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Prefatory Notes

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1. Due to the lack of adequate and reliable source materials, the present study, of course, cannot pretend to be either complete or historically accurate in all respects. On the whole, however, the author is confident that serious errors have been avoided.

2. Major source materials are cited in footnotes whenever applicable.

3. There are no authentic documents regarding the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry (Reichsluftfahrtministerium) during the period 1933/34 and very few for the period 1935 through 1939.

In the case of a number of the decrees and directives utilized as source material, there is some question as to the expiration of their effectiveness, i.e. as to whether or not they might not have been amended or modified at the period concerned. This is particularly applicable to the decrees dealing with the reorganizations of the Reichs Air Ministry during 1938 and 1939.

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According to available documents, for example, the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry from 1938 on was to be that determined upon in case of war, so that peacetime and wartime organization might dovetail smoothly. In reality, however, this was obviously not the case, for Special Annex 1 to the Luftwaffe Mobilization Plan (Besondere Anlage 1 zum Mob. Plan der Lw) (a photocopy of which is still in existence), prepared for the mobilization year 1937/38 and revised for the year 1938/39, describes an organizational set-up vastly different from that still in effect in the Reichs Air Ministry during the peacetime period 1938/39. Inasmuch as both sources, i.e. for the top-level organizational set-up during peacetime as well as for that during wartime, must be accepted as reliable, we can only assume that a new Special Annex 1 was issued sometime during 1938 or, at the latest, during 1939, which dovetailed with the peacetime organization actually in effect.

4. The present study deals with the civilian organization within the Reichs Air Ministry (the Reichs Aviation Administration (Reichsluftfahrtverwaltung)) only insofar as it is indispensable to an understanding of the whole.

5. At certain points in the present study, the reader will note that less important aspects have been dealt with in greater detail than more significant ones. This discrepancy is due to the fact that the author wished to take full advantage of the completeness of available source materials, even when they concerned minor aspects of the problem. Significantly, the latter are available in far greater abundance than materials dealing with fundamental and important aspects.

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Introduction: A General Summary of Top-Level Command and the Fundamental
Organizational Directives Concerned.

1. The top-level command set-up of a military entity is dependent upon the over-all organizational set-up of the state. It determines, in turn, the development of the entity concerned, its missions and goals, and the roles to be played by its leading men.

As is the case with every form of organization, top-level command organization represents a means to an end, a means utilized by the commander in chief in order to fulfill the task entrusted to him. Conversely, the nature and scope of this task also plays a part in determining the structure of top-level command. From this point of view, war and peace imply different top-level command organizations - at least up to a certain point. However, peacetime organization must inevitably be such that the smallest possible number of changes are necessary to convert it to full effectiveness in case of war. In view of the relatively short mobilization and assembly periods (insofar as assembly periods are even necessary) required by an air arm, the transition of an air force command organization from peacetime to wartime operation must be accomplished rapidly and smoothly. The organizational make-up of the flying units determined to be most necessary for quick commitment must determine the organization of command elements up to the very top.

Considerations of political and military security may make it necessary to camouflage the development of a wartime top-level command organization insofar as is possible.

2. Top-level command organization and wartime top-level command organization may be defined as the organizational set-up of the top-level command of a branch of the military service in peacetime and wartime respectively.

3. Duty and position rosters: While strength authorization tables (during wartime, of course, wartime strength authorization tables) and service directives (when applicable) were issued for command headquarters, staffs, and troop units, the elements and agencies of the Reichs Air Ministry did not have strength authorization tables during peacetime. Instead, their organization was based on duty and position rosters, coupled with service directives when applicable. Special Annex 1 to the Luftwaffe Mobilization Plan provided the principles of organization to be followed in case of war.

4. Organization and organizational terminology.

The Reichs Air Ministry was made up of offices (Aemter), departments (Amtsgruppen), branches (Abteilungen), groups (Gruppen), and staffs (Referate), as follows:

- a. An office was composed of several departments or branches.
- b. A department was composed of several branches, insofar as such branches were not already incorporated into an office.
- c. A branch was composed of several groups.
- d. A group was composed of several staffs.

The term "independent" branch, group, or staff was employed to describe a branch, group, or staff which was not directly subordinate to an office, department, branch, or group, respectively.

5. During the early years of its history, the Reichs Air Ministry was made up of offices, branches, groups, and staffs; departments were not introduced until later.

In addition, as time went on, Luftwaffe inspectorates (Luftwaffeninspektionen) and other, similar offices were formed within the Reichs Air Ministry to handle the administration of special Luftwaffe sectors.

6. The chiefs of offices, departments, and branches were invested with the disciplinary authority commensurate with their rank. Group and staff leaders had no disciplinary authority.

In the beginning, the chief of an office was equivalent in rank and authority to a division commander; the chief of a branch, to a regiment commander.

The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff was the first to be accorded the rank and authority of a commanding general. Later on, this rank and authority was also conferred upon the chiefs of an office, while the department chiefs became equivalent to division commanders.

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The rank and authority assigned to the inspectorate chiefs and chiefs of other special activities depended upon the significance and scope of the missions assigned to them.

CHAPTER I

THE ORGANIZATIONAL SET-UP DURING THE PERIOD OF SECRECY

Section 1 - Previous History and Development of the Reichs Air Ministry Prior to the Incorporation of the Administration of Military Aviation.

1. From December 1918 on, the administration of all aspects of commercial aviation, including questions of Germany's air sovereignty, was entrusted to the Reichs Air Office (Reichsluftamt)¹.

Effective 1 October 1919, all of these missions were transferred to the Aviation Branch (Abteilung Luftfahrt) (later Air and Vehicle Traffic Branch) (Abteilung fuer Luft- und Kraftfahrwesen) of the newly created Reichs Traffic Ministry (Reichsverkehrsministerium)¹.

When the International Allied Air Traffic Control Commission (Interalliierte Luftfahrtkontrollkommission) (whose German counterpart was the Commission for Air Peace in the Reichs Traffic Ministry (Luftfriedenskommission)) was abolished on 5 May 1922 and replaced by an Air Control Committee (Luftfahrtgarantiekomitee), the Aviation Branch of the Reichs Traffic Ministry created the office of Reichs Commissioner for Aircraft Construction (Reichskommissar fuer den Luftfahrzeugbau) to replace the Commission for Air Peace. On 22 May 1926, when the Paris air agreements made unnecessary the continued operation of the Air Control Committee, the office of the Reichs Commissioner was also abolished¹.

1 - Based on information furnished the author by Ministry Director Fisch, Retired (formerly employed in the Reichs Air Administration), and on "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" (German Aviation - Volume for 1936).

Over-all supervision of air defense matters was in the hands of the Reichs Ministry of the Interior, with each individual province (Land) being responsible for carrying out the measures ordered from above².

2. On 2 February 1933, the office of Reichs Commissioner of Aviation (Reichskommissar fuer die Luftfahrt) was created as the top-level agency dealing with the ramifications of air activity within the Reich. "The missions formerly assigned to the Reichs Traffic Ministry (aviation in general) and to the Reichs Ministry of the Interior (Reichsministerium des Innern) (air defense) are transferred to the office of the Reichs Commissioner of Aviation"³.

Hermann Goering was appointed Reichs Commissioner of Aviation, and Erhard Milch, former director of the German Lufthansa, was named State Secretary (Staatssekretaer) and Deputy Commissioner.

3. In accordance with the Versailles Treaty, of course, Germany was forbidden to establish a military air force. Even so, by dint of clever exploitation of political developments as well as developments in the field of military aviation, and with the full knowledge and approval of the Government, the Reichs Ministry of Defense (Reichswehrministerium) gradually laid the groundwork for the secret establishment of a military air force.

Administration of military air affairs was divided between the Army and Navy Commands in the Reichs Ministry of Defense. As of the beginning of 1933, the following offices existed to take care of such affairs:

2- According to information received from Ministry Director Knipfer, formerly in charge of air defense in the Reichs Ministry of the Interior.

3 - From the directive announcing the creation of the office of Reichs Commissioner of Aviation, dated 2 February 1933, RGB 1, Volume 1, page 35 (effective as of 30 January 1933), as discussed in "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" German Aviation - Volume for 1936).

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Army agencies: Inspectorate No. 1 (Air) (In. 1 (L))

tactics, organization, training, air defense

Ordnance Office No. 8 (Wa. Pruef. 8)

technological developments: development, testing, procurement

Navy agencies: Air Defense (LS)

Missions corresponding to those of the Army agencies named above.

For quite some time, plans had been under consideration to remove the administration of the military air arm and the air defense function from the Army and Navy offices to which it had been entrusted, and to unite it under a new office - still to be created - within the Reichs Ministry of Defense. Realization of these plans was delayed, partly because of political considerations and partly because of the Navy was unwilling to give up an independent air force of its own⁴. It was not until the office of Reichs Commissioner of Aviation was created, and it became obvious to observers that Goering intended to take the military air arm under his sway as well, that a consolidation of authority was undertaken within the Reichs Ministry of Defense.

As a first step, the staff responsible for "glider technology", Air Defense Office, Navy, was transferred to the Ordnance Office No. 8, Army. Negotiations regarding further integration were continued. In the meantime, Goering managed to have the entire air technical branch (the Ordnance Office No. 8) transferred from the Reichs Ministry of Defense to the office of the Reichs Commissioner for Aviation⁴.

4 - Based on information furnished by General Felmy, Retired, former Chief of Staff, Inspectorate No. 1 (Air), and General Siburg, Retired, former Group Leader, Air Defense Office, Navy.

On 1 April 1933, the air agencies still assigned to the Army's Inspectorate No. 1 (Air) and the other air staffs still active in the Reichs Ministry for Defense were consolidated into the so-called Air Defense Office (Luftschutzamt). Although the newly-created office had certain obligations to the Army and the Navy as far as command channels were concerned, it was made directly subordinate to the Reichs Minister for Defense⁵.

The name "Air Defense Office" had been very carefully selected to take advantage of the fact that the Versailles Treaty expressly permitted Germany to have a limited air defense force.

Deliberately organized to provide the framework for a later general staff, the Air Defense Office was divided into the following branches:

Branch I, Army

- Group I - Tactics
- Group II - Organization
- Group III- Training

Branch I, Navy

Groups I, II, III, as above⁶.

5 - According to "Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs" (History of the German General Staff), author unknown, the establishment of the Air Defense Office was to be completed by 1 April 1933, in compliance with a directive issued by the Reichs Minister of Defense (No. 401/33, Classified, to Inspectorate No. 1, Air, dated 21 March 1933).

6 - See also "Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs" (History of the German General Staff), author unknown. In contradiction to the information given by Generals Felmy and Siburg and also in contradiction to the author's own memory of events, this source presents the organization of the Air Defense Office as follows:

- a) Inspectorate No. 1 (Air)
- b) Ordnance Office No. 8
- c) Air Supply Office (Wa. N. 1)
- d) Those agencies concerned with the weapons of air defense, including "Asta 3" (author's note: "Asta 3" stood for "Ausbildungsstab 3" (Training Staff 3)), the camouflage designation for the staff

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6 - (cont) in charge of antiaircraft artillery).

e) Air Defense (LS)

f) Air Technology (Branch 2, Air) (Abteilung L 2)

This organizational set-up is based presumably on directives and orders which were either actually issued or were prepared as drafts and thus were common knowledge, but which were never put into effect or never carried out in their entirety (due to the reasons already mentioned by the author). We have good reason to assume that in reality the Air Defense Office was composed of the Inspectorate No. 1 (Air) and the non-technical study groups from the Navy Air Defense Group alone.

4. On 5 May 1933, the top-level agency for all matters concerning aviation was created - the Reichs Air Ministry. "The scope of the authority delegated to the Reichs Air minister includes all ramifications of aviation within the Reich. The missions and powers of the Reichs Commissioner for Aviation are herewith transferred to the Reichs Air Minister"⁷.

Hermann Goering, formerly Reichs Commissioner for Aviation, was appointed Reichs Air Minister, and Erhard Milch, formerly State Secretary to the Commissioner, was named State Secretary of Aviation within the Reichs Air Ministry.

7 - Directive dealing with the establishment of the Reichs Air Ministry (RGB 1, Volume 1, page 241), dated 5 May 1933, to go into effect as of 1 March 1933, as discussed in "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" (German Aviation - Volume for 1936).

5. Effective 15 May 1933, the Air Defense Office, Reichs Ministry of Defense, was made subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister⁸. This move, which was kept secret for the time being, brought both commercial and military air activity under the same administrative head.

Despite the organizational change, the Air Defense Office retained its physical location in the Reichs Ministry of Defense and continued to cooperate closely with the Army and Navy in the day-to-day transaction of its business.

6. The establishment of the Reichs Air Ministry (see also Figure 1)

7. With the subordination of the Air Defense Office to the Reichs Air Minister, the following organizational plan went into effect⁹:

Operations Branch (Fliegerführungsabteilung) (tactics, employment)

Organization Branch (Fliegerorganisationsabteilung)

Training Branch (Fliegerausbildungsabteilung)

Air Defense Branch (Luftschutzabteilung)

Personnel Branch (Personalabteilung)

General Branch (Allgemeine Abteilung) (miscellaneous troop services).

8 - According to "Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs" (History of the German General Staff), author unknown, the subordination of the Air Defense Office to the Reichs Air Minister took effect on 15 May 1933 in compliance with a directive issued by the Reichs Minister of Defense and Commander of the Wehrmacht to the Air Defense Office, No. 617/33, Classified, I, (H)II A, dated 10 May 1933.

9 - "Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs" (History of the German General Staff), author unknown.

Although the above plan embodied the ideal of a unified organization to administer the Luftwaffe, in the beginning each of the above groups contained a special staff for naval aviation matters.

8. That part of the new Reichs Air Ministry which was made up of the Reichs Commission for Aviation was divided into the following¹⁰:

General Air Office (Allgemeines Luftamt) (commercial aviation)

Administration Branch (Verwaltungsabteilung) (budgeting)

Civil Air Defense Branch (Abteilung Ziviler Luftschutz).

For the time being, all technological matters, in connection with both commercial and military aviation (formerly handled by Ordnance Office No. 8), were routed to the General Air Office.

9. On 31 March 1933, Reichs Air Minister Goering was accorded the rank of an infantry general.¹¹

10. On 1 September 1933, the Air Defense Office was physically removed from the Reichs Ministry of Defense to take up its quarters in the Reichs Air Ministry¹².

10 - Based on information furnished the author by Ministry Director Fisch, Retired (former chief of the General Air Office).

11 - See "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" (German Aviation - Volume for 1936), page 15.

12 - Based on the author's own experience, substantiated by General Hamhuber Retired (both of whom were assigned to the Air Defense Office at that time).

In addition, the Air Supply Office (Fliegerbestaenderverwaltung), formerly a part of the Army Ordnance Office¹³, and the Central Aerial Photography Office¹⁴ also moved out of the Reichs Ministry of Defense and were assigned to the General Air Office.

Moreover, at the direction of the Reichs Minister of Defense, both the Army and the Navy released a number of high-ranking officers who had heretofore had no connection with air affairs for assignment to key positions in the Reichs Air Ministry, such assignment to become effective as of 1 October 1933.

Apart from the above, the new Luftwaffe - not yet even officially established - also had at its disposal all Army and Navy personnel who had served as pilots during World War I, as well as all officers who had completed flight training subsequent to the war. The only exceptions were some few officers who refused to transfer and those officers whom the Reichs Air Ministry did not wish to accept - for either personal or professional reasons. Among the officer personnel transferred to the Reichs Air Ministry were thirty General Staff officers. Altogether, in 1933 the Reichs Air Ministry took over approximately 300 officers from the Army, Navy, or former Wehrmacht for assignment with the new Luftwaffe.

13 - Based on information received from General Grosch, Retired, (former chief of the Air Supply Office). (Author's note: the Air Supply Office was in charge of the equipment needed for the activation of an air arm).

14 - See "Ueberblick ueber die Taetigkeit und Organisation des gesamten Bildwesens in der Luftwaffe" (Survey of the Functions and Organization of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe), Study prepared by Branch VIII (Military History), Luftwaffe General Staff, 1944.

Section 2 - The Growth of the Reichs Air Ministry during the Autumn of 1933.

1. The Reichs Air Minister was the chief of the Reichs Air Ministry.

He had a permanent deputy in the person of the State Secretary of Aviation, who was permitted to sign official documents "for" the Minister.

