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*Goering*

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It was sometime in March or April or May of 1933 that Goering expressed to General Milch a desire to have luncheon with me at my house alone, as he wished to have a very private conversation. It was only with a certain amount of reluctance and after informing the Ambassador of Goering's desire that I told Milch that I was prepared to have him come to lunch. It was with a good deal of reluctance that I agreed to this because my wife had always said she would not have ~~any~~ a Nazi in the house to her knowledge, and certainly not a person of the <sup>and position</sup> character/of Goering, but in view of the circumstances and as there was reason to believe that the conversation might have some usefulness, that I agreed to have the luncheon. Goering arrived alone at our apartment in the ~~Bredtstrasse~~ <sup>Broke</sup> and quite unostentatiously. There were two of the SS men who accompanied him who remained in the drawing room while he and I were in the dining room. The conversation during the luncheon was quite innocuous. For the first time in any conversation that I had had with Goering he spoke really good German instead of the dialect and rough type of German that he was accustomed to speak and to which he had become accustomed in the taverns where the SS and SA used to meet before the Hitler regime came into power.

The conversation during the luncheon I do not recall, but I do recall that it was quite innocuous and covered quite unimportant matters. It was after luncheon was over and coffee appeared on the table that Goering said very abruptly, "I want you to tell me <sup>what the</sup> Monroe Doctrine is". I said to him that if I told him about the Monroe Doctrine it would be quite a long story and what was it he wanted to know about it. <sup>to know</sup> Did he wish about the historical background? Did he wish to know about its development? Did he wish to know the reasons which impelled the executive of my country to enunciate the Monroe Doctrine? Goering's reply was very abrupt and he reverted to the rather rough German that he was accustomed to use when somewhat upset or excited or crossed by someone. He said, "What I wish to know is all about the Monroe Doctrine. I want to know how it got started, what it means and all there

is about it. I started to tell him first some of the historical background of the Monroe Doctrine. I could see after two or three minutes that he became quite impatient. When I continued with my narrative all at once he said, "All this has no meaning for me. All I know is that what you call the Monroe Doctrine ~~about~~ <sup>before</sup> keeping <sup>hold</sup> and everybody else staying out." What I want you to know is that everything below the Rio Grande is ours". I said to the General, "General, if you consider that everything below the Rio Grande is yours, have you considered that you may have to come and take it and what that will mean." He was very upset and he began pounding on the table with his fist until the coffee cups began to rattle. I said to the General that I did not permit anyone to pound on my table and I would appreciate very much his not doing that and that I thought the conversation should continue on another tone. In an entirely calm manner then and reverting into good German he said, "What I know is that the next time we sit at the table that there will be two pistols on my side of the table and one on yours".

The conversation ended rather abruptly after that and I showed my distaste at the conversation and the General left, but in an agreeable mood and quite jovial.

This conversation was, as will be noted, in the very early months of the Nazi regime. It was indicative of what Hitler and Goering and the rest of the leaders of the Nazi party had in mind. When he spoke of two revolvers being on his side of the table and one on mine what he meant was that Germany's military power, and particularly aviation, would be so strong that there would be no resisting her and that she would be able to carry her way without actually waging war. This is what they definitely had in mind and it is interesting to note that from the very outset, that is from the very first months of the Nazi regime, Goering had this so definitely in mind and he was of course in this respect only reflecting the views of Hitler and other high leaders of the party. It must be noted, however, at the time that the Army had no part in this matter whatever and did not share these views which were being expressed by Goering and Hitler on

other occasions similar to the one which I have just mentioned.

Developing events even from the beginning of the Nazi regime in January and February 1933 showed that rivalries and strong personal feelings amounting to enmities arose between Goering and Goebbels. These became stronger as the months went on. The records which became available after the fall of the Nazi government and the complete defeat of Germany showed how deep and strong this feeling was. The depth of this feeling, however, and its early development was known only to those who were closely informed concerning developments in the Nazi regime from the very beginning. I will not here go into what the basic reasons were for this enmity and strong personal feeling of dislike between Goering and Goebbels, but that it existed is very clear. As Himmler came to the foreground in the months following their coming into power, his ambitions increased and he wished to take over the SA and the SS from Goering. Goering was fully familiar with this situation but felt sure that he could deal with it adequately and there is no doubt that in those earlier months in the first year of the Nazi regime Goering was much more useful to Hitler, and Goering was also closer to Hitler than was Himmler. The disparity between the position of the two men, however, began to decrease, especially in the field of the SS and the SA. The control of the SS and the SA to Goering was very important for the maintenance of his position in other major respects in the hierarchy of the Nazi regime, where he was really No. 2 to Hitler.

