A. OCCUPIED AREAS

The counteroffensive

A report from 12 A.G. quotes the order issued during the counteroffensive to all units under 1 U.S.A. Any concerning German officials serving under M.G.:

"Where practicable, and necessary for protection in the event of movements out of the occupied area, important officials, who have been appointed by and have cooperated with military government, together with their immediate families, should be permitted to leave the area."

No case has yet been reported of a German official actually withdrawing, and so long as the M.G. detachment itself remains in any given town this is unlikely to happen. From several occupied towns come reports that the calm bearing of Americans has been a considerable factor in easing the minds of worried Germans. Even the badly-frightened officials have in several cases indicated their willingness to stay with the M.G. detachment. Their feeling is that they have already committed themselves by accepting posts under M.G. and now have no choice but to depend upon the Americans for protection. No single case has yet been reported of a German willing to stand up and take his chances on his own (except one 70-year-old man who said he was too old to worry.)

21 A.G. reports various accounts by P’s of civilian reactions to the counteroffensive. Of these, three typical accounts agreed that the German civilians spoke well of the Americans, had suffered no mistreatment under their occupation, and denied vague tales of pillaging and requisitioning. But in each case, good treatment led to differing sentiments toward the Wehrmacht's return. In SCHMIDT, civilians encouraged the troops and urged them to free Germany from occupation. In KALL, on the contrary, people said they were waiting for the arrival of the Americans (particularly one wealthy farmer, outraged by the Wehrmacht's new destruction and pillaging of his cattle). Probably the most common reaction is that reported in BREMEN, where disheartened civilians faced the troops with the rhetorical question: "Oh, why did you come back here?" After having escaped battle destruction during the earlier operations, they considered that for them the war was over and that they had been delivered from further miseries. Now that the Wehrmacht had come again, their homes and fields lay in ruins.

First news of the offensive was brought to UEBACH by the Dutch, many of whom act as guards or frontier officials in this area. Official confirmation came from the Allied newspaper Mitteilungen, since lack of electric power prevented the reception of radio news. The paper's frank admission of losses made a very favorable impression upon the population, and at the same time encouraged a belief that the situation could not be serious. Residents did not believe that the Wehrmacht could return to UEBACH, for they had long been convinced of Allied strength by the sight of our wealth of material "from food cans to heavy artillery", rolling through the town from the very beginning of the occupation. Nevertheless, there was a certain amount of uneasiness among the people, who claim they have known ever since they resisted the evacuation that they would be "stood against a wall and shot" if the Nazis returned. There is also a certain amount of fear that they may be evacuated to the rear or into Holland, to provide billets for Allied troops. People who have heard that this had been done in a nearby British sector express the wish above all to remain in their homes.
Two reports from different camps for displaced persons provide an interesting sidelight on the reactions to the counteroffensive. In the camp at SUSANGE 210 people, most of them Germans formerly residing in LORRAINE, were questioned on the point: 32% expressed anxiety for themselves and their families; 5% who are openly pro-Nazi hope the Wehrmacht will return; the rest expressed indifference. The sample was random and small, but the results approximate those which emerge from large numbers of individual interrogations of German civilians who remained in occupied towns. In evaluating both the interrogations and the poll, however, it is probably wise to tally the number of pro-Nazis, for the fact that one is facing an interrogator in American uniform has a considerable softening effect upon many "hard core" Nazis. The second report concerns a large group of Russians (former Fas or workers in Germany) encamped in LUXEMBOURG. Their representative, a Russian 1st Lt, now acting as Camp Leader, came to American interrogators when the Wehrmacht's approach was reported and requested areas for his men. Then told that such a request could not be granted, or that at best they could only hope to be armed with rifles, which would be suicidal against German heavy tanks, the Lt. replied that his men would rather get a shot at the Germans and be killed than just be killed. The interrogator evaluates these sentiments as due primarily to three factors: hatred for the Germans, desire to "reinstate" themselves in the eyes of the Soviet Government, and a recent visit from 2 Russian officers who advised these "displaced persons" that they were still citizens of the U.S.S.R. in good standing, which statement had a notably stimulating effect on morale in the camp.

