures for aircraft production were between 300 and 350. Latterly some 220 of them were fighters, it may have been 180 at the beginning, and rose to 220. The number of long-range fighter-bombers was very small. I estimate there should have been about 40 but in reality there were usually less, between 30 and 40. I estimate bombers at 400, all twin-engined ones.

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As for transport planes and troop-carriers, they numbered about 25 or 30. There were also single-engined 'Stukas', I should say 50 or 60, and the remainder were training aircraft, about 100. These figures are not exact. And they refer to 1941; in 1939 it may have been 5% or 10% less. I think the fighter production rose slightly more than that of the other aircraft. No measures were adopted when the war broke out to raise production? I don't know whether they even meant to build new factories, I had no say in the matter and only objected: "You're mad, how can you expect to win this war with production as it is at present? You're crazy; I know what England and Russia are capable of producing." Nothing much was done. The factories which were there before were just starting to run and they came into production. It was always maintained there was a shortage of raw material - from the very start, even before the war. There was supposed to be a shortage of iron, steel and copper besides tin and other raw materials and as a result no more could be produced. The second objection was the shortage of labor, about which there were complaints in 1939, and earlier still. These objections were unfounded, as I proved later. When I took over there was no more trouble on account of shortage of raw material.

*(Aircraft Inspector General)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

There was also said to be a shortage of aluminum. That wasn't correct either, for those quantities. More than half the aluminum was used for other purposes than the GAF. It was possible to mobilize that, or any way part of it, for the GAF. We did that afterwards.

Programmes were continuously being made and altered. It was a sad story. A programme was made and put before Goering by the people concerned. Then Goering started losing his temper and cursing and said: "I want three times as much of this and four times as much of that", etc. "and soon too!" Then a programme was made to suit Goering, giving, let's say 250 fighters, whereupon he demanded 500. Then another programme was made which would provide 500 fighters within 11 months. Whereupon he said he wanted 1000 bombers, and 1000 bombers were inserted etc. The programme was passed on to the industrialists, who laughed and said "It can't be done just like that." After a month, two months or three months another programme was made which Goering never set eyes on. It didn't show 500 fighters but only 350. After a few months had passed they realized that figure couldn't be attained and reduced it to 250. As a result there was never an honest programme which one really thought one could carry out. At the end of 1941, when I took over, I established the fact that 16 programmes had been started during the course of the war. That is since September 1939, in just over two years. According to my calculations no programme was adhered to longer than six or seven weeks. They contained the craziest figures. I compared those for various types at home on one occasion, and selected one type. This type according to one programme was to be produced at the rate of 600 a month and according to another programme at 20, and to yet another at 150 and according to another 320. I went to Goering and said: "I can't do a thing with all this stuff, I'm sorry but I will show you by a single example what nonsense it all is. No one can work under these conditions; I must start afresh." I made a new programme - it took us about eight weeks to work out with the industrialists - and I tried to keep to it. Of course we also made alterations in this programme sometimes, in particular when the industrialists informed me they couldn't attain the schedule of a certain type or that the production of another type was above expectations. In such a case we naturally altered the programme accordingly. Difficulties arose later, the chief difficulties were a result of your air attacks.

I didn't have any difficulties with labor and material; we managed that all right. I'll give you an example of that: When I came there was a demand for 4000 tons of copper a month for the flying programme. That was in the Spring of 1941 and had also already been demanded before by Udet. Udet didn't know it but left it to his people, and the engineers wrote: "You must have 4000 tons of copper or you can't build the 850 aircraft." I think they demanded on the average for each aircraft about sixteen tons of aluminum and four tons of copper. Then I got the various factories to give me exact information as to what weight of material was finally incorporated in an aircraft and how much was taken to start with and then thrust that under their noses and said to them: "You are all crazy." Then I found out that the factories had actually received far too much copper and aluminum, and some of them had sufficient supplies in reserve for eight or nine months. That was lucky for me. Then in one year I had the numbers trobled and could carry it out more quickly because I found the good reserves. I was also very grateful to my predecessor, whose management, without his knowing it, had built up such reserves. I can no longer remember the details of how high our final output was. I only know one thing: it was not intended to exceed 360 fighters per month, throughout the entire duration of the war. But I altered it at once, even before the major enemy attacks

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B-308 (P. 3)