I was fully familiar with this situation because of my close contact not only with Goering but with others closely associated with him, <sup>and</sup> ~~or rather~~ from the knowledge which I had of a direct character of their activities and of the feelings between the members of the higher hierarchy of the Nazi regime.

I am not exactly certain of the date but it can be determined from my records and from despatches sent at the time to the Department, but it was I believe in the early months of 1934 when the daughter of a prominent American official

in Europe came to my office to see me and was obviously in a greatly perturbed situation. She started to weep and she told me that Diehls, the head of the German Secret Police, that is the Gestapo, was about to be arrested during the course of the ~~morning~~ <sup>day</sup> and that it was almost certain that he would be executed. When she was able to compose herself she asked me to see Goering immediately and tell him that Himmler was going to have Diehls knocked off during the course of the day, as he wished him out of the way in order to have himself made head of the Gestapo and in this way take away some of Goering's power. She said that I was the person and the only person who could tell this to Goering without being in danger of his own life, and that as it was so important to Goering she wished me to see him immediately.

I told her that while it was my duty to be informed of what was going on in the German government, and that while I knew of this situation between Goering and Himmler, and while it was quite possible that Himmler might be trying to take these steps of an extreme character against Diehls in order to get his position, I was not in a position to go and see Goering and do anything about this. Parenthetically, I should state that ~~XXXXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXXX~~ I had known that this young woman had had ~~some other relations~~ close relations with some of the high officers of the Nazi government. It was rather notorious among some of us who had knowledge of inside matters that she had been the mistress of Captain Udet, who had been a great ace in the German Air Force during the First World War. Udet had joined the Nazi party in the early months of 1933 for purely opportunistic reasons and had already been promoted to the grade of Colonel and afterwards became a General. We also had reason to know that she had close relations with several others of the hierarchy. I had been told that she was the mistress of Dr. Diehls but had not the same confirmatory information as I had in the case of Udet. I therefore was not surprised when she came to my office in this hysterical state, insisting that I see Goering, and it was quite obvious to

me that she had the information concerning Diehls' danger from Diehls himself. It was probably at the suggestion of Diehls that she had come to see me, as the one person who might have easy access to Goering on a matter of this kind but without danger to himself and who would be able to accomplish something in the matter.

I must say that it was with a good deal of reluctance that I had to insist with her that I could do nothing, because while I had no real sympathy for her because I felt that she had behaved so badly in so many ways, especially in view of the position held by her father, I nevertheless told her that I could not do anything, and after a great deal of difficulty was able to get her out of my office.

After she left I began thinking about the matter and realized that she was correct in saying one thing, and that is that Diehls after all was one of the best in the regime, as was Goering and that in case anything happened to Diehls and Himmler came in, it would weaken the position of Goering and of the more reasonable element in the party. I also realized that with Himmler as head of the Gestapo it would be more difficult for us in our government representation who had to deal with these cases of attacks on American citizens to do anything effective, for Himmler was known to be even more cold-blooded and ruthless than Dr. Diehls.

It so happened that I had that day a luncheon engagement at the Herren Klub with General von Fritsch and General von Seeckt. I had been asked to this luncheon the week before and I had no idea what it was about. I had thought of going to see ~~Dr. Diehls~~ Goering, as I thought that perhaps it was the best thing that I could do, when I realized that I would have to forego this luncheon engagement. After a good deal of thinking about the matter I called up Dr. Milch on the telephone to see whether I could see Goering, which I did, and Dr. Milch, who was in the Luftwaffe Ministerium, told me that unfortunately the General couldn't see me as he had just left for the Herren Klub, where he



was to be the guest of General von Seeckt and General von Fritsch. Milch said this with a great deal of pride. I had not realized up to that moment that the luncheon to which I was invited in the Herren Klub by General von Seeckt and General von Fritsch was for General Goering. I realized the significance of the event and Milch's obvious pleasure in telling me that Goering was going to a luncheon of this kind, as it was the first time since the Nazis came into power that the highest ranking officers of the German Army had sat down to the table, or were going to sit down to a table with Goering or any high ranking member of the Nazi regime. I told Milch that I was going to the same luncheon and that I would see the General there.