The Mark and the Dollar

The Bürgermeister of UEBACH explains why his constituency is so pleasantly surprised that their money retained any value after the occupation. Many Germans began to lose faith in the Reichsmark during 1943, he explains, and particularly after STALINGRAD. Savings in that community went into the "family stockpiling" instead of the bank account, and soon thereafter came the wholesale conversion to real property, and to furniture and agricultural machinery, but many were willing to exchange currency for any type of goods. The growing shortage of consumer goods helped spread the feeling that paper money was worthless. Hence people were agreeably surprised to find the U.S. Army paying out marks and honoring the old currency. People are very satisfied with the present exchange rate, which exceeds their expectation. The Bürgermeister thinks that even this rate (10 $ per mark) will be too high to maintain after the war in the face of Germany's tremendous burden of debt.

Nazi Propaganda in ALSACE

The enemy's "black" propaganda campaign in ALSACE, reported in Summary # 12, has been intensified and broadened to include "gray" material in leaflet form. One pornographic specimen, written in French and entitled "Comme chez soi" (Just like Home), quotes a dispatch allegedly written by an American correspondent to the effect that GIs are "having wonderful time" with Paris females. The reverse side illustrates the point with loud drawings of jeep rides and wild parties. The German news service to French troops is rather more straightforward, but out of date. A copy of "Die Wacht", dated 22 November, dealing with such subjects as the Allied attack on AACHEN and Separatism in Sicily, was not dropped over the French lines until 20 December. Four days after Germany's own counteroffensive jumped off. Another paper in French, called "Face à Face" and sporting the device of a French and a German helmet laid face to face, is lighter in tone - again playing fortiissimo its nasty cartoons.

Definition of Politics

Interrogators have frequently noted the strange phenomenon of Germans who declare themselves to be "unpolitischt!" and then go on to develop all sorts of complex political ideas. Latterly it has become clear that to Germans the term "polities" is synonymous with the comparatively restricted view implied in the American term "racket" or the British term "vamp". For the broader
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Anglo-Saxon meaning of the word "politics" the German reserves "Volktschaung". To be "unpolitisch" means not that one has no political ideas, but that one has never had a share in the Party machinery. The normal term for the governing body is "clique", and the general view, as expressed by one young Nazi, is "Politics is all lies". The same youngest informed interrogators of the popular test as to the outcome of the war: "I believe among ourselves "whoever lies the most will win the war. I think it is the war that makes people lie so much!" In the Rhineland, particularly, it is reported that the term "Nazi" is applied only to "outsiders", people who were sent by the Party from towns in NORDPALEN or even from BERLIN, to take up positions of power.

The Nazi, in German eyes, is not the man next door who joined the Party to keep his job, or to improve his position, but the man with delegated authority to withhold ration cards, collect special Party taxes, make people go to meetings, or to send them to concentration camps. This somewhat misguided point of view helps account for the feeling among Rhinelander who remain in the occupied areas that they have nothing to fear from the Allies even though they are Party members of long standing, and coincides with the complete lack of political responsibility advanced by the "kleiner K znajst" as justification for all he has done or left undone in the field of political activity. In many cases, it is clear, such naivete is more simulated than real.

B. EMERGENCY AREAS

(1) The German Combat Zone

DUESSELDORF: A large number of Ps/. from this city recently interrogated gave several interesting items of information on the attitudes of civilians. One P/. who spent an end-November furlough at home reports that "most" people have remained in the badly damaged town. Destruction of the inner city, as of 1 December, was estimated at 75%. The housing shortage is critical: many of the bombad-out live in cellars; others live in blockelheim (emergency houses) which they built themselves from wood supplied by the city. The Party, said one anti-Nazi P/, has done good work in aiding the bombad-out, which is said to be a pleasant surprise after the rumors about Party inaction in AACHEN and STOLBERG. For example, the Party has arranged a low ceiling price on food and a strict control system which enables people to get what their ration cards call for. Since this is an important industrial city, officials are anxious to keep workers content and on the job. As yet no general evacuation orders have been issued, but it is expected that when they are issued, there is likely to be considerable resistance. One P/, for example, reports that his parents had determined not to leave the town - not because they love the Americans or are opposed to the Nazis, but simply because they want to remain in their homes, or at least their home towns, no matter what happens. They have planned to hide in woods if need be in order to evade evacuation. This is linked to the feeling reported by Ps/. that the arrival of Allied forces would be welcome if only because they would spell the end of the war and bombing.