UNCLASSIFIED

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Thereupon he said to me: "Well, that seems very few to me, too", and asked Jeschonnek: "What do you think about it?" And the Chief of General Staff said - I shall never forget it - (emphatically): "I do not know what I should do with more than 360 fighters." So I gasped, looked at him, looked at the Reichsmarschall, and said to myself, one of us here is mad, perhaps I'm the one. Then the Reichsmarschall asked me: "How many do you want to produce then?" I said: "I request you to give me orders today, without the General Staff being consulted at all or having anything more to do with it, to produce at least twice as many, let's say 1000. I tell you straight, Reichsmarschall, 1000 is too few; I want to produce 3000 now, but I want to get the figure up to 5000." Thereupon Jeschonnek said: "Herr Reichsmarschall, there's some catch in it, there's something wrong. If the 'Feldmarschall' promises that, he will simultaneously step down correspondingly the production of bombers, which are very much more difficult to produce and take more material." "Well", said the Reichsmarschall; "what do you say to that?" I said: "I promise you that not one bomber less will be produced than you have demanded or we have planned. I can guarantee you today up to 1000 fighters, without going into it in detail." "All right", he said, "go ahead then." Produce 1000 fighters if you can. I'd like to have even more." I had touched the Reichsmarschall's soft spot over that, he always responded to as large numbers as possible - they impressed him.

I had already had 1000 fighters on the programme for a long time, but just didn't tell the General Staff that because they would have kicked up a fuss immediately. We had little contact - the General Staff was at that time somewhere on the East Russian frontier, and subsequently on Russian territory, and I was in Berlin. Personal discussions on these matters hardly ever took place. He (Jeschonnek?) had a young General Staff officer for technical matters who then came to us and wanted to discuss it. I very abruptly refused to co-operate with the man - he couldn't understand it - and said that his chief himself should come if he wanted anything. That's one thing I do know, an absolutely concrete figure which was to be the total sum for the whole war - 360. There was absolutely no understanding of the general war situation at all there; they had not in any way taken into account Russia's capacity. I knew what Russia could produce; our engineers - the ones from Udet's time; I still hadn't arrived then - had accepted an invitation to visit Russia shortly before our attack, and the Russians had shown them their

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B-308 (P. 3)

UNCLASSIFIED

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B-308 (P. 4)

most modern factories, including those at Kuibishev. They came back and said: "Everything we have here is quite negligible (?) in comparison with what they are producing there."

This had nothing to do with plants on the far side of the Urals. But there were factories on this side of the Urals, of which they said: "If we were to combine six of our engine factories" - that's all we had altogether - "that still wouldn't be as large as the one at Kuibishev." They duly reported that, Udet passed on the report, and the Reichsmarschall threw them out and told them that if they said that again they would be put into a concentration camp as defeatists. They told me about it afterwards.

Our planned peak production of all types, I can't give off-hand. They'll find the estimates somewhere, no doubt. But I told you just now how much value could be attached to the estimates. They were ambiguous like a Delphic oracle: this size for Goering, and so large in reality, and Goering apparently didn't notice it. There were always difficulties and quarrels between the 'Generalluftzeugmeister' and the General Staff, even before my time. So there's no point at all in quoting the numbers. For fighters it was 360 and, as far as I know, it was 500 or 600 for the bombers. It was even much worse than that.

When I arrived, the Ju.87 had been struck off the programme altogether; the programme under production was being allowed to run out. The He.111 as a bomber and the Ju.88 had been struck off the list and only those under construction were being finished, and in answer to my question: "Well, what else in heaven's name is going to be produced?" I was told: "The Ju.288," a type which never appeared, a large aircraft with twin engines like the He.177, that's to say with two engines coupled together - better constructed, with rather more up-to-date characteristics than the '177' similar to it - and Junkers, whose managing director, Herr Koppenberg (?), is not a technical expert, had submitted the specifications. That was still in 1942.

At the beginning of the year the rate of production of the other bombers was still high and was to run down towards the end of the year, while the production of the Ju.288 was to start in such volume that 300 of that large type of aircraft should come out at the end of the year. That was an aircraft weighing 24 tons, whereas the Ju.88 was a small kite of 12½ tons, and thereupon I said at once: "Junkers simply can't manage that!" Thereupon I sent for all the Junkers people, and Herr Koppenberg (?) appeared with his personal assistant, a very capable man, Herr Tiedemann (?). The two of them brought me all these specifications and I had my 'Generalluftzeugmeister' people there, the men formerly under Udet, although I had reorganized everything else and had replaced a great many of the people by others. I asked the gentlemen: "What guarantee do you give me that we shall receive 300 of these aircraft in December 1942?" Koppenberg (?) said: "There's no doubt about it; that can easily be done; there is no trouble about that at all." I said: "Herr Tiedemann (?), what do you say about it? But I would point out to you, Tiedemann (?), that Herr Koppenberg (?) knows nothing at all about the technical side of the business. You are the expert. If you lie to me, too, I shall arrest you at once, for I will not tolerate the way I am constantly being lied to." Then he blushed and admitted to me that that wasn't possible at all, that it was all nonsense, and that all the sketches had only been made because the engineers from the 'Generalluftzeugmeister' of before my time had demanded that that should be done for the Reichsmarschall. So I said: "That's to say, in plain language, that none of these aircraft at all will go into mass production this year." "Yes, you could put it like that", he said. I called up the Heinkel works there and then and said: "The production of the '111' will continue, and will be increased. You've now got down to 60; I demand

