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TEN FAMILIES OF UBACH

(Report from P & W, 9th United States Army
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1. This is an attempt to determine how civilians live in present occupied territory. Ten families were interrogated at their homes in the Ubach-Palenberg area, selected at random except for an endeavor to include representatives of the entire community. Some tentative conclusions are drawn, both on the basis of these attached interviews and of those previously made in this territory.

2. The Ubach-Palenberg Gemeinde comprises a group of small towns, all within five miles of each other, which have been combined for purposes of MG. Ubach itself is a fairly old village, built on a hillside, its main streets still composed of wooden farm residences, including barn buildings and a dwelling house around small courtyards. Many of the lower middle class have moved into many of these, and there are few open fields still in the town. But cattle are kept, and gardens are tended. The newer side streets have rows of smaller houses, usually brick, which were built specifically as residences for the non-agricultural population.

3. To find a cinema, railroad station, beauty parlors, and other advantages of civilization you have to go to Palenberg, a neat suburban-looking town on the flat ground before Ubach. Here there are even rudimentary apartment or tenement houses, though Palenberg cannot boast the slums of an up-to-date industrial area. Most of the town consists of uniform, well spaced brick houses, almost a thousand homes built by the mine for its workers. Many of these have been badly damaged by the fighting. Palenberg has its traditions, too. It boasts a church built in the seventh century, and still in good repair.

4. Three smaller communities complete the area. Scherpenseel, Marienberg, and Frelenberg are agricultural villages with some miner's houses.

5. The center of gravity is the mine, lying between Ubach and Palenberg with its towering smokestacks, its great brown buildings representing an imposing capital investment, and its two huge slatepiles, which dwarf the natural hills. But few lives seem to be lived in its shadow. Though the mine is visible from almost all points in the area, open fields are always within walking distance. This is not yet the turbulent Ruhr. This is a small community on the Dutch border, where mining and farming mix, in the quiet, moderate, left-of-the-Mine.

6. In this area the idea of the worker-subsistence gardener is a reality. Here it is a way of life, rather than a theoretically cheap farm unemployment and strike insurance. The people work long hours at the mine, followed by long hours in their garden or tending their family pig and poultry. Even in normal times they go to the stores mainly for bread, meat and manufactured or imported groceries. They rarely buy potatoes by the pound, but supply their needs for months out of a large stock purchased at harvest time from the farmers, and stored in their cellars. The mine management regularly supplied loans to employees who were too
improvident to make this purchase. The women usually also preserved or dried vegetables in their cellars.

7. There are really two social groups or castes in the town now, the original inhabitants and the evacuees. Fully 60% of the present population was moved here from the fighting zone by the Americans (four of the appended interrogation reports concern evacuees, six deal with natives). They have been placed in the houses of the people who left with the Nazis. They tend to stick close together, forming little groups of people who "met in Wels", or who "came from Geilenkirchen". A surprising number have taken under their care an old or sick person, often not previously known to them. The evacuees have one great passion: going home. Their struggles to return were made without the permission of MG with one of its biggest headaches. Some can be seen every day, queuing up at the Bürgermeister's office, asking for a pass to leave.

8. The original inhabitants have an analogous passion; staying home. Thus billeting of troops is a sore point with the m. Those who have to leave their homes wonder why they could not have remained, moving into one room to make space for the soldiers, or why the troops could not have gone into the empty houses of the Nazis. The families who are still in their houses worry whether they are not the next to be put out. There are no objections to taking in civilians, or even to soldiers as such (any would welcome the opportunity), but only to having to leave themselves.

9. The present MG detachment is well aware of this feeling. But MG is forbidden to act as "Town Major" (i.e. to billet and feed tactical units). Troops at one time billeted themselves without coordination wherever they chose, taking along some civilian to act as interpreter. At first there were three whole divisions in the area, three soldiers for each civilian who ever lived here, and the town may be called on to house large numbers of soldiers again. Capt. Mihald, USO, suggested zoning the town into an area for troops and an area for civilians. This is intended as the only practical means of enforcing the non-fraternization rule. Furthermore, when civilians and troops live together, military routine becomes a civilian problem, and civilian problems become a tactical concern, precisely the thing MG is supposed to prevent. His plan naturally became valid only when accepted by the controlling tactical authority and on the basis of their agreement will be applied in the future. It does not affect units which are already billeted (now mainly service units, Ordnance, Signal, Medical, Engineer, etc.)

10. The great longing for home is more than a fear of loss or spoilation of what few possessions remain, though this plays a strong part at present. It is the nature of these people. Catholic teachings on the family have deep roots here; one of the most frequent complaints against the Nazis is "they broke up our home, they never left us together, they never left us alone". In addition there is local feeling, and a strong sense of pride in their labor. Invariably you hear statements like "I have worked 20 years here", said with satisfaction. An American who works 20 years in the same place is unenterprising or a sucker. A Rhinelander who works for years at the same mine has standing in the community, has proven his value and reliability. In turn, he feels attached to his workplace, and feels unhappy when moved elsewhere, even if only a few miles away to another very similar mine.

