

Notes on Hitler's "Mein Kampf", "Lebensraum", the "Hossbach Memorandum" etc
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The word "Lebensraum" appears just 3 times in Hitler's original German language text. I provide here the original German text (the surrounding paragraphs) which contain the word "Lebensraum", followed by James Murphy's very good English translations of those same paragraphs.

Adolf Hitler – Mein Kampf - Die vier Wege deutscher Politik p. 147-48

Die Natur kennt keine politischen Grenzen. Sie setzt die Lebewesen zunächst auf diesen Erdball und sieht dem freien Spiel der Kräfte zu. Der Stärkste an Mut und Fleiß erhält dann als ihr liebstes Kind das Herrenrecht des Daseins zugesprochen.

Wenn ein Volk sich auf innere Kolonisation beschränkt, da andere Rassen sich auf immer größeren Bodenflächen dieser Erde festklammern, wird es zur Selbstbeschränkung schon zu einer Zeit zu greifen gezwungen sein, da die übrigen Völker sich noch dauernd fortvermehren. Einmal tritt aber dieser Fall ein, und zwar um so früher, je kleiner der zur Verfügung stehende **Lebensraum** eines Volkes ist. Da im allgemeinen leider nur zu häufig die besten Nationen oder, noch richtiger, die einzigen wahrhaften Kulturrassen, die Träger alles menschlichen Fortschrittes, sich in ihrer pazifistischen Verblendung entschließen, auf neuen Bodenerwerb Verzicht zu leisten, um sich mit „innerer“ Kolonisation zu begnügen, minderwertige Nationen aber ungeheure Lebensflächen auf dieser Welt sich zu sichern verstehen, würde dies zu folgendem Endergebnis führen:

Murphy Translation p. 115

“Nature knows no political frontiers. She begins by establishing life on this globe and then watches the free play of forces. Those who show the greatest courage and industry are the children nearest to her heart and they will be granted **the sovereign right of existence**.

If a nation confines itself to ‘internal colonization’ while other races are perpetually increasing their territorial annexations all over the globe, that nation will be forced to restrict the numerical growth of its population at a time when the other nations are increasing theirs. This situation must eventually arrive. It will arrive soon if the **territory** which the nation has at its disposal be small. Now it is unfortunately true that only too often the best nations - or, to speak more exactly, the only really cultured nations, who at the same time are the chief bearers of human progress - have decided, in their blind pacifism, to refrain from **the acquisition of new territory** and to be content with ‘internal colonization.’ But at the same time nations of inferior quality succeed in getting hold of large spaces for colonization all over the globe. The state of affairs which must result from this contrast is the following: ...”

Adolf Hitler – Mein Kampf p. 164 to 165

“Der Staat hat aber mit einer bestimmten Wirtschaftsauffassung oder

Wirtschaftsentwicklung gar nichts zu tun.

Er ist nicht eine Zusammenfassung wirtschaftlicher Kontrahenten in einem bestimmt umgrenzten **Lebensraum** zur Erfüllung wirtschaftlicher Aufgaben, sondern die Organisation einer Gemeinschaft physisch und seelisch gleicher Lebewesen zur besseren Ermöglichung der Forterhaltung ihrer Art sowie der Erreichung des dieser von der Vorsehung Staat und Wirtschaft vorgezeichneten Zieles ihres Daseins.

Dies und nichts anderes ist der Zweck und Sinn eines Staates. Die Wirtschaft ist dabei nur eines der vielen Hilfsmittel, die zur Erreichung dieses Zieles eben erforderlich sind. Sie ist aber niemals Ursache oder Zweck eines Staates, sofern eben dieser nicht von vornherein auf falscher, weil unnatürlicher Grundlage beruht. Nur so ist es erklärlich, daß der Staat als solcher nicht einmal eine territoriale Begrenzung als Voraussetzung zu haben braucht. Es wird dies nur bei den Völkern vonnöten sein, die aus sich selbst heraus die Ernährung der Artgenossen sicherstellen wollen, also durch eigene Arbeit den Kampf mit dem Dasein auszufechten bereit sind. Völker, die sich als Drohnen in die übrige Menschheit einzuschleichen vermögen, um diese unter allerlei Vorwänden für sich schaffen zu lassen, können selbst ohne jeden eigenen, bestimmt begrenzten **Lebensraum** Staaten bilden. Dies trifft in erster Linie zu bei dem Volke, unter dessen Parasitentum besonders heute die ganze ehrliche Menschheit zu leiden hat: dem Judentum.

Der jüdische Staat war nie in sich räumlich begrenzt, sondern universell unbegrenzt auf den Raum, aber beschränkt auf die Zusammenfassung einer Rasse. Daher bildete dieses Volk auch immer einen Staat innerhalb der Staaten. Es gehört zu den genialsten Tricks, die jemals erfunden worden sind, diesen Staat als „Religion“ segeln zu lassen und ihn dadurch der Toleranz zu versichern, die der Arier dem religiösen Bekenntnis immer zuzubilligen bereit ist. Denn tatsächlich ist die mosaische Religion nichts anderes als eine Lehre der Erhaltung der jüdischen Rasse. Sie umfaßt daher auch nahezu alle soziologischen, politischen sowie wirtschaftlichen Wissensgebiete, die hierfür überhaupt nur in Frage zu kommen vermögen.“

Murphy Translation p. 126 -27

“Now, the truth is that the State in itself has nothing whatsoever to do with any definite economic concept or a definite economic development. It does not arise from a compact made between contracting parties, within a **certain delimited territory**, for the purpose of serving economic ends. The State is a community of living beings who have kindred physical and spiritual natures, organized for the purpose of assuring the conservation of their own kind and to help towards fulfilling those ends which Providence has assigned to that particular race or racial branch. Therein, and therein alone, lie the purpose and meaning of a State.

Economic activity is one of the many auxiliary means which are necessary for the attainment of those aims. But economic activity is never the origin or purpose of a State, except where a State has been originally founded on a false and unnatural basis. And this alone explains why a State as such does not necessarily need a **certain delimited territory** as a condition of its establishment. This condition becomes

a necessary pre-requisite only among those people who would provide and assure subsistence for their kinsfolk through their own industry, which means that they are ready to carry on the struggle for existence by means of their own work.

People who can sneak their way, like parasites, into the human body politic and make others work for them under various pretences can form a State without possessing any definite delimited territory. This is chiefly applicable to that parasitic nation which, particularly at the present time preys upon the honest portion of mankind; I mean the Jews.

The Jewish State has never been delimited in space. It has been spread all over the world, without any frontiers whatsoever, and has always been constituted from the membership of one race exclusively. That is why the **Jews have always formed a State within the State.** One of the most ingenious tricks ever devised has been that of sailing the Jewish ship-of-state under the flag of Religion and thus securing that tolerance which Aryans are always ready to grant to different religious faiths. But the Mosaic Law is really nothing else than **the doctrine of the preservation of the Jewish race.** Therefore this Law takes in all spheres of sociological, political and economic science which have a bearing on the main end in view.”

The following is testimony is from the IMT given by **Dr. Walther Emanuel Funk**, who was originally a journalist specializing in Economics, he later became Reichs Press Secretary in the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, then Reich Minister for Economic Affairs and later on, President of the Reichsbank (replacing Hjalmar Schacht). He was being questioned by his Defence Counsel. He touches briefly on the “Fuehrer Principle” and then discusses “Lebensraum”:

“DR. SAUTER: The summer of 1931. You have already told the Court that you did not object to the Leadership Principle for the reasons you have stated.

FUNK: No, on the contrary, **the Leadership Principle was absolutely necessary.**

DR. SAUTER: On the contrary, you considered the Leadership Principle necessary for the period of emergency that then obtained. Now, I would be interested in knowing: There were other points of view, of course, also represented in the Party program which worked out unfavorably later on and have, **in the course of this Trial, been used extensively against the defendants. I point out one example, for instance, the slogan of "Lebensraum"; you have heard it again and again during this Trial.** The Defendant Dr. Schacht dealt with this problem also. perhaps you can give us briefly your own position on this problem and on this question?

FUNK: The problem of living (Lebensproblem) is no slogan; and the problem of Living was really a problem for the German people at that time. By "Lebensproblem" . . .

DR. SAUTER: You mean "Lebensraum"?

FUNK: . . . or "Lebensraum" - **It did not mean the conquest of foreign countries at that time; the thought of war was just as strange to me as it was probably to**

most other Germans. By "Lebensraum" I meant the opening up of the world for the vital interests of Germany, that is, the participation of the German people in the profitable utilization of the world's goods of which there was a superabundance.

Whether that was to be done by colonies, or concessions, or international trade agreements, I did not trouble to find out at that time.

The expansion of Germany in the world economy before the first World War was the decisive factor which determined me to become an economic journalist. The participation of Germany in the Rumanian petroleum industry, the concession of the Bagdad Railway, the growing German influence in South America, in China, generally in the Far East-all this inspired me very much. At that time already I became acquainted with such men as Franz Gunther of the Discount Bank, Arthur Von Gwinner of the Deutsche Bank, Karl Helferich, the big Hamburg importer, Witthoft, and many other German economic pioneers, and started on my profession with all the enthusiasm of the young journalist.