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B-308 (P. 5)

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B-808 (P. 5)

UNCLASSIFIED

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These types had already dropped down to less than half everywhere. It was only possible by the exertion of terrific efforts to keep up production of all these types. It was the same case with the engines. All engine production had ceased to make way for new engines which weren't in production at all. That rendered my work so very much more difficult during the first months. You can see from that, that no-one was keeping a check and no-one knew at all what was being produced or what was going on altogether!

Under the circumstances I naturally thought that production of the old types should continue. The General Staff came along and wanted to know why the '288' was not coming out. I asked: "Do you want to have the old types, or none at all? That's the only choice there is." Then we improved the types a trifle. The Heinkel aircraft was given a slightly better performance. In order to adapt the Heinkel for two purposes, to be used either as a transport or bomber aircraft, the speed of the plane, which was good, was reduced by 40 kph, not intentionally, but that was the result of the adaptation of the aircraft for two purposes. I opposed that and said: "I consider it intolerable to reduce the speed of an aircraft by 40 kph when it hasn't got any speed anyhow." Then that was continually argued back and forth and we could not settle matters. I couldn't see the Reichsmarschall when I wanted to either. I didn't see him for months on end and couldn't get any ruling from him. He said he would have to ask the Chief of General Staff and he, in turn, said something else. I gave up asking altogether after that. I said: "Any of the gentlemen who is interested in being in on my arrangements, must be present at the conferences." I had a conference every Tuesday and every Friday from 10 o'clock in the morning to 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and told all the branches of the General Staff and the various air arm 'Generale': "Be present; I'm not going to accept any complaints afterwards. You can't say afterwards that you weren't asked. If the Chief of the General Staff is occupied with important matters himself, I should be grateful to him if he would come and discuss the whole affair with me, or if he would be present, or send someone to represent him." So every branch sent a representative; Galland, for instance, was usually there representing the fighters, and their matters always went very well because he was there.

Those were conferences which unfortunately were very long; I had them taken down word for word and the minutes must be still somewhere about. I myself gave orders - for other reasons: because they wanted to attack me at home - that these minutes were not to be destroyed. They were for me the very best proof I could possibly have that I had kept a firm grip on my business and had had all the people on the spot and could make all decisions immediately. I have only mentioned that to show that there was no sensible programme at all, but an idiotic programme which could not be adhered to at all and where, for fear of the Reichsmarschall's anger, they showed him some spurious figures which calmed him down again.

At that time the Fuehrer didn't interfere at all. He knew nothing at all about air force matters, neither tactically nor technically. He only interfered later on, and it was most unfortunate, too, but at that time he still had complete faith in the Reichsmarschall and, when I took over, he said to me: "You have taken on a very difficult task, but I am sure that you will make a good job of it."

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I had drawn up a programme which stated: "Immediate target: 1000 fighters a month by the end of a year." This was achieved. The date fixed for reaching this was May/June 1943. "May/June 1944, 3000 fighters; target: 5000 fighters a month as soon after that as possible." These decisions were made back in March 1942. To the General Staff I merely talked about the 1000 fighters. I didn't show them the programme after that. I said: "You'll get what's in the first programme, but I won't promise anything beyond that. I don't know myself yet. It depends upon what claims you make and what opportunities we have." I reckoned that we could reach 5000 by the summer of 1945 at the latest; for, from 3000 to 5000, providing you've got the materials, is not a big jump. Nor was the number of bombers to be reduced, but on the contrary to increase to a total of 200 He.177s - the four-engined type, not the twin-engined ones - that was a real wizard, a better aircraft than the flying fortress; we flew comparative tests with them.