11. This localization of attachments is perhaps the fundament of the strong currents of separatist feeling. Separatism sometimes takes on strange appearances, as in the common belief that war can be avoided by breaking the ties to Germany, despite the
example of Alsace-Lorraine. And then there is the woman who seems to think Kreis Gallenkirchen-Heinsberg will be made an independent State with no obligations to Kreis Aachen.

12. Separation of the families in the Luback-Polenberg area

13. Daily life is mainly conducted in the kitchen. This usually has a long bench along one side, a table, and a large stove. Though its position in the house and its appointments make it likely that even before the war was the center of the house, there are several reasons why that status is reinforced at present. The kitchen is usually the largest room on the ground floor, and thus has suffered less damage than other parts of the house. And the kitchen is warmed by the big iron stove, while other parts of the home are cold. Thus the kitchen becomes often the only room used.

14. Many of the interrogees own their own homes. The others do not seem particularly bothered by rent-collectors under present circumstances. Household expenditures are modest now; usually the only possible outlays are on the town food ration. Expenses average about 10 RM per week for the whole family (individual statements range from 7-12 RM, with the exception of one extemely figure whose reliability is questionable).

15. Questions on family finances are often answered reluctantly, particularly by the well-to-do. First there must be the assurance that the interrogator is not a tipster for a bureau of thieves, a tax collector, a bank inspector, or a ration board investigator. Even then the answers are couched in vague terms: "several hundred Marks", or "usually people spend so much". Nevertheless, black market activity in the accepted sense seems non-existent. Nobody will exchange goods for money unless the Government steps in, and even then goods are few. There is a certain amount of exchange of goods for goods, or of goods for services, but it too is rapidly disappearing as the government of the town develops its controls. Of course, farmers, millers, bakers, and butchers enjoy a plenty unknown to ordinary citizens, but the great number of homes with small allotments extend this inevitable advantage to a healthily large segment of the population (every one of the nine-owned homes, for example, has its own subsistence garden and a place for a pig or some chickens). The evicted, however, have no such resources to draw on, and much of the animal and poultry stocks of subsistence growers has disappeared in the fighting.

17. There are three kinds of people here, or rather, people have remained here in defiance of the Nazis for three reasons:
to save their necks, to save their property, to save their souls. The group which remained to save its necks is small. It consists, in its pure form, of healthy men of military age (anything from sixteen to sixty in Germany at present), who guessed that those who evacuated would be thrown into the Army. Many of these men stayed though their wives became frightened and left. But such men ran the greatest risks in remaining, and were few to begin with. Thus men older than fourteen and younger than forty-five (or even fifty) are rare in Ubach. However, from a P/F point of view, they are probably the most significant people here.

17. Those who remained to save their property are perhaps more numerous. But few had substantial property in this area, except farmers, and their greatest treasure is the indestructible earth. Those who had furniture or houses saw much being destroyed in the fighting. Those who had good connections with the Party were able to get moving vans for their household goods. Actually, the property motive finds its clearest expression as part of the much more complicated and all-important attachment to the home.

18. Motives of conscience seem to predominate, or, at least, are most often expressed. They are rarely positive, however, rarely in the form of a desire to hurt the Nazis or help the Americans, except for the frequent thought that by remaining they would be able to protect their workplace and thus keep the region alive. They are largely passive, to be free of the Nazis, to get out of the war, to be disassociated from the turmoil of Germany’s collapse.

19. Yet these are politically the most courageous people of the area, the ones who can think for themselves, can defy the Nazis, or lie to them and hide from them. They are people to whom welfare or conscience, both postulates of our kind of world, are more important than the demands and deadly taboos of the tribal state. Even so, few here can be counted on to offer active resistance to a recrudescence of Nazism. This casual survey has unearthed nobody with strong political leanings. A frequent answer to questions about political affiliations before 1933 is "I was a union member". "Party" means only the Nazis, except to a few old Centrists. There were once many Marxists here, but they seem to have been dispersed.

20. Being an opponent of the Nazis means disliking them, refusing to give to the Wirtschaft, going to church, criticizing them, but only rarely does it signify passing on leaflets or organizing small groups against them. Listening to foreign broadcasts is considered deriding resistance (probably with reason, considering the penalties involved). Yet there is an abundance of informers eager to help the Americans save the Germans from the Nazis.