"Lebensraum" was thus for me at that time the fulfilling of these economic claims, that is, Germany's participation in the world's goods and the abolition of the restraints which hemmed us in on all sides. It was sheer nonsense that Germany on her part should have to pay reparations and debts while the creditor nations on their part refused to accept payment in the only form possible, that is, payment in goods and products.

That period marked the beginning of a great wave of protective tariffs in the world. I recall the American economic policy at that time; I recall the Ottawa agreements, and this mistaken economic policy led to a world economic crisis in 1929 and 1930 by which Germany also was badly hit.

DR. SAUTER: Dr. Funk, have you finished? [The defendant nodded assent.]”

Source: P 83/84 Nuremberg IMT - NT Vol-XIII

The Hossbach Memorandum

The text of the Hossbach Memorandum was prepared by then **Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Hossbach** in November, 1937, following a conference he had attended on the 5th of that same month. It's alleged or has been interpreted that, in this conference, Hitler laid out his plans for “aggressive war” in Europe. (The full text is included later in this document).

In the section below I have extracted from British Historian AJP Taylor's “**The Origins of the Second world War**”. He dealt with the subject of “**Lebensraum**” and the so-called “**Hossbach Memorandum**” document right from the outset. He found was not reliable to begin with and unauthorized, signed only by Hossbach himself. The document was edited / altered when presented Nuremberg, and even the IMT did not find it useful or at least incriminating, but they used the “Lebensraum” theory nonetheless in their presumptions of

guilt and their line of questioning of defendants. Even in the form that was presented, it did not make the case for “aggressive war”. Nonetheless, it is often referred to by many to this day with respect to the issue of “Lebensraum” as an “evil Nazi” doctrine, invented by Hitler, as part of an alleged aggressive policy of war and conquest. AJP Taylor discredits the Hossbach document, as have others reputable scholars Taylor, however, also refers to “Lebensraum” in the so-called “Zweites Buch” apparently written in 1928. I believe is also a manipulated document and was never authorized for publication by Hitler, and only discovered after the war under suspicious circumstances. Most copies of 'Mein Kampf - Murphy Edition' include the second book, but there is no way that Murphy had access to it in 1939. There were also two English translations of the “second book” that vary substantially from one another.. Nonetheless, you will find this tacked on to the otherwise well translated original version of Mein Kampf by James Murphy in 1939, but without any acknowledgements as to the source, nor with any notes concerning its reliability. Thus, the average reader is led accept it as being the pure written work of Hitler.

NOTE: Regarding the discovery of the “Zweites Buch”, Wikipedia states.....

“Only two copies of the original 200-page manuscript were made, and only one of these copies has ever been made public. Zweites Buch was not published in 1928 as Mein Kampf was not selling well, and Hitler's publisher informed him that having two books out would depress sales even further. By the time Mein Kampf started to sell well after the September 1930 Reichstag elections, Hitler decided that Zweites Buch revealed too much of his foreign policy goals. **[NO PROOF, NO CITATIONS!]** Kept strictly secret under Hitler's orders, the document was placed in a safe inside an air raid shelter in 1935, where it remained until its discovery by an American officer in 1945. The authenticity of the book was verified by Josef Berg—a former employee of the Nazi publishing house Eher Verlag **[NO PROOF, NO CITATIONS!]**—and by Telford Taylor, the former Brigadier General U.S.A.R. and Chief Counsel at the Nuremberg war-crimes trials. The book was neither edited nor published during the Nazi Germany era and remains known as Zweites Buch (lit. **"Second Book"**). The Zweites Buch was first discovered in the Nazi archives being held in the U.S. by the German-born Jewish American historian Gerhard Weinberg in 1958. Unable to find an American publisher, Weinberg turned to his Jewish mentor Hans Rothfels and his associate Martin Broszat at the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, who published Zweites Buch in 1961 in German. Rothfels wrote the foreword to the 1961 edition. A pirated edition was translated into English and published in New York in 1962. The first authoritative English edition was not published until 2003 as **Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to Mein Kampf**. It has also been published under the title "Hitler's Secret Book".”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zweites_Buch

(More on this later in an article from the Telegraph UK regarding Gerhard Weinberg)

A.J.P. Taylor, 1961 - Origins of the Second World War

(beginning on page 6 – paragraph 4)

“Pretending to prepare for a great war and not in fact doing it was an essential part of Hitler's political strategy; and those who sounded the alarm against him, such as Churchill, unwittingly did his work for him. The device was new and took everyone in.

Previously governments spent more on armaments than they admitted, as most do to the present day. This was sometimes to deceive their own people; sometimes to deceive a potential enemy. **In 1909, for instance, the German government were accused by many British people of secretly accelerating naval building without the approval of the Reichstag. The accusation was probably untrue. But it left a permanent legacy of suspicion that the Germans would do it again; and this suspicion was strengthened by the evasions of the disarmament imposed by the treaty of Versailles, which successive German governments practised, though to little advantage, after 1919. Hitler encouraged this suspicion and exploited it.** There is a very good illustration. On 28 November 1934 Baldwin denied Churchill's statement that German air strength was equal to that of Great Britain's. Baldwin's figures were right; Churchill's, supplied by **Professor Lindemann**, were wrong. **On 24 March 1935 Sir John Simon and Anthony Eden visited Hitler. He told them that the German air force was already equal to that of Great Britain, if not indeed superior. He was at once believed, and has been believed ever since.** Baldwin was discredited. Panic was created. How was it possible that a statesmen could exaggerate his armaments instead of concealing them? Yet this was what Hitler had done.

German rearmament was largely a myth until the spring of 1936. Then Hitler put some reality into it. His motive was principally fear of the Red Army; and of course Great Britain and France had begun to rearm also. Hitler in fact raced along with others, and not much faster. In October 1936 he told Goering to prepare the German army and German economy for war within four years, though he did not lay down any detailed requirements.

In 1938-39, the last peacetime year, Germany spent on armament about 15% of her gross national product. The British proportion was almost exactly the same. German expenditure on armaments was actually cut down after Munich and remained at this lower level, so that British production of aeroplanes, for example, was way ahead of German by 1940.

When war broke out in 1939, Germany had 1450 modern fighter planes and 800 bombers; Great Britain and France had 950 fighters and 1800 bombers. The Germans had 8500 tanks; Great Britain and France had 3850.⁴ In each case Allied intelligence estimated German strength at more than twice the true figure. As usual, Hitler was thought to have planned and prepared for a great war. In fact, he had not.

1 Churchill, *The Second World War*, i. 226.

2 Klein, 17.

3 Klein, 26.

4 Klein, 17.

Origins of the Second World War (Page 7)

It may be objected that these figures are irrelevant. Whatever the deficiencies of German armament on paper, **Hitler won a war against two European Great Powers when the test came.** This is to go against Maitland's advice and to judge by what happened, not by what was expected to happen. **Though Hitler won, he won by mistake—a mistake which he shared. Of course the Germans were confident that they could defeat Poland if they were left undisturbed in the west. Here Hitler's political judgement that the French would do nothing proved more accurate than the apprehensions of the German generals. But he had no idea that he would knock France out of the war when he**

invaded Belgium and Holland on 10 May 1940. This was a defensive move: to secure the Ruhr from Allied invasion. The conquest of France was an unforeseen bonus.

Even after this Hitler did not prepare for a great war. He imagined that he could defeat Soviet Russia without serious effort as he had defeated France. German production of armaments was not reduced merely during the winter of 1940-41; it was reduced still more in the autumn of 1941 when the war against Russia had already begun. No serious change took place after the initial setback in Russia nor even after the catastrophe at Stalingrad. Germany remained with “a peace like war economy”. Only the British bombing attacks on German cities stimulated Hitler and the Germans to take war seriously. German war production reached its height just when Allied bombing did: in July 1944.

Even in March 1945 Germany was producing substantially more military material than when she attacked Russia in 1941. From first to last, ingenuity, not military strength, was Hitler’s secret of success. He was done for when military strength became decisive, as he had always known he would be.

Thus I feel justified in regarding political calculations as more important than mere strength in the period before the war. There was some change of emphasis in the summer of 1936. Then all the Powers, not merely Hitler, began to take war and preparations for war seriously into account. I erred in not stressing this change of 1936 more clearly, and perhaps in finding too much change in the autumn of 1937. This shows how difficult it is to shake off legends even when trying to do so.

I was taken in by the Hossbach Memorandum. Though I doubted whether it was as important as most writers made out, I still thought that it must have some importance for every writer to make so much of it. I was wrong; and the critics were right who pointed back to 1936, though they did not apparently realise that, by doing this, they were discrediting the Hossbach memorandum. I had better discredit this “official record”, as one historian has called it, a little further. The points are technical and may seem trivial to the general reader. Nevertheless scholars usually and rightly attach importance to such technicalities.

In modern practice, an official record demands three things. First, a secretary must attend to take notes which he writes up afterwards in orderly form. Then his draft must be submitted to the participants for correction and approval. Finally, the record must be placed in the official files. None of this took place in regard to the meeting on 5 November 1937, except that Hossbach attended. He took no notes. Five days later he wrote an account of the meeting from memory in longhand. He twice offered to show the manuscript to Hitler, who replied that he was too busy to read it. This was curiously casual treatment for what is supposed to be his “last will and testament”.