The twin-engined '177' was a miscarriage, with three cardinal errors. But we overcame them and there was no trace of them in the four-engined type. We had four-engined types and they flew exceptionally well. Besides its lengthened nose, the four-engined model incorporated several other alterations from the twin-engine design in particular it had an entirely different wing profile. The wing profile of the He.177 with coupled engines was wrong, so was the wing stability. Two hundred of those was the limit of our aim, then a total of 750 Ju.388s, a twin-engined aircraft with a BMW altitude engine, for bomber, recon and night-fighter purposes. That aircraft had a guaranteed speed of 650 kph at an altitude of 9 km; the rated altitude was 13½ km. It was a development from the old '88' but had a completely new fuselage and completely new engines; but the size remained much the same, so that it, too, weighed about 15½ tons. These aircraft were mainly destined as bombers against England, etc., working at an altitude of 13½ km, their rated altitude. That was the BMW 801-L engine. This same aircraft was also to be equipped with the Junkers 213.

It first appeared sometime during the summer of 1944. It had already been flown before but not at the front; that was still the prototype. We had the prototype engine, which had a rated altitude of about 6½ km, then a second type, which had 8½ km, and finally a special type for high altitudes was brought out. They still had a few difficulties, of course. Anyway, 750 of those. Included in the figure for fighters were the bomb-carrying fighters, the fighter-bombers, and also the replacement for dive-bombers. In the end we used only the '190' for dive-bombing. The dive-bomber men were always after an aircraft which would carry really large bombs, a second man with WT apparatus and everything, and which was faster than a fighter. I could merely say to them: "Then you must find another 'Generalluftzeugmeister'; I can't do it. You must tell me whether you want a heavy bomb or a fast aircraft." Eventually - they took six months over it - they chose the fast aircraft; it therefore came into the fighter class. In addition to other bombers the Arado 234 with two or four turbines was to be built. At first it had the Junkers turbine, then two of them, but that didn't work; then it was to get the BMW twin-turbine, two side by side.

It was to function as a bomber carrying a 1000 kg bomb. Two hundred of them were to be produced, too. Production started up well, as it always does on anything Arado produces. It was a good aircraft, too, but had its troubles, of course, because it didn't get the BMW propulsion unit. The BMW propulsion unit wasn't yet working properly. I can't remember the specific reasons anymore. Junkers had great trouble over the hollow blades and the Arado 234 had hollow blades and, what's more, it had them fitted in such a way that they caused no vibration. But afterwards, as far as I remember, their main difficulties were in the introduction of the fuel. I had formed a pool - we had three factories

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UNCLASSIFIED

B-808 (P. 7)

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The yearly schedule for bomber construction thus comprised 200 plus 750, and then later another 200 jet-bombers, making 1150 in all. There was also demand for a very large transport fleet and the actual intention - though I was always rather doubtful about it myself - was to build 400 large transport aircraft, mainly big Arado's which could land like the 'Storch' and which would have 'legs'. They were meant for troop transports. It was a request specially made by the Fuehrer, besides which it was the intention to let still more 'Armeen' be cut off, in which case they must be supplied.

By the Summer of 1945 I hoped to reach a figure of 5000 fighters. I could guarantee 3000, judging by the raw material situation. The other 2000 were still in some doubt. There were further to have been 1100 to 1200 bombers; and about 500 training aircraft were allowed for in the programme because training had completely lagged behind. The 3000 fighters plus the 950 bombers were to be achieved by the middle of 1944. As regards the bombers I think it was more towards the end of 1944.

My highest production was a total of 2600 aircraft. Of those slightly more than 1000 were fighters, about 200 were training aircraft. The rest included 120 transports, Ju's. I allowed Ju's to be built only because they were there and they were good. They were extremely cheap to build. The total number of Germans working on 60 of those 120 aircraft was three German supervisors and three German foremen. The rest were Ukrainian women, who were incredible workers. Those women broke the pre-war record of our own German workers on the Ju.52. They were also extremely interested in their work and were there of their own free will; there was no compulsion. The rest of the 2600 aircraft were all bombers. We started stepping things up towards the middle of the Summer of 1942 and by July 1943 we had already achieved 2000 aircraft - from an original production of about 800. Engine production also rose, to about 6500 new engines and 7500 repaired ones, at least.

When I took over, my second cause for worry was your attacks. I knew that they would come and I also knew, having been in America and knowing factories like Ford, River Rouge, etc. well, what to expect. Of the twelve million square metres of factory space under my command I had four million already dispersed by the beginning of the air-raids.