A British Army Intelligence Summary reported that the Volkssturm in DUESSELDORF is controlled by a strictly political chain of command leading from Gauleiter to Blockleiters, whose duties include the recruiting of personnel. SA and Party officials comprise the officers corps, and the former is in charge of training. Uniforms have not, so far, been generally issued, and members are reported to be saying openly that they would refuse to fight in civilian clothes. (This coincides with earlier reports that fear of fighting in civilian clothes is widespread among WSS members). Proclamations posted in the city state that the Ws is to be used for the following purposes:

(a) to relieve front line units during rest periods.
(b) to strengthen certain sectors in the front line.
(c) to defend German cities to the last man and the last house.

This is the first report of a public announcement that Ws will be used in the line. Training has been fixed for a three-hour period during the week and an
eight-hour period on Sunday, about which many members are said to be already grumbling. In DUESSELDORF, contrary to the practice in most other cities, the Stadtwehr continues in existence alongside the Volkssturm. They are trained for use as auxiliary police in case of emergencies, and during the airborne landings in HOLLAND it is reported that this organization, wearing a white armband with the inscription Stadtwehr and the police district number, were used to relieve the police for a period of 3 days while the latter were moved to the threatened area.

COLOGNE: The prevailing sentiment reported by PA/F/4 is that any man in this city "ist froh wenn er sein blieschen Leben behält" (is happy if he can live his own little life). Some 60% of all buildings in the city are reported to be badly damaged; destruction of the inner city, especially in the "Ring" and "Neuer Markt" sections is reported as "nearly complete". Electricity and gas are available only at stated intervals, and water only at designated points. Although selling prices for ration card food are low, transport difficulties and occasionally Hoheh Gewalt (arbitrary usage) exercised by Party officials have caused shortages. In such cases one must have recourse to the black market which is customarily called US, abbreviation for Unter der Tache (under the counter), where prices are high indeed. A slightly revised estimate from that given in an earlier Summary includes the following prices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price (RM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 lb coffee</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 lb butter</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 lb meat</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cigar</td>
<td>2.70 (20 pfennig with coupon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cigarette</td>
<td>1.25 (3/4 pfennig with coupon)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Kölnische Zeitung of 12 December prints a letter attacking it for praising the murder of German collaborators with the Allies, while Belgian collaborators with the Germans had been applauded. It seems likely that this particular letter to the editor is a "plant", for the answer given is very pat indeed. The first argument is a legal one ; Belgium was "completely occupied and had capitulated". This is not the case in occupied Germany : "Für uns LEICH was an occupied town whereas EISENACH specifically stated that AACHEN is a conquered town". The second argument is that Germany had no intention of destroying the Flakails and -ballons, but had offered Belgium a "sound development" while the U.S. merely "brings distress and misery and offends German honor".

FREIBURG: It is reported from this city that the official estimate of killed during the 27 November raid is now 23,640 though many persons are still missing. More than 20,000 of the killed are said to have been members either of the Wehrmacht, the SS or the Volkssturm. The number of injured was relatively low owing to the extremely heavy bombs used. The Nazi officials are unsatisfied with the explanation that the first bomb destroyed the alarm system so that no alarm was given. They believe sabotage played a role. The FREIBURG chief of civil defense, his two assistants, a doctor, a lawyer and six members of an observation post have been arrested so far. The Gauleiter is personally supervising an investigation. People in FREIBURG do not complain against the Allies, according to a Swiss reporter, but merely decry the misery of war and ask why they have merited such punishment. The population seem to have no fear of Allied troops, mainly because they want to see the war ended and believe things cannot become worse than they are now.