Blomberg may have looked at the manuscript. The others did not know it existed. The only certificate of authenticity attached to it was the signature of Hossbach him self. One other man saw the manuscript: Beck, chief of the general staff, the most sceptical among German generals of Hitler’s ideas. He wrote an answer to Hitler’s arguments on 12 November 1937; and this answer was later presented as the beginning of the German “resistance”. It has even been suggested that Hossbach wrote the

memorandum in order to provoke the answer. These are speculations.

At the time, no one attached importance to the meeting. Hossbach left the staff soon afterwards. **His manuscript was put in a file with other miscellaneous papers, and forgotten. In 1943 a German officer, Count Kirchbach, looked through the file, and copied the manuscript for the department of military history. After the war, the Americans found Kirchbach's copy, and copied it in their turn for the prosecution at Nuremberg. Both Hossbach and Kirchbach thought that this copy was shorter than the original. In particular, according to Kirchbach, the original contained criticisms by Neurath, Blomberg, and Fritsch of Hitler's argument—criticisms which have now fallen out. Maybe the Americans "edited" the document; maybe Kirchbach, like other Germans, was trying to shift all the blame on to Hitler. There are no means of knowing.**

Hossbach's original and Kirchbach's copy have both disappeared. **All that survives is a copy, perhaps shortened, perhaps "edited", of a copy of an unauthenticated draft. It contains themes which Hitler also used in his public speeches: the need for Lebensraum, and his conviction that other countries would oppose the restoration of Germany as an independent Great Power. It contains no directives for action beyond a wish for increased armaments. Even at Nuremberg the Hossbach memorandum was not produced in order to prove Hitler's war guilt. That was taken for granted. What it "proved", in its final concocted form, was that those accused at Nuremberg—Goering, Raeder, and Neurath—had sat by and approved of Hitler's aggressive plans. It had to be assumed that the plans were aggressive in order to prove the guilt of the accused. Those who believe the evidence in political trials may go on quoting the Hossbach memorandum.** They should also warn their readers (as the editors of the Documents on German Foreign Policy for example do not) that the memorandum, far from being an "official record", is a very hot potato.¹

The **Hossbach memorandum** is not the only alleged blue print of Hitler's intentions. Indeed, to judge from what some historians say, Hitler produced such blueprints continually—influenced no doubt by his ambition to be an architect (yet another goak). These historians even underrate Hitler's productivity. **They jump straight from Mein Kampf to the Hossbach memorandum, and then to the Table Talk during the Russian war.**² In fact Hitler produced a blueprint nearly every time he made a speech; this was the way his mind

1 Hossbach's account: affidavit In International Military Tribunal, xlii, 228, and, with variants, in Hossbach, Von der militärischen Verantwortlichkeit in der Zeit vor dem zweiten Weltkrieg (1948), 28. Kirchbach's copy and subsequent doubts: G. Meinek, Hitler und die deutsche Aufrüstung 1933-37, (1956), 286. Beck's counter-memorandum in: W. Foerster, Ein General kampf gegen den Krieg (1949), 82. Beginning of the Resistance: Hans Rothfels, Die deutsche Opposition gegen Hitler (1951), 71. **At Nuremberg, Blomberg, Goering, and Neurath testified against the authenticity of the memorandum. Their testimony is generally held to be worthless;** or rather of worth only so far as it tells against Hitler.

2 Now they can halt also at Hitler's second or, as it is called in the English edition, **his secret book**, which he wrote in 1928 and which remained unpublished until recently. Of course there is nothing secret about it. **It is a rehash of the speeches which he was making at the time;** worked.

Origins of the Second World War (Page 8)

Obviously there was nothing secret about these blueprints either in Mein Kampf which sold by the million after Hitler came to power, or in speeches delivered to large audiences. No one therefore need pride himself on his perspicacity in divining Hitler's intentions. It is equally obvious that **Lebensraum** always appeared as one element in these blueprints. This was not an original idea of Hitler's. It was a commonplace of the time. Volk ohne Raum, for instance, by Hans Grimm sold much better than Mein Kampf when it was published in 1928. For that matter, **plans for acquiring new territory were much aired in Germany during the first World war**. It used to be thought that these were the plans of a few crack-pot theorists or of extremist organisations. Now we know better. In 1961 a German professor reported the result of his investigations into German war aims.¹ These were indeed "a blue print for aggression" or, as the professor called them, "a grasp at world power": Belgium under German control; the French iron-fields annexed to Germany; the Ukraine to become German; and, what is more, Poland and the Ukraine to be cleared of their inhabitants and to be resettled with Germans. These plans were not merely the work of the German general staff. **They were endorsed by the German foreign office and by "the good German", Bethmann Hollweg**. Hitler, far from transcending his respectable predecessors, was actually being more moderate than they when he sought only **Lebensraum** in the east and repudiated, in Mein Kampf, **gains in the west**. **Hitler merely repeated the ordinary chatter of Rightwing circles**. Like all demagogues, Hitler appealed to the masses. Unlike other demagogues, who sought power to carry out Left policies, Hitler dominated the masses by Leftwing methods in order to deliver them to the Right. This is why the Right let him in.

But was **Lebensraum** Hitler's sole idea or indeed the one which dominated his mind? To judge from Mein Kampf, he was obsessed by anti-semitism, which occupies most of the book. **Lebensraum gets only seven of the seven hundred pages. Then and thereafter, it was thrown in as a final rationalisation, a sort of "pie in the sky" to justify what Hitler was supposed to be up to.**

Perhaps the difference between me and the believers in Hitler's constant plan for **Lebensraum** is over words. By "plan" I understand something which is prepared and worked out in detail. They seem to take "plan" as a pious, or in this case impious, wish. **In my sense Hitler never had a plan for Lebensraum. There was no study of the resources in the territories that were to be conquered; no definition even of what these territories were to be. There was no recruitment of a staff to carry out these "plans", no survey of Germans who could be moved, let alone any enrolment. When large parts of Soviet Russia were conquered, the administrators of the conquered territories found themselves running round in circles, unable to get any directive whether they were to exterminate the existing populations or to exploit them, whether to treat them as friends or enemies.**

Hitler certainly thought that Germany was most likely to make gains in eastern Europe when she became again a Great Power. This was partly because of his belief in **Lebensraum**. There were more practical considerations. **For a long time he thought, whether mistakenly or not, that it would be easier to defeat Soviet Russia than the Western Powers. Indeed, he half believed that Bolshevism might break down without a war, a belief shared by**

many western statesman. Then he could collect his gains with no effort at all. **Moreover Lebensraum could easily be presented as an anti-Bolshevik crusade; and thus helped to win the hearts of those in western countries who regarded Hitler as the champion of Western civilisation. However he was not dogmatic about this. He did not refuse other gains when they came along.**

After the defeat of France, he annexed Alsace and Lorraine, despite his previous declarations that he would not do so; and he carried off the industrial regions of Belgium and north-eastern France for good measure, just as Bethmann had intended to do before him. **The rather vague terms which he projected for peace with Great Britain in the summer of 1940 included a guarantee for the British Empire, but he also intended to claim Irak, and perhaps Egypt, as a German sphere.** Thus, whatever his theories, he did not adhere in practice to the logical pattern of status quo in the west and gains in the east. **The abstract speculator turned out to be also a statesman on the make who did not consider beforehand what he would make or how.**

He got as far as he did because others did not know what to do with him. Here again I want to understand the "appeasers", not to vindicate or to condemn them. **Historians do a bad day's work when they write the appeasers off as stupid or as cowards. They were men confronted with real problems, doing their best in the circumstances of their time. They recognised that an independent and powerful Germany had somehow to be fitted into Europe. Later experience suggests that they were right.** At any rate, we are still going round and round the German problem. **Can any sane man suppose, for instance, that other countries could have intervened by armed force in 1938 to overthrow Hitler when he had come to power by constitutional means and was apparently supported by a large majority of the German people?** Could anything have been designed to make him more popular in Germany, unless perhaps it was intervening to turn him out of the Rhineland in 1936? **The Germans put Hitler into power; they were the only ones who could turn him out. Again the "appeasers" feared that the defeat of Germany would be followed by a Russian domination over much of Europe. Later experience suggests that they were right here also. Only those who wanted Soviet Russia to take the place of Germany are entitled to condemn the "appeasers"; and I cannot understand how most of those who condemn them are now equally indignant at the inevitable result of their failure."**

THE HOSSBACH MEMORANDUM:

"Document 386-PS [translation]", in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression. Volume III, US Government Printing Office, Washington (DC): 1947. pp. 295-305.