21. Conversely, there is probably no significant group now in the area who will offer any sort of resistance to the present occupation. There are certainly entirely human grievances which have arisen, whether justified or not, but any dissatisfaction against the administration is heaped on the heads of their own people at the Burgemeister’s Office. The American MG is never considered to blame, even on minor matters, and it is generally presumed that any problem will be favourably and immediately settled “if the American officer knew” or “if they would let me see the Commander, and I could explain things in English.” Opinion is not as unanimous on the conduct of the troops, but even here all agree that there are good and bad in every army.
22. Their expectations on future American policy are mixed. On the one hand, they expect us to provide for their physical wants, particularly food. On the other hand, many people await economic sanctions, even against small property. A woman, for example, thinks the Americans intend to own everything in Germany, and asks, "Can I have my house in Boesweiler back after the war is over?" In general, though, their beliefs are optimistic, to say the least.

23. There is a big question unanswered by these interviewees: one which cannot be forgotten if they are to be evaluated properly: Where are the responsible ones? Where are the real Nazis? Where are those who must pay for the crimes of Germany? This interrogator has not found them here in Ubach, in the broken families, old women, sad men, or small bourgeoisie.

24. Ubach is a small town, still partly rural. It never had the big leaders, the elite who must ultimately account for Germany's course. It had no big demagogues, big organizers, big industrialists, few or no intellectuals. And those it did have are gone. The people who are left are characterized by their own mediocrity. The biggest man in town, the present director of the mine, had to be imported from Boesweiler by SHAFT Solid Publ. Mission. The present Burgermeister, now the political leader of the town if there is one, was a minor engineer who lived an obscure but good life during the Nazi rule.

25. Ubach is in the strongly Catholic Rhineland, the "black corner" of brown Germany, where Nazism may have been weaker. Above all, Ubach has been evacuated by the Germans, the real Nazis at the head of the refugee column headed for the other side of the Rhine. The true believers and the rag-tag of the Party are gone, down to the lowest functionary of the lowly labor front.

I. THE EVACUIES

A. Interrogation of Maria K.

1. Maria K. opened the door and smiled her welcome. "Come in," she said, and she continued to smile enthusiastically during the interrogation. She is 25 years old. Without make-up, and wearing glasses, she looks rather plain though healthy.

2. Her father was a school official in Aachen. He had a fair income, and managed to send her to school in Belgium for several years. She knows French well, but, unfortunately, only a little English which she is now trying to supplement "here and there". Her father was a Catholic, opposed to the Nazis like many other people in "black" (Catholic) Aachen, but had to join the Party to keep his job. This preyed on his conscience. He succumbed to a stroke "one month, no, two months ago", brought on by poor food and sleeping on the ground while they moved about to escape the Nazis.

3. With her father, she first hid out in Oettweiler, near the house of her stepmother. They "waited impatiently for the Americans to come". She reproves us for not having arrived sooner and for not getting the war over more quickly now that we are here. There they lived for several weeks in a bunker to which they tried to bring most of their valuable things. "Interrogator's Note: The term "bunker" as used in these interrogations, usually means an air raid shelter. These were
built by the people of the neighbourhood on orders from the Nazis. Only seldom does it mean a regular pillbox or dugout constructed as part of the West Wall.) Then, on the 7 October, the Americans made them evacuate immediately to Palsenberg. They had to live in the Carolus Magnus mine for three weeks, then moved into a partly destroyed house across the street from where they are now.

4. Though their house in Uttweiler is still occupied by American troops, her stepmother got permission to go back to live in the neighbourhood with a relative. She will try to keep an eye on their things, or what is left of them.

5. The house she is in now belongs to people who were evacuated by the Nazis. Then the American troops left it. She moved in with permission from MG, since it is in better condition than her first billet. Together with her aunt and an old man who came with them from Uttweiler she lives and sleeps in the kitchen. They stay close to the large stove, burning coal they found in the cellar. In houses nearby are four or five other families, totalling fifteen people, also from Uttweiler, and they have tried to keep together. They have made of this street a "little Uttweiler".

6. Her father had some money with him when he died, and the have been living on this. They spend 20-25 RM a week, mostly on meat and bread. (Interrogator's Note: This estimate is extremely high, and is probably erroneous). She wishes there were more things to buy, especially things like stockings.

7. Her father lost all his savings in the last inflation. She does not believe there will be another. When asked why she paused for a long time, puzzled. Perhaps she wasn't really interested in this problem, the interrogator suggested. Indeed she was, she protested. "It's a very big thing for us... I'm not afraid of inflation because I've always had confidence (in the Americans). If I didn't have confidence I wouldn't have remained". Shown the American occupation Marks, she asked, "are these only for soldiers?" In her opinion, "They're nothing extraordinary. Our soldiers had this kind of money in France."

8. For a time there were rumors that everybody would have to move to Holland. She hopes this is not true. She has heard that the Dutch would not give them enough to eat, and knows that the Dutch do not like the Germans.

9. German women are not interested in politics, she says. Though they put a few words into conversations now and then, they are more interested in their houses, and do not take such things as seriously as the men.

10. Her main concern is getting back home, first to Uttweiler and then to Aachen. She wonders whether her house in Aachen is still standing, and whether she could still save the furniture. Judging from what he has seen in Aachen, the interrogator thinks she will be disappointed.

