

3 Aug 45

An INTERVIEW With  
Gen Art Walter WARLIMONT



HITLER'S INTEREST IN  
SMALL DETAILS;  
GERMAN - JAPANESE COLLABORATION

EUCOM : HD : OHGB

Copy 1

00001

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HISTORICAL DIVISION  
SPECIAL STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

12 July 1949

Note to: ETHINT 4

By: Kenneth W. Hechler  
Major, Infantry (Res)

As with the other oral interviews with General Warlimont, this oral interview was conducted entirely in English, which accounts for the fact that no German record of the oral interview is available.

This is not a stenographic record of General Warlimont's remarks, but is merely a summary of his more important statements, edited in order to preserve compactness and continuity.

ETHINT 4 - (         )

Title           : Hitler's Interest in Small Details; German-Japanese  
                  Collaboration

Source           : Gen Art Warlimont, Walter

Position         : Deputy Chief, Armed Forces Operations Staff  
                  (until 6 Sep 44, Deputy to Genobst Jodl -  
                  Chief, Wehrmachtsfuehrungsstab)

Date             : 3 Aug 45

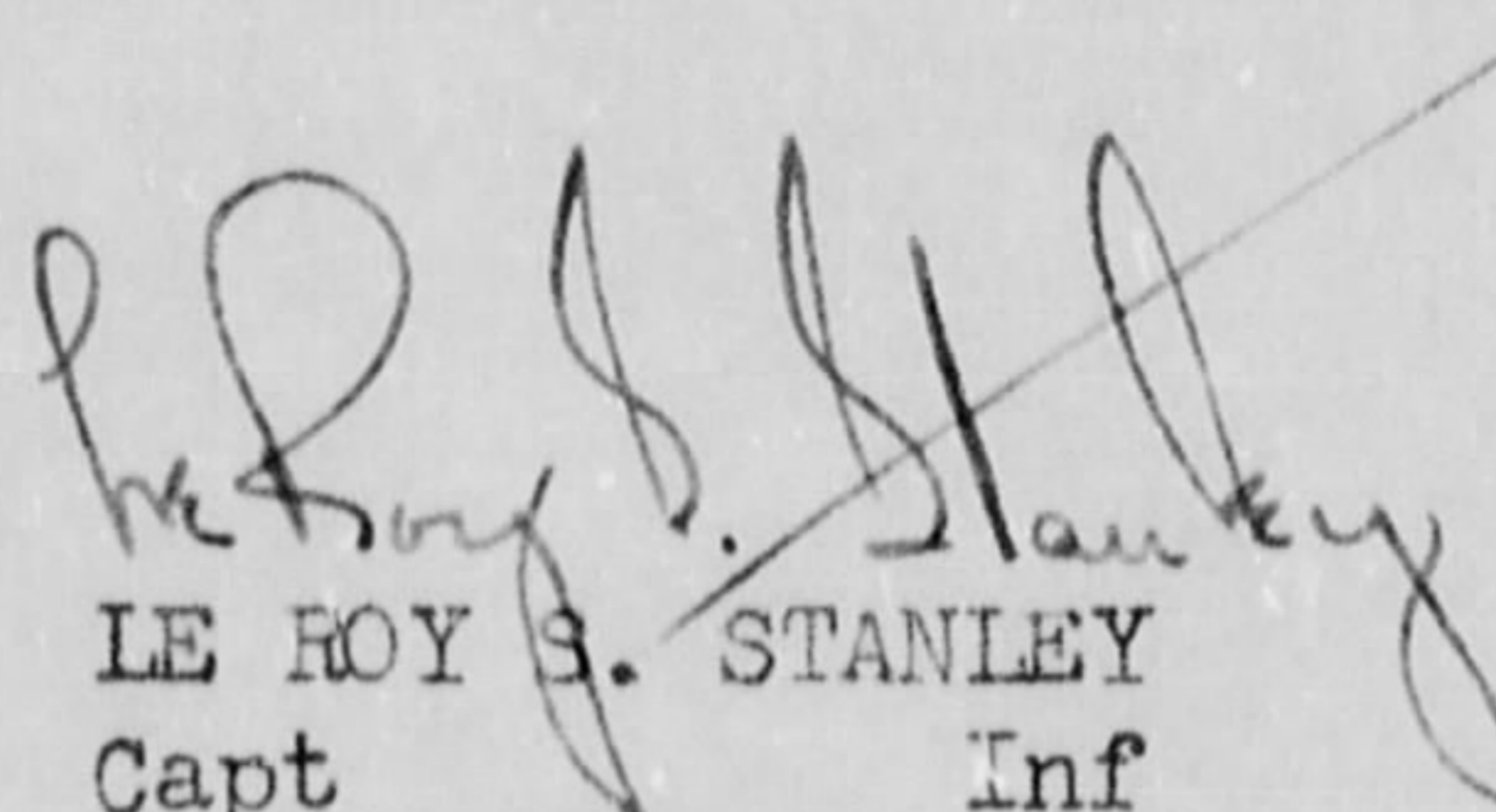
Place            : Bad Mondorf, Luxembourg