Berlin, 11/10/1937

NOTES on the Conference in the Reichskanzlei on 11/5/1937 from 1615-2030 hours

Present: The Fuehrer and Reich Chancellor, The Reichsminister for War, Generalfeldmarschall v. BLOMBERG, The C-in-C Army, Generaloberst Freiherr von

FRITSCH, The C-in-C Navy, Generaladmiral Dr. h. c. RAEDER, The C-in-C Luftwaffe, Generaloberst GOERING, The Reichsminister for Foreign Affairs Freiherr v. NEURATH, Oberst HOSSBACH

The Fuehrer stated initially that the subject matter of today's conference was of such high importance, that its further detailed discussion would probably take place in Cabinet sessions. However, he, the Fuehrer, had decided NOT to discuss this matter in the larger circle of the Reich Cabinet, because of its importance. His subsequent statements were the result of detailed deliberations and of the experiences of his 4 1/2 years in Government; he desired to explain to those present his fundamental ideas on the possibilities and necessities of expanding our foreign policy and in the interests of a far-sighted policy he requested that his statements be looked upon in the case of his death as his last will and testament.

The Fuehrer then stated:

The aim of German policy is the security and the preservation of the nation, and its propagation. This is, consequently, a problem of space.

The German nation is composed of 85 million people, which, because of the number of individuals and the compactness of habitation, form a homogeneous European racial body which cannot be found in any other country. On the other hand, it justifies the demand for larger living space more than for any other nation. If no political body exists in space, corresponding to the German racial body, then that is the consequence of several centuries of historical development, and should this political condition continue to exist, it will represent the greatest danger to the preservation of the German nation [Volkstum] at its present high level. An arrest of the deterioration of the German element in Austria and Czechoslovakia is just as little possible as the preservation of the present state in Germany itself. Instead of growth, sterility will be introduced, and as a consequence, tensions of a social nature will appear after a number of years, because political and philosophical ideas are of a permanent nature only as long as they are able to produce the basis for the realization of the actual claim of existence of a nation. The German future is therefore dependent exclusively on the solution of the need for living space. Such a solution can be sought naturally only for a limited period, about 1-3 generations.

Before touching upon the question of solving the need for living space, it must be decided whether a solution of the German position with a good future can be attained, either by way of an autarchy or by way of an increased share in universal commerce and industry.

Autarchy: Execution will be possible only with strict National-Socialist State policy, which is the basis; assuming this can be achieved the results are as follows:

A. In the sphere of raw materials, only limited, but NOT total autarchy can be attained:

1. Wherever coal can be used for the extraction of raw materials autarchy is feasible.
2. In the case of ores the position is much more difficult. Requirements in iron and light metals can be covered by ourselves. Copper and tin, however, can NOT.
3. Cellular materials can be covered by ourselves as long as sufficient wood supplies

exist. A permanent solution is not possible.

4. Edible fats possible.

B. In the case of foods, the question of an autarchy must be answered with a definite "NO".

The general increase of living standards, compared with 30-40 years ago, brought about a simultaneous increase of the demand for an increase of personal consumption even among the producers, the farmers, themselves. The proceeds from the production increase in agriculture have been used for covering the increase in demands, therefore they represent no absolute increase in production. A further increase in production by making greater demands on the soil is not possible because it already shows signs of deterioration due to the use of artificial fertilizers, and it is therefore certain that, even with the greatest possible increase in production, participation in the world market could NOT be avoided.

The considerable expenditure of foreign currency to secure food by import, even in periods when harvests are good, increases catastrophically when the harvest is really poor. The possibility of this catastrophe increases correspondingly to the increase in population, and the annual 560000 excess in births would bring about an increased consumption in bread, because the child is a greater bread eater than the adult.

Permanently to counter the difficulties of food supplies by lowering the standard of living and by rationalization is impossible in a continent which had developed an approximately equivalent standard of living. As the solving of the unemployment problem has brought into effect the complete power of consumption, some small corrections in our agricultural home production will be possible, but NOT a wholesale alteration of the standard of food consumption. Consequently autarchy becomes impossible, specifically in the sphere of food supplies as well as generally.

Participation in World Economy. There are limits to this which we are unable to transgress. The market fluctuations would be an obstacle to a secure foundation of the German position; international commercial agreements do NOT offer any guarantee for practical execution. It must be considered on principle that since the World War (1914-18) an industrialization has taken place in countries which formerly exported food. We live in a period of economic empires, in which the tendency to colonize again approaches the condition which originally motivated colonization; in Japan and Italy economic motives are the basis of their will to expand, the economic need will also drive Germany to it. Countries outside the great economic empires have special difficulties in expanding economically.

The upward tendency, which has been caused in world economy, due to armament competition, can never form a permanent basis for an economic settlement, and this latter is also hampered by the economic disruption caused by Bolshevism. It is a pronounced military weakness of those States who base their existence on export. As our exports and imports are carried out over those sea lanes which are ruled by Britain, it is more a question of security of transport rather than one of foreign currency, and this explains the great weakness in our food situation in wartime. The only way out, and one which may appear imaginary, is the securing of greater living space, an endeavor which at all times has been the cause of the formation of states and of movements of nations. It is explicable that this tendency finds no interest in

Geneva and in satisfied States.

Should the security of our food position be our foremost thought, then the space required for this can only be sought in Europe, but we will not copy liberal capitalist policies which rely on exploiting colonies. It is NOT a case of conquering people, but of conquering agriculturally useful space. It would also be more to the purpose to seek raw material producing territory in Europe directly adjoining the Reich and not overseas, and this solution would have to be brought into effect in one or two generations.

What would be required at a later date over and above this must be left to subsequent generations. The development of great world-wide national bodies is naturally a slow process and the German people, with its strong racial root, has for this purpose the most favorable foundations in the heart of the European Continent. The history of all times Roman Empire, British Empire has proved that every space expansion can only be effected by breaking resistance and taking risks. Even setbacks are unavoidable; neither formerly nor today has space been found without an owner; the attacker always comes up against the proprietor.

The question for Germany is where the greatest possible conquest could be made at lowest cost.

German politics must reckon with its two hateful enemies, England and France, to whom a strong German colossus in the center of Europe would be intolerable. Both these states would oppose a further reinforcement of Germany, both in Europe and overseas, and in this opposition they would have the support of all parties. Both countries would view the building of German military strong points overseas as a threat to their overseas communications, as a security measure for German commerce, and retrospectively a strengthening of the German position in Europe.

England is NOT in a position to cede any of her colonial possessions to us owing to the resistance which she experiences in the Dominions. After the loss of prestige which England has suffered owing to the transfer of Abyssinia to Italian ownership, return of East Africa can no longer be expected. Any resistance on England's part would at best consist in the readiness to satisfy our colonial claims by taking away colonies which at the present moment are NOT in British hands, e.g. Angola. French favors would probably be of the same nature.

A serious discussion regarding the return of colonies to us could be considered only at a time when England is in a state of emergency and the German Reich is strong and well-armed. The Fuehrer does not share the opinion that the Empire is unshakable. Resistance against the Empire is to be found less in conquered territories than amongst its competitors. The British Empire and the Roman Empire cannot be compared with one another in regard to durability; since the Punic Wars the latter did not have a serious political enemy. Only the dissolving effects which originated in Christendom, and the signs of age which creep into all states, made it possible for the Ancient Germans to subjugate Ancient Rome.

Alongside the British Empire today a number of States exist which are stronger than it. The British Mother Country is able to defend its colonial possessions only allied with other States and NOT by its own power. How could England alone, for example, defend Canada against an attack by America or its Far Eastern interests against an attack by Japan.

The singling out of the British Crown as the bearer of Empire unity is in itself an admission that the universal empire cannot be maintained permanently by power politics. The following are significant pointers in this respect.

a. Ireland's tendency for independence.

b. Constitutional disputes in India where England, by her half-measures, left the door open for Indians at a later date to utilize the nonfulfillment of constitutional promises as a weapon against Britain.

c. The weakening of the British position in the Far East by Japan.

d. The opposition in the Mediterranean to Italy which by virtue of its history, driven by necessity and led by a genius expands its power position and must consequently infringe British interests to an increasing extent. The outcome of the Abyssinian War is a loss of prestige for Britain which Italy is endeavoring to increase by stirring up discontent in the Mohammedan world.

It must be established in conclusion that the Empire cannot be held permanently by power politics by 45 million Britons, in spite of all the solidity of her ideals. The proportion of the populations in the Empire, compared with that of the Motherland is 9:1, and it should act as a warning to us that if we expand in space, we must NOT allow the level of our population to become too low.

France's position is more favorable than that of England. The French Empire is better placed geographically, the population of its colonial possessions represents a potential military increase. But France is faced with difficulties of internal politics. At the present time only 10% approximately of the nations have parliamentary governments whereas 90% of them have totalitarian governments. Nevertheless we have to take the following into our political considerations as power factors:

Britain, France, Russia and the adjoining smaller States. The German question can be solved only by way of force, and this is never without risk. The battles of Frederick the Great for Silesia, and Bismarck's wars against Austria and France had been a tremendous risk and the speed of Prussian action in 1870 had prevented Austria from participating in the war. If we place the decision to apply force with risk at the head of the following expositions, then we are left to reply to the questions "when" and "how". In this regard we have to decide upon three different cases.

Case 1. Period 1943-45. After this we can only expect a change for the worse. The re-arming of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, as well as the formation of the Officers' Corps, are practically concluded. Our material equipment and armaments are modern, with further delay the danger of their becoming out-of-date will increase. In particular the secrecy of "special weapons" cannot always be safeguarded. Enlistment of reserves would be limited to the current recruiting age groups and an addition from older untrained groups would be no longer available.