B. Interrogation of Fraulein F.

1. The F. family are well-to-do peasants from Palsenberg, a village several kilometers from Ubach. They are very class-conscious as the Russians say, and will undoubtedly be shot as kulaks if the revolution comes to Germany. In the mean time
they sit in the house of Herr Weiden, owner of the mill of Palaenborg. The house stands at the edge of town, in the courtyard of the mill. It has suffered almost no damage, though if you step out on the street and go a few yards to the corner, you can see several pillboxes, flattened by some tremendous force.

2. There are four F. in Palaenborg, the father, mother, and two daughters. One of the daughters, an angular woman of 35, with almost masculine black eyebrows, acted as spokesman. The F. awaited the Americans in a bunker near the farm. Then they returned home. For four weeks they got along well with the American troops. Then the original occupants moved out, another unit moved into their farm buildings, and forced them to evacuate. They hated to leave their home.

3. Herr Weiden first took in their cattle, since his own had been killed in the fighting, then the family was billeted on him also. But they are not crowded, since his home is large, and held only Weiden and two male relatives before the F. came. "And we must all help one another," says Weiden. True to the traditions of his trade, he possesses a certain corpulence and a merry laugh.

4. The F. wish they could get back home now. There are farm machines rusting in the open, and crops which could still be saved. Perhaps when the front moves on they will be allowed to go back. In the mean time the Germans in the Bürgermeister's office keep putting them off when they ask for a pass, and refuse to let them see the Commandant. If they spoke English and could explain things to the Commandant, he would surely understand and let them go home.

5. They are prosperous people. They have 100' "Morgen" of land. They are, furthermore, very self-conscious about their prosperity. Then asked how much cash they had with them, they hesitated. Assured that the interrogator was not interested in robbing them, Trudlein F. replied: 500 RM. Asked how much the family had in the bank, she gave the interrogator (who normally prides himself on his honest face) a startled and angered look. She turned to the titular head of the family, spoke a few words in dialect, caught herself, and translated into German: "Do I have to answer?" Reminded that the bank had long been evacuated with all their money, she admitted in a low voice, "Twenty thousand Marks".

6. As peasants having their own cattle they are not allowed the full ration of food by the town. Thus, the F. family gets along on about 10 RM per week, including several Marks for the Pastor.

7. On seeing the American occupation currency for the first time, Trudlein F. was doubtful of its value. "Is it good?" she asked. "Can we take it? Can we pay taxes with it?" She fears that after the war, when the Americans own everything in this part of Germany, the Mark will be devalued. Told the Mark was already devalued, she could not conceal her chagrin, though she realizes that the Germans now have so much paper money that the Mark cannot maintain its full worth. She does not expect us to allow inflation after we devalue the Mark to some extent.

8. Despite her belief that the Americans will soon "own everything", she hopes we will continue to occupy the Rhineland, Or, if not the Americans, perhaps the French, anyone but the Dutch. Even before the war, the Dutch did not get along well with the Germans, though in this border region the Dutch "live
off the Germans".

9. They are willing to be occupied because "we have had enough to do with the Nazis". On the other hand, they are still proud to be German, "Germans, but not Nazis". Even American soldiers who have been in Holland and France say that everything is cleaner and nicer in Germany. If the Nazis could be eliminated, they would want to be restored to the Reich.

10. The three sons of the F. family were refused deferment and went into the Army long before the other young farmers of the area, because the family refused to have anything to do with the Nazi Party. One was killed. The F. have always been non-political, but use "well-to-do people have other cares," The Nazis were all "bankrupts and farmers who could not pay their debts", and the possessing class had nothing to do with them.

11. Fraulein F. seems to have few interests besides the family property, and judges most questions by her immediate effect on her inheritance. This was so obvious that sometimes her father smiled in an embarrassed manner as he sat in the background and listened. He looked hopped up.

C. Interrogation of Peter K.

1. Peter K. looks like a comic-opera Dutchman. His middle bulges out in all directions, he wears a square cap, and his trousers are baggy. His head is bald and he has a tiny square moustache. But only his appearance could provide light amusement.

2. He was severely wounded in the last war; one of his eyes is completely blind and the sight of the other is affected. A native of Geilenkirchen, he worked as a machinist until 1943, when he was retired as a complete invalid. His only political association has been with a pre-1933 union (Deutsche Metallerbeiterverband). With many other people he awaited the arrival of the Americans anxiously, in an air-raid shelter in Geilenkirchen which they had built themselves. The St. came, came several times to evacuate them, but nobody was afraid. "We know them, and they know we had guns too". Then the Army Field Police came one day, forced everybody out of the bunker, and examined their papers to find a spy or any deserters who might be there. For a few more days they were left alone, till the Field Police returned with the order, "everybody out of Geilenkirchen" (eclis restilos rona aus Geilenkirchen). K. told them: "We built this shelter ourselves to remain here when there is danger. Why should we leave?" The answer was a loaded gun in his ribs. It was hopeless to try to resist the Army.