2. As soon as all those agencies having to do with aviation had been physically incorporated into the Reichs Air Ministry (by 1 October 1933), work was begun on an organizational plan for the Ministry. The following offices, insofar as they were not already in existence, were set up:

- a. Central Branch (Zentralabteilung)
- b. Air Defense Office (Luftschutzamt) (its subdivisions remaining as already indicated, but without the Air Defense Branch¹⁵)
- c. General Air Office (Allgemeines Luftamt) with the following subdivisions¹⁶:
 - Air Traffic (Luftverkehr)
 - Air Control Service (Luftaufsicht)
 - Air Supply (Air Supply Office, formerly a part of the Army Ordnance Office¹⁷)
 - Aerial Photography (Luftbildwesen) including the Central Aerial Photography Office (Hauptbildstelle) (formerly the Aerial Photography Branch of the

15 - The Air Defense Branch was made up of the former Air Defense Staff from Inspectorate No. 1 (Air). Inasmuch as the antiaircraft artillery remained with the Army for the moment, however, the Air Defense Branch was in reality a kind of inspectorate (Inspectorate No. 4, Training Staff 3). General Bogatsch, Retired (former Chief of the Air Defense Branch), maintains that this status was in effect prior to 1 October 1933 and must have been determined soon after the Air Defense Office was made subordinate to the Reichs Air Ministry. General von Axthelm, Retired (formerly assigned to Training Staff 3), confirms the fact that Inspectorate 4, Training Staff 3, was the superior headquarters agency for the antiaircraft artillery forces at that time.

16 - According to information furnished the author by Ministry Director Fisch, Retired (former Chief, General Air Office).

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17 - Based on data supplied by General Grosch, Retired (at that time Chief
of the Air Supply Office).

Central Photography Office of the Reichs Air Ministry, which was transferred to Hildesheim on 1 October 1933 as the Aerial Photography School (Bildschule)¹⁸.

Ground Organization and Flight Safety (Bodenorganisation und Flugsicherung)

Meteorological Service (Wetterdienst)

d. Technical Office (Technisches Amt), which was made up of the air technical agencies formerly assigned to the Army Ordnance Office and consisted of the following subdivisions¹⁹:

Research (Forschung)

Development (Entwicklung)

Procurement (Beschaffung)

e. Administrative Office (Verwaltungsamt), the result of consolidation of the former administrative branch of the Reichs Air Ministry with the branches dealing with budgeting, logistics, clothing, and pay²⁰. It had the following subdivisions:

Physical Plant (Liegenschaften)

Construction (Bauwesen)

Personnel Administration (Personalangelegenheiten) (civilian officials and employees)

f. Personnel Office (Personalamt), developed from the existing Personnel Branch of the Air Defense Office.

g. Headquarters Command, Pilot Schools (Kommando der Fliegerschulen), organized from the agencies in charge of pilot training under the auspices of the Reichs Ministry of Defense.

18 - See "Ueberblick ueber die Taetigkeit und Organisation des gesamten Bildwesens in der Luftwaffe". (Survey of the Functions and Organization of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe), Study prepared by Branch VIII (Military History), Luftwaffe General Staff, in 1944.

19 - According to information furnished by General Siburg, Retired (former branch chief in the Technical Office)

20 - Information provided by General Siburg, Retired.

On 1 November 1933, this branch was rechristened Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools (Inspektion der Fliegerschulen)²¹.

h. Civil Air Defense Branch (Abteilung für Zivilen Luftschutz)

3. The offices and the independent branches were directly subordinate to the State Secretary in his capacity as permanent deputy to the Reichs Air Minister. Office and branch chiefs were authorized to sign official documents "by order of" the Reichs Air Minister.

4. The office chiefs (except for the General Air Office), the chief of the Central Branch, and the Inspector of Flight Training Schools were officers.

5. 1 October 1933 also marked the official establishment of the Luftwaffe officer corps, composed of the officers taken over by the Reichs Air Ministry from the Ministry of Defense and those officers formerly active in the secret preparations for a military air arm.

The regulations pertaining to the promotion of Luftwaffe officers were somewhat different from those obtaining in the case of line officers, but the duties and privileges inherent in their rank were the same.

Shortly after its inception, the Luftwaffe officer corps was officially disbanded and its members either redesignated as reserve replacement officers or reassigned to line officer status.

6. On 19 October 1933, State Secretary Milch was assigned the honorary rank of colonel²².

²¹ - Based on information furnished the author by Colonel Heldmann, Retired (formerly assigned to the Inspectorate for Flight Training Schools).

²² - Based on Milch's personal history statement (excerpt, M/13).

7. In the beginning the Reichs Air Ministry was still quite dependent on the assistance of the Army and Navy for the accomplishment of most of its military assignments. The conduct of military personnel administration (promotion of officers, assignment of lieutenant rank on the basis of previous selection and approval by Luftwaffe agencies, administration of reserve forces, etc.) was a case in point, as were the conduct of basic military training, the training of signal personnel, transportation units, and medical squads, and the arming of Luftwaffe units with Army weapons and equipment. In the beginning, military justice for Luftwaffe personnel was in the hands of Army and Navy judge advocate personnel.

Section 3 - The Functions and Status of the Reichs Air Minister.

1. In addition to exercising supervision over all matters connected with commercial aviation, the Reichs Air Minister was entrusted with the task of establishing a new military air arm, which was to have the status of a third independent Wehrmacht branch (equivalent to the Army and Navy). Accordingly, the Reichs Air Minister, exploiting the beginning, made by the Reichs Ministry of Defense, and taking full advantage of the existing flight training schools and the newly established air ordnance schools, was to establish a training program whose scope would be adequate to supply the manpower needed to set up a corps of flying personnel and a Luftwaffe signal force.

2. The immediate goal was the establishment, as soon as possible, of a "trial fleet", a fighting unit (its strength not subject to previous determination) which would be powerful enough to assure that any hypothetical attack made against Germany with a view to disrupting her armament activity would be subject to immediate and effective reprisal. The ultimate decision as to what type of unit should be given priority in the establishment of the trial fleet was dependent upon estimates of the enemy's defensive force, and was finally resolved in favor of the activation of bomber forces²³.

3. In theory, according to a directive announced by the President of the Reich (Reichspräsident) on 5 May 1933, the Reichs Air Ministry, in keeping with the command channel applicable to the other two Wehrmacht branches, was subordinated to the Reichs Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht, Generaloberst von Blomberg. In practice, however, Goering refused to recognize that he was subordinate to anybody except Hitler, and insisted that such subordination must be direct - without any intervening channels. He insisted that his position

23 - Based on Generalfeldmarschall Milch, Retired, "Hauptgruende fuer den Zusammenbruch der deutschen Luftwaffe im Weltkrieg II" (The Main Reasons for the Collapse of the German Luftwaffe during World War II): "In compliance with orders issued by the Fuehrer, planning for the peacetime development of the Luftwaffe was put off until 1944/45." "In accordance with the plans in effect in 1933, the trial fleet was to be based on the bomber arm, in order that Germany might have a defensive force at her disposal in case the Western powers should attempt to threaten her armament activity. From the winter of 1937/38 on, it was the fighter aircraft which was to form the basis of this force - first the day fighters and then the night fighters. This conversion in aircraft type was never carried through." (Author's note: As a matter of fact, this conversion was carried out, at least to a limited extent. The activation of bomber units was emphasized until approximately mid-1938, which marked the switch from bomber forces to single-engine and twin-engine fighters).

as a Minister of the Reich with a seat in the Cabinet Council (Kabinettsrat) and the prestige inherent in his political standing were sufficient to assure him complete freedom and independence. During the Reichswehr period, of course, the establishment of an air force was subject to stringent limitations from the budgetary standpoint. Goering was now in a position to make sure that there were virtually no financial restrictions to Luftwaffe expansion; as a result, the new branch developed at a much more rapid rate than might otherwise have been expected.

4. At first the question of whether or not the antiaircraft artillery forces should be incorporated into the Luftwaffe was left in abeyance. During the preliminary planning for the establishment of the Luftwaffe, carried out by the Reichs Ministry of Defense, the prevailing opinion was that the antiaircraft artillery very definitely belonged with the Luftwaffe. When the Reichs Air Ministry took over planning responsibility, the antiaircraft artillery field was left provisionally with the Ministry of Defense. Here it remained until 1 April 1934, when the Air Ministry finally succeeded in securing the responsibility for its administration²⁴.

For reasons of secrecy, it was deemed inadvisable to make public the newly revised relationship between the antiaircraft artillery forces and the Luftwaffe; thus the transfer of responsibility was kept secret for the time being. For the same reasons, although their top-level command apparatus was subordinate to the Reichs Air Ministry, the antiaircraft artillery forces themselves remained a part of the Army up to the time when Germany regained her military independence. Their designation within the Army organizational set-up was Motorized Troops (Antiaircraft Artillery) (Fahrtruppe (Flak))²⁵.

24 - According to information furnished the author by General Felmy, Retired.

25 - The antiaircraft artillery forces had their origin in the motorized batteries of the seven artillery regiments of the Reichswehr.

Their top-level command headquarters was the Antiaircraft Artillery Inspectorate, which was camouflaged as Training Staff 3 (Asta 3) of the Inspectorate for Artillery (Inspectorate 4)

Section 4 - The Reichs Aviation Administration (Reichsluftfahrtverwaltung) during 1933 and 1934²⁶ and its Role in the Secret Expansion of the Luftwaffe.

1. With the issuance of the decree dealing with the Reichs Aviation Administration (dated 15 December 1933) and the directive concerning its expansion (dated 18 April 1934), the Aviation Administration was made an independent office within the Reichs Air Ministry and given responsibility for administering civil aviation affairs, the meteorological service, and other matters (to be determined by the Reichs Air Minister) in connection with civilian air defense.

Within the Reichs Air Ministry itself it was the General Air Office which was assigned over-all responsibility for the administration of commercial aviation.

2. The missions assigned to the Reichs Aviation Administration were the following:

- a. handling of matters concerning air sovereignty and air traffic control
- b. promotion of flight safety by means of
 - 1) aeronautical telecommunication services
 - 2) airfield illumination services

26 - Taken from "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" (German Aviation - Volume for 1936)

c. administration of the Reichs meteorological service

The Aviation Administration had the following agencies at its disposal for the accomplishment of the above missions:

- a. Air Offices (Luftaemter)
- b. Reichs Office of Meteorological Services (Reichsamt fuer Wetterdienst) and the Coastal Weather Observation Station (Deutsche Seewarte).
- c. Reichs Air Traffic Control School (Reichsschule fuer Luftaufsicht)
- d. Flight Safety Training Program at Halle (Lehrgaenge fuer Flugsicherung)

3. The Air Offices were responsible for all matters concerning air sovereignty within their respective geographical areas, and were chiefly concerned with administrative activity. It was their duty to represent the interests of commercial aviation in dealing with state and municipal authorities, including police agencies. Their mission was to relieve the Reichs Air Ministry of the day-to-day details of administrative activity, insofar as fundamental questions of policy were not involved, and they had the police authority necessary to enforce their decisions.

The missions assigned to the Air Offices were the following:

- a. The granting of permission to establish airports.
- b. The licensing of pilots.
- c. The granting of permission to hold various functions sponsored by aviation associations.
- d. The determination of prohibited flying zones.
- e. The issuance of landing prohibitions.
- f. The supervision and guidance of commercial air activity in the interests of public safety and economical utilization of available facilities (air traffic control).

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g. The supervision of flight safety programs.

h. The maintenance of meteorological services

In order to carry out the administrative activities connected with air sovereignty, the aeronautical telecommunication service, and the meteorological service, the Air Offices established airport control groups (Flughafenleitungen) and air traffic observation stations (Luftaufsichtwachen). These groups and stations were not independently subordinate to the Aviation Administration, but were a part of the Air Office having jurisdiction over their geographical area.

4. Due to the fact that all those functions of administrative, organizational, and personnel nature occurring in the field of aviation were concentrated in the hands of the Reichs Air Ministry, it was possible to utilize the agencies set up to handle civilian aviation affairs for certain military purposes - insofar as these purposes were not too obviously connected with a military air arm - and to expand their functions to include the possibility of later conversion to purely military use. In short, the agencies of the Aviation Administration served as a welcome and convenient method of camouflaging the establishment of a military air force.

The Air Offices, staffed by officers from the police force who had been taken over by the Reichs Air Ministry (later to be designated as Luftwaffe reserve officers), constituted the so-called V Group (Gruppe V) of each Air Regional Command (Luftkreiskommando), which provided a liaison link between the Regional Command headquarters and the agencies responsible for civilian aviation affairs - via the Air Offices. This was particularly useful in questions of flight safety, meteorological service, the utilization of commercial airports as military landing fields (E-Haefen), etc.

5. Furthermore, inasmuch as the German Association of Sport Fliers (Deutscher Luftsportverband) and the Reichs Association for Air Defense (Reichsluftschutzbund) belonged to the "agencies organized behind the back of the government, in violation of the decree of 21 March 1933 (effective as of 1 April 1934) forbidding the secret formation of organizations devoted to areas of endeavor not sanctioned by the government²⁷", their organizational set-up, members, and facilities were, for all practical purposes, under the control of the Reichs Air Ministry. The key positions in the Association of Sport Fliers, for example, were all held by officers from the Luftwaffe.

Section 5 - Camouflaging the Establishment of the Luftwaffe

1. Foreign policy considerations dictated the necessity of keeping secret any and all steps taken towards the establishment of a military air arm. The need for secrecy applied to the recruitment of personnel as well as to all other preparatory aspects.

2. All of the officers taken over from the Reichswehr by the Reichs Air Ministry were officially discharged from military service. Officially they became civilian employees of the Ministry²⁸; in reality, they retained their rights and privileges as officers - but secretly.

Luftwaffe candidates for officer rank received their training in special courses at an Army War Academy (Kriegsschule des Heeres) in Dresden, after having been selected by

27 - RGB 1, page 1079, Article 4; taken from "Die deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936" (German Aviation - Volume for 1936).

28 - According to General Felmy, Retired, the Reichswehr officers taken over by the Reichs Air Ministry were officially discharged not because of the need for camouflaging Luftwaffe preparations, but in compliance with the decree issued by Generalfeldmarschall von Hindenburg, President of the Reich, "Kein Soldat ins Reichsluftfahrtministerium" (No Soldiers Will Be Assigned to the Reichs Air Ministry).

special Luftwaffe recruitment offices.

The enlisted personnel intended for the Luftwaffe were given basic military training in courses sponsored by the Army or the Navy.

3. The training (both flight and technical ground training) of Luftwaffe personnel was carried out in courses sponsored by the agencies responsible for training civilian aviation personnel (the Commercial Flying School (Verkehrsfliegerschule) and the Deutsche Lufthansa (German commercial airlines) in the training programs set up by the Association of Sport Fliers, and in camouflaged Luftwaffe schools set up by the individual Luftwaffe units - all under the aegis of the all-encompassing powers for regulating air sovereignty, concentrated under the authority of the Reichs Air Ministry.

4. The agencies of the new Luftwaffe (command headquarters, flying units, schools, and air supply organizations) were called into existence as entities of commercial aviation activity, and their true purpose thus disguised. The Air Regional Commands, for example, were officially designated as "supervisory air offices" (gehobene Luftaemter)

5. All planning and preparation of a purely military nature were carefully camouflaged. The officers assigned to the Reichs Air Ministry went about their daily business in civilian clothes, for example. On special occasions,

they donned the uniform worn by members of the Association of Sport Fliers, which was also the uniform worn by Luftwaffe personnel assigned to the field units. The uniform was altered very slightly to distinguish these personnel from the normal, civilian members of the Association.

Section 6 - The Basic Organizational Set-Up of the Reichs Air Ministry
in 1934.

A. As of 1 April 1934, the organization of the Reichs Air Ministry was as follows:

1. Reichs Minister of Aviation
2. State Secretary of Aviation
3. Central Branch
4. Air Command Office (Luftkommandoamt) (formerly the Air Defense Office)²⁹
5. General Air Office
6. Technical Office
7. Administrative Office
8. Personnel Office
9. Inspectorate of Flight Training Schools

B. On 1 November 1934, the Office of Chief of Procurement and Supply, Luftwaffe (Luftzeugmeister), was created to take over the administration of air armament activity, formerly handled by Group III of the General Air Office (LB III), and to supervise the work of subordinate air supply agencies. The position of the Chief of Procurement

29 - According to "Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabs" (History of the German General Staff), M/4, the Air Defense Office was officially re-organized and redesignated "Air Command Office" on the basis of directives LA, No. 426/34, Classified, dated 15 February 1934, and LA, No. 88/34, Classified, dated 22 March 1934.

and Supply, Luftwaffe, was not really a part of the Reichs Air Ministry, but was directly subordinate to the State Secretary of Aviation.

