

RIBBENTROP IS OUT BY DOENITZ ORDER

Foreign Chief Is Replaced by Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk as Nation Crumbles

By CLIFTON DANIEL

By Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, May 2—Apart from peace feelers, Germany today showed all the symptoms of a nation crumbling to bits.

Following the announced death of Adolf Hitler and the fall of Berlin, Germany's military and political leadership has split into factions, with Joachim von Ribbentrop dismissed as Foreign Minister, other former sub-Fuehrers oddly silent and a million German soldiers laying down their arms in Italy in the first of a series of expected piecemeal surrenders.

In his very first broadcast to the German nation as von Ribbentrop's successor, Count Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk spoke like the representative of a beaten nation.

The Hamburg radio announced today that he had been appointed Foreign Minister by Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz, successor to Hitler.

Saying that "Germany could have saved Europe from bolshevism if its rear had not been threatened," he again repeated the tactic already tried unsuccessfully by Rudolf Hess, Heinrich Himmler and Doenitz of appealing to the Western Allies to leave the Reich free to fight against the Red Army.

He may have thought that his appeal acquired character by the fact that he is a conservative professional civil servant who was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and has a perfect command of English.

Finds No Echo Abroad

His appeal found no echo abroad and meanwhile events are casting a serious doubt on the ability of Doenitz, fanatical U-boat tactician and Britain-hater, to carry out his intention of continuing the "fight against bolshevism."

There was a notable lack of unanimity among the followers of the former Fuehrer who once spoke with the single voice of Hitler.

Britain, which came so near to being strangled by Doenitz's U-boat packs, was especially interested in the possibility that the thin-lipped Nazi admiral would be able to keep his navy fighting, if not the Wehrmacht.

While the Norway and Denmark commanders rallied to Doenitz, Col. Gen. Heinrich von Vietinghoff-Scheel gave up the fight in Italy.

Nothing was said from Germany yesterday of Field Marshal Gen. Albert Kesselring, who is presumably still commander in chief of the shattered western armies.

Party leaders who once shared the mastery of the Reich with Hitler have also been peculiarly silent—perhaps because some of them are dead. The arrogant von Ribbentrop, former Rhineland wine merchant who became a Nazi in 1930 and executed Hitler's foreign policy from 1938 until today, was not mentioned in the brief announcement of the appointment of von Krosigk who has been Finance Minister since the Franz von Papen government of 1932 and became a Nazi only by virtue of a gold party badge conferred on him for his services.

Himmler Out of News

Himmler vanished from German news reports days ago although it can be presumed that he still wields strong authority over the civilian population, if not the armed forces. He not only commanded the German Home Army but also the police, the Gestapo and the SS [Elite Guard] whose terrorism so long kept the German people fighting against their will

REPLACES RIBBENTROP



Count Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk
Associated Press

and stiffened the will of the Wehrmacht.

Facts now coming out about Himmler's peace feelers suggest that, accepting the opinion of the General Staff that Germany was irrevocably beaten, he resolved to take power in his own hands, knowing Hitler to be dying, and to seek a two-sided peace.

Field Marshal Gen. Wilhelm Keitel, presumably, backed him up and thus lost his post.

Before expiring, it would appear that Hitler appointed his fellow-fanaticist Doenitz to carry on the war, his trusted lieutenants having failed him in the end.

It was not known here tonight where Himmler is and what he now proposes to do. It was fairly apparent tonight that the important news that Prime Minister Churchill had in mind for this week was the surrender in Italy, not unconditional surrender from all the German forces. But a swift and total disintegration of German resistance is still expected here.

Wherever Himmler is, it is apparent that he was not by the side of his new Fuehrer.

If the Nazi hierarchy is still alive it would be normal for them to pledge loyalty to Hitler's heir—provided they approved of his selection and trusted Doenitz's truthfulness in announcing his accession. No such pledge has been made.

While it is possible that Martin Bormann, deputy Fuehrer and nominal successor to the leadership; Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the Party mouthpiece; and Reich Marshal Hermann Goering, one of Hitler's oldest associates, may be ill, dead or out of communication, the possibility has not been overlooked that some of them may, after all, have gone underground to perpetuate the movement.

Doenitz Believed in North

LONDON, May 2 (U.P.)—Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz, with von Krosigk, the remnants of the German High Command and other remaining leaders, was believed to be in northwestern Germany preparing to continue to Denmark or Norway—if he had not already started.

There were totally unconfirmed reports that Doenitz and possibly von Krosigk might have met Count Folke Bernadotte, Swedish intermediary, during the abortive attempt by Heinrich Himmler to arrange peace with the United States and Britain but not Russia.

There was a feeling that von Krosigk had been put in the Foreign Ministry only in anticipation of peace. He never identified himself closely with the Nazis and told friends he retained his post so others would not get at the public funds. He tried to help the Rev. Martin Niemoeller when the Nazis

persecuted him, and was said to have disliked Himmler.

Schoerner Backs Doenitz

LONDON, May 2 (P)—Field Marshal Schoerner, German Commander in Chief in the southern section of the eastern front, pledged allegiance to Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz today in a broadcast order of the day. He called on German soldiers to "fight on for freedom."

Troop Shift to East Reported

WITH THE CANADIAN FIRST ARMY, May 2 (P)—A captured German officer asserted today that Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz had ordered German troops facing the western Allies to cease fighting and to withdraw to the east to oppose the Russians, a Canadian Army source said. There was no confirmation or further information.