3. He went to Baesweiler, was chased out by the SS, and proceeded to Edem, where he and his wife hid for three weeks in the cellar of a school. More Field Police found him there, and he moved on to Wells, where, again he took to a bunker. One morning SS armed troops told him he would have to get out. He still did not leave. One hour later he heard American talkies outside. The K. stayed in Wells until the 1st of December, then were suddenly moved to Pahlenberg by American soldiers who did not understand German. They had with them only the clothes they are wearing.

4. What concerns them most is the loss of the papers, which worries them day and night. They have a relative who
stood close with the Nazis, and who has been trying to swindle them out of their house. The dead to the house is in the bunker at Wels. Their only income has been from three pensions (military, accident and social insurance), totalling 111 RM monthly. These have not been paid since September. The pension papers are also in the Bunker at Wels. If he could go there, get the papers and see what has happened to the rest of their goods, he would feel better.

5. M. and his wife were billeted, together with a 71-year-old pensioner, Herr Schunck, also from Wels, in a house in Faulenberg where lives a mine worker whose wife has left. Frau M. cooks and cleans, and in return the house-owner provides part of their food. They pay for their own bread and meat.

6. Herr N. does not believe the Allies will allow inflation, because that would mean the people who have remained will "fold up" (vird ganz kaputt). Whether American, British or Russian, the occupying powers will try to keep the Germans alive so that they can work after the war.

7. While employed, Herr N. "stood with one leg in the concentration camp" because "I opened my mouth". He never gave more than 20 Pfennigs to the Nazi collections, and gave even this much under heavy pressure, "because I did not want the war to last longer. I had two sons".

8. He had two sons, while he spoke of them, his wife began to cry quietly, continuing to sort the huge piles of laundry she was doing for their landlord. The eldest son was never fooled by militarism, even though in the Army. One day, while the German-Russian Non-aggression Pact was still valid he said, "We will have war with Russia". For this he was condemned to death by court martial. The sentence was commuted to two years of concentration camp. After two years he was sent to Hoeburg, the "most infamous Army post", (beruchtigte Truppenlager), reserved for soldiers who had been in concentration camps. Here, on starvation rations, he was beaten by the SS, had rotten potatoes stuffed into his mouth. The father managed to see his son by requesting a seven-day leave to "settle an inheritance matter". The father had never seen him so thin. The son said, "I'm going back there some day, father, and kill them. You can come with me if you wish." During all this time they had not been allowed to write, and their small gifts of soap and food paste were always returned by the post office. Their son left Hoeburg for Italy, Tunisia, got out of Tunisia, and was sent back to Hoeburg for a while. Then nothing was heard of him until a notice came, "Missing in a sea action in the Eastern Mediterranean".

9. The youngest son was tainted by the spirit of militarism. As he left for the Army, the father said: "Wait till you've been to the Russian front and are hospitalized. You'll see what war really means". The boy contracted malaria in Russia, and confessed that his father had been right from the hospital bed. Temporarily cured, he was sent to Italy, where glandular complications developed. Since then he had been in a hospital bed, paralyzed, unable to talk, subject to spastic tremors, for several years. A professor of medicine told the father, "Your son will never be any good any more". Now, Herr N. fears, the Nazis may do him in (chickenionk vird) because he can no longer be useful to them. There has been no news of him for a long time.

10. "They should be destroyed", his wife said as he finished.
No. her husband replied, "They should not die quickly. They should be forced to work: They have to reconstruct Europe."

D. Interrogation of Peter B.

1. Peter B. grew up with the coal mine at Beesweiler. He is so proud of this he repeats it several times. He began work twenty-three years ago, at the age of 14, when the mine was first opened. As a timberer and sawyer, he now knows "every stick in the mine". He wishes he were back at work there. He would be much happier and useful than if he accepted a job here at the mine in Palesberg. Perhaps he cannot go back now because they are trying to keep workers for the Carolus Magnus mine.

2. There were once several hundred people evacuated to Palesberg from Beesweiler. Some disappeared in the direction of Beesweiler by themselves. Many were returned legally by the Americans, but he did not go with them because his wife's foot was infected. The Beesweiler people have a priest with them, who proposed at Christmas time to lead the sixty who are still left back on foot through field paths, but permission was refused. Despite his wife's bad foot and his three year old child, they would have gone eagerly, to be back home for Christmas, to be in his "homeland" (Heimat), Beesweiler. They have been in Palesberg for three months now. Two of his sisters still live in his house in Beesweiler.

3. P. B. is a shy, young-looking man, with a tanned face and straight black hair. He smiles often, and talks in the hard deep voice of a city-dweller, though he calls Beesweiler his "village" (Dorf). He wears the black wool shirt and pants of the German workers. His speech is fuller and more lively than that of most native Uschiers who were interviewed. But this is perhaps because he is younger and healthier than most people here.