C. The Organizational Set-Up of the Reichs Air Ministry during 1934

(Figure 2 presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Reichs Air Ministry during 1934)

D. Central Branch (independent branch)³⁰:

1. Adjutant (Adjutantur)

- a. handling of personal matters for the State Secretary of Aviation
- b. handling of official representation for the Reichs Air Ministry
- c. liaison to the Foreign Office (Auswaertiges Amt)

2. Attache Group (Attachegruppe)

- a. supervision of German and foreign air attache personnel

3. Defense Group (Abwehrgruppe)

- a. air defense of industrial installations
- b. camouflage
- c. export of air armament (in conjunction with the Technical Office and the Reichs Ministry of Economics (Reichswirtschaftsministerium))

4. Judge Advocate Group (Gruppe Rechtswesen)

- a. handling of legal matters for the Reichs Air Ministry

5. Political Affairs Group (Gruppe Politische Angelegenheiten)

- a. liaison to agencies of the Party
- b. administration of Party members assigned to the Luftwaffe

6. Medical Group (Gruppe Sanitaetswesen)³¹

- a. administration of medical affairs in

³⁰ - The organizational breakdown is based on information furnished by General Bruch, Retired (former chief of the Central Branch).

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31 - Based on information furnished by General Schroeder, Retired, MD (former chief of the Medical Group). According to General Schroeder, the decrees of 1933, which were instrumental in the establishment of the Luftwaffe, envisioned the handling of all air medical matters by the Army Inspectorate for Medical Affairs (Heeressanitätsinspektion) in the Reichs Ministry of Defense. At that time the question of whether or not the Luftwaffe should have a medical service of its own, entirely independent of the Army, was still open. During the period 1933 through 1939, candidates for officer rank in the medical branch of the Luftwaffe were trained at the Army's Military Medical Academy (Militärärztliche Akademie des Heeres). From 1940 on, the Luftwaffe assumed responsibility for the training of its own medical personnel, carried out in the newly-established Luftwaffe Military Medical Academy (Ärztliche Akademie der Luftwaffe). Prior to 1935, applicants for medical posts within the Luftwaffe were selected by the Army Inspectorate of Medical Affairs; after 1935, by the chief of the Medical Branch (Medizinische Abteilung), Reichs Air Ministry.

compliance with regulations issued by the Army Inspectorate of Medical Affairs (Heeres-sanitaetsinspektion)

- b. supervision of medical services in the field units (in conformance with applicable Army regulations)
- c. handling of all medical questions arising in connection with aviation
- d. establishment and operation of pilot medical examination stations
- e. evaluation and interpretation of medical examinations, particularly in connection with determining physical aptitude for flight duty and with investigating accidents involving pilot personnel
- f. supervision of research in flight medicine

7. Press Group (Pressegruppe)

8. Headquarters Commandant, Reichs Air Ministry (Kommandant des Reichs-luftfahrtministeriums)

9. Secretary of Staff, Reichs Air Ministry (Buerodirektor des Reichs-luftfahrtministeriums)

E. Air Command Office³²

1. handling of all matters pertaining to Luftwaffe operations
2. planning and organization of the Luftwaffe
3. training of Luftwaffe personnel
4. coordination with the Reichs Ministry of Defense, the Army and the Navy

32 - Based on information provided by Generals von Seidel and Schmid, Retired, both of whom were assigned to the Air Command Office at that time.

5. Organization of the Air Command Office during 1934 (Figure 2a presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Air Command Office during 1934

a. Operation Branch (Fuehrungsabteilung, LA I)

1) Operations Section (LA I 1)

- a) Strategic and tactical air warfare.
- b) Operational planning
- c) Determination of the requirements for the development of aircraft, weapons, and instruments for the Technical Office.
- d) Air topographical operations
- e) Coordination with the Organization Branch (Organisationsabteilung, LA II) in connection with the growth and development of the Luftwaffe.

2) Supply Section (LA I/Qu) (established on 1 May 1934).

- a) Development of a supply system (together with the Organization Branch).
- b) Evaluation and presentation of suggestions concerning the activation of supply organization elements (the actual activations were then carried out by the Organization Branch).
- c) Issuance of instructions and directives pertaining to supply operations.

3) Foreign Air Forces Section (LA I/ Fremde Luftmaechte)

- a) Study of data concerning the strength, technological developments, and operational planning of foreign air forces.
- b) Evaluation of such data in terms of its applicability to defensive planning by the German Luftwaffe.

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c) Determination of the goals to be achieved by the Intelligence Branch, Reichs Air Ministry (R.L.M./Abwehr)

- d) Coordination of the work of German air attaches and assignment of their missions
- 4) Figure 2a, 1 presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Operations Branch during 1934.
- b. Organization Branch (Organisationsabteilung, LA II³³)
 - 1) Group 1 (LA II, 1)
 - a) General organizational planning at the policy-making level
 - b) Top-level organization
 - c) Organization of the Reichs Air Ministry
 - 2) Group 2 (LA II, 2)
 - a) Organization of the Luftwaffe, with the exception of the antiaircraft artillery forces (in conjunction with Section 1)
 - b) Organization of the command headquarters and subordinate command posts within the Luftwaffe
 - c) Organization of flying units and the Luftwaffe signal forces
 - d) Evaluation and approval of activation orders pertaining to flying units, Luftwaffe signal units, Luftwaffe schools (except antiaircraft artillery schools), pilot replacement battalions, supply units, etc.; preparation of Luftwaffe mobilization plans (except as concerned antiaircraft artillery forces)
 - 3) Group 3 (LA II, 3)
 - a) Preparation of strength and equipment authorization tables (except as pertaining to the antiaircraft artillery forces)
 - b) Group 3 was reorganized into Branch IV (Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch - Staerke- und Ausruestungs-

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nachweisungen, LA IV) during 1934

33 - Based on the author's memory and notes.

4) Group 4 (LA II, 4)

- a) Ground organization (airfields and advance military fields) (in conjunction with Operations Branch)

5) Group 5 (LA II, 5)

- a) Organization of the antiaircraft artillery forces in conjunction with the Reichs Ministry of Defense (Training Staff 3)
- b) Organizational preparations for the incorporation of the antiaircraft artillery forces into the Luftwaffe

Figure 2a, 2 presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Organization Branch during 1934.

c. Training Branch (Ausbildungsabteilung, LA III)³⁴

1) Group 1 (LA III, 1)

a) Training within the Luftwaffe

- aa) Over-all supervision of the Luftwaffe training programs
- bb) Preparation of training guidelines for the Luftwaffe
- cc) Luftwaffe maneuvers
- dd) Training of Luftwaffe reserve officer personnel
- ee) Special training courses for Luftwaffe officers
- ff) General Staff training for Luftwaffe officers
- gg) Supervision of troop libraries
- hh) Physical education in the Luftwaffe troop units
- ii) Preparation of sport equipment authorization tables for Luftwaffe units

34 - According to information given by General Geisler, Retired (former Chief of the Training Branch), the Training Branch did not really become active in Luftwaffe affairs (i.e. did not attain full effectiveness in the various areas of endeavor assigned to it) until after Germany had regained her freedom of action as an armed sovereign nation.

2) Group 2 (LA III, 2)

a) Training at troop level

aa) Preparation of training guidelines for the pilot training and aerotechnical schools

bb) Pilot training

cc) Luftwaffe maneuvers at troop level

dd) Establishment of shooting ranges and practice bombardment areas for the use of Luftwaffe troop units

3) Group 3 (LA III, 3)

a) Preparation of Luftwaffe directives

aa) Issuance of operational guidelines for the Luftwaffe

bb) Preparation of training directives for the various Luftwaffe branches (based on recommendations submitted by training specialists from each branch)

4) Group 4 (LA III, 4)

a) Budgetary affairs of the Air Command Office

Figure 2a, 3 presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Training Branch during 1934.

d. Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch (LA IV)³⁵

(Established during 1934 from Group 2 of the Organization Branch, first as an independent group and later as a branch)

1) Establishment of strength and equipment authorization for the Luftwaffe (with the exception

35 - Based on information furnished by General Count Hachenburg, Retired (former Chief of the Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch).

of the antiaircraft artillery forces) (in conjunction with the Organization Branch and representatives of the specific units concerned)

- 2) Preparation of the Unit Roster (Liste der Einheiten) used in preparing Luftwaffe mobilization plans
- 3) Administration of matters connected with strength and equipment authorizations.

e. Supply Branch (Nachschubabteilung - LA V)³⁶

(Missions and organization after 1 October 1934, when Branch 3, General Air Office (Abteilung LB, III) was transferred to the Air Command Office as Branch 5)

- 1) Determination of supply needs on the basis of personnel and equipment strength authorization figures (in conjunction with the planning carried out by the Organization Branch)
- 2) Ordering of Army equipment (weapons, etc.) from the Army Ordnance Office (Heereswaffenamt)
- 3) Ordering of aircraft, aircraft equipment, Luftwaffe signal equipment, and ammunition from the Luftwaffe Technical Office (Technisches Amt, LO).
- 4) Group 1 (LA V, 1) Organization
- 5) Group 2 (LA V, 2) Weapons
- 6) Group 3 (LA V, 3) Aircraft and aviation fuels
- 7) Group 4 (LA V, 4) Miscellaneous equipment
- 8) Group 5 (LA V, 5) Signal communications equipment
- 9) Group 6 (LA V, 6) Ammunition (except antiaircraft artillery ammunition)
- 10) The following missions, formerly assigned to Branch 3, General Air Office, were assigned to

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36 - Based on information furnished by General Grosch, Retired (former Chief
of Branch 3, General Air Office)

the office of the Chief of Procurement and Supply, created on 1 November 1934³⁷:

- a) Administration of existing stores of equipment
- b) Planning and organization of supply units (in conjunction with the Organization Branch)
- c) Over-all supervision of the operations⁸ of supply units
- f. Signal Communications Branch (Abteilung Nachrichtenverbindungs-
wesen - LA, NVW³⁸).

(Prior to the establishment of the Signal Communications Branch in 1934, signal communication matters were handled by an officer appointed by the Army Inspectorate for Signal Communications (Heeresnachrichteninspektion 7) to the Air Command Office, Reichs Air Ministry)

- 1) Coordination with the Chief of the Wehrmacht Signal Communications Office (Chef des Wehrmachtnachrichtenwesens)
- 2) Coordination with the Reichs Postal Service (Reichspost) and establishment of a radio communications network for Luftwaffe use
- 3) Radio communications facilities (establishment of a radio network for the ground organization)
- 4) Development and testing of airborne radio equipment

37 - The concentration of supply functions in the hands of the office of the Chief of Procurement and Supply reflected an attempt to create a Luftwaffe parallel to the Army supply organization. It was discontinued effective 1 April 1935, when the supply units were assigned to the Air District Commands, where they were under the direct supervision of the procurement and supply groups (Luftzeuggruppen)

38 - Taken from a study on the organizational set-up of the Reichs Air Ministry by General a. Nielsen, Retired

- 5) Over-all supervision of all signal communications activity, including the development of the various codes utilized
 - 6) Establishment, operation, and over-all supervision of the radio monitoring service
 - 7) Handling of questions concerning the organization and activation of the Luftwaffe signal forces (together with the Organization Branch), as well as all other matters pertaining to the signal communications units
 - 8) Training of Luftwaffe signal communications personnel .
- g. Civil Air Defense Branch (LA/ZL³⁹)
- 1) Administration of all matters connected with civil air defense
 - a) Operations and Commitment of civil air defense units
 - b) Organization and training
 - c) Administration and legal questions
 - d) Technology
 - e) Civil air defense construction projects

39 - In accordance with information provided by Minister Director Knipfer (former Chief of the Civil Air Defense Branch), this Branch had already existed as such under the Reichs Commissioner of Aviation, who had inherited this area of endeavor from the Reichs Ministry of the Interior as a result of the Directive dated 2 February 1933. The Directive of 5 May 1933 concerning the Reichs Air Ministry transferred civil air defense matters to the office of the Reichs Air Minister. From the legal standpoint, responsibility for civil air defense was placed in the hands of the government by the Civil Air Defense Law of 26 June 1935.

In accordance with its mission, the establishment of a military air arm (based on instructions issued by the Reichs Air Minister), the Air Command Office was the most important agency within the Ministry. Accordingly, the positions of chief of the Operations, Organization, and Training Branches as well as those of chief of the more important groups, were filled by General Staff officers. From the point of view of the significance of its mission and the personnel it employed, the Air Command Office, for all practical purposes, was the General Staff of the new Luftwaffe, although it was not yet officially recognized as such.

The main emphasis in the work of the Air Command Office lay, in continuation of the work already begun by the Reichs Ministry of Defense, in the establishment of an air force (together with the schools needed to perpetuate it) and of an air communications force.

The incorporation of the anti-aircraft artillery forces into the new Luftwaffe was still under study.

Within the Air Command Office, the main emphasis naturally lay on the Organization Branch in its mission of the actual activation of flying units. The over-all requirement established by the Reichs Air Minister - the creation of a "trial fleet" within the shortest possible time - was most effectively met by the operational method in effect, namely that the planning agency was at the same time the executive agency. This meant, for example, that an activation schedule drawn up by the Organization Branch, after approval by the Chief of the Air Command Office and the State Secretary, could be turned over directly to the same agency, i.e. the Organization Branch, to be translated into actual activation orders. In other words, planning and execution lay in one and the same hand.

This procedure differed radically from the one followed by the Army. There, planning was carried out by the General Staff, which forwarded its recommendations through the General Staff Chief (for approval) to the General Army Office (Allgemeines Heeresamt), which in turn issued appropriate orders - often after a number of delays occasioned by the need to clarify certain points. Apart from the delays inherent in this procedure, the basic plan was frequently altered so much that the finished product bore little resemblance to the original intention of the General Staff. Difficulties of this sort were obviated by the Luftwaffe from the very beginning by the firmly functional organization of the Air Command Office and by the fact that its plans could be immediately translated into reality.

F. General Air Office (LB)⁴⁰.

The General Air Office was responsible, as the highest-level administrative office for civilian aviation matters, for those activities of the Reichs Air Ministry concerned with civilian aviation. In addition, in the beginning the General Air Office was also responsible for the affairs of military aviation insofar as they were connected with meteorological services, aerial photography, and flight safety. This was the case until the agencies responsible for military aviation within the Reichs Air Ministry had reached that point in their development where they could take over effectively.

Figure 2b presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the General Air Office during 1934.

40 - Based on information furnished by Ministry Director Fisch (former Chief of the General Air Office).

1. Air Traffic Control Branch (Abteilung Luftverkehr, LB I)
 - a. Administration of all matters concerning the political, administrative, legal, and operational affairs of civilian aviation.
 - b. Coordination with international agencies in matters concerning air traffic control and the operations of civilian aviation organizations; conclusion of international agreements in the field of commercial aviation.
 - c. Furtherance of air transport on an international basis.
2. Air Sovereignty Branch (Abteilung Lufthoheit, LB II).
 - a. Enforcement of the agreements concerning the air sovereignty of Germany (supervision of air traffic, operations of the Air Office).
 - b. Issuance of guidelines for the granting of pilot and aircraft maintenance licenses; granting of such licenses.
 - c. Supervision of meetings and conferences sponsored by civilian aviation associations.
3. Meteorological Branch (Abteilung Wetterdienst, LB III)
 - a. Organization and operation of the agencies belonging to the Reichs Meteorological Service (Reichs Wetterdienst).
 - b. Personnel administration
 - c. Technical supervision over the Reichs Meteorological Service (Reichsamt fuer Wetterdienst).
 - d. Preparations for the agencies which were to take over meteorological service for the Luftwaffe.
4. Aerial Photography Branch (Abteilung Luftbildwesen, LB IV⁴¹).

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41 - For further details concerning the functions and organization of the agencies concerned with aerial photography within the Luftwaffe, see the study prepared by Branch VIII of the Luftwaffe General Staff in 1944.

- a. Handling of all questions pertaining to military and civilian aerial photography.
- b. Supervision of technical aspects of aerial photography: determination of tactical and technical requirements; development and testing of equipment; utilization of aerial photography as a topographical aid; technical supervision of the agencies responsible for taking and evaluating aerial photographs.
- c. Personnel and training: organization of training schedules for the Aerial Photography School at Hildesheim; administration of aerial photographer personnel (in conjunction with the Personnel Office, Branch 2 - Personalamt, LP II); personnel assignment; collection and evaluation of experience gained in aerial photography; preparation of training guidelines for aerial photographer personnel.
- d. Civilian aerial photography: utilization of aerial photography techniques in topography; distribution of aerial photography assignments designed to build up a library of photomaps for military and civilian use; interpretation and evaluation of aerial photographs; maintenance of an aerial photograph archive.
- e. Licensing of aerial photography: granting of authorizations to take aerial photographs; release of aerial photographs; etc.
- f. Procurement of aerial photographs for use in the planning of strategic air operations (at the request of the Operations Branch); authorizing contributions to professional publications; interpretation and evaluation of experience gained in

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the field of wartime aerial photography.

g. Films: production of training films; maintenance of a film
lending library; sponsoring of studies on film techniques

5. Ground Organization and Flight Safety Branch (Abteilung Bodenorganisation and Flugsicherung, LB V).
 - a. Handling of all questions pertaining to the ground organization (airfield companies) and flight safety (radio communication and airfield illumination) (in conjunction with the military Flight Safety Service (Flugsicherungsdienst), which was then being set up by the Air Command Office).