SARLAND: PA/F/9 who passed through the SAA region shortly before capture, claim that the population is deeply resentful of their treatment by the Nazis. Party officials are safely in the Reich, taking all their belongings with them, while in CLEVENH, for example, the property of evaucuees was left on the town square to deteriorate in the rain instead of being forwarded to the owners as promised. Several PA/F/9 from a VG Division, who were home only recently, described the plight of Saarlanders as "terrible beyond description". Because of the persistent aid raids they spend "their whole life" in the cellar.
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They have nothing to eat, and if they obtain food cannot cook it as they have to stay in their shelters most of the time. People say openly: "If only the 15 years of slavery were here again!" thus abusing HITLER's favorite definition of the Weimar Republic. This report is quite clearly exaggerated, but it does tally with other recent reports from the SAA, which most reporters as late as October 1944 considered firmly pro-Nazi.

The policy of causing mine workers to remain at work in areas slightly behind the line is again illustrated. Thus, a SAH newspaper of 21 December prints a strong appeal from the mining firm Sangruben aG to its workers and miners to "take the chance of joining your works communities and you will save your family from disadvantages and simultaneously serve your Fatherland". The appeal is more conciliatory than other widespread appeals to miners to register, but a threat is quite clearly conveyed in the warning about familial welfare (presumably withholding of ration cards). That this was a Party order rather than that of a private firm is indicated by the fact that the order was signed by the Gaufachabteilungsleiter as well as the works leader.

Miscellaneous Notes:

A Gestapo report of 9-16 November 1944, gives the statistics of arrests in BADEN for breach of labor contract, shirking work, and similar offenses: 15 Reichsdeutsche, 83 Frenchmen, 45 Italians, 27 Eastern workers, 22 Poles, 7 Dutchmen, 3 Greeks, 3 Balian, 2 Volksdeutsche, 1 Alsatian, 1 Croat and 1 Spaniard. Note: in this report are the number of arrests during one week, and the fact that the Gestapo is charged with handling such cases. Two Russian girls, who have worked in various sections of Western Germany, say that many German workers were "good people" and did their best to help them, in spite of the order prohibiting all contact between Germans and Russians. The foreman of a mine in which they worked would tell them about the latest political and military developments and would often say "you work too hard, take it easy, work only when the Commissar comes around". They believe he was a Communist sympathizer.

The center of BOCHUM has been reported almost completely destroyed by the R.A.F. raids of 4/5 November. One reliable source estimates 90% destruction in the fully built-up area and 80% in the residential section. This represents a higher rate of destruction than that reported previously in any major city (pre-war population 315,000), and explains recent statements from that area that the Gauleiter had declared BOCHUM a "dead city".

A secret order datelined Fuehrer Hauptquartier, 19 September, confirms previous reports of the division of responsibility between Wehrmacht and Party in ARMZ areas in Western Germany (ARMZ signifies Auflockerung, Reinigung, Lachmangel, und Zerstörungs-Massnahmen, or dismantling, removal, stoppage and demolition of installations). The Wehrmacht is responsible for ARMZ measures in the Military Zone only, which includes only the area immediately involved in the battle. The Civilian Zone, the responsibility rests with the civil authorities, usually the Raichs Defense Commissioner.

A few vestige Germans within the Combat Zone look forward to the arrival of Allied troops for rather special reasons. A letter written by a housewife in LÜBACH contains the following remarks, which ought to be read as a statement of irritations rather than intentions:

"I wish the 'liberators' would come, so we could clean up. I too could kill a few, there is one, for example, whose threat I could cut at any time - don't laugh at me - your wife can become very brutal when she is provoked. Listen to me: We have a Blockleiter (Small Party Man) here who keeps pestering me. Four times a week he has asked me to work at the lastwall. Today I received another request, telling me that my reasons for not going are not valid; at least I should go digging twice a week. The secondral even threatened me with punishment. You can imagine how furious I am. But I don't permit myself to be intimidated. I shall stay right at home...."
Industry: Assignment of top priority to Flak production, reported in last week's Summary, is confirmed by a letter of 12 November from O. K. SAND (Head of Armaments and Munitions in Speer's Ministry) to all war production plants, boards and inspectors:

"In a conversation tonight the Fuehrer firmly reiterated, as you were notified on 4 November by Reichsmadister Speer, that the production of AA equipment ranks highest among all essential war products. It must be given priority over all other considerations."