This process started at the beginning of 1942. That was just the actual aircraft assembly, not the intermediary processes on parts coming from the foundries, etc. They were no longer under us afterwards. They were not dispersed, but air-frame production was, and so was engine production to a certain extent. Not underground; I had nothing to transfer under ground; I got no money for building; I couldn't erect any buildings; I couldn't get any means of transport; I was obliged to carry out the whole dispersal by means of the public railways and the few vehicles which the factories had. All requests that I be given a few hundred trucks from the CAF were turned down by the Reichsmarschall himself. I reminded him of it, too, when he reproached me, after the start of the air-raids, for the amount of damage done. Of course, a great deal more was to be dispersed. I looked, principally, for small

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localities, such as medium-sized towns of 5000 to 20000 inhabitants. There would be a gymnasium in one and a restaurant with a large hall in another. The factories were dispersed all over the lot in places like those. The big drawback was that I needed many more supervisors. When I started I was working with 50% Germans and 50% foreigners. When I left it was 70% foreigners and 30% Germans; of the Germans all the strong young men had left; there was practically nothing but old men, very young boys and women.

All the workers, including the women, were efficient; even the foreign workers were exceptionally efficient and industrious. They were well-treated with us, too. They fed better than our own civilian population. They all got their heavy worker's supplement. In my time the working hours were 64 hours a week; after I left it was stepped up to 70 hours - to my mind that was ridiculous; no-one can stand that for long - for which they got a further supplement in rations. That's why they seemingly co-operated willingly but went slow at their work. No man can work 70 hours a week the way they had to work: the factories were destroyed by the RAF, there was no roof over them, part of the walls was gone, it was winter and it either snowed or rained on the people working inside. I don't know of a single case where difficulties arose with a foreign worker, or a P/W, working together with us. The French P/W, in particular, were excellent workers and were very popular in Germany. Nor do I believe that the French who were there or who were working on the land will complain. Naturally, those on the land fed better, but we gave our people all we were able to give them.

I have spoken about work on the transport aircraft which, comparatively speaking, were very cheap to build; there were those 120 of them which were already in production, but the rate of production was supposed to go up to 400. I couldn't do that in the available factories and had requested the construction of new factories and had already submitted detailed plans for a 1000-bomber factory in Silesia. It was not something I could decide on my own responsibility; but I made that request in the Summer of 1942, it may have been in May or June; and wanted to co-operate in its construction with Minister Speer, who was in charge of building at that time. However, we couldn't get the building materials for it. The factory was planned down to the last detail, the land was already as good as bought, but it was not built. Everything else had precedence over the GAF, everything.

I chose a site in Silesia on the east bank of the Oder, not very far from Breslau, in the belief prevailing at that time (1942) that the eastern front was far away and nothing would happen here. Moreover, it was furthest away from your bombers but still in an area where German labour could be employed, and in a good agricultural district where all the surrounding farms could supply the workers with the necessary food. Those were the reasons for the choice. Then the shipping transport facilities, as there was a tributary of the Oder on which barges could sail. The factory was to be built entirely above ground, but with a very thick concrete, above all over the vital parts; it was impossible to concrete the whole factory as there was not enough concrete available.

When the attacks came, I was not able to take any special additional measures. My programme was to attain the maximum degree of defense possible; I had discussed everything with the Director of Training - he was subordinate to me - as regards the fighters - he knew my programme and my plans - and told him exactly what the training requirements

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B-808 (P. 9)

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were; how many pilots had to be trained in order to man the increasing number of aircraft being produced. When I took over, we had the hard struggle, which lasted for a year of my time, until the training was in full swing again. For 2½ years we had not carried out any training at all because the Chief of General Staff had stopped the supply of petrol for training. It led to a frightful fight with the Reichsmarschall before we got it through. The old Chief of Training had already given up. He kept asking and got nothing. Then a new man took over, who was very energetic, one of my former General Staff Officers, my personal Chief of Staff. He attacked the matter energetically and then we got permission to start training again. That must have been about the end of 1942 or beginning of 1943. Until then all training had been neglected for 2½ years. We kept asking for good young people and they came to us and had to do drill. They never got a chance to fly. Of course they lost their enthusiasm and asked for transfer to the paratroops or the army. They were afraid that the war would end without them having been in action at all.