6. Outside the Reichs Air Ministry itself, the following agencies were directly subordinate to the Chief of the General Air Office:
 - a. The Air Offices (regional executive agencies in connection with all matters of air sovereignty⁴²).

7. Outside the Reichs Air Ministry itself, the following training installation was directly subordinate to the Chief of the Aerial Photography Branch:
 - a. The Aerial Photography School at Hildesheim.

42 - The Air Offices had air police authority. As a result, the Air Office located nearest the headquarters of each Air District Command was automatically the latter's Group 5. This was, of course, another link within the air districts (air areas (Luftkreise) after 1 July 1938) between the command agencies of the Luftwaffe and the ground organization maintained by Germany's civil aviation activity. The post of chief of an Air Office was filled by a Luftwaffe reserve officer.

G. Technical Office (LC)⁴³.

The Technical Office was responsible for the development, technical testing, and procurement of all Luftwaffe equipment (with the exception of antiaircraft artillery equipment in the beginning), in conformance with requirements and instructions issued by the Air Command Office. It worked in close coordination with research institutes (such as the Experimental Aeronautical Institute (Deutsche Versuchsanstalt fuer Luftfahrt)) and with the German aeronautics industry, as well as with the Army Ordnance Office.

The Technical Office (Personnel Section (Chef-Ing. P)) was also in charge of personnel administration for flight engineers and technical ground personnel.

Figure 2c presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Technical Office during 1934.

1. Research Branch (Abteilung Forschung, LC I)

- a. Assignment of research projects to the various aeronautical research agencies.

2. Development Branch (Abteilung Entwicklung, LC II)

- a. Assignment to industrial firms of development projects for aircraft, engines, airborne equipment, radio equipment, and - in conjunction with the Army Ordnance Office - bombs, weapons, and ammunition on the basis of the tactical and technological requirements set up by the Air Command Office.

43 - Based on charts and other information provided by General Hertel, Retired, who was assigned to the Technical Office.

b. Outside the Reichs Air Ministry, the following activities were directly subordinate to the Chief of the Technical Office:

- 1) acceptance of goods produced by industry
- 2) testing stations maintained by the National Association of Aeronautics Industries (Reichsverband der Deutschen Luftfahrtindustrie)

3. Procurement Branch (Abteilung Beschaffung, LC III).

- a. Procurement of aircraft, engines, equipment, etc.
- b. Supervision of equipment construction projects.
- c. Industrial planning.
- d. Inspection of industrial projects.
- e. Outside the Reichs Ministry itself, the office of the Supervisor of Industrial Personnel (Beauftragter fuer Industriepersonal) was directly subordinate to the Procurement Branch.

4. Administration Branch (Abteilung Haushalt, LC IV)

- a. Budgetary administration of the Technical Office.
- b. Formal preparation of orders to the aircraft industry.

It was characteristic for the organizational set-up of the Technical Office, that development and procurement and everything connected therewith were assigned to two separate branches. This method of organization had been taken over from the Army Ordnance Office and was altered during 1938.

H. Administration Office (Verwaltungsamt, LD)

1. Handling of all administrative questions concerning the Luftwaffe and German commercial aviation.
2. Establishment and implementation of the budget for Luftwaffe and other air activity.
3. Personnel administration (civilian officials and other clerical employees, hourly-paid personnel) (with the exception of aero-technical personnel).
4. Organization and development of ground organization services in accordance with instructions issued by the Air Command Office.
5. Supervision of Luftwaffe construction projects.
6. Administration of the physical plant.
7. Administration of payroll matters as well as of questions concerning the provision of food and clothing to Luftwaffe units.

Figure 2d presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Administration Office during 1934.

I. Personnel Office (Personalamt, LP)⁴⁴.

Figure 2e presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Personnel Office during 1934.

1. Adjutant's Branch (later Chief Group (Chefgruppe))
 - a. General administration of the Personnel Office.
 - b. Assignment of General Staff officers.
 - c. Issuance of criteria for performance evaluations.
2. Branch I (Abteilung LP I)
 - a. Assignment, evaluation, and promotion of troop officers.
 - b. Training of officer replacement personnel.
 - c. Reactivation of retired officer personnel.
 - d. Assignment of enlisted flying personnel, development of a replace-

48-a

ment training program for flying personnel.

44 - Taken from a study on the Reichs Air Ministry by General Nielsen, Retired, and substantiated by information provided by Colonel Koester, Retired, both of whom were assigned to the Personnel Office.

3. Branch II (Abteilung LP II)

- a. Assignment of enlisted personnel, development of a replacement training program for enlisted personnel.
- b. Establishment of training requirements for non-commissioned officer and enlisted career personnel (except for enlisted flying personnel).
- c. Troop administration (disciplinary guidelines, leave regulations, etc.).
- d. Determination of questions concerning conscription procedures.
- e. Supervision of supply matters.

4. Branch III (Abteilung LP III)

- a. Personnel administration of civilian employees⁴⁵.

5. Branch IV (Abteilung LP IV)

- a. Handling of questions concerning the military code of honor and disciplinary measures.
- b. Settlement of questions arising out of legal suits brought against members of the Luftwaffe.
- c. Administration of military orders and awards.
- d. Advisory functions in connection with payroll matters (together with Administration Office).
- e. Administration of welfare funds set up for the use of Luftwaffe personnel

6. Branch V (Abteilung LP V)

- a. Personnel administration for replacement, special duty, and reserve officers.

45 - It is probable that the administration of civilian officials, which was still the responsibility of the Personnel Office during 1933, was taken over by the Administration Office prior to 1 April 1934.

J. Inspectorate for Flight Schools (Inspektion der Fliegerschulen)

1. Planning and supervision of the training programs for flying and technical ground personnel held at the various schools and training installations in accordance with instructions issued by the Air Command Office.

Prior to the establishment of military flight training schools, the training of flying personnel was carried out under the auspices of the Association of German Sport Fliers and the Commercial Flight School, as well as by the German Lufthansa within the framework of its night freight hauls. Training in the operation of Luftwaffe equipment was carried out at the (military)⁺ Luftwaffe Ordnance Schools (Fliegerwaffenschulen).

The Inspector (Inspekteur) had supervisory authority over all training installations; the Inspectorate Chief of Staff was simultaneously Commander of the Luftwaffe Ordnance Schools (Kommandeur der Fliegerwaffenschulen).

Figure 2f presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Inspectorate for Flight Schools during 1934⁴⁶.

2. Organization Group (Gruppe Organisation)

- a. Handling of general organizational questions.
- b. Organization and development of the flight schools in compliance with activation orders initiated by the Air Command Office.
- c. Advisory functions in the establishment of personnel and equipment strength authorizations for the flight schools.

+ - Translator's Note: parentheses based on German text, which has "... an den (militaerischen) Fliegerwaffenschulen ..." .

46 - Based on information furnished by Colonel Heldmann, Retired, formerly assigned to the Inspectorate for Flight Schools, and confirmed by General Felmy, Retired, who was assigned to the post of Chief of Staff, Inspectorate for Flight Schools.

3. Training Group (Gruppe Ausbildung)
 - a. Processing of the training guidelines issued by the Air Command Office.
 - b. Issuance of instructions pertaining to the training of pilots, observers, gunners, and seaplane pilots.
 - c. Advisory functions in connection with the development of training directives.
 - d. Development of training schedules.
4. Technical Schools Branch (Abteilung Technische Schulen) (later Technical Schools Command - Kommando der Technischen Schulen)
 - a. Establishment and development of technical schools in accordance with activation orders issued by the Air Command Office.
 - b. Advisory functions in the establishment of personnel and equipment strength authorizations for the technical schools.
 - c. Planning and supervision of training in the technical schools and in the various technical course programs.
5. Technical Equipment Group (Gruppe Technik und Gerat).
 - a. Furnishing of the technical schools with aircraft, weapons, equipment, motor vehicles, etc.
 - b. Development of training aids.
 - c. Handling of all technical matters.
6. Administration Group
 - a. Budgetary administration of the schools.
 - b. Handling of the administrative affairs of the Inspectorate for Flight Schools.
7. In addition, the Inspectorate for Flight Schools was directly responsible for the flight preparedness of the Reichs Air Ministry itself.

K. Chief of Luftwaffe Procurement and Supply⁴⁷ (outside the Reichs Air Ministry).

1. Supply administration (storage, supply records, repair, etc.)
2. Planning and organization of supply agencies (in conjunction with the Organization Branch, Air Command Office).
3. Training of supply personnel.
4. Advisory functions in the personnel administration of supply personnel of officer rank.
5. Personnel administration of bomb disposal units.
6. Supervisory responsibility towards all supply units.
7. In accordance with instructions issued by the Air Command Office:
 - a. Original issue and subsequent replacement issue of supplies to Luftwaffe units, schools, etc.
 - b. Issue of replacement supplies to subordinate supply agencies and to the installations of the Luftwaffe ground organization.

47 - Based on information provided by General Kitzinger, Retired (formerly Chief of Luftwaffe Procurement and Supply), General von Seidel, Retired (at that time Chief of the Supply Section, Operations Branch, Air Command Office), and General Mensch, Retired (formerly assigned to the Supply Branch, Air Command Office).

Section 7 - Status of Luftwaffe Expansion by the End of the Period of Secrecy.

1. In spite of the many difficulties created by the need for secrecy, the result of Germany's position in foreign politics, she was able to complete successfully the first step - creation of a sufficiently stable foundation for subsequent Luftwaffe expansion - by the establishment of a number of training programs of all sorts. Effective 1 April 1934, the first Luftwaffe units (flying units, signal communications units, and the command headquarters necessary for their administration and operation) were officially established.

2. The construction of military airfields required extremely careful consideration and presupposed painstaking preparations, not only because of the absence of all up-to-date experience in such matters and the total lack of suitable example,^y but also in view of the expense which was bound to be involved in case modifications should become necessary afterwards.

Due to the considerations of wartime planning, the Luftwaffe schools and units were not geographically concentrated but were scattered throughout the Reich. As a result, a relatively extensive ground organization had to be created from the start.

3. On 1 April 1934, in order to relieve the Reichs Air Ministry of the day-by-day administrative details connected with the expansion of the Luftwaffe and in order to assure more direct administration and training of the flying units, the first Luftwaffe command agencies

were created and made directly subordinate to the Ministry. They were as follows:

- a. Commander, 1st Air Division (Kommandeur der 1. Fliegerdivision)
 - 1) 1 single-engine fighter group
 - 2) 2 bomber groups
 - 3) 3 long-range reconnaissance squadrons
- b. Commander, Army Air Forces (Kommandeur der Heeresflieger)
 - 1) 2 close-range reconnaissance squadrons
- c. Air District Commands I through V (each having jurisdiction over a particular geographical area).

Figure 2g presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Luftwaffe command set-up during 1934.

CHAPTER II

THE TOP-LEVEL COMMAND ORGANIZATION AFTER

GERMANY HAD REGAINED MILITARY SOVEREIGNTY

Section 1 - General Survey of the Events of 1935.

1. On 16 March 1935, Hitler announced that Germany had regained complete military sovereignty and freedom⁴⁸, which meant that the Luftwaffe was freed of the necessity of camouflaging its personnel and equipment build-up.

2. 1 March 1935 was declared the official birthday of the new German Luftwaffe⁴⁸.

3. On 1 April 1935, the antiaircraft artillery forces were officially incorporated into the Luftwaffe⁴⁹ and joined the flying forces and the signal communications forces as the third Luftwaffe branch.

4. On 21 May 1935, the military conscription law was proclaimed. This was followed on 22 May 1935 by a "Decree concerning obligatory active duty with the Wehrmacht" and, on 29 May 1935, by a "Directive concerning recruitment and conscription for the year 1935". In addition, "flying personnel subject to conscription are urged to put in the required period of active duty with the Luftwaffe"⁴⁸.

48 - Based on "Die Deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936"

49 - Effected by the Directive issued by the Reichs Minister of Defense, Wa No. 708/35, Classified, Ia/C, dated 25 February 1935, and the Directive L.A. No. 1472/35, Classified, II L/2, dated 25 February 1935.

5. In connection with the implementation of the military conscription law, the designation "Luftwaffe", as a Wehrmacht branch, and "Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe", as its commander, were officially established on 1 June 1935.

6. The following Luftwaffe hierarchy was officially recognized:

- a. Supreme Commander, Wehrmacht - the Fuehrer and Reichs Chancellor
Adolf Hitler
- b. Commander in Chief, Wehrmacht - Reichs War Minister, General-
oberst von Blomberg
- c. Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe - Reichs Air Minister, General
der Flieger Goering
- d. Top-level agency within the Reich for all matters of aeronautics
and air defense - Reichs Air Ministry. Chief of the Reichs Air
Ministry was the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief,
Luftwaffe. His simultaneous authority as Reichs Minister of
Aviation was not affected by his connection with the Wehrmacht
in his capacity as Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. His permanent
deputy was Generalleutnant Milch, State Secretary of Aviation⁵⁰.

7. On 18 October 1935, the Reich proclaimed the "Law pertaining to the Luftwaffe engineer corps", which gave official recognition to the Luftwaffe Engineer Corps established under the provisions of the directive of 20 April 1935⁵⁰.

50 - Based on "Die Deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936"

8. Effective 1 November 1935, all legal matters pertaining to the Luftwaffe, formerly handled by Army and Navy courts, were placed under the jurisdiction of Luftwaffe judge advocate agencies⁵¹.
9. On 1 November 1935, the first Luftwaffe recruits were selected; they were officially inducted on 7 November 1935⁵¹.

51 - Based on "Die Deutsche Luftfahrt - Jahrbuch 1936".

Section 2 - Changes Effectuated in the Organizational Set-Up of the Reichs
Air Ministry during 1935.

1. In keeping with the further expansion of the Luftwaffe as an independent Wehrmacht branch, and the increased administrative work created thereby, the Reichs Air Ministry was also expanded.

2. Medical affairs, theretofore handled by the Central Branch (ZA/Med), were taken over by the Air Command Office. Effective 1 October 1935, the Judge Advocate Group, Central Branch, assumed responsibility for all Luftwaffe legal affairs⁵².

3. Within the Air Command Office a number of staffs were expanded to groups and a number of groups to branches. After the reorganization, the Air Command Office was comprised of the following:

- a. Operations Branch (LA I)⁵³
 - 1) Operations Group (LA I, 1)
 - 2) Target Preparation Group (LA I, 2)
 - 3) Tactical and Technological Requirements Group (LA I, 3)
- b. Quartermaster Branch (Oberquartiermeister - LA/O. Qu.)
(formerly a group of the Operations Branch)
- c. Communications Branch (LA/NW)

The headquarters signal company, Reichs Air Ministry, was directly subordinate to the chief of the Communications Branch.

52 - Based on information provided by General Bruch, Retired (former Chief of the Central Office).

53 - Based on information provided by General Schmid, Retired (formerly assigned to the Foreign Air Forces Group, Operations Branch)

- d. Foreign Air Forces Branch (LA/Fr. L.) (formerly the Foreign Air Forces Group, Operations Branch)
- e. Organization Branch (LA II)
- f. Training Branch (LA III)
- g. Strength and Equipment Authorization Branch (LA IV)
- h. Supply Branch (LA V)
- i. Medical Branch (Medizinalabteilung - LA/Med) (formerly Medical Group, Central Branch; its new organizational status did much to loosen its bounds to the Army Medical Affairs Inspectorate)

The Civil Air Defense Branch (LA/ZL) was placed under the command of the Inspector for Antiaircraft Artillery (Inspekteur der Flakartillerie) (see 8, below).

Within the Air Command Office, the Operations Branch, Quartermaster Branch, Communications Branch, and the Foreign Air Forces Branch were further combined to form an Operations Staff (Fuehrungsstab), under the leadership of the Chief of the Operations Branch. The latter was responsible for coordinating the work of the four branches concerned, regardless of the fact that the other three branch chiefs also had the right of direct access to the Chief, Air Command Office.

4. Effective 1 April 1935, the first Luftwaffe Inspectorates were created⁵⁴ as follows:

- a. Inspectorate for Air Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography (Inspektion der Aufklaerungsflieger und des Luftbildwesens) (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1), which - at the same time - was charged with planning and

54 - Excerpts from the decree issued by the Reichs Air Ministry, Air Command Office, No. 6600/34, Classified, II, 1, dated 19 December 1934 (Microfilm Roll 115, Wiesbaden Archives).

supervisory functions in connection with raising Luftwaffe materiel strength to the level authorized.

The chief of Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1 was also advisor to the Commander in Chief, Army, as regarded the transfer of certain air reconnaissance and antiaircraft artillery units to the Army in case of mobilization. In addition, he was in charge of plans for the establishment of the office of a "Luftwaffe General attached to the Commander in Chief, Army" in case of war.