This change in priorities is rather drastic, in as much as it supersedes the previous priority of "Geilenberg Plan" for repair of oil plants, and possibly the production of V weapons. It may be due to the recognition that vital targets, especially oil, cannot be protected against precision bombing by present or prospective methods (e.g., fighter cover), or that the present priority given to their repair is too costly.

A shortage of industrial materials in various parts of the Reich is said by Pa/1 to have caused a serious lag in employment in terms of man-hours worked. One said that some industries in Sealin are working only 3 hours a day, 3 days a week; another claims that Polish workers, who formerly did a 12-16 hour shift 7 days a week, now work 7-8 hours 4 days a week. It is not made clear just which materials are short in which industries, and it is doubtful that shortages are the main reason for the lag. More reliable sources have previously reported critical shortages, particularly of metals used in the manufacture of bearings, but it is notable that these reports are usually accompanied by the name of the substitute which the Germans, with characteristic speed, had already devised to meet the shortage. It is likely that priority allocation of materials for war production, the building or transfer of industrial plant, or fuel shortages, may have caused a temporary lag in several industries, but authoritative sources agree that there is unlikely to be any marked shortage in the production of war-essential equipment in the near future.

That there has been some employment lag, particularly after Goebbels' total mobilisation measures, has been clear from the numerous expressions of discontent during the past two months. In some cases people have been mobilized only to "hurry up and wait". Or if not to wait, then to occupy themselves with irritating busy work and training programs. A girl in the Labour service, for example, complains in two letters to her "Liebschen" about the lack of time off: lack of sleep, and then reveals that she is being mainly occupied, not with war production but with such things as a "20 kilometer march in pouring rain". Calling her group "a sorry bunch", she announces that she herself has passed the point of worrying about "appeals".

Shortages: The industrial position has been considerably affected in the overall view by shortages mainly of fuel and transport. The Deutsche Verkehrszeitung of 27 December, in quoting a sentence for failure to register petrol and diesel fuel writes: "The fuel supply has become the central point in the conduct of the war". This is a rare admission in the German press, even in such a technical paper of limited circulation. The transport situation has been a considerable headache for many months now. Its effect on heavy industry, however, has been less than upon small businessmen and consumers. At a meeting of the Hamburg Gau Economic Chamber on 21 November, reported by its own confidential publication, a committee on Trade problems discussed the question of "Deliveries to and from areas threatened by the enemy", in terms of the difficulties of transport, the possibilities or long delay or destruction by bombing on route, and the consequent effects upon payment. The outcome seems to have been a refusal to deliver goods to the west without some guarantees of early transport and early payment, which guarantees have not yet been forthcoming. The result of such decisions is to deprive consumers, particularly in threatened areas, of essential articles. The German system of provisioning has been disrupted by the transportation crisis to the point where the Ministry has abolished, to a large extent, all exchange of provisions between so-called...
surplus and under-supplied regions (Überschuss and Unterbezirke Gebiete). This move was announced in several speeches by Bück, that each region would have to rely on its own products. The result is that certain regions have too many potatoes but lack meat, others have too much meat but lack vegetables. The whole question of food distribution seems to have become a political football. The Labour Front, Gesellschaftenexzelle, has prepared "plans based on the idea of transporting the whole food distribution apparatus to itself". This is a high-handed piece of bureaucratic imperialism by the Labour Front which has already been declared "impracticable and unsuitable" by the Reich Group Trade Committee.