In comparison with the re-armament, which will have been carried out at that time by the other nations, we shall decrease in relative power. Should we not act until 1943/45, then,

dependent on the absence of reserves, any year could bring about the food crisis, for the countering of which we do NOT possess the necessary foreign currency. This must be considered as a "point of weakness in the regime". Over and above that, the world will anticipate our action and will increase counter-measures yearly.

Whilst other nations isolate themselves we should be forced on the offensive.

What the actual position would be in the years 1943-1945 no one knows today. It is certain, however, that we can wait no longer.

On the one side the large armed forces, with the necessity for securing their upkeep, the aging of the Nazi movement and of its leaders, and on the other side the prospect of a lowering of the standard of living and a drop in the birth rate, leaves us no other choice than to act. If the Fuehrer is still living, then it will be his irrevocable decision to solve the German space problem no later than 1943-45. The necessity for action before 1943-45 will come under consideration in cases 2 and 3.

Case 2. Should the social tensions in France lead to an internal political crisis of such dimensions that it absorbs the French Army and thus renders it incapable for employment in war against Germany, then the time for action against Czechoslovakia has come.

Case 3. It would be equally possible to act against Czechoslovakia if France should be so tied up by a war against another State, that it cannot "proceed" against Germany.

For the improvement of our military political position it must be our first aim, in every case of entanglement by war, to conquer Czechoslovakia and Austria simultaneously, in order to remove any threat from the flanks in case of a possible advance Westwards. In the case of a conflict with France it would hardly be necessary to assume that Czechoslovakia would declare war on the same day as France. However, Czechoslovakia's desire to participate in the war will increase proportionally to the degree to which we are being weakened. Its actual participation could make itself felt by an attack on Silesia, either towards the North or the West.

Once Czechoslovakia is conquered and a mutual frontier, Germany-Hungary is obtained then a neutral attitude by Poland in a German-French conflict could more easily be relied upon. Our agreements with Poland remain valid only as long as Germany's strength remains unshakeable; should Germany have any setbacks then an attack by Poland against East Prussia, perhaps also against Pomerania, and Silesia, must be taken into account.

Assuming a development of the situation, which would lead to a planned attack on our part in the years 1943-45, then the behavior of France, Poland and Russia would probably have to be judged in the following manner:

The Fuehrer believes personally that in all probability England and perhaps also France have already silently written off Czechoslovakia, and that they have got used to the idea that this question would one day be cleaned up by Germany. The difficulties in the British Empire and the prospect of being entangled in another long-drawn-out European War, were decisive factors in the non-participation of England in a war against Germany. The British attitude would certainly NOT remain without influence on France's attitude. An attack by France

without British support is hardly probable assuming that its offensive would stagnate along our Western fortifications. Without England's support, it would also NOT be necessary to take into consideration a march by France through Belgium and Holland, and this would also not have to be reckoned with by us in case of a conflict with France, as in every case it would have as consequence the enmity of Great Britain. Naturally, we should in every case have to bar our frontier during the operation of our attacks against Czechoslovakia and Austria. It must be taken into consideration here that Czechoslovakia's defence measures will increase in strength from year to year, and that a consolidation of the inside values of the Austrian army will also be effected in the course of years. Although the population of Czechoslovakia in the first place is not a thin one, the embodiment of Czechoslovakia and Austria would nevertheless constitute the conquest of food for 5-6 million people, on the basis that a compulsory emigration of 2 million from Czechoslovakia and of 1 million from Austria could be carried out. The annexation of the two States to Germany militarily and politically would constitute a considerable relief, owing to shorter and better frontiers, the freeing of fighting personnel for other purposes and the possibility of re-constituting new armies up to a strength of about 12 Divisions, representing a new division per 1 million population.

No opposition to the removal of Czechoslovakia is expected on the part of Italy; however, it cannot be judged today what would be her attitude in the Austrian question since it would depend largely on whether the Duce were alive at the time or not.

The measure and speed of our action would decide Poland's attitude. Poland will have little inclination to enter the war against a victorious Germany, with Russia in its rear.

Military participation by Russia must be countered by the speed of our operations; it is a question whether this need be taken into consideration at all in view of Japan's attitude.

Should Case 2 occur - paralyzation of France by a Civil War - then the situation should be utilized at any time for operations against Czechoslovakia, as Germany's most dangerous enemy would be eliminated.

The Fuehrer sees Case 3 looming nearer; it could develop from the existing tensions in the Mediterranean, and should it occur he has firmly decided to make use of it any time, perhaps even as early as 1938.

Following recent experiences in the course of the events of the war in Spain, the Fuehrer does NOT see an early end to hostilities there. Taking into consideration the time required for past offensives by Franco, a further three years duration of war is , within the bounds of possibility. On the other hand, from the German point of view a 100% victory by Franco is not desirable; we are more interested in a continuation of the war and preservation of the tensions in the Mediterranean. Should Franco be in sole possession of the Spanish Peninsula it would mean the end of Italian intervention and the presence of Italy on the Balearic Isles. As our interests are directed towards continuing the war in Spain, it must be the task of our future policy to strengthen Italy in her fight to hold on to the Balearic Isles. However, a solidification of Italian positions on the Balearic Isles can NOT be tolerated either by France or by England and could lead to a war by France and England against Italy, in which case Spain, if entirely in white (i.e. Franco's) hands, could participate on the side of Italy's enemies. A subjugation of Italy in such a war appears very unlikely. Additional raw materials could be brought to Italy via Germany. The Fuehrer believes that Italy's military strategy would be to remain on the

defensive against France on the Western frontier and carry out operations against a France from Libya against North African French colonial possessions.

As a landing of French-British troops on the Italian coast can be discounted, and as a French offensive via the Alps to Upper Italy would be extremely difficult and would probably stagnate before the strong Italian fortifications, French lines of communication by the Italian fleet will to a great extent paralyze the transport of fighting personnel from North Africa to France, so that at its frontiers with Italy and Germany France will have at its disposal solely the metropolitan fighting forces.

If Germany profits from this war by disposing of the Czechoslovakian and the Austrian questions, the probability must be assumed that England being at war with Italy would not decide to commence operations against Germany. Without British support a warlike action by France against Germany is not to be anticipated.

The date of our attack on Czechoslovakia and Austria must be made dependent on the course of the Italian-English-French war and would not be simultaneous with the commencement of military agreements with Italy, but of full independence and, by exploiting this unique favorable opportunity he wishes to begin to carry out operations against Czechoslovakia. The attack on Czechoslovakia would have to take place with the "speed of lightning" [blitzartig schnell].

Feldmarschall von Blomberg and Generaloberst von Fritsch in giving their estimate on the situation, repeatedly pointed out that England and France must not appear as our enemies, and they stated that the war with Italy would NOT bind the French army to such an extent that it would NOT be in a position to commence operations on our Western frontier with superior forces. Generaloberst von Fritsch estimated the French forces which would presumably be employed on the Alpine frontier against Italy to be in the region of 20 divisions, so that a strong French superiority would still remain on our Western frontier. The French would according to German reasoning, attempt to advance into the Rhineland. We should consider the lead which France has got in mobilization, and quite apart from the very small value of our then existing fortifications which was pointed out particularly by Generalfeldmarschall von Blomberg the four motorized divisions which had been laid down for the West would be more or less incapable of movement. With regard to our offensive in a South-Easterly direction, Feldmarschall von Blomberg draws special attention to the strength of the Czechoslovakian fortifications, the building of which had assumed the character of a Maginot line and which would present extreme difficulties to our attack.

Generaloberst von Fritsch mentioned that it was the purpose of a study which he had laid on for this winter to investigate the possibilities of carrying out operations against Czechoslovakia with special consideration of the conquest of the Czechoslovakian system of fortifications; the Generaloberst also stated that owing to the prevailing conditions he would have to relinquish his leave abroad, which was to begin on 10 November.

This intention was countermanded by the Fuehrer who gave as a reason that the possibility of the conflict was not to be regarded as being so imminent. In reply to the remark by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that an Italian-English-French conflict be not as near as the Fuehrer appeared to assume, the Fuehrer stated that the date which appeared to him to be a possibility was summer 1938. In reply to statements by Generalfeldmarschall von Blomberg

and Generaloberst von Fritsch regarding England and France's attitude, the Fuehrer repeated his previous statements and said that he was convinced of Britain's non-participation and that consequently he did not believe in military action by France against Germany. Should the Mediterranean conflict already mentioned lead to a general mobilization in Europe, then we should have to commence operations against Czechoslovakia immediately. If, however, the powers who are not participating in the war should declare their disinterestedness, then Germany would, for the time being, have to side with this attitude. In view of the information given by the Fuehrer, Generaloberst Goering considered it imperative to think of a reduction or abandonment of our military undertaking in Spain. The Fuehrer agreed to this in so far as he believed this decision should be postponed for a suitable date. The second part of the discussion concerned material armament questions.

(Signed) HOSSBACH.

<http://forum.axishistory.com/viewtopic.php?t=55420>

The Hossbach 'Protocol': The Destruction of a Legend



Das Hossbach-'Protokoll': Die Zerstoerung einer Legende, by Dankwart Kluge.