The Aerial Photography Branch, General Air Office, was transferred to Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1, and the Central Aerial Photography Office, Reichs Air Ministry, was reactivated to take over to the Aerial Photography School:

- 1) Carrying out of aerial photography assignments for the offices and branches of the Reichs Air Ministry
- 2) Testing of newly-developed equipment, evaluation of new methods in aerial photography, and assessment of innovations in training methods (for the Aerial Photography Branch)
- 3) Cooperating in the development of training guidelines and directives.

Within the Central Aerial Photography Office, a special-duty group was established for detachment to the Operations Staff in case of war⁵⁵.

55 - Based on "Ueberblick ueber Taetigkeit und Organisation des gesamten Bildwesens in der Luftwaffe" (Survey of the Functions and Organization of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe), study prepared by Branch VIII, Luftwaffe General Staff, during 1944.

After reorganization was complete, Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1 consisted of the following subdivisions⁵⁶:

- 1) Staff No. 1 (Training and Organization)
- 2) Staff No. 2 (Technology and Equipment)
- 3) Branch 3 (Aerial Photography - the former Aerial Photography Branch, General Air Office)
- 4) Aerial Photography School
- 5) Central Aerial Photography Office, Reichs Air Ministry (directly subordinate to the Chief of the Aerial Photography Branch)

b. Inspectorate for Bomber Forces (Inspektion der Kampfflieger) (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 2), which - at the same time - was charged with planning and supervisory functions in connection with bomb development and navigation.

Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 2 was made up of the following:

- 1) Staff No. 1 (Training and Organization)
- 2) Staff No. 2 (Technology and Equipment)
- 3) Group 3 (Navigation)

c. Inspectorate for Fighter and Dive-Bomber Forces (Inspektion der Jagd- und Sturzkampfflieger) (Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 3), which - at the same time - was charged with planning and supervisory functions in connection with Luftwaffe ordnance

56 - Based on information provided by Colonel Borchardt, Retired (formerly assigned to Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1).

Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 3 was made up of the following subdivisions:

- 1) Staff No. 1 (Training and Organization)
- 2) Staff No. 2 (Technology and Equipment)
- 3) Group 3 (Airborne Weapons)

Luftwaffe Inspectorates No. 1, 2, and 3 were directly subordinate to the Chief, Air Command Office.

The primary mission of the Inspectorate chiefs was the furtherance of the tactical and technological readiness of their particular branches. "By order of" the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, they issued directives regarding the technological and tactical standards required of the troops falling within their areas of jurisdiction, and they were called upon for advice in the preparation of employment directives and training guidelines. On the basis of their evaluation of experience at the front, they established tactical and technological requirements for their troops. They played an important role in the development and testing of equipment. They were asked to submit their recommendations in questions of organization.

Each Inspectorate chief had the right to inspect the units and training installations under his command.

5. Effective 1 January 1935, the post of Inspector for Naval Air Forces (Waffeninspektion der Seeflieger) was assigned to the commander of Air Area IV (Sea).

As Inspector for Naval Air Forces, this officer was directly responsible to the State Secretary for Aviation, but - again only in this capacity - he was bound by instructions issued by the

Chief of the Air Command Office.

6. The Chief of the Communications Branch, Air Command Office, was given the post of Inspector for Communications (Inspekteur des Nachrichtenverbindungswezens). He worked in close coordination with the other Luftwaffe Inspectorates.

7. Effective 1 April 1935, a Luftwaffe Inspectorate for Vehicle Transport (Inspektion des Kraftfahrwesens der Luftwaffe) was established as Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6. This agency was responsible for all matters pertaining to motor vehicles within the Luftwaffe and, in addition, acted as liaison office to Inspectorate No. 6 of the Reichs Ministry of War, which was in charge of motor vehicle transportation for the entire Wehrmacht.

Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 6 was directly subordinate to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

8. As of 1 April 1935, the former Inspectorate for Flight Schools was reorganized into the Flight School Command (Kommando der Fliegerschulen) and was thus no longer a part of the Reichs Air Ministry.

The Flight School Command was placed in charge of all flight training installations as well as of the Luftwaffe ordnance schools.

9. Effective 1 April 1935, the date on which the Luftwaffe took over the antiaircraft artillery forces, the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery Forces was transferred from the Reichs Ministry of Defense to the Reichs Air Ministry. At the same time, the Civil Air Defense Branch (hitherto a part of the Air Command Office) was made subordinate to the Inspector for Antiaircraft Artillery. Thus, the inspectorate was given

the title of Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense (Inspektion der Flakartillerie und des Luftschutzes)⁵⁷.

This inspectorate was directly subordinate to the State Secretary for Aviation and was made up of the following subdivisions⁵⁸:

- a. Group 1 (Employment, Organization, Personnel Replacement, and Supply)
- b. Group A (Training)
- c. Group 2 (Weapons, Equipment, and Ammunition) (establishment of tactical and technological requirements for the development of equipment together with the Army Ordnance Office; testing of new equipment at troop level)
- d. Group 3 (Publications) (preparation of training aids and instructional materials)
- e. Group 4 (Aircraft and Tank Identification Service)
- f. Staff Motor Vehicle Services
- g. Staff Antiaircraft Artillery Research and Development
- h. Staff Signal Communications Services
- i. Civil Air Defense Branch (formerly a part of the Air Command Office)
- j. The following were also directly subordinate to the Inspector for Antiaircraft Artillery:
 - 1) The antiaircraft artillery schools
 - 2) The antiaircraft artillery practice ranges

57 - Directive issued by the Reichs Air Minister, No. 1240/35, Classified, II 1, dated 8 March 1935.

58 - Based on information provided by General von Axthelm, Retired (formerly assigned to the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense).

As a result of the hybrid nature of its activity (including General Staff-type missions as well as the administration of a technical service branch), due in turn to personnel considerations, the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense had far more extensive responsibilities than those of the other inspectorates. It was not until later that its General Staff functions were relegated to the proper agencies.

10. On 1 June 1935, the Research Group for the History of Air Warfare, Reichs Air Ministry, (Forschungsgruppe des Reichsluftfahrtministeriums fuer Luftkriegsgeschichte) was established and placed under the direction of the Chief of the Training Branch⁵⁹.

11. On 1 November 1935, the following training installations were founded and placed under the command of the Chief of the Air Command Office:

- a. The Advanced Luftwaffe School (Hoehere Luftwaffenschule)
- b. The Air War Academy (Luftkriegsakademie)
- c. The Air Technical Academy (Lufttechnische Akademie) (under the technical supervision of the Chief of the Technical Office)

12. In summary, the organizational structure of the various agencies discussed above during 1935, is illustrated by the figures indicated below:

- a. Reichs Air Ministry (Figure 3)
- b. Air Command Office (Figure 3a)
- c. Operations Branch (Figure 3b)
- d. Inspectorate for Air Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography
(Figure 3c⁶⁰)

59 - "Establishment and Development of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch" (Entwicklungsdaten der Kriegswissenschaftlichen Abteilung der Luftwaffe) (Microfilm roll No. 15).

60 - The organizational structure of the Aerial Photography Branch reflects the status as of 1936, based on the report "The Organization and Function of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe" (Ueberblick ueber die Taetigkeit und Organisation des gesamten Bildwesens in der Luftwaffe).

- e. Inspectorate for Bomber Forces (Figure 3d)
- f. Inspectorate for Fighter and Dive Bomber Forces (Figure 3e)
- g. Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense
(Figure 3f)

The organizational structure of the other offices and branches either remained the same or changed so little that we need not concern ourselves with them.

The organization described for the Luftwaffe inspectorates is the original one; it was expanded later on.

Section 3 - Summary of Developments during 1935.

1. Once Germany had regained her military sovereignty, of course, the formal assignment of Luftwaffe personnel to either the Army or the Navy, which had been necessary so far in order to camouflage the build-up of an air force, could be discontinued immediately. Air academies and pilot replacement battalions were established to take care of the training of Luftwaffe officer candidates and Luftwaffe enlisted personnel respectively. Recruits assigned to the antiaircraft artillery forces or to the signal communications forces were given basic military training in replacement units within their own service branches.

The number of pilot training and ordnance schools was soon increased, and at the same time new, specialized training centers were set up.

The Advanced Luftwaffe School and the Air War Academy were called into being to prepare Luftwaffe officers for assignment to the General Staff. The Air Technical Academy was created to meet the need for qualified flight engineers with the requisite military as well as technological training and background.

2. Effective 1 April 1935, certain changes were made in the organization of the operational command apparatus. The staffs of the 1st Air Division and of the Commander, Army Air Forces, were deactivated and their responsibilities assigned to the Headquarters of the Air Regional Commands I through V. As a result, these headquarters were no longer merely territorial administrative offices, but now had a place in the chain of command.

Each Air Regional Command was assigned a Senior Pilot Commander (Hoeherer Fliegerkommandeur) and a Senior Antiaircraft Artillery Commander (Hoeherer Kommandeur der Flakartillerie), who had full and exclusive command over the flying units and antiaircraft artillery units respectively.

The VIth Air Regional Command (Sea) retained command over the Commander, Naval Air Forces, (Fuehrer der Seeluftstreitkraefte) and the seaplane units under his jurisdiction.

See Figure 3g for the organization of the Luftwaffe operational command apparatus during 1935.

Within each one of the Air Regional Commands an air supply and procurement group was created to take charge of all supply activity in the region.

3. During the summer of 1935, Luftwaffe strength was approximately as follows:

a. flying forces

- 3 single-engine fighter groups
- 6 bomber groups
- 1 dive-bomber group
- (each group comprising three squadrons)
- 7 close-range reconnaissance squadrons
- 5 long-range reconnaissance squadrons
- 7 seaplane squadrons

b. antiaircraft artillery forces

- 15 heavy artillery battalions
- 3 light artillery battalions
- 1 antiaircraft artillery training battalion

Section 4 - The Changes in the Organization of the Reichs Air Ministry during 1936.

1. Apart from a number of new activations, there were no really fundamental organizational changes in the Reichs Air Ministry.

2. Inspectorate for Aerial Reconnaissance Forces and Aerial Photography (Inspectorate No. 1):

On 1 March 1936, the inspection of Luftwaffe photographic equipment (formerly the responsibility of the Inspector) was delegated to the Chief of the Aerial Photography Branch⁶¹.

61 - Taken from "The Organization and Function of Aerial Photography within the Luftwaffe".

On 1 April 1936, Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 1 was made subordinate to the newly-established Aerial Reconnaissance Training Staff (Aufklaerungslehrstab), which was expanded to the Aerial Reconnaissance Group (Aufklaerungsgruppe) on 1 October 1936. On 1 October 1938 the Group became a part of the Luftwaffe Training Division (Luftwaffenlehrdivision)⁶².

Effective 1 July 1936, the Central Film Office (Hauptfilmstelle des Reichsluftfahrtministeriums) was established and placed under the command of the Chief, Aerial Photography Branch. The Central Film Office was located outside the Reichs Air Ministry⁶².

3. Effective 1 April 1936, the Research Group for the History of Air Warfare was rechristened the Luftwaffe Military History Branch. It remained under the direct supervision of the Chief, Training Branch⁶³.

It comprised the following groups:

- a. Group 1 (Research in Military History)
- b. Group 2 (Interpretation and Evaluation)
- c. Group 3 (Archives)
- d. Group 4 (Administration)

62 - Based on information furnished by General Drum, Retired.

63 - Based on "Establishment and Development of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch" (Entwicklungsdaten der Kriegswissenschaftlichen Abteilung der Luftwaffe), (Microfilm roll No. 15).

4. On 1 April 1936, the Inspectorate for Aircraft Equipment (Fliegergeraeteinspizient) and the Air Accident Investigations Office (Unfalluntersuchungsstelle fuer die Luftfahrt) (closely allied with the Institute for Experimental Aeronautics) - formerly entirely independent of each other - were combined to form the Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Aircraft Equipment (Inspectorate S) (Inspektion fuer Flugsicherheit und Geraet, In. S)⁶⁴. The motivating factor behind this organizational change was the sharp increase in aircraft accidents occasioned by the too hurried - and thus too superficial - pilot training program.

The responsibilities assigned to the Inspectorate S were the following:

a. Accident investigation

- 1) Investigation of all accidents involving aircraft (Luftwaffe and commercial aircraft)
- 2) Evaluation and interpretation of findings in terms of flight techniques, technological factors, training standards, tactical considerations, and organizational aspects involved
- 3) Advisory functions in connection with court investigations to fix the responsibility for accidents (as the highest-ranking investigative and opinion-stating agency)
- 4) Grounding of aircraft and discontinuation of items of equipment on the basis of accident investigation findings
- 5) Initiation of accident-prevention measures

b. Inspection of aircraft and equipment

64 - Based on information provided by General Fink, Retired (former Deputy Chief of Inspectorate S).

- c. Provision of instructional material for troop units in connection with the introduction of new aircraft models or new types of equipment (including weapons and ammunition)
- d. Inspection of all aerotechnical training installations, including the advanced ordnance schools (Waffenmeisterschulen)
- e. Advisory function in connection with the appointment of aerotechnical personnel to key positions

Temporarily under the direct command of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Inspectorate S was ultimately made subordinate to the State Secretary for Aviation.

5. On 3 June 1936, General Wever, Chief of the Air Command Office, was killed in an air crash while on an official flight. His successor was General-leutnant Kesselring, former Chief of the Luftwaffe Administration Office.

6. On 1 July 1936, the Luftwaffe General Staff came into being as an officially recognized entity. Its creation resulted in no immediate changes in the organization of the Air Command Office⁶⁵.

The Chief of the Air Command Office was simultaneously Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff⁶⁶.

The General Staff officers taken over from the Army, as well as those officers who had had general staff training, were automatically

65 - In Hitler's decree, as well as in the general order issued by Goering on the occasion of Wever's death, Generalleutnant Wever was already referred to as the first Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff. (German Aviation - Volume for 1937)

66 - Based on information provided by General Nielsen, Retired (who was responsible for preparing the directives setting up the Luftwaffe General Staff).

appointed General Staff officers with the Luftwaffe. At the same time, a list of the positions requiring General Staff personnel was drawn up⁶⁷.

7. The antiaircraft artillery schools and practice ranges, theretofore unconditionally subordinate to the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense, were transferred to the jurisdiction of the Air Regional Commands in which they were located. They remained under the supervision of the Inspectorate only insofar as training and personnel assignment were concerned.

8. The supply function was subjected to thoroughgoing reorganization, and on 1 August 1936 the Supply Branch, Air Command Office, and the Office of the Chief of Supply and Procurement were combined to form the Luftwaffe Supply Office (Nachschubamt der Luftwaffe).

The chief of the Luftwaffe Supply Office was responsible to the State Secretary for Aviation.

The Supply Office operated in accordance with instructions issued by the Air Command Office; its work was closely coordinated with that of the Technical Office⁶⁸.

The missions assigned to the new office were as follows:

- a. Further development of the supply organization within the Luftwaffe and establishment of an adequate training program
- b. Planning of equipment and spare part requirements on the basis of organizational factors and past experience in materiel consumption.

67 - In Hitler's decree, as well as in the general order issued by Goering on the occasion of Wever's death, Generalleutnant Wever was already referred to as the first Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff (German Aviation - Volume for 1937).

68 - Based on information furnished by General Kitzinger, Retired (former Chief of the Luftwaffe Supply Office).

- c. Issuance of technical guidelines for the carrying out of initial as well as subsequent supply functions.
- d. Preparation of instructional materials concerning the repair and maintenance of equipment
- e. Establishment of procedures for the disposal of obsolete or otherwise useless equipment
- f. Furnishing vehicle fuels and ammunition to troop units
- g. Responsibility for inspecting all supply units and facilities, including those service schools concerned with the supply function (bomb disposal training centers, advanced ordnance schools, and the Luftwaffe Supply School
- h. Preparation of directives and operational guidelines in the field of supply
- i. Advisory functions in connection with the assignment of supply officer personnel

The Luftwaffe Supply Office was divided into the following branches:

- a. Group 1 (Organization of Supply function)
- b. Group 2 (Aircraft and aircraft equipment)
- c. Group 3 (General equipment: signal communications equipment, motor vehicles, vehicle fuels)
- d. Group 4 (Weapons, antiaircraft artillery, and ammunition)

9. During the fall of 1936 the Political Affairs Group was detached from the Central Branch and assigned to the staff of the State Secretary for Aviation⁶⁹.

69 - According to information provided by General Bruch, Retired (at that time Chief of the Central Branch).

10. In summary, the organizational structure of the various agencies discussed above during 1936 is illustrated by the figures indicated below:

- a. Reichs Air Ministry (Figure 4)
- b. Air Command Office (Figure 4a)
- c. Luftwaffe Supply Office (Figure 4b)

Section 5 - Summary of Developments during 1936.