When I arrived at the Herren Klub a little after 12 I found General Goering in conversation with the two hosts, General von Fritsch and General von Seeckt, and as I approached them Goering left them and came towards me and he put his arm around my shoulder and he said the equivalent in German: "Gentlemen, this is a man who doesn't like me at all, a man who doesn't think very much of me, but he is a good friend of our country." We then joined General von Fritsch and General von Seeckt and as soon as I had an opportunity within a few moments I told Goering that there was something that I had to say to him which was of some importance and could we have a moment aside. I told him in very few words that a person in whom I had absolute confidence had called on me that morning and told me that Himmler was bent on getting rid of Diehls during the course of the day and that Diehls was actually to be bumped off. I did it in the plain language that Goering was accustomed to use himself and which I knew would leave no doubt as to the character of the information which I had. Without asking me who had given me this information or without asking me any questions, Goering simply said that he thanked me very much for giving him this information. Immediately thereafter we joined General von Seeckt and General von Fritsch, who by that time had been joined by ~~many~~ several other high ranking generals who were to be guests at the luncheon. General Goering said to General von Seeckt, who was

the ranking <sup>army</sup>/officer present, that something had come up which ~~was extremely important~~ ~~which immediately~~ required his immediate attention and that to his great regret he would have to forego the pleasure of having lunch with him. As all these men, especially the army officers, were men trained in this sort of thing, one did not note very much the astonishment which they must have felt and Goering left. The luncheon went on just as though nothing had happened.

About 5 o'clock in the afternoon the late edition of the Berliner Zeitung came to my desk and there were big headlines to the effect that Dr. Diehls, the head of the Gestapo, had been transferred to Cologne as Reichs Reigerungs President, and that ~~Himmler~~ he had resigned his post as head of the Gestapo, which would be filled by Himmler. This was the first setback that Goering had had since the beginning of the Nazi regime. ~~Himmler~~ had become the head of the Gestapo and ~~Goering~~ <sup>Goering,</sup> while he kept control of the SA and the SS, by the same token he had some fall in prestige. Goering afterwards showed his appreciation of the information which I had given him by making mention of Diehls being still alive in ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> conversation which we had without making any further reference to the whole matter.

A sequel to the foregoing is that in 1942 when I was Ambassador to Cuba the same young woman appeared in my office accompanied by her brother. She told me that she had come to Havana, as she was about to publish the letters of her father. It was her desire to publish among these letters ~~some~~ several which I had written to her father from Vienna. I told her that it would be quite impossible for her to publish any of the letters which I had written to her father, that if she was writing a book it was quite proper for her to publish, and quite correct, any letters which her father might have written to me, as well as to other persons, but that she could not publish any letters which I had written to her father without my permission and that she could not have that. She blandly informed me that the publisher had given her the same information and that was why she had made this trip to Havana at considerable expense in order to get my permission but that she wanted me to know that whether I gave the permission or

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not, she was going to publish the letters which I had written to her father. I told her that no publisher of any responsibility would accept the book without having a letter from me saying that I had given my agreement to publication of the letters. She still was very insistent and her brother was quite nasty about the whole matter and so I thought it was best to terminate the whole matter in the following way. I told her that if she published my letters, either through an irresponsible ~~or~~ responsible publisher, that I would write a little article about what I knew about her and about certain episodes in her life and that my article would be much more interesting than anything that would be in her book, even though it would contain some interesting letters which her father had written to various people. That ended the matter. I never heard any further of it.

At the outset of this memorandum I spoke of the personal feeling and rivalry and hatred between Goebbels and Goering. It should be recalled that as soon as ~~Himmler~~ began to push his head up and had these ambitions to replace Goering and first began his efforts to get in through the Gestapo and the SA and the SS, he formed a close relationship with Goebbels. Goebbels and Himmler were men of the same type, cold, ruthless, calculating, absolutely without any principle and determined to make their way without regard of anything and anybody. This alliance between Goebbels and Himmler, who both had the same designs against Goering, served more purpose to Himmler than it did to ~~Goering~~ <sup>Goebbels</sup>. This was increasingly obvious by events all the way through the history of the Nazi regime until the very end.