Under pressure of Allied attacks a decision was reached to carry out a further dispersal of factories and it was also decided to build new factories under concrete cover. My requests were now granted in theory. Subterranean factories were also planned. Their construction was to be carried out by Speer's Ministry. We ourselves no longer carried out construction. Until such time as we had subterranean factories or factories under concrete cover, the old factories were to be continually repaired so as to carry on production. Only in the second half of 1944 were certain districts pronounced banned areas. It is true that your attacks on the air-frame factories did hold up our production, but they didn't reduce it. That's to say the 1000 fighters were turned out every month in spite of your attacks. I have never understood why you didn't attack the engine factories at that time. If you had attacked them straight away it would have been far worse. You needn't have attacked the air-frame factories at all.

We did not increase production at all on account of the effect of raids, but adhered to the July 1943 rate of production. That's to say the programme for stepping up production could no longer be maintained. But that was transitory. Through the further dispersal of factories, of course, the programme increased again in time. There was eventually a change of emphasis in production which took the form of a switch from bombers to fighters, etc. That came about only in March 1944; until then things remained as they were. I did request a change of types even before your attacks and during them, with a view to a further switch to fighter production and a change in the organization of the whole GAF. I had requested that as long ago as 1941 and 1942, when I was 'Generalinspekteur'. I had pointed out that you had been very successful with Fighter Command, etc., and recommended a Fighter Command for the whole of Germany and the outlying countries, France, Holland, Belgium, with the single purpose of defending these areas against attacks by the RAF.

Personally, I knew these attacks were bound to come sometime. I knew your capacity and I knew your factories. I had been a visitor here in England and had also become very friendly with a great many people here, and knew exactly what was bound to happen and constantly pointed it out. That was turned down, turned down by the Reichsmarschall, and, as he told me, also by the Fuehrer. He wouldn't believe me; he kept saying that the production of bombers must be stepped up and that he didn't care about the fighters. Goering realized the position very late.

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I made an entry in my diary in 1944: "Today the Reichsmarschall discovered that there is also such a thing as air defense." I asked for that when I was 'Generalinspektour' at the moment we attacked Russia; I was against this war on Russia; I considered it to be madness; I even tried to get a hearing, but that was refused; and then I said there was only one thing to do, to multiply the GAF by ten so that we could defend our territory towards the west, for at such-and-such a time the English would come, and at such-and-such a time the Americans. To this I got the reply that the figures given out by the English and Americans were all bluff; that they couldn't do the impossible either. That's the way the Reichsmarschall always dealt with the Fuehrer, too. I said: "That is no bluff; it will come; I know what they can do." Then I was told that I was a defeatist and should be careful what I said or I would be treated differently. I knew what they meant, but I said that didn't interest me and I would keep repeating my prediction. I reported it in writing, too. However, I then found out in the Spring of 1944 that the Reichsmarschall:- I sent him a two-page report every four months, which was my report as 'Generalinspektour', quite concrete and quite well thought-out, because I had time. He wasn't told of the small matters, I dealt with them myself. He said then: "Don't imagine that I read all that rubbish you write me!" So I said: "Then I suppose I needn't travel any more either?" "No, not as far as I'm concerned." So I said: "Then I hereby resign my job as 'Generalinspektour' and request you to take the necessary steps." I no longer travelled after that. He told me it didn't interest him in the least. I said to him again: "We should do just as the English do: form a Fighter-Command which would contain all our air defences under a unified command and unified administration."

This would have had to cover not only Germany but France - they are quite inseparable. At that time you could still draw a line more or less from Stettin, through Berlin to Munich inclusive, for the attacks didn't go beyond that at the beginning. Then I also made suggestions that Germany could no longer be defended in the air on the Channel front, but should be defended near Berlin; at the synthetic oil plants, at the large factories in Central Germany, Hanover, Munich, Stuttgart, Augsburg etc; there, at the places where the enemy was even then continually penetrating furthest, and that it should be done quickly, before the enemy should come with fighters. Thereupon I was told: "It's quite out of the question that the enemy could get that far with fighters!" I said: "You wait and see, they will come with fighters!" "Well, why can't we do it then?" I said: "We could do it too; we are in a position to do so at any time." I had aircraft such as the Messerschmitt, with an operational range of 2400 km, and the Focke-Wulff even had 300 km more. I said: "That's possible at any time, and they have more modern aircraft than we have", for we had always kept to the old fighter and just kept on modifying it a bit. It was never believed; I was told that I was being pessimistic, that I was altogether a pessimist; 'Cassandra' they called me then. Galland, for instance, always judged the situation from my angle, in a similar way, though rather less from the technical, and more from the operational, point of view. The whole of the fighter arm was of my opinion, but Galland couldn't do anything either. He knew it perfectly well and repeatedly said so, but he got one rebuff after the other, just as I did. Of five conferences, four of mine ended in a frightful row - Galland said it was five in his case. They didn't want to admit it and didn't understand it, and then at last the Reichsmarschall did realize it - I should guess in 1944.