1. In Hitler's opinion, by the spring of 1936 the Luftwaffe already represented a factor to be reckoned with in terms of a military deterrent "trial fleet". On 7 March 1936, for example, he utilized certain Luftwaffe units during the occupation of the Rhineland.

2. In order to be prepared for possible military involvement in Europe, the Luftwaffe worked out its first operational plans (Operation GRUEN (Green) - Czechoslovakia).

These plans called for the expansion of the Luftwaffe ground organization through the establishment and equipment of advanced airfields which would become immediately operational as soon as mobilization was ordered. Organization and supervision of these preparations were entrusted to the Air Administrative Commands (Luftgaukommandos), created by decree dated 1 April 1936 and assigned to the Air Regional Commands II through V. In case of mobilization, the Air Administrative Commands were to assume command of the ground organization.

3. During the fall of 1936, Air Regional Command VII was created.

4. On 1 April 1936, the first wing staffs were set up in the flying units (each wing was composed of three groups).

Section 6 - The Changes in the Organization of the Reichs Air Ministry
during 1937.

1. On 1 April 1937⁷⁰, the Flight School Command (which had been taken out of the Reichs Air Ministry in 1935) was reorganized as the Inspectorate for Flight Schools and reincorporated into the Ministry, where it was placed under the command of the Chief of the Air Command Office.

At the same time, all the schools formerly under the central jurisdiction of the Flight School Command were transferred to the jurisdiction of the newly-established Flight School and Pilot Replacement Battalion Commands (Kommando der Fliegerschulen und Fliegerersatzabteilungen), which in turn were subordinate to the Air Regional Commands.

The Inspector for Flight Schools was authorized to inspect the pilot training installations, while inspection of the ordnance schools remained the responsibility of the various Air Ordnance Inspectors (Fliegerwaffeninspektoren).

2. The Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces (Luftwaffeninspektion der Seeflieger) was established, making it possible to relieve the Commander of Air Area VI (Sea) of his duties as inspector of the seaplane units.

The Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces was made directly responsible to the Chief of the Air Command Office.

3. The Medical Branch, Air Command Office, was reorganized into the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs. The new agency, like its predecessor, was directly subordinate to the

70 - This date is based on information given by Colonel Heldmann, Retired (formerly assigned to the Inspectorate for Flight Schools).

Chief of the Air Command Office. With its creation, the extremely close bonds between the medical affairs administration of the Luftwaffe and the Army Inspectorate for Medical Affairs were no longer necessary, and from then on basic organizational questions and personnel matters (promotion and assignment of medical officers) were handled independently⁷¹.

4. Prior to 1937, the top-level organizational structure of the Luftwaffe might be said to possess a certain inner unity and stability; during 1937, however, there arose the problem of the status of a "civilian" State Secretary in a military ministry, particularly in connection with the relationship existing between the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff of the Luftwaffe (see also Section 7 - The State Secretary for Aviation and the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff).

The conflict between Generalleutnant Kesselring, Chief of the Air Command Office, and General der Flieger Milch, State Secretary for Aviation, soon came to a head. On 31 May 1937, Generalleutnant Kesselring resigned his position at the Reichs Air Ministry and accepted an appointment as Commanding General, Air Area III. Generalmajor Stumpff, Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office, was named Kesselring's successor as Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff⁷². If we disregard the death of General Wever, this was the first of a long series of personnel changes in the post of Chief of the General Staff of the Luftwaffe.

71 - Based on information provided by General Schroeder, MD, Retired (formerly Chief of the Medical Branch, Air Command Office).

72 - Taken from the list of personnel changes in the Luftwaffe published in German Aviation - Volume for 1938.

5. Effective 2 June 1937, the chain of command within the top-level echelon of the Reichs Air Ministry was changed as follows:

- a. The State Secretary was relieved of his assignment as permanent deputy to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. From that point on, he was to assume the duties of his chief only if the latter was to be away for an extended period or in case a sudden emergency should prevent him from carrying on his work⁷³.
- b. The Chief of the General Staff was made directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. It was his mission to establish requirements in connection with preparations for and conduct of air warfare and to transmit these requirements to the State Secretary and the offices under the latter's command for action. The General Staff Chief was no longer required to obtain the concurrence of the State Secretary before addressing himself in person or in writing to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe; he was merely requested to inform the State Secretary briefly of any decisions made by the Commander in Chief. For all practical purposes these modifications divided the Reichs Air Ministry into two separate spheres of command, the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff (with the General Staff) on the one hand, and the State Secretary (with the various Ministry offices) on the other.

6. At the same time the Air Command Office was reorganized into the Luftwaffe General Staff⁷⁴, consisting of

73 - Based in part on information provided by General Nielsen, Retired (former member of the Luftwaffe General Staff) and in part on the "Development of the Peacetime and Wartime Top-Level Organizational Structure of the

77-a

- 73 - (cont) Luftwaffe from 1934 on" (Entwicklung der Friedens- und Kriegspitzengliederung der Luftwaffe seit 1934), a brief study prepared by the Military History Branch (Branch VIII) of the Luftwaffe General Staff. Both sources mention the directive issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Chief, Luftwaffe General Staff, No. 1600/37, Classified, dated 2 June 1937. The directive itself is no longer available for reference.
- 74 - Based on information provided by General Nielsen, Retired (former member of the Luftwaffe General Staff).
-

the following subdivisions⁷⁵:

a. Operations Staff

- 1) Branch 1 (Operations)
- 2) Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces)
- 3) Branch 6 (Quartermaster)
- 4) Branch 7 (Signal Communications)
- 5) Topography Group (Gruppe Kartenwesen)

b. Organization Staff

- 1) Branch 2 (Organization)
- 2) Branch 4 (Personnel Strength and Equipment Authorization)

Note: The Chief of the Organization Staff was at the same time
Chief of Branch 2.

c. Branch 3 (Training)

d. Chief Group

7. On 1 July 1937, the post of Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army (General der Luftwaffe beim Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres) - a post which previous planning had envisioned only in case of war - was created in the Reichs Air Ministry⁷⁶.

The mission of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, was to advise the Army High Command in questions concerning aerial reconnaissance and antiaircraft artillery defenses at the front and to implement mobilization plans for the employment of the

75 - This organizational plan (except for the subdivisions of the Operations Staff) is based on material appearing in German Aviation - Volume for 1937.

76 - German Aviation - Volume for 1938, page 58.

Air Commander Staffs (Koluftstaebe), aerial reconnaissance squadrons, anti-aircraft artillery and signal communications units which would become tactically subordinate to the Army in case of war⁷⁷.

The Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army, was personally responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. He had no executive authority.

8. During the autumn of 1937, a Staff for Army Tactics (Referat fuer Heerestaktik) was set up within the framework of the Inspectorate for Aerial Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography. This Staff was the nucleus for the Army Tactical Training Staff (Lehrstab fuer Heerestaktik)⁷⁸, whose missions were the following:

- a. Furtherance of familiarity with Army tactics in the aerial reconnaissance training schools and units
- b. Issuance of instructional guidelines for training in Army tactics; publication of new developments and new Army tactical directives for the use of schools and units; informing interested Luftwaffe training centers of Army practices concerning troop organization and employment, etc.

9. On 1 December 1937, the Staff Office (Stabsamt) was rechristened the Ministry Office (Ministeramt)⁷⁹, and organized into the following branches:

- a. Branch 1 (Political and Economical Developments - Four-Year Plan)
- b. Branch 2 (Adjutant)
- c. Branch 3 (Secretarial Branch (Persoenliches Sekretariat))

77 - Taken from a study written by General Drum, Retired.

78 - The directive from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Luftwaffe General Staff, Branch 2, dated 18 January 1938, refers to an earlier directive, from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Luftwaffe General Staff, Branch 2,

79-a

78 - (cont) No. 3250/37, Classified, dated 1 December 1937, in which the Army Tactical Training Staff was mentioned.

79 - Based on "The Organization of the German Luftwaffe" (Die Gliederung der der deutschen Luftwaffe), author unknown.

10. In summary, the organizational structure of the agencies discussed above during 1937 is illustrated in the figures indicated below:

- a. Reichs Air Ministry (Figure 5)
- b. Luftwaffe General Staff (Figure 5a)
- c. Inspectorate for Aerial Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography
(Figure 5b)
- d. Office of the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army
(Figure 5c)

Section 7 - The State Secretary for Aviation and the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff⁸⁰.

1. In accordance with the original organizational set-up of the Reichs Air Ministry, the forerunner of the Chief of the General Staff, the Chief of the Air Command Office, was, like all other office chiefs, subordinate to the State Secretary in the latter's capacity as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister.

During the early years of Luftwaffe development, this chain of command did not give rise to any appreciable difficulties. In full awareness of his own lack of military background, the State Secretary was quite willing to cede the leading role in all military questions to the Chief of the Air Command Office. The two men, General Wever, General Staff Officer and Chief of the Air Command Office, and State Secretary Milch, a man of long and broad experience in general aviation, complemented each other in the most exemplary fashion.

80 - In writing this section, the author has referred frequently to the brief study of the Military History Branch, Luftwaffe General Staff, "Development of the Peacetime and Wartime Top-Level Organization Structure of the Luftwaffe from 1934 on" (Entwicklung der Friedens- und Kriegsspitzengliederung der Luftwaffe seit 1934), and to "The Organization of the German Luftwaffe" (Die Gliederung der deutschen Luftwaffe), author unknown.

This organizational set-up, however stable and effective it might appear to an outsider, was to lead to more and more serious conflict between the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff as the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, became more and more dependent upon his General Staff Chief as his principal military advisor. And in view of Hitler's increasing political activity, his need for competent military counsel grew more urgent than ever before. As a result of these new tensions, the State Secretary gradually withdrew to a position diametrically opposed to that of the General Staff Chief.

2. At the beginning of 1937, the following agencies were directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe:

a. Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff (Generalleutnant Kesselring)

- 1) Air Command Office
- 2) Luftwaffe Inspectorates (except the Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Air Defense and the Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Equipment)
- 3) the air academies

b. State Secretary for Aviation (General der Flieger Milch)

- 1) General Air Office
- 2) Technical Office
- 3) Administration Office
- 4) Supply Office
- 5) Personnel Office
- 6) Central Branch

7) Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Civil Defense

8) Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Equipment

By order of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Chief of the General Staff was responsible for issuing directives dealing with training, organization, and employment (prepared in close coordination with the Inspectorate concerned) to the various offices of the Reichs Air Ministry and to the Luftwaffe command agencies in the field. On the other hand, as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the State Secretary had the right to interfere in fundamental policies and, in the event of an unreconcilable difference of opinion, to request a decision from his chief.

It was obvious that this organizational set-up, lacking both clarity and balance, was bound to provide ample opportunity for conflict and friction based on overlapping areas of authority. Nevertheless, as Generalfeldmarschall Kesselring points out in retrospect⁸¹, "the system worked smoothly as long as the State Secretary and the Chief of the General Staff kept within their bounds. Even the State Secretary's role as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was not necessarily a disadvantage; after all, the two offices had to work together. Each office was required to keep the other informed of its activity, of course, and it was natural that this was done by the Chief of the General Staff

81 - From a letter to the author under date of 1 October 1955.

in the form of oral conferences. The mere fact that the State Secretary - or, as a matter of fact, the Chief of the General Staff - happened to speak up for an opposing viewpoint during the course of a conference with the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, can certainly not be interpreted as a sign of poor organization. It was not until the State Secretary began to claim a completely unwarranted voice in the establishment of operational policies and took to expressing his dissenting opinions in deliberately insulting terms that the conflict between us came into being."

At the very least, the circumstances described by General Kesselring serve to illustrate the weaknesses inherent in a system of dual leadership. In order to remedy these weaknesses, General Kesselring demanded that the Chief of the General Staff be given sole responsibility for all questions of military command. Since the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, refused to accede to his demand, General Kesselring resigned from his position on 31 May 1937.

Generalleutnant Stumpff, former Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office, was named to succeed Kesselring as Chief of the General Staff.

3. On 2 June 1937, after Kesselring's resignation, the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, modified the deputy function of the State Secretary; he was no longer to be considered the permanent representative of the Commander in Chief, but was to assume this function in future only when the latter was to be away for an extended period or was prevented by an unforeseen emergency from carrying on his work⁸². As a result of this modification, the Chief of the General Staff

82 - The study by the Military History Branch, General Staff, (Development of Peacetime and Wartime Top-Level Organizational Structure of the Luftwaffe from 1934 on) refers to a directive from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Chief, Luftwaffe General Staff, Branch 2, No. 1600/37, Classified, dated 2 June 1937. General Nielsen, Retired, also makes mention of this particular directive. Its exact text is no longer available for reference.

was placed on the same level as the State Secretary. Needless to say, each was required to inform the other of any decisions taken during the course of a conference with the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

The State Secretary and his staff formed an independent administrative entity. The Secretary was responsible for materiel procurement, technological developments, administration, supply, and personnel matters within his sphere of command. In accordance with general instructions received from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, he directed the work of the offices and agencies subordinate to him, supervised the preparations designated by the General Staff as necessary to assume military preparedness on the part of the troops and effective conduct of operations on the part of command, and made certain that his subordinates were uniformly exposed to appropriate political indoctrination.

The State Secretary, however, was not willing to accept the change in his status effected by the new directive based on the Commander in Chief's decision; instead, he gradually set himself up as the opponent of the Chief of the General Staff⁸³. Nor was the General Staff Chief himself,

83 - In this connection, General Deichmann, Retired (at that time Chief of the Operations Branch, Luftwaffe General Staff) has the following to say: "This modification (i.e. the restriction in the State Secretary's status), however, was to have far-reaching and extremely significant consequences. Heretofore, for example, the State Secretary had always shown a personal interest in the tactical and technological requirements established by the General Staff and had always done his best to see that they were promptly and properly dealt with by the Technical Office. After the change, which permitted the General Staff to deal directly with the Technical Office, the lack of an interested and sympathetic mediator often made itself painfully felt. The Commander in Chief himself intervened only rarely, and then without spectacular success. One cannot help feeling that the State Secretary now began to oppose the requests made by the General Staff and that his hostile attitude soon communicated itself to the Technical Office. Just how far this hostility towards the General Staff could go became apparent in the fall of 1937, when the State Secretary managed to bring the chiefs of Branches 1, 2, and 3 of the General

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83 - (cont) Staff simultaneously to the point where they resigned in protest
at his charge that they no longer had any contact with the troops."

Generalleutnant Stumpff, particularly happy with the new situation, which - to be effective- presupposed a spirit of cooperation between State Secretary and General Staff Chief, and not the hostile antagonism which was becoming more and more apparent on the part of the State Secretary.

The State Secretary was constantly occupied with plans to regain his former position, and on 16 September 1937 he presented the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, with a memorandum suggesting another top-level organizational set-up⁸⁴. His plan envisioned a Chief of Air Defense (Chef der Luftwehr)

84 - In retrospect, too, Generalfeldmarschall Milch, Retired, seems to consider the organizational change of 2 June 1937 a mistake, since he gives it a portion of the blame for the collapse of the Luftwaffe during World War II (in his memorandum of 21 February 1954, "The Chief Causes for the Collapse of the German Luftwaffe in World War II" (Hauptgruende fuer den Zusammenbruch der deutschen Luftwaffe im Weltkrieg II)). In his memorandum he comments as follows: "During the summer of 1937, Goering made a change in the top-level organization of the Luftwaffe. This change had a number of serious consequences, eg. the previously close coordination among the General Staff, the Chief of Supply and Procurement (author's note: presumably Milch means the Technical Office, since the post of Chief of Supply and Procurement was not created until 1938), the Personnel Office, and the other agencies of the Reichs Air Ministry came to an end." As other serious consequences Milch refers to a number of errors in judgment and wrong decisions in connection with technological matters, armament planning, and organization.

as "Minister of War" and an Inspector General (Generalinspekteur) to function as the "eyes and ears" of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. The Inspector General "should and must have the right to evaluate and criticize to an equal degree the work of the Chief of the General Staff, the Chief of Air Defense, and the Chief of the Personnel Office." Basically, of course, Milch's suggestion was simply a roundabout attempt to regain his right to interfere with the General Staff Chief by having himself appointed to the post of Inspector General with its all-encompassing review authority. He failed to take into account the fact that his responsibility for a part of the operation of the Ministry (in his capacity as State Secretary) was quite incompatible with his claim to authority for inspecting and evaluating all phases of its operation.

Nevertheless, Milch apparently had his way, as is indicated in the Conference Report (Vortragsnotiz) of Branch 2, Luftwaffe General Staff, dated 23 November 1937⁸⁵. Excerpts of this report, dealing with the planned reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry, are quoted below:

"I. State Secretary:

1. In accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, dated 2 June 1937, the State Secretary was relieved of duty as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. Under the projected plan, the State Secretary will resume his status as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe; in other words, he

85-- From microfilm roll M/(illegible). The conference report also provides valuable hints regarding the status of the State Secretary and the General Staff Chief as a result of the reorganization of 2 June 1937. As has been pointed out, the directive effecting this reorganization (No. 1600/37) is no longer available for reference.

will be the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, for all practical purposes.