Leoni am Starnberger See [Bavaria]: Druffel Verlag, 1980. 168 pages. DM 19.80. ISBN 3-80611003-4.

Reviewed by Mark Weber

Hitler, we're told over and over again, set out to conquer the world, or at least Europe. At the great postwar Nuremberg Tribunal the victorious Allies sought to prove that Hitler and his "henchmen" had engaged in a sinister "Conspiracy to Wage Aggressive War." The most important piece of evidence produced to sustain this charge was and is a document known as the "Hossbach Protocol" or "Hossbach Memorandum."

On 5 November 1937, Hitler called a few high officials together for a conference in the Reich Chancellery in Berlin: War Minister Werner von Blomberg, Army Commander Werner von Fritsch, Navy Commander Erich Raeder, Air Force Commander Hermann Göring, and Foreign Minister Konstantin von Neurath. Also present was Hitler's Army adjutant, Colonel Count Friedrich Hossbach.

Five days later, Hossbach wrote up an unauthorized record of the meeting based on memory. He did not take notes during the conference. Hossbach claimed after the war that he twice asked Hitler to read the memorandum, but the Chancellor replied that he had no time. Apparently none of the other participants even knew of the existence of the Colonel's conference record. Nor did they consider the meeting particularly important.

A few months after the conference, Hossbach was transferred to another position. His manuscript was filed away with many other papers and forgotten. In 1943 German general staff officer Colonel Count Kirchbach found the manuscript while going through the file and

made a copy for himself. Kirchbach left the Hossbach original in the file and gave his copy to his brother-in-law, Victor von Martin, for safe keeping. Shortly after the end of the war, Martin turned over this copy to the Allied occupation authorities, who used it to produce a substantially altered version for use as incriminating evidence at Nuremberg. Sentences such as those quoting Hitler as saying that "The German question can only be solved by force" were invented and inserted. But over all, the document presented at Nuremberg is less than half the length of the original Hossbach manuscript. Both the original written by Hossbach and the Kirchbach/Martin copy have completely (and conveniently) disappeared.

According to the Hossbach document presented at Nuremberg and widely quoted ever since, Hitler told those present that his remarks were to be regarded as a "final testament" in case of his death. The most incriminating section quotes **Hitler as saying that the armed forces would have to act by 1943-45 at the latest to secure the "living space" ("Lebensraum")** Germany needed. However, if France became weakened by internal crisis before that time, Germany should take action against Czechia (Bohemia and Moravia). Or if France became so embroiled in war (probably with Italy) that she could not take action against Germany, then Germany should seize Czechia and Austria simultaneously. **Hitler's alleged references to German "living space" refer only to Austria and Czechia.**

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Germany was militarily at the mercy of hostile foreign states. Rearmament had begun slowly, and **in early 1937, because of a raw materials shortage, the three armed service branches had to cut back.** A furious dispute broke out between the branches for the remaining allocation.

Contrary to what the Hossbach protocol suggests, Hitler called the conference of 5 November 1937 partially to reconcile the squabbling heads of the military branches and partially to revive the German rearmament program. Foreign policy was only a subsidiary issue. Hitler sought to justify the need for rebuilding German armed strength by presenting several exaggerated and hypothetical foreign crisis cases which would require military action, none of which ever occurred. Hitler announced no new course in German foreign policy, much less a plan for aggressive war.

At Nuremberg Göring testified that Hitler told him privately just before the conference that the main purpose in calling the meeting was "to put pressure on General von Fritsch, since he (Hitler) was dissatisfied with the rearmament of the army." Raeder confirmed Göring's statement.

Like some other aristocratic and traditionalist conservatives, **Hossbach became a bitter opponent of Hitler and the National Socialist regime. He was an intimate friend of General Ludwig Beck, who was executed in 1944 for his leading role in the conspiracy which tried to assassinate Hitler and overthrow the government. Despite his postwar denial, it is virtually certain that Hossbach prepared his slanted version of the conference at Beck's urging for possible use in discrediting the Hitler regime following a coup d'etat. Hossbach was also close to Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, head of military intelligence, and General Ziehlberg, both of whom were also executed for their roles in the 1944 assassination plot. Even in early 1938 Hossbach, Beck and Canaris were in favor of a coup to forcibly overthrow Hitler.**

The Hossbach memorandum is frequently cited in popular historical works as conclusive proof of Hitler's plans for aggressive war. A good example is William Shirer's best-selling but unreliable *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, which alleged that the protocol

recorded "the decisive turning point in the life of the Third Reich." At this critical conference, **Shirer wrote, "... the die was cast. Hitler had communicated his irrevocable decision to go to war. To the handful of men who would have to direct it there could no longer be any doubt."** Like many other Germanophobe publicists, Shirer deceptively cites the Hossbach memorandum as a reliable record. He even distorts the actual wartime importance of the conference participants. Of the five top officials present, three (Blomberg, Fritsch, Neurath) lost their high positions within months of the meeting. Raeder was replaced as Navy Commander in January 1943. Only Göring was really close to Hitler.

The important role of the fraudulent Hossbach protocol at the Nuremberg Tribunal is another damning confirmation of the illegitimate, show-trial character of this most extravagant judicial undertaking in history. On the basis of the protocol, which became Nuremberg document 386-PS, the Tribunal indictment declared: "An influential group of the Nazi conspirators met together with Hitler on 5 November 1937 to discuss the situation. Once again it was emphasized that Germany must have living space in Central Europe. They recognized that such a conquest would probably meet resistance that would have to be beaten down with force, and that their decision would probably lead to a general war." U.S. prosecutor Sidney Alderman told the Tribunal that the memorandum ("one of the most striking and revealing of all the captured documents") removed any remaining doubts about the guilt of the German leaders for their crimes against peace. It was also the basis for the conclusion of the Nuremberg judges that the German "Conspiracy to Wage Aggressive War" began at the conference of 5 November 1937. The document was crucial in condemning Göring, Neurath and Raeder for their roles in the "criminal conspiracy." The spurious Hossbach protocol is all too typical of the kind of evidence used by the victorious Allies at Nuremberg to legitimize their judicial imprisonment and murder of defeated Germany's leaders.

There is now no doubt that **the Hossbach protocol is worthless as a historical document. After the war both Hossbach and Kirchbach declared that the U.S. prosecution version is quite different than the document manuscript they recalled.** Hossbach also testified at Nuremberg that he could not confirm that the prosecution version corresponded completely with the manuscript he wrote in 1937. And in his memoirs, he admitted that in any case, Hitler did not outline any kind of "war plan" at the meeting. At Nuremberg, Göring, Raeder, Blomberg and Neurath all denounced the Hossbach protocol as a **gross misrepresentation of the conference.** (Fritsch was dead.) The protocol deals only with the first half of the meeting, thereby **distorting its true character.** The memorandum concludes with the simple sentence: "The second half of the conference dealt with material armaments questions." No details are given. In 1968 Victor von Martin characterized the memorandum with these words: **"The protocol presented at the Nuremberg court was put together in such a way as to totally change the meaning [of the original] and can therefore be characterized only as a crude forgery."**

When he wrote his path-breaking study, *The Origins of the Second World War*, **A.J.P. Taylor** accepted the Hossbach memorandum as a faithful record of the meeting of 5 November 1937. However, in a supplementary **"Second Thoughts"** added to later editions, the renowned British historian admitted that he had initially been "taken in" by the "legend" of the document. The allegedly significant conference was actually **"a maneuver in domestic affairs."** The protocol itself, Taylor noted, "contains no directives for action beyond a wish for increased armaments." He ruefully observed that "those who believe

in political trials may go on quoting the Hossbach memorandum." **H.W. Koch, a Lecturer at the University of York (England), further dismantled the legend in a 1968 article which concluded that the infamous protocol would be "inadmissible in any other court except the Nuremberg tribunal."**

Dankwart Kluge has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of the origins of the Second World War. **His study will stand for many years as the most authoritative dissection of a great documentary fraud.** This attractive work includes the complete text of the Hossbach protocol as an appendix, four photos, and a comprehensive bibliography. The author was born in 1944 in Breslau (Wroclaw), Silesia. Since 1974 he has worked as an attorney in West Berlin. **Kluge has done an admirable job of assembling his material, which is drawn not only from all the available published and documentary sources, but also from numerous private interviews and correspondence with key witnesses. Kluge argues his case compellingly, although the narrative style is somewhat weak. This important study leaves no doubt that the highly touted protocol is actually a forged revision of an uncertified copy of an unauthorized original, which has disappeared.** Harry Elmer Barnes, to whom the work is dedicated, would have welcomed it heartily.

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Source: http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v04/v04p372_Weber.html

Carlos Porter – Not Guilty at Nuremberg writes:

Document 386-PS, the '**Hossbach Protokoll**', Hitler's supposed speech of 5 November 1938, is a certified photocopy of a microfilm copy of a re-typed 'certified true copy' prepared by an American, of a re-typed 'certified true copy' prepared by a German, of unauthenticated handwritten notes by Hossbach, of a speech by Hitler, written from memory 5 days later. This is not the worst document, but one of the best, because we know who made one of the copies. **The text of 386-PS has been 'edited' (XLII 228-230).**

Thus 'trial by document' works as follows: A, an unknown person, listens to alleged 'oral statements' made by B, and takes notes or prepares a document on the basis of those alleged oral statements. The document is then introduced into evidence, not against A, who made the copy, but against B, C, D, E and a host of other people, although there is nothing to connect them with the document or the alleged statements. It is casually stated as fact that 'B said', or that 'C did', or that 'D and E knew'. This is contrary to the rules of evidence of all civilized countries. Nor are the documents identified by witnesses.