It is clear that the transport crisis has had some effect upon heavy industry, despite its priorities. It has been reported that all major railroad centers in Germany have thousands of FuSt available, whose only duty consists in repairing damaged rail installations. It is said that, in the past, direct damage has generally been repaired within one day, but it seems likely that continued bombing has begun to produce a more lasting effect on the conditions of the railroads. A joint order by the Reich Transport Minister, Food Minister and Peasant Leader has been published by DNB (10 January) which requires "immediate direction of all not fully employed horses to more important tasks". (Race horses and others specially reserved for breeding are exempt.) Nor is the use of horses to be taken as evidence of a complete breakdown of the German transport system, for this is by no means the case. Horse-drawn transport, which drew upon the now lost imports of Hungarian horses, has been customary in Germany. It is important to note that the order was signed jointly by the three ministers mentioned above as a further indication that control of transport has not yet been completely centralized within one authority.

Shortages which directly affect the consumer are increasingly evident. The acute oil-seed shortage announced by Bücke two months ago has now had a direct effect on the margarine ration available. It has been announced that during the rationing period beginning 6 January, margarine will be replaced by lard. Another announcement by DNB (6 January) indicates that the soap powder ration for children has been cut by half for a period extending to March. All these shortages have led to a great increase in black market activity. The Schwartze Köper of 28 December writes: "It is intolerable that black market prices, far more than at any period a year ago, are almost official prices today, that in restaurants and canteens they are hardly whispered any longer, that rubbish offered in departmental stores at the most shameful prices loudly proclaims money's depreciation". This is the most open official admission to date of the extent of black market activity in Germany. It is suggested by the same newspaper that the efficiency of price control has broken down considerably. This would be a natural result of the diversion of police to other tasks, at the very time when shortages of consumer goods exert increased pressure.

Opposition: A report from Switzerland attributes to the opposition within Germany the view that the Gestapo is directing most of its efforts to tracking down members of the Centrum and Socialist parties, while the Communists are less bothered than at any time during the past decade. It is claimed that uniformed men of the SA helped distribute some of the Communist tracts which were recently scattered in HAMBURG. This fantastic-sounding story is advanced on a theory of Haut-Politik which claims, without producing any real evidence, that top Nazis believe a settlement with MOSCOW is possible. As one consequence of this view, it is urged by members of the German opposition that the Communists are becoming increasingly active and strong within the Reich. All such reports require considerable skepticism, however, on the basis of the notable lack of hard facts. The Nazi leadership has announced that 20 July marked the end of effective opposition, and we have no serious evidence that this is not true. Stories of anti-Nazi organizations which circulated widely during the four months of 1944, have now fallen off. The Edelweiss, it seems clear, is not to be regarded as anything like a large organization with an active and serious political program. Organizations like the Schwarze Händ and the Schwarze Partei have recently been reported only in
connection with isolated incidents of small consequence. The view of serious students of the anti-Nazi movements, both within and outside Germany, has always been that no organized revolt was possible without the cooperation of large segments within the Wehrmacht. It is hard to think that this latter condition can be fulfilled, for the army has, since May, on the whole accepted thorough penetration by the SS and the Party. A curious item in this connection is a report written on 24 November by a representative of the SS on conditions in armed units near MAINZ. The report includes severe strictures on the whole military leadership, on the Officers Corps, on propaganda in the Wehrmacht, and on the unsuitability of NS guidance officers. The writer is clearly a member of the "radical" wing of the SS, and too much significance cannot be attached to his report, but the fact that he should be allowed freely to express such opinions to paper in an official report is indicative of the extraordinary powers with which SS members may be invested. It must be remembered, too, that if guidance officers are ineffective and frequently inept as morale builders among troops, they may nevertheless be effective observation posts planted by the Party within the Wehrmacht.

**German Propaganda:** The tone of propaganda output concerning the counteroffensive in BELGIUM and LUXEMBOURG has softened considerably during the past week. From earlier indications of grand objectives, and claims of strategic victory already achieved, the line has changed to admissions that the counteroffensive has become a "battle of attrition" and that the attacking forces have, at several points, been forced on to the defensive. One of the strategic victories claimed is the achievement of a second counterattack in the Aachen sector. It is held that the southern attack was made possible by the forced Allied deployment to meet the northern attack. It is not made clear, however, what the southern attack is intended to achieve.