2. While the State Secretary, in accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, Paragraph B, was responsible for 'supervising the carrying out of tactical and technological requirements established by the General Staff as necessary to the preparations for and the conduct of war', under the planned reorganization he will be relieved of the responsibilities of a divisional chief (Ressortchef) and placed in charge of the entire Ministry.

3. While the State Secretary, in accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, Paragraph B, was 'authorized to inspect field units in connection with personnel matters, materiel, administration, and supply', under the planned reorganization he will be authorized, in his capacity as representative of the Reichs Air Minister, to inspect the troops in connection with any and all aspects.

4. While the State Secretary, in accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, was assigned the status of 'highest-ranking general in the Luftwaffe' and represented the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, on official occasions when the latter was absent (see also Directive No. 1950/37, to the Chief of the General Staff, Branch 2, dated 1 July 1937), in future he will be considered the highest-ranking officer in the Luftwaffe, after the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in any and all respects.

5. While the State Secretary, in accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, Paragraph B, was in charge of an independent agency,

under the planned reorganization he will no longer head an independent agency, but will issue all orders, instructions, directives, and decisions through the General Staff of the Luftwaffe.

II. Chief of the General Staff:

1. While the Chief of the General Staff, in accordance with Directive No. 1600/37, Classified, Paragraph A, was empowered to pass on the tactical and technological requirements established as necessary to the preparation for and conduct of war to the State Secretary and the offices subordinate to him for action, under the planned reorganization the General Staff becomes the operational staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe; in other words, the General Staff will be responsible for preparing the orders and instructions to be forwarded through the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, (or, in his absence, through the State Secretary) to subordinate agencies.

2. While individual office chiefs, according to Directive No. 1600/37, often had authority to decide on matters of fundamental importance to the Luftwaffe, in future, only the Minister (or his deputy, the State Secretary) will be empowered to make such decisions. The operational staff will be responsible for completing the preliminary staff work needed before such decisions can be taken and for preparing the necessary orders and instructions once a decision has been made.

3. While the Chief of the General Staff, in accordance with

Directive No. 1600/37, last paragraph, was to be 'kept informed only of basic policy decisions made by the State Secretary', under the new system he is to be kept regularly and completely informed of basic decisions made in any and all agencies of the Reichs Air Ministry.

4. While the Chief of the General Staff has heretofore been granted the title of 'Commanding General, Luftwaffe' only in case of war, under the new system he will be given this rank during peacetime as well (as is the case with the Chief of the Army General Staff)"⁸⁶

The Chief of the General Staff, Generalleutnant Stumpff, submitted two fairly long memoranda voicing his objections to the suggestions put forward by the State Secretary. General Stumpff's recommendations gave repeated expression to his own basic concepts of top-level military organization:

1. The greater degree of 'command authority must lie with the Chief of the General Staff in his capacity as the primary military advisor of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. The post of State Secretary, of course, was necessary

86 - We cannot tell whether the projected reorganization was put into effect immediately after publication of the conference report in 1937 or whether it was included in the overall reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry which became effective on 1 February 1938. In any case, Feldmarschall Milch obviously already considered himself to be Inspector General in 1937 (based on Milch's reply to questions asked by Dr. Richard Suchenwirth during early September 1955).

during peacetime as well as wartime in order to deal with technological and administrative matters in connection with the Luftwaffe and in order to administer the affairs of commercial aviation. It was of the utmost importance that the top-level organizational structure be the same in peacetime and in wartime.

2. All the available troop units, the various inspectorates, the training schools, all the personnel replacement battalions, and the entire supply organization belong under the heading of "instruments of command". The Luftwaffe did not, after all, have an unlimited source of replacement personnel at its command, but was only one part of the Wehrmacht as a whole.

In Stumpff's opinion, the State Secretary should be responsible for the replacement function in the field of technology, i.e. for the development, procurement, initial issue, and continuing supply of materiel. This ought to be his main responsibility, and he could contribute a great deal in the procurement of raw materials and in their subsequent processing. This should be the case in wartime as well as during peacetime.

As far as the rest of the organizational structure was concerned, General Stumpff put forward the following suggestions:

1. The consolidation of all agencies concerned with materiel ~~armament~~ (Technical Office, Administration Office, Luftwaffe Supply Office) under the projected Chief of Air Defense.

2. The consolidation of all the Luftwaffe inspectorates under the projected Inspector General.

3. The assignment of all matters concerning personnel recruitment to the Personnel Office.

General Stumpff went on to point out that the State Secretary, as the permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe,⁸⁷ could hardly be his own subordinate at the same time in his capacity as Chief of Air Defense. Such a situation would inevitably result in a chaotic shifting of responsibilities.

General Stumpff was particularly anxious to have the Technical Office placed under the command of the office of the Chief of Air Defense, which was envisioned as a central clearing-house for all materiel and armament matters. On the other hand, he had "no objections whatsoever to granting the Chief of the Technical Office, Udet, a good deal of authority and a number of personal privileges (such as the right of direct access to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe)". Stumpff's recommendations continue, "the important thing is that the General Staff be given the opportunity to guide the work of the Technical Office, so that materiel and personnel planning can be well coordinated. This is by far the most vital requirement in view of the complexity

87 - General Stumpff apparently expressed no objections to the restoration of Milch's status as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, or to the restrictions implied in relegating the General Staff to the status of an operational staff for the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

of modern technological equipment, for the best machines are worthless if there are no trained people available to fly them, if there is no one familiar with their maintenance, if spare parts are unobtainable, if there is a shortage in ammunition, or if there is no way of getting hold of aviation gasoline. If the Technical, Administration, and Supply Offices can be brought together under a Chief of Air Defense, then at least everything having to do with materiel can be handled directly by these offices without the necessity of calling upon the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, (or his deputy) and the Chief of the General Staff (as his operational staff) for confirmation each time. There is no reason why such an arrangement should jeopardize in the least the personal independence of any office chief within his own domain".

The integration of the inspectorates into the projected chain of command also gave rise to differences of opinion. The Chief of the General Staff was very much opposed to the State Secretary's proposal that the inspectors be transferred from their present status of subordination to the General Staff Chief and be made subordinate to the new Inspector General, while the inspectorates themselves should be integrated into the General Staff as operational staffs. Stumpf felt that the inspectorate staffs, if they were relieved of operations at troop level,

would tend to identify themselves more and more closely with the General Staff and would have less and less contact with the troops for whom they ostensibly existed⁸⁸.

The suggestions submitted by the State Secretary were obviously aimed at creating an agency empowered to evaluate and criticize, in opposition to the General Staff, the work being done by the various inspectorates. General Stumpff was not in favor of the State Secretary's proposals and offered an alternate suggestion of his own. He proposed the following:

1. Complete freedom for the inspectors ("They can criticize as much as they want to")
2. Restriction of the post of Inspector General to that of an independent inspector for all Luftwaffe matters. He would not be an administrative entity having supervision over all the inspectorates, but would merely be the top-ranking inspector, with no supervisory functions.
3. "At the same time", according to Stumpff, "the inspectors would be in a position to make a valuable contribution as a result of their work with the operational staffs assigned to them. Since these staffs would be directly subordinate to the General Staff - if my suggestion is followed -, the front-line experience of the inspectors could be immediately evaluated and passed on to the General Staff."

88 - Quoted from a letter from the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff, No. 23/37, Classified, Branch 2, dated 6 December 1937, addressed to General-oberst Goering.

At the same time, the General Staff Chief was against the total incorporation of the inspectorate staffs without their inspectors into the General Staff itself. He felt that this would represent "an undesirable increase in the size of the General Staff, an increase which would inevitably bring with it the necessity of increased administrative detail and the concomitant danger that the General Staff might be reduced to a slow and ponderous administrative body".

The organization of the schools and personnel replacement battalions was another cause for dissension⁸⁹. The State Secretary recommended that the Inspectorates for Flight Schools (subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff) and the decentralized flight school and battalion headquarters (subordinate to the Air Area Commands in which they were located) be replaced by a central Flight School and Replacement Battalion Command (Kommando der Schulen und Ersatzabteilungen), as had been the case prior to 1 April 1935. The Chief of the General Staff, in turn, substantiated his objections by listing all the weaknesses which had led to the abolishment of a centralized command in the first place. He pointed out that such a step would be a step backwards; in addition, there were simply not enough qualified personnel available to fill a command staff of the necessary size. The State Secretary, who apparently visualized himself as the commander of a sort of top-level

89 - Taken from the letter of 6 December 1937 from the Chief of the General Staff to Generaloberst Goering.

home-front headquarters (as, indeed, he had been in command of the former centralized Flight School Command), refused to back down and pointed out that "there could be no distinction between home front and operational area for the Luftwaffe in case of war." Milch continued, "we must free ourselves of the concepts valid for the Army; they do not apply to the Luftwaffe. The operational area of the German Luftwaffe is all of Germany. And there can be no foreign body inside the operational area of a commanding general; this is as unthinkable as if, for example, there should be a replacement unit stationed inside the operational area of an Army commander but under the command of a home-front headquarters."⁹⁰

In addition the General Staff Chief raised objections to the contemplated change-over from the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs to an "office of the Chief of Medical Affairs, Luftwaffe". His objection was based on the grounds that, since there was no command function involved, the change in title was unwarranted⁹¹.

As concerns the status of the General Staff, General Stumpff had the following to say: "The term 'operational staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe' is not to be interpreted to mean that

90 - As a matter of fact, the original system of decentralized Flight School Commands under the jurisdiction of their local Air Area Commands was retained.

91 - The reorganization of 1 February 1938 did change the title from Inspector for Medical Affairs to Chief of Medical Affairs, Luftwaffe; the new Chief, however, like the former inspector, remained directly responsible to the Chief of the General Staff.

the Chief of the General Staff is the supervisor of the Chief of Air Defense or the Chief of the Personnel Office, but simply that he is responsible for putting the orders and instructions of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, (or his deputy) into official form and disseminating them at his order."

The Chief of the General Staff would never interfere with the work of the Chief of Air Defense or the Chief of the Personnel Office. "Nevertheless, it is clearly his privilege and indeed his duty to assure himself, in peacetime as well as during wartime, that the orders and instructions of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, concerning materiel and personnel preparations are dealt with properly. No command agency may be permitted to become an end in itself; all must cooperate in attaining the common goal of wartime preparedness. The more imminent the danger of war appears, the more urgent becomes the need for firmness and purposefulness in command; under such circumstances the military organization can no longer afford to tolerate dead wood in any of its command agencies, to say nothing of ^Nfiction among them."

4. Referring to his former status, i.e. parallel to the status of the State Secretary, the General Staff Chief observed in his letter of 6 December 1937 to the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, that "this parallelism had proved conclusively during the last six months that it

was detrimental to the smooth and effective development of the Luftwaffe. Instead of a single, uniform command agency, there were two, and the inevitable result was an unhealthy dualism in orders and instructions."

It was Stumpff's opinion that this dualism within the Reichs Air Ministry must be removed at all costs.

As we have seen, General Kesselring's demand that the General Staff Chief be recognized as the sole representative of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, as far as all Ministry offices and all field headquarters were concerned had been refused. General Stumpff, in an attempt to restore some measure of unity to the command function, tried another approach. He wrote as follows: "I have voluntarily bowed to the authority of the State Secretary as permanent representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in order to assure that there should be only one agency in the Reichs Air Ministry issuing commands." Stumpff continued, observing that he found it "only right and proper that the rest of the Ministry agencies should follow suit and take their places in the over-all organizational structure in accordance with my example" (i.e. full acceptance of the authority of the State Secretary as permanent representative of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.).

In return for his willingness to renounce all claim to an independent role for the General Staff, Stumpff made it a condition that the General Staff be recognized as that agency entrusted with the formulation and issuance of the orders of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

Section 8 - Summary of Developments during 1937.

1. The following command agencies and headquarters were set up:

- a. Air Area Command VII
- b. Senior Pilot Commander, Air Area Command VII
- c. Senior Antiaircraft Artillery Commander, Air Area Command VII

Figure 5d presents a graphic summary of the organizational command structure of the Luftwaffe during 1937.

After the central Flight School Command was abolished, the pilot training schools and the personnel replacement battalions were assigned to the Flight School and Replacement Battalion Commands, which in turn were subordinate to the Air Area Commands in which they were located.

The training units were placed under the command of the Senior Commander of Luftwaffe Training Troops (Hoeherer Kommandeur der Luftwaffenlehrtruppen).

2. Luftwaffe strength during 1937 was as follows:

- a. 6 close-range reconnaissance group staffs (as of 1 July 1937⁹²)
- b. 17 close-range reconnaissance squadrons
- c. 6 long-range reconnaissance group staffs
- d. 15 long-range reconnaissance squadrons
- e. 1 reconnaissance training group staff with 2 squadrons
- f. 3 single-engine fighter wing staffs (as of 15 March 1937⁹³)

92 - Information pertaining to the reconnaissance forces is based on a study by General Drum, Retired.

93 - Based on a study by General Grabmann, Retired, "Development of the Single-Engine and Twin-Engine Fighter Forces" (Entwicklung der Jagd- und Zerstoeererwaffe), 15 December 1955.

- g. 15 single-engine fighter groups
- h. 10 bomber wing staffs (as of 3 May 1937⁹⁴)
- i. 30 bomber groups
- j. 9 dive-bomber wing staffs
- k. 9 dive-bomber groups
- l. 4 coastal patrol group staffs⁹⁵
- m. 10 coastal patrol squadrons
- n. 1 carrier-based squadron
- o. 1 carrier-based single-engine fighter squadron
- p. 1 carrier-based dive-bomber squadron
- q. 11 antiaircraft artillery regiment staffs (as of 1 October 1937⁹⁶)
- r. 34 heavy antiaircraft artillery battalions
- s. 14 antiaircraft artillery cadre batteries
- t. 17 light antiaircraft artillery battalions
- u. 1 antiaircraft artillery searchlight battalion
- v. (antiaircraft artillery training battalions)

3. During 1937, for the first time, the Luftwaffe took part in a large-scale all-Wehrmacht maneuver lasting from 20 through 26 September 1937⁹⁷.

94 - Based on a distribution schedule dated 3 May 1937.

95 - Estimated strength.

96 - Based on information furnished by General von Arthelm, Retired.

97 - Based on German Aviation - Volume for 1938.

Section 9 - Survey of Events during 1938.

1. On 4 February 1938, after dismissing the former Reichs Minister of War and Commander in Chief, Wehrmacht, Generalfeldmarschall von Blomberg, Hitler himself took direct command over the entire German Wehrmacht⁹⁸. A Wehrmacht High Command (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht) was created, in which the Luftwaffe was represented by a group in the Wehrmacht Operations Staff (Wehrmachtfuehrungsstab).

2. On 5 February 1938 Generaloberst Goering, Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe, was given the rank of Generalfeldmarschall.

98 - According to German Aviation - Volume for 1939, Hitler issued the following order upon assuming command: "From this point on I assume direct personal command over the entire German Wehrmacht. The Wehrmacht Office, Reichs Ministry of War, (Wehrmachtsamt, Reichskriegsministerium) is hereby christened the Wehrmacht High Command and will henceforth be directly responsible to me as my military staff. The former Chief of the Wehrmacht Office is herewith appointed Chief of the Wehrmacht High Command. His rank will be equal to that of a Reichs Minister. The Wehrmacht High Command will assume the responsibilities heretofore entrusted to the Reichs Ministry of War; and the Chief of the Wehrmacht High Command, by my order, will assume the privileges and responsibilities formerly accorded the Reichs Minister of War. The Wehrmacht High Command will, at my order, undertake in peacetime whatever steps may be necessary to assure effective defense of the Reich."

3. On 12 March 1938, Austria was annexed to the Reich and on 16 March the Austrian air forces were officially incorporated into the German Luftwaffe.

4. The contemplated reorganization of the Luftwaffe was carried out and made itself felt not only in the Reichs Air Ministry but also in all command agencies of the Luftwaffe.

Section 16 - The Reorganization of the Reichs Air Ministry in 1938.

1. On 18 January 1938, the Reichs Air Ministry was informed of a reorganization of its peacetime structure and of certain changes to be made in its chain of command⁹⁹. According to the new directive, which was to become effective on 1 April 1938, the Reichs Air Ministry was to consist of the following:

- a. the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, with the State Secretary for Aviation and the Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff, together with the General Staff
- b. the Ministry Office
- c. the Chief of Air Defense
 - 1) General Air Office
 - 2) Administration Office
 - 3) Luftwaffe Supply Office

99 - Directive issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, to the Chief of the General Staff, Branch 2, No. 200/38, Classified dated 18 January 1938; Microfilm roll M/5.