But when at last he came to the realization and wanted to put it into effect, - it was in the first place too late, and secondly he no longer had any say at all with the Fuehrer. The Fuehrer considered

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him to be completely incapable in his sphere, no longer believed anything he said and depended for information about flying matters on all sorts of clairvoyants in the Air Arm, people like his pilot Bauer, an

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B-808 (P. 11)

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him to be completely incapable in his sphere, no longer believed anything he said and depended for information about flying matters on all sorts of clairvoyants in the Air Arm, people like his pilot Bauer, an old Lufthansa man; those were then the people who knew how to run the GAF. They told him the most frightful nonsense and of course always said only what he wanted to hear. So the Fuehrer thought that he had a good grasp of the situation and that everyone else did not understand it, and that was the end of that. The worst case was the Me.262, which were not allowed to be sent into operation. For months they stood there because they were to be used as bombers. The Fuehrer had forbidden them to be used as fighters. That was the biggest mistake. The Reichsmarschall was not in a position to make a decision in that respect.

They ought to have been used as fighters, but instead they were classed as 'Blitz' bombers. I said to the Fuehrer: "My Fuehrer, you can get hits only within an area of three by three kilometres that way." Then he looked at me and said: "Now you're talking nonsense, too!" I said: "No, my Fuehrer, that's not nonsense. I know something about it!" "No," said he, "I know that for an absolute fact. Other people have told me about it too; it works splendidly. If I had had 100 of them at the time of the invasion, the invasion would have been impossible!" So I said: "My Fuehrer, whoever told you that is the biggest fool in history. Kill the fellow, before he does any more harm." His only response was "He is right and you are wrong." I said: "My Fuehrer, I am not wrong. I ask you to test it. Ask anyone who knows anything about it." Then he said to me: "I have told you that is nonsense, and that stands." He started to shout: "If you were right a hundred times over I have told you: it stands. Do you understand?" "Yes!" "So it is to be used as a bomber." So I said: "My Fuehrer, that will take a little time." "Now, of course, you don't want to get on with it. You have all agreed with the fighters that it is to be done differently. You want to use it as a fighter, so that the fighters have a better aircraft again, and the poor bombers can take care of themselves." I said: "My Fuehrer, it's nothing whatsoever to do with that." It was no use! We all tried it; Galland tried it and got into very hot water over it. We tried it through Speer, who was in the Fuehrer's good books at that time. It couldn't be done. Goering tried it, but he had never opposed the Fuehrer and could do nothing more. It was too late anyway. That was another example of the manner in which even something which was available was sent to the dogs.

On the Russian front we did not sustain so very heavy losses from enemy fighters. The Russian fighters only worked their way up after a time. At first their aircraft were inferior and then they lacked the whole spirit a fighter needs and which your fighters, our fighters, and the Americans also had. But they kept gradually improving. However, men from the fighter arm are best qualified to give you information about that. They had most experience of it. But of course we did sustain losses in Russia through the difficult terrain, and also a great many by bad weather, emergency landings etc; then always a great many by defensive fire during low-level attacks. The Russians fired on every low-flying aircraft from every nook and cranny.

It was not primarily a question of their A.A., but mainly infantry fire. The infantry was otherwise not good at attack by our standards, that's to say one of our men would feel himself vastly superior to a Russian. But if a train was attacked, it would stop and firing would immediately come from everybody. They would jump out, and the whole train-load would fire. Those were the orders and the Russians are very obedient soldiers and would fire everything they'd got, regardless of

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B-808 (P. 12)

whether they were fired at or bombed themselves. So we sustained a great many losses, particularly our dive-bombers and also our fighter-bombers. I really can't give you any figure of total losses in Russia. Actually, by the replacement of aircraft, the operational force was always kept up to strength, as long as the type was still in production.

The matter of repairs went quite well. We had very large repair shops everywhere. The repair business, which I also took over, was not yet up to much. But it had only just been started, and we were very quickly able to make it very efficient. We always repaired 1100 to 1200 aircraft and 7000 to 8000 engines a month on all fronts. Each front actually had its own repair services in its own back areas, so that at that time the repair works at home were relieved of a great burden. We always sent out the personnel from the firms concerned, Junkers engines were repaired by Junkers mechanics; BMW engines by BMW mechanics who were there, and then they were immediately supplemented by a considerable number of workers from the country involved, who cooperated quite well.