4. Most of Beesweiler were determined to remain. They were part of the "black (Catholic) corner" (Schwarze Ecke), people who did not like to raise their right arm. And they did not want to be soldiers, especially for such a hopeless cause. It was strange to hear the Nazis ordering people to leave their homes, after all the propaganda about sticking to the soil and the home (Bauer, steht auf ihren Scholle, etc.)

5. With twelve other families from his block, he stayed in the communal air raid shelter they had to build themselves. People came in from other towns, telling how the Nazis were evacuating everybody. They came into Beesweiler because it was supposed to be exempt from the evacuation: for a long time there were no orders for Beesweiler. Nobody knows why, but there are rumors that the Burgermeister tried to delay evacuation as much as possible. (Interrogator's Note: Probably not true, according to other sources). Finally the Party ordered the women and children to go. Some people became frightened and left, others said "Boloney" (quack) and remained.

6. The regular German army took no part in the evacuation. Most of the troops passing through were from the Ostmark (Austria), and many soldiers said: "Racial Era, the Boys (Americans, "Boys" in the original German) will not do anything to you," The SS and Field Police evacuated some people, but usually left when towns came under artillery fire.
7. The part of Baesweiler directly in the fighting was later evacuated by the Americans, and these people went to the Carolus Magnus mine. They lived in the gallery for several weeks, and then the B. moved to the modern tenement in Palenberg where his cousin lives. He and his wife brought with them an old woman, also evacuated from Baesweiler.

8. They thought the war would be over as soon as the Americans broke through the West Wall defenses on the border. He laughed indulgently when it was suggested that the front might still be in the neighbourhood of Geilenkirchen. Naturally the interrogator did not want to tell military secrets. But even though they knew nothing of the current situation, they can't believe that!

9. As a sawyer, B. was supposed to be paid on a piecework contract basis (stückgeld). Actually the men were continually cheated by the works manager, and anyone who complained was promised "another shirt" - a Wehrmacht uniform. Thus B. earnings averaged only 180-190 RM per month after deductions. A friend of his has calculated that during the five years of war they actually worked six years, since their hours were increased from 9 to 9 3/4 per day, they had to work every second Sunday, and holidays were cut to one day at Christmas and Easter.

10. Their savings increased rapidly, since they could purchase little during the war, and they thought "there might be something to buy later". B. put most of his spare cash in the bank, since it might be lost or destroyed at home, and in case of a financial upheaval paper money would be no safer than bank accounts. But he established two bank accounts, one in his wife's name, so that if deposits were eventually blocked he would have something returned from each. The two accounts now total 1,000 RM. In the last few months before the Americans came, "there was no point in putting the money in a bank". He anticipated that his wife might have to leave home, and saved up 500 RM in case to give to her in this event. Their present expenditures are about 7 RM per week.

11. B. was 15 years old in the last inflation. He still remembers how he was paid about 60 million RM for one month's work, in a thick packet of 132 half-million RM notes, and how this would not even buy a box of cigarettes. He can laugh about it now. He does not expect such complete ruin again, though probably only a certain percentage of the old money will be honored.

12. Many people in his neighbourhood lost confidence in the German Mark when they saw how money was being thrown around for the construction of the West Wall. The compulsory laborers had to be paid at their previous salaries, and got special bonuses besides, just for leaning on a shovel. Thus, they often earned twice as much as he did. The great sums wasted to stage Party functions also indicated to him that the Mark was being weakened. Then the Czechoslovak crisis showed that war was coming. Of course, such things could never be said openly. One could only talk to people one knew well, who were not "ideological bums" (Gesinnungsbumsen).

13. People like him went only to live in peace. They hope they can remain American or English subjects, so that they won't be dragged into another war by the Germans. Neither Russian, or English or American capital owns Germany makes no difference to them, as long as they can work and can have freedom again. Under
the Nazis they never had peace. There was "always something new, always something new" (inner war noises, inner war noises) and a man was never left alone.

14. They hope the Americans will allow them to regain ownership of their houses (He was relieved to hear the Americans had no intention of taking them permanently). As for possible questions, "My question is only: here's to home!" (Parole Hoimat!)

II. THE NATIVES

A. Interrogation of Herr G.

1. Herr G. is an old, bald-headed man who talks in a deliberate, sing-song voice. He was interrogated in the room where he lives with his wife and son. One of the first objects to catch the interrogator's eye as he entered unannounced was a book lying on the table: "First Lessons in English". His wife, grey and small, said little as she darned a worn stocking. The son is only 13 ("We married late," G. explains), slight, blond, and quiet. They have only one habitable room here, in which they cook, eat, sleep, and dry laundry. They have been in this room for seven weeks.