- d. the Inspector General, Luftwaffe, with all the inspectorates under his supervision
- e. the Technical Office
- f. the Luftwaffe Personnel Office
- g. the Central Branch
- h. the Luftwaffe General, Commander in Chief, Army.

Figure 6 presents a graphic survey of the organizational structure of the Reichs Air Ministry in 1938.

2. The duties of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, were as follows:

- a. The Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was in command of the Reichs Air Ministry and of the Luftwaffe.
- b. The State Secretary was appointed the representative of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. He was authorized to sign official documents "for" the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. He and his staff belonged officially to the office of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.
- c. The Chief of the General Staff was the first and foremost advisor to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in all matters pertaining to military preparedness, operations, organization, and training. The Luftwaffe General Staff was to serve as the operational staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.
- d. The office of Reichs Air Minister and the office of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, were designated officially as one and the same.

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- e. The Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was the highest-ranking commander of the Luftwaffe. He represented the highest command and administrative agency and was entrusted with direct command authority over all individual members as well as units of the Luftwaffe.
- f. He was responsible for issuing orders and instructions pertaining to the further development of the Luftwaffe and to personnel, materiel, and industrial preparations for such development. He retained the right of decision in all matters of fundamental policy.
- g. He was in charge of all matters concerning Germany's air sovereignty. He was in charge of the Reichs Weather Service.
- h. The Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was represented by the State Secretary for Aviation, who received his instructions directly from the former.

The officers listed in i, below, (with the exception of the Chief of the Ministry Office) were required to inform the State Secretary in advance of the subject of any conferences they ^{might} ~~may~~ wish to have with the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

- i. The following officers were directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and had the right of direct access to him:

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- 1) Chief of the Ministry Office
- 2) Chief of the Central Branch
- 3) Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff
- 4) Chief of Air Defense
- 5) Chief of the Technical Office
- 6) Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office
- 7) Inspector General, Luftwaffe
- 8) Commanding General and Commander of an Air Area
- 9) Senior Commander of the Luftwaffe Training Troops
- 10) Commander of the National Socialist Air Corps (Nationalsozialistisches Fliegerkorps)
- 11) President of the Reichs Air Defense Association (Reichsluftschutzbund)
- 12) Leader of the Luftwaffe Association (Luftwaffenbund)

3. The duties of the Chief of the General Staff were as follows:

- a. The Luftwaffe General Staff and its Chief formed the operational staff of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

The Chief of the General Staff was the first and foremost advisor of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, in all matters pertaining to preparations for air ~~air~~ warfare.

He had the rank of a Commanding General, Luftwaffe, and was directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

- b. In accordance with instructions received from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Chief of the General Staff formulated and issued orders and instructions pertaining to the expansion of the Luftwaffe and its preparations for war. He was authorized to sign such orders and instruction "by order of" the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. The General Staff Chief had no direct command authority over the troops.
- c. The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff was the supervisor of the General Staff, the commanding officer of all the members of the General Staff ~~Officers~~ assigned to positions in the field, and of all officers temporarily detached to the General Staff for training purposes. The Chief of the General Staff presented his recommendations regarding the selection, appointment, and utilization of such personnel to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe. He was responsible for the further training of these men within the framework of war games, maneuvers, etc. His authority over the officers assigned to positions among the troops had no influence, of course, upon their status in connection with their own immediate superiors.

The Chief of the General Staff was to be consulted in connection with appointments to important command positions within the Luftwaffe.

- d. The Chief of the General Staff had the right to participate in all policy conferences held by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, or by the State Secretary for Aviation, as the latter's representative.

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The Chief of the General Staff was to be kept continually and fully informed of all fundamental policies, particularly in connection with military preparedness and armament, decided upon by those agencies of the Reichs Air Ministry which were directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, (Chief of Air Defense, Chief of the Technical Office, Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office, the Inspector General, Luftwaffe).

In the event that his recommendations are disapproved, the General Staff Chief was authorized to request a final decision from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, or from the State Secretary for Aviation as his permanent deputy.

- e. The Chief of the Luftwaffe General Staff was authorized to inspect the operations of any and all Luftwaffe units.
- f. The following agencies were directly subordinate to the Chief of the General Staff:
 - 1) the Luftwaffe General Staff
 - 2) the Chief of the Luftwaffe Signal Communications Forces
 - 3) the Chief of Medical Affairs (formerly the Inspectorate for Medical Affairs)
 - 4) outside the Reichs Air Ministry:
 - a) the Air War Academy, including its "Technical Department" (Technischer Teil der Luftkriegsakademie), formerly the Air Technical Academy

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b) the Advanced Luftwaffe Schools

4. The Luftwaffe General Staff was made up of the following:

a. Chief Group

b. Operations Staff

- 1) Branch 1 (Operations)
- 2) Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces)
- 3) Topography Group

c. Quartermaster General

- 1) Group I (Supply Organization and Planning)
- 2) Group II (Armament Requirements) (1 July 1938)

d. Organization Staff

- 1) Branch 2 (Organization)
- 2) Branch 4 (Personnel Strength and Equipment Authorization)

e. Training Staff (1 October 1938)

- 1) Branch 3 (Training)
- 2) Branch 6 (Military History) (1 October 1938)
- 3) Air Landing and Parachute Forces (Luftlande- und Fallschirmtruppe)
(1 June 1938¹⁰⁰)

100 - Based on information provided by General Bassenge, Retired (former Chief of the Air Landing and Parachute Forces Branch), and on a distribution schedule dated 1 December 1938.

- 4) Chief of the Training Staff (who was simultaneously Chief of Branch 3).

Figure 6a provides a graphic presentation of the organization of the Luftwaffe General Staff in 1938.

5. Effective 1 January 1938, the Operations Branch assigned target identification (formerly its Group II) to Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces), which left Branch 1 (Operations) with only the following:

- a. Group I (Operations)
- b. Group III (Tactical and Technological Requirements)
- c. To replace the old Group II, a new one was created to deal with the evaluation of tactical experience¹⁰¹. Its mission was the evaluation of experience in the field of tactics gathered by the various inspectorates, which were now under the command of the Inspector General, Luftwaffe.

Figure 6b provides a graphic summary of the organizational structure of Branch I during 1938.

6. Effective 1 January 1938, Branch 5 (Foreign Air Forces) added the following missions to those it already had¹⁰²:

- a. Evaluation of foreign armament potential
- b. Evaluation of the degree of vulnerability to air attack of foreign nations
- c. Evaluation of foreign armament activity in comparison to the stage attained by Germany

101 - The actual date on which this new Group II was established is open to question. It appears for the first time in an official distribution schedule dated 1 December 1938. General Schmid, Retired, and Admiral Moessel, Retired, both of whom were assigned to the Luftwaffe Operations Staff, confirm the existence of the new Group.

102 - Based on information furnished by General Schmid, Retired, (former Chief of Branch 5).

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d. Distribution of assignments and evaluation of results achieved in

the following activities:

- 1) aerial photography
- 2) counter-intelligence
- 3) attaché activities
- 4) press and propaganda
- 5) radio monitoring services
- 6) prisoner interrogation (during wartime)

e. Target identification

f. Added duties in case of mobilization:

- 1) supervision of the aircraft reporting service
- 2) evaluation of the air situation
- 3) supervision of civil air defense activity.

g. Branch 5 was composed of the following:

- 1) Group I (collation and compilation of material; aircraft reporting service and evaluation of the air situation during wartime)
- 2) Group II (the West: Romance countries)
- 3) Group III (the West: Anglo-Saxon countries and South America)
- 4) Group IV (the East: Slavic countries)
- 5) Group V (aerial photography)

Target identification activity was broken down according to the countries involved and assigned to Group II, III, or IV, as appropriate.

Figure 6c provides a graphic summary of the organization of Branch 5 during 1938.

7. On 1 October 1938, Branch 6 (Military History) came into being, organized from the former Military History Branch, Luftwaffe, originally outside the Reichs Air Ministry¹⁰³. Branch 6 consisted of the following:

- a. Group I (Evaluation and interpretation)
- b. Group II (central group)
- c. Military History Research Group (Kriegsgeschichtliche Forschungsgruppe), outside the Ministry
- d. Air Archives (Luftarchiv), outside the Ministry

Figure 6d provides a graphic summary of the organizational structure of Branch 6 during 1938.

8. The Air Landing and Parachute Forces Branch was created on 1 June 1938¹⁰⁴. Its missions were as follows:

- a. Activation of air landing and parachute forces for both the Army and the Luftwaffe, including preparation of personnel strength and equipment authorization tables, employment guidelines, training directives, etc.
- b. Supervision of the parachute training courses held at the Parachute School in Stendal
- c. Publication of guidelines for the development of paratrooper equipment (including specialized weapon types)
- d. Training of elements of the Army's 22d Division as air

103 - Based on "Establishment and Development of the Luftwaffe Military History Branch", Microfilm roll No. 15.

104 - Based on information provided by General Bassenge, Retired (former Chief of the Air Landing and Parachute Forces Branch).

landing forces (together with the Army Inspectorate for Infantry Forces (Inspekteur der Infanterie))

- e. Equipping and training the Luftwaffe air transport units for their role in connection with the employment of air landing and parachute forces.
- f. Organization, equipping, and training of the SA-Standarte Feldherrnhalle units as air landing forces.

The staff of the Air Landing and Parachute Forces Branch worked in close coordination with Branch 3. Its chief received his instructions directly from the Chief of the General Staff and had the right of direct access to the latter.

9. The office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications grew out of the former Branch 7. The newly-created office consisted of the following¹⁰⁵:

- a. Staff Group (Referat beim Stabe)
- b. Central Group
- c. Wire Communications Branch
- d. Radio Communications Branch
- e. Luftwaffe Signal Construction Staff.

Figure 6e presents a graphic summary of the organization of this office during 1938.

The Signal Communications Branch, Office of the Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, was subordinate to the Chief of Luftwaffe Signal Communications.

10. Effective 1 February 1938, the office of the Chief of Air Defense officially came into being. Its missions were the following:

- a. The Chief of Air Defense was directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and had the rank of a

105 - Based upon the directive from the Luftwaffe Personnel Office, No. 7440/38, Classified, I, B, 2, dated 1 July 1938.

Commanding General, Luftwaffe. The following agencies were directly responsible to the Chief of Air Defense:

- 1) Chief of the General Air Office
- 2) Chief of the Administration Office
- 3) Chief of the Supply Office

- b. In accordance with general instructions issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Chief of Air Defense was responsible for the financial aspects of Luftwaffe armament in peacetime as well as during wartime, for equipment, clothing, billeting, and food, and continual supply services for equipment, weapons, and ammunition. He maintained liaison activity with other Wehrmacht agencies in connection with the above responsibilities and was in charge of presenting Luftwaffe requirements to them.
- c. He exercised general supervision over civilian air defense activity, commercial aviation, its ground organization, and the measures taken to promote flight safety. He concerned himself with Germany's air sovereignty rights "by order of the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe".

11. The organizational structure of the offices under the command of the Chief of Air Defense either remained the same or underwent only minor alterations.

12. The office of the Chief of Civil Air Defense (formerly the Civil Air Defense Branch, Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery and Air Defense) was made subordinate to the Chief of the General Air Office.

13. The office of the Inspector General of the Luftwaffe was established on 1 February 1938. Its missions were the following:

- a. The Inspector General, Luftwaffe, was directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, and had the rank of a Commanding General, Luftwaffe. The Luftwaffe inspectors were directly subordinate to the Inspector General.
- b. The Inspector General, Luftwaffe, was authorized to inspect Luftwaffe troops in connection with any and all aspects of their service.
- c. The Inspector General, Luftwaffe, was expected to add his comments and suggestions to all reports submitted by the Luftwaffe inspectors.
- d. The Inspector General, Luftwaffe, was authorized to inspect Luftwaffe troops at all echelons and in all respects. During inspection tours he ranked immediately ahead of the Commanding General of an Air Area.

14. The Luftwaffe Inspectorates:

- a. The following inspectorates were established effective 1 February 1938:
 - 1) Inspectorate for Signal Communications Services, Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 7
 - 2) Inspectorate for Luftwaffe Education and Training (Inspektion des Erziehungs- und Bildungswesens der Luftwaffe), Luftwaffe Inspectorate No. 10, at the same time Command Headquarters, Air Warfare Schools (Kommando der Luftkriegsschulen)
- b. At the same time, the following titles for the

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various inspectorates became effective:

- 1) Inspectorate for Aerial Reconnaissance and Aerial Photography (No. 1)
 - 2) Inspectorate for Bomber Forces (No. 2)
 - 3) Inspectorate for Fighter Forces (No. 3)
 - 4) Inspectorate for Antiaircraft Artillery (No. 4)
 - 5) Inspectorate for Flight Safety and Equipment (No. 5)
 - 6) Inspectorate for Motor Vehicles (No. 6)
 - 7) Inspectorate for Signal Communications Services (No. 7)
 - 8) Inspectorate for Naval Air Forces (No. 8)
 - 9) Inspectorate for Pilot Training Schools (formerly Inspectorate for Schools) (No. 9)
 - 10) Inspectorate for Luftwaffe Education and Training (No. 10)
- c. The Luftwaffe inspectors were responsible personally and in respect to their inspection activity and reports to the Inspector General, Luftwaffe. They utilized the services of the inspectorates in the compilation of such reports.

The inspectorates were also subordinate to the Luftwaffe General Staff. As a result, they were directly responsible to the Chief of the General Staff for reports concerning training, organization, equipment supply, armament, etc. within the Luftwaffe.

d. The former Inspectorate for Medical Affairs was changed to the office of the Chief of Luftwaffe Medical Affairs (Chef des Sanitaetswesens der Luftwaffe); the Chief himself, as had been the case so far, continued to be directly responsible to the Chief of the General Staff.

15. The Chief of the Technical Office; his missions were as follows:

- a. The Chief of the Technical Office was directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.
- b. In accordance with general instructions issued by the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Chief of the Technical Office was in charge of the procurement of equipment as well as of the industrial aspects of Luftwaffe armament.
- c. Coordinating his activity with that of the appropriate research institutes, of industry and of the Army Ordnance Office, the Chief of the Technical Office was in charge of research and development of aircraft equipment, as well as of the testing of new equipment.
- d. On the basis of the requirements schedules he received, the Chief of the Technical Office was responsible for the procurement of the equipment, weapons, and ammunition needed by the Luftwaffe in the event of a long-term war. In accordance with wartime supply estimates, he was responsible for supervising and directing the build-up of the Luftwaffe armament industry to the level adjudged mandatory for wartime requirements. He was responsible for securing the necessary factory space, raw

materials, and labor force in case of war (in coordination with the Wehrmacht Office, Military Economics Staff (Wehrmachtswirtschaftsstab)).

e. In accordance with instructions received from the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe, the Chief of the Technical Office controlled the export of aircraft equipment on the part of German industry.

16. During the period 28 March through 9 May 1938, the Luftwaffe Technical Office was subjected to thoroughgoing reorganization.

a. Instead of the horizontal organization previously existing between the development and procurement branches, Branches 1 through 13 were created, in each of which the development and procurement functions were coupled.

b. The Luftwaffe Testing Station, physically located outside the Reichs Air Ministry, was made subordinate to the Chief of the Technical Office.

Figure 6f presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Luftwaffe Technical Office during 1938.

17. The Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office was made directly responsible to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe¹⁰⁹.

106 - Based on the notes and reports of General Hertel, Engineer Corps, Retired (formerly assigned to the Technical Office).

107 - There is no description of duties available for the Chief of the Luftwaffe Personnel Office. According to German Aviation - Volume for 1938, he was in charge of the personnel administration of officers, enlisted personnel, civilian officials, clerical personnel, and laborers.

18. The Chief of the Central Branch was directly subordinate to the Reichs Air Minister and Commander in Chief, Luftwaffe.

The Central Branch consisted of the following subdivisions¹⁰⁸:

- a. Judge Advocate Group
- b. Attaché Group
- c. Press Group
- d. Ministry Office Chief (Ministerialbuerodirektor)
- e. Headquarters Commandant, Reichs Air Ministry

Figure 6g presents a graphic summary of the organizational structure of the Central Branch during 1938.

Section 11 - Summary of Developments during 1938.

1. On the basis of the planning for the annexation of Austria during 1937 and, later, on the basis of the operational experience gained during that action, the command organization of the German Luftwaffe was reorganized and expanded to allow for Austria's air personnel.

a. Instead of the seven Air Area Commands, the following subdivision was approved:

- 1) three Luftwaffe Group Commands (Luftwaffengruppenkommandos)
(East, West, South)
- 2) three Luftwaffe Commands (East Prussia, Austria, Sea)
- 3) ten Air District Commands (Luftgaukommandos) (formed by the re-organization and consolidation of existing smaller Air District Commands).

108 - Based on German Aviation - Volume for 1938.