Interviewer     : Maj Kenneth W. Hechler

00002

Foreword

This interview is one of a series conducted by the Historical Section, ETOUSA. Unfortunately, only a typed record in English is available for editing. It is not known whether a record in German was made at the time of the interview, nor, if one was made, can the accuracy of the translation be determined. Therefore, no absolute guarantee can be given as to the authenticity and completeness of this version of the interview. Only obvious errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammatical construction have been corrected. All parenthetical statements, except those of the editor, which are identified as such, are as they appear in the available record.



LE ROY S. STANLEY  
Capt                    Inf  
Historical Editor

DEC 17 1947

00003

HITLER'S INTEREST IN SMALL DETAILS  
GERMAN-JAPANESE COLLABORATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

I. Hitler's Interest in Small Details

1. Reports on Allied Bombings . . . . .	1
2. Hitler and His Maps . . . . .	1
3. Hitler's Interference in von Rundstedt's Plans . .	1
4. Interest in Certain Minor Units . . . . .	2
5. Details Demanded on Railway Artillery and Replacements . . . . .	2
6. Attitude Toward Channel Islands . . . . .	2
7. Hitler's Demands for Details Encouraged by his Staff. . . . .	2

II. German-Japanese Collaboration

8. Military Coordination with Japanese . . . . .	3
9. V-1 Data Given to Japan . . . . .	4
10. Hitler's Attitude Toward Closer German-Japanese Collaboration . . . . .	5

00004

## I. Hitler's Interest In Small Details

1. Prior to the Invasion, Hitler always demanded very detailed reports on the results of your bombings of our fortifications on the coast line. In order to satisfy his interest, such reports had to include specific and complete information as to when the fortifications were built, who built them, the thickness of the concrete, the kind of concrete used, what system was used to put in the wire binding, a precise sketch where each of the bombs had hit, and how far the bombs had penetrated the concrete. Necessarily, reports of each incident of this kind took ten or more pages.

2. Hitler had a complete set of 1:25,000 maps of defenses showing the installations in France. He studied these maps frequently and probably knew the location of defenses in detail better than any single army officer. His passion for detail is illustrated in an amusing incident regarding the antiaircraft defenses of the Channel Islands. Hitler always took particular pains to build up the defenses on these Islands, because he felt that the British would try to recapture them for the sake of prestige. On one occasion, Hitler discovered that there were two less antiaircraft guns defending the Channel Islands than in the previous reports. The officer responsible for this supposed reduction was punished. It turned out that the fault was due to a miscount by the surveying officer.