The date 1 March 1944 marked a turning point. I must explain that to you. It became quite clear to me in March that the difficulties of production were constantly increasing, and as a matter of fact that was no longer so much a matter of the production of the aircraft and the engines at the final assembly points, as of delivery of the parts; that is to say with an engine, for instance, the delivery of the crankshaft or the crankcase or sparking plugs or valves and all the parts belonging to an engine: pumps, above all, for which we had a very great demand because we used injection pumps for everything. These deliveries came from our Ministry of Production. On the day when Speer took over the affair (that was at the beginning of 1942, after Todt's death) it was passed over to him in accordance with a mutual agreement between him and me, for it was impossible to split up a single large smithy and to say: these are to forge parts only for aircraft, and these parts only for army vehicles, and these only tank parts etc; that had to be divided up by units, so for that reason I said to him: "I shall hand this over to you in the anticipation of getting better deliveries than if each one worked individually."

Each arm would get some advantage. It was impossible to get armaments production unified and as a result, before Speer came I was just trying to come to an agreement with the Army and the Navy and to exercise uniform control over all armaments production under my command. The Army, the Navy and Ministry of Economics were agreed. But we had not asked either Goering or the Fuehrer, because we knew that they would only say "No", and we wanted to do it like that. Then Speer was appointed. I knew Speer - Todt could not have fulfilled that task well; he would have devoted more attention to the building questions - and I knew that Speer was a particularly capable and resolute young man. When he came I informed him: "We have agreed that this-and-this should be done in such-and-such a way. What do you think about it?" So he said: "Well, that's actually the job I should do as Minister of Production." So I said: "Well, if you want to take it over, I'll hand it over to you." "Now, what about the other Armed Forces? There won't be any difficulty about the Army, I've got that in any case, for the whole of Todt's Ministry was only founded to put the Army Ordnance Branch out of circulation because the Fuehrer found it too slow. What about the Navy?" I said: "We'll override the Navy. I'll take that on myself. I'll win them over. They wanted to do it with me, so they'll do it all the more willingly with you."

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B-808 (P. 13)

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B-808 (P. 13)

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Everything went well until your large-scale attacks began. The effect was felt during the winter of 1943/44. The Fuehrer demanded more and more tanks - suddenly a new tank-programme - a thousand more tanks, small tanks - was started. I saw the supplies sent to me were more and more reduced, as the Speer Ministry was mainly concerned with supplies to the Army since that was their responsibility. Thereupon I started weekly conferences between my people and the Speer men in order to put that right. They promised to do all that was necessary but didn't keep their promise. Speer wanted to be helpful but his entourage took a different view. They had their own responsibility and said: "Keep them out of it" and hampered us all the time. When I saw this method was no good after we had tried it for two or three months, I spoke to Speer, who was ill at the time: I first approached all his people, made a suggestion and said: "Let's start along new lines; we must increase fighter output. Speer realized that and agreed to it; We'll form a joint fighter-staff consisting of your and my men; we'll be the heads and install someone as managing director. From the Speer Ministry we'll take Sauer, the chief opponent of the GAF, the man who hampered me the most." He said to me: "I don't want that man." I said: "Whom do you suggest?" He proposed the 'Gauleiter' of Silesia, Hanke, who was a voluntary worker in his Ministry. I said: "I am very fond of Hanke, but he isn't equal to it. He knows nothing about it and isn't forceful enough." "Yes, the man would have to be that."

He laid this suggestion before the Fuehrer, who refused to accept Hanke, saying: "He is a 'Gauleiter', a politician, and has nothing to do with it; I won't have it." There was nothing for it but to take Sauer. Speer was ill at the time, at death's door, so a special train took Sauer, guided by me, all over Germany in March, April and May; we travelled to the various factories and various districts, made our requirements known and fulfilled all the further wishes the people were bound to have. At the same time, however, we advised the Fuehrer and the Reichsmarschall that the programme could now no longer be adhered to. We couldn't exist on the small number of fighters available; we should have to build fighters; a large force of bombers and transport aircraft was no longer of importance. In the course of various conferences the number of bombers and transport aircraft was continually reduced and that of fighters increased and as a result we managed to reach an output of 3000 fighters a month during the summer of 1944, thanks to all the assistance we got a fighter production. Those were all fighters the production of which had begun in the factories on 1 March.

For the A. C. of S., G-2:

P. E. PEABODY
Brigadier General, GSC
Chief, Military Intelligence
Service

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