Considerable emphasis continues on the theme of disunity among the Allies from the long-range point of view, attention being particularly directed once more to events in GREECE and, more particularly, in POLAND. The Allies are reported to be united on only one intention, which is summed up by DNB (9 January) in these terms:

"Various recent discussions among the Allied public indicates that a new historical deception on a gigantic scale, after the pattern of "Axe's 14 points, has been planned in the Allied campaign. The victim is to be the German people. "
PART II - WEHRMACHT MORALE

1. Morale in Ardennes Sector.

The confident spirit of offensive which was reported declining among the German troops engaged in the Northern counter-offensive has continued to decline and is now largely absent among Ps/W captured by Allied counter-drives in this area. Although lacking specific psychological priming for an all out decision, these soldiers in the main, fought with great determination and offered stiff resistance. Their knowledge of the extent and implications of the German counter-offensive in this sector varied depending on local circumstances. But, with the exception of a small minority of longstanding extreme defeatists (as well as some Volksdeutsche and foreigners), the failure of the drive to achieve a deep geographical penetration has not caused a precipitate break in unit morale, although many reports indicate profound defeatism among Ps/W after capture.

Ps/W have been taken during the last days who were ordered to hold their positions for the winter. Whatever disillusionment they may have experienced over the failure of the reports of the capture of Liège and the crossing of the Meuse to mature, these soldiers displayed the traditional willingness and skill to carry out effective holding actions. Individual field interrogations for morale purposes bring to light lack of training among replacements in certain units, a dissatisfaction among some Ps/W in this respect as well as other signs of after capture defeatism. But it is important to remember that German soldiers have displayed unbelievable persistence during former periods of holding operations while the main body of troops was being regrouped. Thus far, the elements of military discipline and automatic obedience which have made such performance possible in the past do not appear to have been altered.

Desertions continue to remain few in the sector of the counter-attack, and in almost all cases motivated by some special longstanding personality factors, at times influenced by our leaflets. Their foreignness and Volksdeutsche are more prone to desert is well-known. But the current use of units containing such personnel has not been on a scale as to cause any new problems for the Wehrmacht.

No comprehensive reports on the morale of troops in the counter-offensive in the 3rd sector have been received.

2. Faith in Hitler.

The long absence of Hitler from the public scene before his New Year’s speech raised the question whether there is developing an attitude of less confidence in the Führer. Hitler, “the great social leader and the advocate of the ordinary German”, has been frequently cited by Ps/W as an important source of continued faith in the German cause. During the last weeks rumors have been encountered with increased frequency about the death or removal of Hitler which his silence tended to support. Despite such rumors, detailed examination of a group of Ps/W captured during the counter-offensive indicates clearly that the traditional attachment to Hitler as a German leader has remained intact. Of 60 Ps/W interrogated in detail on this subject about half expressed some measure of approval for the Führer. This percentage significantly has remained relatively constant throughout the entire period of the Western campaign. A survey by FDI/SHAEF of about 450 Ps/W captured just before the counter-attack reveals an even higher figure of trust in the Führer, (65%). Scepticism of Hitler as a military leader is clearly discredited, as well as criticism of some of his underlings. But the belief still exists that he is a man who would not continue the war or launch a counter-attack unless there were justified political reasons for so doing.

The general isolation of the front line soldier from the political events of the homefront has made it possible for former patterns of ideas to persist. The argument that Hitler is too busy to make speeches, which is currently offered to the troops, suffices for those followers who are bothered by the problem.
3. Faith in the High Command.

The question will also be raised of whether confidence in the High Command has been undermined by recent events. No quantitative studies on this point have yet been made, but there is a trend of individual interrogations touching on the point. This trend indicates that thus far faith in the High Command has not been substantially shaken. This is partly due to the blind obedience of the German soldier often noted here. The ultimate impact of a great defeat, if such should occur, might have disastrous effects, but probably not in the measurably short run.