2. When the first rumors of the American advance came, people were confused. G.'s advice was "Don't be crazy, stay here". But many people were packing up and getting ready to move, until one peasant got as far as Puffendorf and was turned back by a German Major. This news quieted the people, and there was peace for about eight days. Then the German Field Police (Feldpolizei: "die Grünen") came to evacuate the town. G., hid in a bunker, but a neighbor directed the police to it, perhaps because he thought it his duty, perhaps he was confused. G. still does not think the neighbor was a Nazi, though his wife is now convinced of it. The G. family went to a town near Geilenkirchen where they had relatives. After a few days they sneaked back into Ubach, and waited in a bunker for the Americans to come. Herr G. was the first to step outside and see an American soldier. "Believe me, I cried, as I never have cried since my childhood.” Within the bunker his wife heard the crying and thought somebody was wounded. Then the soldier came in with Herr G. and everybody greeted him with heartfelt joy. The tyrants were gone.

3. The family returned home. They found 6 mortar hits on their house, fired from the East. Most skilled workman were gone. At first those who were left would repair only the houses of "butchers, bakers, or farmers". G. managed to find a carpenter who was willing to make repairs - for a bottle of Schnapps. By now the Americans have registered the artisans and send them where they are needed.

4. Then a civilian commissioner came along and told him he would have to evacuate his house for the Army. He quickly packed a few things not knowing where to go, while his son ran down the street and found the room they are in now. For three weeks his own house was continually occupied by the Army. Then, when one unit moved out and another moved in, he managed to get back into the house to rescue a few more of his things. Now, he hopes, they will soon be able to move back in again. He wonders whether he was picked to evacuate from his house because he is known as an anti-Nazi.
5. He is, he claims, the only man in Uebach who ever left the Party. He joined in 1933, partly to protect his job at the post office, and partly because he really thought some good might come out of a change of regime. In 1934 he saw what a swindle it was and resigned. Luckily, he did this early when things were not so strict. By 1939, for example, an order had come out that all who resigned from the Party would lose any government position they held. He could have made 100 RM more a month if he had remained, but wanted nothing to do with the "bums".

6. They forced his son into the Hitler Youth, but the boy never showed any enthusiasm. When eleven years old, a HJ leader of 16 seized him by the collar and said threateningly: "Do you know I can make it impossible for you to get a job when you grow up?" His son came home with a torn shirt.

7. G. was retired by the Post Office in 1942 on a disability pension. Naturally, this is not being paid now. Furthermore, all his savings were in the evacuated bank. But they spend very little now. The family can buy six loaves of bread a week, costing about RM 3.50; a meat ration costing about RM 3.10 per week, and very little else. Their total expenses are about 10 RM a week. Anybody who spends more "must be buying on the black market", and there is no black market. Nobody wants to sell goods. The only black transactions are between peasants, who can exchange things.

8. He thinks Americans are issuing the new currency because the Germans left too little money in circulation. He remembers the last inflation all too well. "noch du lieber!" But inflation cannot come again, because the Americans realize it would mean that all trade would stop. If the Americans made the Mark worth only 5 Pfenning, the people in Germany would stop working and selling. Mention of the last inflation brought to his mind the many American soldiers who have been picking up old inflation money, which is printed in fantastic denominations but is worthless now. "They think they're millionaires", he chuckled.

9. Though he talks willingly about such things as inflation his only real interest is in peace, and what will follow. He wonders whether the left bank of the Rhine will remain German. He hopes not. "Out of 100 people here, only two want to return to Germany, and even these fools won't tell you so!"

10. On the other hand, the Dutch would not be kind to them if given control of this area. He knows why the Dutch hate them now. But even in the last war the Dutch did not like the Germans, though they made plenty of money from them. Despite Hitler's racial nonsense, the French and Belgians were always better liked here than the "Germanic" Dutch.

11. He realizes "we must suffer as Germans, because we started the war, but...it is hard. The innocent will suffer as usual". Then his wife spoke up, for almost the first time, and with deep feeling in her voice, "The innocent should not always be the only ones to suffer". It would be good if the Nazis, the real Nazis, were found and punished.

B. Interrogation of Leo H.

1. Even in occupied Germany, a man's house is his castle.
But, as in the troubled Middle Ages, it now requires ramparts and bastions. Like many of the houses in Ubach, Leo H.'s home is built in a small courtyard, which once presumably fulfilled the functions of barnyard. Large wooden doors block the entrance; held closed by a short length of railroad iron leaned against them. The shop on the street side of the court-
yard is shuttered, and upstairs windows are boarded up. On
the doors are the usual two signs of civilian occupancy: one
is printed placard reading "Off Limits to All Troops By Order
of Commanding General," the other a typewritten notice: "This
house is occupied as living quarters by the following named
persons...The house and surrounding grounds are placed off
limits to all military personnel. Looting is prohibited and
will be severely dealt with. By Order of the Allied Military
Government." If the outer gate is shaken vigorously enough,
Leo H. will come running out into the courtyard with a
frightened look on his face. When told your intentions are
honorable he will eventually invite you into his house. On
the door is still another sign, crudely printed in pencil, "The
man of the house (sic) is at home". Leo H. needs only one
more notice to make his collection of Ubach placards complete:
"A Dutchman lives here". But Leo H. is German.