3. Hitler reserved the right to move every division himself. Time after time, von Rundstedt tried to invoke the details

00005

of the "Normandy Plan," which had been drawn up to meet the invasion of this sector, but Hitler interfered.

4. Hitler had a very great interest in certain minor units. For example, the 7 and 8 Nebelwerfer Bns, according to Hitler, would decide the issue in the British sector if they were placed at a specific spot near the British bridgehead over the Orne River. The Wehrmachtsfuehrungsstab was heckled a number of times on this issue because, while Hitler insisted that these two battalions be placed at a precise spot, von Rundstedt would not trouble himself with such minor details.

5. Hitler always wanted to know the specific location of all railway artillery batteries and he directed their displacement. He was also deeply interested in all questions concerning the replacement of losses, especially the Waffen SS. He always had to decide the amount of replacements to be shifted.

6. Hitler did not give a free hand to the Commander-in-Chief of Cherbourg so far as reinforcing the port was concerned. He prohibited reinforcement from the Channel Islands and ordered that reinforcements be sent from St Malo. Hitler did not satisfy himself by merely making the decision. He also wanted to know what boats would be used to transport the troops, how long it would take each boat to make the journey, and when the journey could be completed. In addition, he always demanded detailed reports on the slightest evidence of the Resistance Movement in France.

7. This inclination of Hitler to go into smaller details

00008

was encouraged by various members of his staff, many of whom seemed to be striving to satisfy his curiosity for detail.

Q: Was this due to a desire of certain individuals to gain personal recognition, or was it due to the informal way in which the daily situation meetings were conducted?

A: It was a little of both, but probably more of the latter. The informal attitude of Hitler at these meetings encouraged everyone to act without restraint in the discussions. As a matter of fact, I have often compared these daily situation meetings to a sort of bourse. We all got around a large table like a counter, and everyone had something to offer and to receive or exchange. Private conversations of an official nature went on continually throughout the situation briefing.

## II. German-Japanese Collaboration

8. Q: To what extent did the German High Command coordinate offensives with the Japanese?

A: There was no common strategy with Japan nor was there the idea of a coalition war. Military collaboration was carried on in various ways short of a formal coalition. At various times the German Army had advocated a stronger coalition on military activities, nominating a German general at Japanese headquarters for this purpose. However, the German Foreign Office was always strongly opposed to such a move, fearing that the authority would exceed its limits and in-



fringe upon their sphere. Therefore, the main source for an exchange of views was the ambassador. In both cases--Gen Ott in Tokyo and Adm Oshima in Berlin--the ambassadors were very cognizant of operational matters. In addition, there was some exchange of military information through the three power commission at Berlin in which Adm Nomura represented Japan and Adm Grosz represented Germany. Adm Oshima frequently called at the Fuehrer's headquarters. In addition, members of the Japanese Embassy Staff regularly called to see Genfldm Keitel and Gen Jodl, accompanied by Adm Buerkner.

Very few definite arrangements were made. An east-west line of demarcation was established for operation of German and Japanese submarines. Intelligence reports were exchanged, but it is difficult to appraise the concrete results of such exchanges. Experiences were exchanged on such matters as your amphibious landings. We had no knowledge, however, of the use of artificial ports which you may have employed in the Far East. This caused us to make the mistake of concentrating our main forces and defense installations around the principal harbors and not on the beaches.

New technical data on new technical developments were exchanged as soon as these developments had been completed and they were in use.

9. Q: Did Japan get data on V-1 and V-2?

A: We gave them complete data on V-1, but not on V-2 because they said they could not use the latter effectively in their theater.

10. Q: It is still puzzling to me why there was not a greater degree of operational collaboration between Germany and Japan.

A: Hitler always felt that Japan was the best and most war-like ally which he had. He further maintained that it was incorrect to try to influence the military moves by suggestions. This theory he always based upon the fact that if his suggestions resulted in failure, the failure would be blamed on Germany. There was no long-range blueprint for world conquest between Germany and Japan.