The forgery of original documents was rarely resorted to at Nuremberg, because the **documents were not brought to court.** The "original document" - that is, the original unsigned "copy" - was kept in a safe in the Document Centre (II 195 <<224>>, 256-258 <<289-292>>).

Then, 2 "photocopies" of the "copy" (V 21 <<29>>) or 6 photocopies (II 251-253 <<284-

286>>) were prepared and brought to court. All other copies were re-typed on a mimeograph using a stencil (IX 504 <<558-559>>).

In the transcript, **the word "original" is used to mean "photocopy"** (II 249-250 <<283-284>>; XIII 200 <<223>>, 508 <<560>>, 519 <<573>>, XV 43 <<53>>, 169 <<189>> 171<<191>> 327 <<359>>), to distinguish the photocopies from the mimeograph copies (IV245-246 <<273-274>>).

"Translations" of all documents were available from the beginning of the trial (II 159-160 <<187-189>>, 191 <<219-220>>, 195 <<224>>, 215 <<245>>, 249-250 <<282-283>>, 277 <<312>>, 415 <<458>>, 437 <<482-483>>), but the "original" German texts were not available until at least two months later. This applies not just to the trial briefs and indictment, etc. but to ALL DOCUMENTS. The defense received no documents in German until after January 9, 1946 (V 22-26 <<31-35>>).

Documents which appear to have been prepared on the same typewriter include Document 3803-PS, a letter from Kaltenbrunner to the Mayor of Vienna, and the cover letter from this same Mayor sending Kaltenbrunner's letter to the Tribunal (XI 345-348 <<381-385>>). This letter from Kaltenbrunner contains a false geographical term (XIV 416 <<458>>).

[...]

HERMANN GÖRING

Göring was accused of creating the **concentration camp system** and **plotting "aggressive war"** against Poland. Göring's defense was that Germany was a sovereign state, recognized by every government in the world (XXI 580-581 <<638-639>>); that Hitler was legally elected; that every nation has the right to legislate and to organize its affairs as it sees fit; that General von Schleicher had attempted to rule illegally and unconstitutionally without the support of the National Socialists; that Germany was on the verge of civil war in 1933; that concentration camps were invented by the British during the Boer War, and that internment of aliens and political opponents was practiced by both Britain and the United States during WWII.

The order to create the camps was unquestionably legal under an emergency clause in the Weimar Constitution, and was signed by Hindenburg (Reich President's Decree of 28 February 1933), under the authority of Article 48, paragraph 2, of the Weimar Constitution (XVII 535 <<581>>, XIX 357 <<394>>).

According to a prosecution document, Document R-129 (III 506 <<565-566>>) **there were 21,400 inmates in all German concentration camps put together in 1939. 300,000 persons were confined in ordinary prisons** (XVII 535-536 <<581-582>>, XX 159 <<178>>).

One year after the war, 300,000 Germans were held in Allied prison camps under "automatic arrest" clauses in Allied agreements (such as Point B-5 of the Joint Declaration of Potsdam) (XVIII 52 <<62>>).

The majority of prisoners in German concentration camps were Communists and common criminals (XVII 535-536 <<581-582>>, XXI 516-521 <<570-576>>, 607-614

<<677-685>>).

During the war, due to the Allied blockade, the camp system was expanded to utilize the labor of enemy aliens, criminals, Jehovah's Witnesses and Communists. It was pointed out that America imprisoned 11,000 Jehovah's Witnesses (XI 513 <<563>>).

Britain fought both world wars in defiance of international law by reducing Germany and any occupied territories to literal starvation through blockade (XIII 445-450 <<492-497>>; XVIII 334-335 <<365-367>>). It was this which necessitated requisitions and labor conscription in occupied territories, legal under Article 52 of The Fourth Hague Convention on Land Warfare 18 October 1907. It was this which made people happy to work in Germany and remit wages to their families (between two and three billion Reichsmarks during the war). The "slaves" paid German taxes on their wages, and were disciplined through fines, which could not exceed a week's wages (V 509 <<571>>). For gross indiscipline, they could be sent to a work camp (not a concentration camp) for a period not exceeding 56 days (XXI 521 <<575-576>>). It was strictly forbidden to beat or mistreat them.

Prisoners of war could volunteer to be released from prisoner of war camps and work in industry, in which case they were treated like any other industrial workers (XVIII 496-498 <<542-544>>), but lost protection under the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention. They could not be forced to do so.

The Vichy Regime in France obtained the release and immediate return home of 1 prisoner of war for every 3 workers sent to Germany under contract for a period of 6 months (XVIII 497 <<543>>). It was not possible to violate the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention by forcing French, Belgian or Dutch prisoners to participate in hostilities against their own countries, because their own countries were no longer fighting (XVIII 472-473 <<516>>).

As for the attack on Poland, the Polish crisis existed for over a year prior to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the German and Soviet attack. During this entire time, the Poles never called for an impartial international Court of Arbitration; never called on the League of Nations; because they did not wish an equitable solution. They were content to continue to violate their international agreements by expelling Polish citizens of German descent, as well as many hundreds of thousands of Jews (XVI 275 <<304>>).

The influx of Polish Jews into Germany was the principal immediate cause of German anti-Semitism, according to many defendants and defense witnesses (XXI 134-135 <<155>>; XXII 148 <<169>>). Polish Jews were involved in many financial scandals and swindling schemes, such as the Barnat-Kutitsky affair (XXI 569 <<627>>).

As for "conspiracy to wage war in defiance of the laws of war", of course it was the British who did that, with mass aerial bombings. German soldiers went into battle with detailed written instructions that property was to be respected; prisoners must be humanely treated; women must be respected; and so on (IX 57-58 <<68-69>>, 86 <<100-101>>, XVII 516 <<560>>).

Frequent trials resulting in many death penalties against Germans were carried out by the German armed forces against members of their own armed forces for rape or looting, even if the value of the property involved was slight (XVIII 368 <<401-402>>, XXI 390 <<431>>, XXII 78 <<92>>).

Requisition of government property was legal under the Hague Convention. The Soviet Union was not a signatory to this convention. In any case, in Communist countries there was no private property. Göring said he had been to Russia, and the people there had nothing to steal (IX 349-351 <<390-393>>).

Furthermore, **the Allies were presently engaged in everything they accused the Germans of doing (XXI 526 <<581>>; XXII 366-367 <<418-420>>).**

Göring demolished the "pressure chamber medical experiment" accusation by saying that every airman had to test his physical reactions to high altitude; there was nothing sinister about a so-called "pressure chamber" (XXI 304-310 <<337-344>>). **Americans carried out medical experiments resulting in death while the Nuremberg trial was still going on (XIX 90- 92 <<102-104>>; see also XXI 356, 370 <<393, 409>>).**

Ironically, it was alleged that "defensive war" included preventive attack (XXII 448 <<508>>) or to protect citizens of a foreign country from their own government (XIX 472 <<527>>; XXII 37 <<49>>), except when Germans did it (X 456 <<513>>). Protests that Germans did just that were ignored.

<http://archive.org/details/NotGuiltyAtNuremberg>

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Finally, here is the story of the "Second Book" according to Mr. Weinberg:

Revealed: the amazing story behind Hitler's second book

Thirty years after Hitler wrote his last and largely unknown book, it was discovered by Jewish scholar Gerhard Weinberg - who has spent four decades trying to publish it in English. He spoke to Daniel Johnson

Daniel Johnson
Telegraph (UK)
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In **1958**, Gerhard Weinberg made the kind of discovery that features in every historian's dreams. **During his summer holidays, the young American scholar had been examining captured German military documents in the US Army archives**, which - back then - were housed in a converted torpedo factory in Alexandria, across the Potomac from Washington DC. **Before being shipped back to Germany, each one was being microfilmed.**

Humdrum work, but **Weinberg was alert to a remote yet exciting possibility. In a memoir, one of Hitler's secretaries had mentioned a "secret" book about Nazi foreign policy** - Weinberg's special subject. Then, when **Hitler's Table Talk** was published by Hugh Trevor-Roper (later Lord Dacre) in 1953, **there was a reference to this "unpublished work" by Hitler himself.** Weinberg hoped to track it down one day, though it was not easy to know where to look.

One day, leafing through the contents of a green box-file, he found a folder labelled "Draft of Mein Kampf". Inside was a 324-page typescript: "The moment I looked at it, read the opening lines and the attached document on its confiscation, it became obvious to me that this was not a draft of Mein Kampf. In fact, this was the book to which I had seen references," he says.

It was a dramatic moment: Weinberg had unearthed a previously unknown second book by Hitler, the only one he ever wrote after Mein Kampf. "This thing in fact existed and was here! It really existed, it had survived," says Weinberg, recalling his excitement. "Lots of stuff, after all, had been destroyed - and now this could be made accessible to anybody who had an interest in it."