One effect of the offensive may tend to vitiate in future, however, one of the strong points of German morale. The feeling on the part of thelander that the American infantryman was not in his match has been periodically reported from many interrogation sources. In this offensive, contrarywise, a new respect for the American infantry appears to have emerged. The exaggerated propaganda indoctrination tending to underestimate the American infantry, followed by the startling tenacity and skill of their defense, has caused articulate disillusionment on the part of German prisoners of war. It would not be accurate to state that the German self-pride so often evident, even in interrogation, has been badly bruised. All that can be said is that the Wehrmacht is again realizing that the American soldier is a foe mean worthy of his steel.

4. Reactions to Allied Propaganda.

The decision not to drop leaflets on German troops during the early phase of the counter-attack and bad weather hampering air drops in other sectors have lowered the percentage of PS/W who report having seen any propaganda. Moreover, a good proportion of the current PS/W were taken from units which have arrived only recently at the front and therefore have had little opportunity for exposure to our leaflets.

Tabulations of over 150 PS/W captured during the last two weeks in December on the 1, 3, 9 US Army fronts reveal that about 50 per cent report having seen leaflets. Not all such leaflets were seen recently. The figure of 50 per cent was made up in part of mentions of contact with our leaflets during previous months in some cases even as far back as Normandy.

5. Fear of Anglo-American Occupation.

Recent studies by PS/W, SHAEF of 450 prisoners of war confirms the marked lack of hostility towards and fear of Anglo-American occupation. In appraising this study, however, it must be recognized that many Germans, who are unwilling of our occupation, do not actively desire it to come to pass.

The prisoners were asked whether they thought Anglo-American troops are imbued with a spirit of revenge towards the German population, and whether they would show a hostile attitude to the population. Only 11 per cent of all the prisoners thought that there would be a spirit of revenge and only 18 per cent that a hostile attitude would be exhibited to the population. These figures should be raised somewhat because the poll was taken in an American enclosure, and a certain number of PS/W undoubtedly aim to please even though the questionnaires were anonymous. These quantitative results, in the main, however, are confirmed by interrogations made by the PS/W Interrogation Team. There is little fear, the survey reveals, of looting, wilful destruction of private property or the maltreatment of German women, on the part of Anglo-American troops.

The survey further attempted to study the effect of that part of the "Strength through Fear" propaganda which implies that life would be intolerable for the average German under occupation. It appeared that less than 20 per cent of the PS/W believe that life in general, under Anglo-American occupation, would be so hard as to be unendurable, although 50 per cent recognize that life would, indeed, be hard.
Interrogations point, however, to an underlying fear of occupation, which seems to be quite unrelated to the attitude of the average German soldier to the Anglo-American forces. Germans, except for strong anti-Nazis, obviously do not wish to see their country occupied under any condition. Fear of the Russian occupation moreover has been frequently and coherently expressed, even more strongly, often in the very cliches of German propaganda slogans, but still definitely manifesting a real fear. It is understandable, therefore, that absence of any real fear of Anglo-American occupation has not served more strongly as an inducement to surrender.

6. Enemy Propaganda to the Wehrmacht.

German frontline troops have long been known to be largely cut off from the main currents of Nazi propaganda because of lack of radio facilities and the difficulties of distribution of homefront newspapers. Therefore leaflets prepared especially for frontline troops are of prime importance in ascertaining what Nazi propaganda actually reaches them. New leaflets taken from recent Fg/W indicate that among others continuing stress is placed on the themes of "No Return to Germany" for deserters and poor treatment for Fg/W in general by the Allies. Positive appeals point out that political difficulties within the Allied camp are resulting from heavy battle losses. This is obviously a variation on the theme, "time is on Germany's side."

One release describes the mood of the American people who speak dolafuly of the privations suffered by the US forces in the great battles which are raging. The tremendous losses suffered by their soldiers can no longer be concealed from the American people. All gains have been paid for in blood. The knowledge of all this is a nightmare to the people of the United States. In contrast each German stands like a rock of granite.

Claims of Allied supply difficulties are also put forth. Skorpion headlined a statement by Secretary of War Stimson radio broadcast that General Eisenhower had to postpone the planned offensive due to lack of ammunition. In fact, one leaflet claims that the Allies are resorting to an increased use of leaflets because supply difficulties prevent our achieving a decision by force of arms.

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