By a stroke of good fortune, it had already been declassified by the authorities, which meant there was nothing to stop Weinberg making it public. Before there could be any question of publication, however, he had to be sure that it was authentic. Though this was a quarter of a century before the great "Hitler Diaries" hoax - which damaged the reputations of the Times, the Sunday Times and the late Lord Dacre - Weinberg was already aware of the danger of forgery.

The document itself, though yellowing, was in decent condition. Weinberg applied the logical methods of Sherlock Holmes: "If you look carefully, you can see that it has been dictated straight on to a typewriter, because, periodically, there is a space and then a full stop or a comma. In other words, the person who was typing thought there was another word coming and had already hit the space bar, then realised it was the end of the sentence or there was a comma coming. And I knew from other information that it was a practice of Hitler's to dictate on to the typewriter. So the physical appearance of the document was consistent with the way that Hitler actually operated."

The provenance of the typescript was good: **it had been found among other documents known to be genuine. According to the brief report appended by the American officer who confiscated it in 1945, this copy had been kept in the safe of the Nazi publishing house and then handed over by Josef Berg, the manager, who thought it had been written "more than 15 years ago" (i.e. Before 1930).**

The Munich Institute for Contemporary History, which had also been searching for the Hitler book, told Weinberg that it had received correspondence about it. Among the letters was one from a man called Lauer, who said that, during the war, Berg had shown him the manuscript of a book by Hitler.

"I checked up: who is Lauer and why would anybody show him secret things out of the safe?" said Weinberg. "It turned out that this was a man who had edited a whole bunch of songbooks for the Nazi party, so he knew his way around the publishing house. So it made sense that

Berg, a close friend with whom he had worked there, might make himself important by saying: 'Hey - you know what we got here?' "

Berg, who was still alive, then provided a crucial detail. **Writing to the institute in 1958, he mentioned that there had been another copy of the typescript. Weinberg seized on this: "At one point, after the first couple of hundred pages of what we used to call ribbon [top] copy, it suddenly changed, and the last 100 or so pages were clearly carbon copies. That suggests to me that when they were collating it, back in 1928, somebody goofed. There were, at one point, two copies - at least.**

"Now, this combination of information, and a careful reading of the text, convinced me that there was no question but that this was authentic. The bits and pieces of evidence fitted together and made sense.

"All the corrections, with one exception, were made on the typewriter while Hitler was dictating. He would suddenly stop and say: 'Strike that', and Max Amann [the publisher to whom Hitler dictated the second volume of Mein Kampf as well as this second book] would 'xxx' out a few words, and then would come a new bunch of words. There is one short word corrected by ink. My guess is that this was done at the time. There is no editing; it was never worked over, even for spelling errors. It's the way it came out of the typewriter in the summer of 1928. Then it was simply stashed away."

Once the question of authenticity had been settled, Weinberg asked himself: why did Hitler's second book never appear at the time he wrote it? "I think Max [the publisher] advised him against publishing it just then," Weinberg says. It would have competed with Mein Kampf, the second volume of which was not selling well. "The following year, Hitler aligned himself with the very people he attacked in this manuscript: the people on the political Right who wanted to undo the Versailles Treaty. Hitler thought they were utter fools - but he was not about to say that in print, when they gave him money to travel all over Germany and appeal to the German people. And, later on, all kinds of other changes would have had to be made [to the book]."

Did Hitler ever refer to the book again?

"The one time when he did refer to it in his table talk was in February 1942, almost 14 years after he had written it. Obviously, in the intervening years, his decision not to publish it must reflect some kind of choice."

[...]

Thirty years later, once Weinberg had established the main facts, the Munich Institute was eager to publish the book in German, and it was agreed that an English translation should appear with additional footnotes. But who owned the copyright?

The Americans, who had occupied Bavaria, had confiscated the property of the Nazi party - including its publishing house, the Eher Verlag.

"The Nazi party publishing house had owned the rights to Mein Kampf and paid Hitler huge royalties," says Weinberg. "These rights were then transferred to the Bavarian

government by the Americans. But, in this case, we couldn't confiscate from the Eher Verlag what the Eher Verlag didn't own. Hitler had never signed a contract for the publication of this unpublished manuscript. So, after his suicide in 1945, the publishing rights passed to his heirs."

Aware that the question of royalties for the second book was fraught with dangers, the Munich Institute promptly bought the publishing rights from the heirs.

So far, so good. In 1961, the untitled manuscript was published in German as Hitler's Second Book: A Document from the Year 1928, edited by Weinberg and with an introduction by his old supervisor, Hans Rothfels. It was quickly acclaimed by German historians as authentic, though the public reception of this unwelcome reminder of the Nazi past was somewhat muted. Germany was more interested in the present: that year, the Berlin Wall was built overnight.

Weinberg had agreed with the Munich Institute that because of the nature of the project, it was fitting that no one should make a penny out of it. Consequently, he received no payment and there were no royalties. **The next step was to publish an edition in English. It was then, however, that Weinberg heard rumours of a rival version under the title Hitler's Secret Book. Weinberg's great discovery had been pirated.**

He soon discovered that the pirated edition was inaccurate: it had been translated not from the original manuscript, but from Weinberg's German edition - plagiarising his work in the process. "I was then informed that the intended American publisher [for my own English edition] was withdrawing."

Weinberg was furious. **The translation by the pirates was "lousy", he says, and "an outrageous thing to do. For almost half a century, nobody would put out a decent one."** Didn't he think of suing? "To sue for piracy, you have to prove economic loss," Weinberg says. "How could I sue for lost royalties when I wasn't getting any?"

But it was a personal catastrophe: **"At this point, I was a young associate professor," Weinberg says. "This book seemed to me of considerable importance for the scholarly profession, and for someone starting on an academic career, to have that stolen was a very unpleasant experience."**

Was there anything he could do? "I wrote a letter to the New York Times, which they declined to publish. In those days, apparently, the newspapers weren't interested in uncovering plagiarism."

Over the next 40 years, Weinberg made repeated efforts to interest other publishers in a new, scholarly edition. "I'm not Hitler's press agent, obviously, but one of the things that outraged me about this is that we're not talking about somebody of no importance. We're talking about one of the central figures of the 20th century - and the man wrote all of two books. One of these is not available in a reliable English-language edition, which is why I am pleased that, at last, it will be."

Serious scholars have always known that the pirated edition is not reliable. Ian Kershaw's highly acclaimed biography of Hitler, for example, only refers to Weinberg's

German edition in the footnotes. Hardly any English-speaking non-specialist has any inkling that Hitler's Second Book exists.

How did Weinberg himself get involved in all this? The truth is that Hitler had already overshadowed his life long before he discovered the manuscript that is his chief claim to fame.

In 1928, the same year that Hitler dictated his second book, Gerhard Weinberg was born in Hanover. His father was a pillar of German society: a judge, a soldier in the Great War, a Treasury civil servant. There was one problem: the Weinbergs were Jews.

When the Nazis came to power, Weinberg senior lost his job. Working from his flat, he devoted himself to helping other Jews to overcome the chicanery of the Nazi bureaucracy which made emigration so difficult.

"My older brother got beaten up so often that my parents took him out of school and sent him to a school in Berlin," Weinberg says. "I guess I had a thicker skull, so I put up with the beatings until November 1938, when Jewish children in the public schools were expelled."

After the nationwide pogrom known as Kristallnacht, the Weinbergs decided it was time to leave. "The British Government was one of the few that changed the rules after Kristallnacht. People waiting for quota numbers to go to the United States, and who had a means of support without a job, could do their waiting in England.

"A school in Swanage said it would take two boys, and another in Bournemouth said it would take a girl - so my father put my brother, sister and me on a boat to Southampton. I arrived the day before my 11th birthday and stayed at boarding school until the summer of 1940, when we moved to London where I had a grandstand view of the first big raids of the Battle of Britain."

In September 1940, the military police brought his father, who had been interned, up to Glasgow, where the family were reunited. They then set sail on the Cameronia, one of the very last passenger ships allowed to cross the Atlantic - "We zigzagged, not in convoy, with lifebelts on all the time, to New York," recalls Weinberg, who later became an American citizen.

However, members of his extended family fell victim to Hitler's "Final Solution". "The majority of my father's family, including his aunts, an uncle, and cousins whom I had met, together with some relatives of my mother, were murdered."

Weinberg's German experience marked him, and his life's work has been a prolonged meditation on his former countrymen: "I have come to think it important for people not to look on the Nazi experience in two ways that are very dangerous and very bad. One of them is to look on it as a kind of freak show. It's not a freak show: it's a coherent, horrible system.

"Equally dangerous is the opposite: that this is some kind of a German genetic defect. It isn't. Not only were there decent people in Germany, but these Nazis were people like other

people. Human beings can do awful things, and can turn away from awful things and reform themselves.

"It's a very comforting thought that this is a German peculiarity and nobody we know would ever dream of doing any such things. That's nonsense, and very dangerous nonsense. The potential both for good and for evil is in all people."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/3603289/Revealed-the-amazing-story-behind-Hitlers-second-book.html>