2. He is 46 years old, exempted from military service
"until now" because of nerve trouble and a chronic cattarrh.
He is a spare, forthright man of medium height, who answers
questions carefully and deliberately.

3. Leo H. remained in Ubach because "Here is my home and
my work. As a reasonable, logical man I saw that if the whole
people is evacuated further back again and again there will be
a catastrophe and eventual starvation". He is not afraid to
answer questions, he says: "If I had left I would fear
interrogation." But he has two brothers in the German Army,
who would suffer if his replies were published; or if he did
anything else openly against the Nazis. Also, though he does
not say this, he seems to want a clean record if the Nazis
come back.

4. As an office manager at Carolus Magnus, he was one of
those obligated to remain at the mine for emergency service.
He has proved this, which he will not willingly give
away. Perhaps he is a souvenir collector at heart. Or perhaps,
though he probably does not even admit this to himself, he may
have to explain some day why he didn't evacuate, somewhat
differently than he explained it to the present interrogator.
(See report on Emergency Service Personnel in Ubach, now in
preparation). Up to the 15 September, his family remained at
home. Then, unexpectedly, the Americans bombarded the mine and
town heavily for the first time. The people had hoped it would
never be attacked, because "the Americans have just as much
interest as the Germans in preserving heavy industry and will
avoid destruction as far as possible, so that they can use it
themselves". After the bombing, his family and many others
moved into the galleries of the mine. They remained there for
five weeks. Life in the mine, all crowded together, was a
strain. His sister, who had two infants, decided to leave.
He remained with his wife and three young daughters.

5. The people put up signs over the mine shaft in English
"CIVILIANS". On the 4 October the first American troops
arrived. They were very friendly to the civilians, as every-
body had expected. The people remained in the mine up to the
middle of November, when the fighting moved on from the area and
they were allowed to return home.
6. He does not believe the Americans will bring inflation, because he cannot conceive of our wanting to make the whole population poor. Of course, there will probably be devaluation, something like the 25% devaluation of the German currency of the people of Rupe-Melsdor after the last war. Naturally, he would not welcome this with enthusiasm, but "the losers of a war naturally lose".

7. The interrogation took place on a Sunday. He had stayed at home while his wife went to the first mass, and had planned, he hinted broadly, to go to church as soon as she came back. The interrogator agreed, since the remaining questions concerned mainly household affairs. His wife returned with their two red-haired daughters, twins of about six. She was a calm woman of about forty, who spoke in a low but distinct voice.

8. She was first questioned about family expenses. They were actually living in the house of her husband's sister. Her own house, across the small courtyard, had received four mortar hits, severely damaging the roof and chimney. A mason and two helpers had worked on the chimney for one day, and had been paid 24 RM. Then a man from Baeswoller had continued repairing for four days, mainly to have something to do. As soon as he received permission to go home he left without returning to collect his pay. Two men had worked on the roof, each for about 16 days, and each had been paid 100 RM.

9. Her current expenses are no more than 10 RM a week. The main items are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meat, 500 grams per person</td>
<td>3.50 RM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread, Allowed two leaves per person at 0.50 RM per loaf</td>
<td>4 RM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Her potato supply is assured because she worked with the labor gang organized by MG to get in the harvest. They were paid in kind, and the friendly farmers gave her a little extra besides her regular share. With the coal in her cellar and that left behind by her husband's sister, she has enough fuel to last through winter if used sparingly.

10. She does not know what her husband's salary is now, but presumes it is the same as before, since "the mine is supposed to have plenty of cash, and many employees are gone". The family has put most of its savings into building a house of their own in Boscheln. In the last few months before the American occupation they could spend almost nothing, because most goods were reserved for air raid victims. They therefore have accumulated about 2,000 RM in cash at home.

11. People think that the RM will be stabilized, and that a certain percentage of their money will be safe. They have thought this ever since 1941, when it began to seem possible that Germany would lose the war.

12. Women are not interested in politics. She has always kept in touch with the news of the war, but mainly because of her relatives and friends in the Army. Otherwise, she has too much to do at home to be bothered.
13. Every week the American newspaper tells them that they must help themselves, and that all relief supplies are reserved for the countries attacked by Germany. Yet she cannot help hoping that some food will be brought in, since "we people here were not guilty of starting the war, either". When the interrogator suggested that the food situation in the Ubach area was rather fortunate she agreed. He then hinted that they might have to share their supplies with neighboring towns like Alsdorf," Her answer was: "Oh, no; Alsdorf is in Kreis Aachen, and we are in Kreis Geilenkirchen."

C. Interrogation of Joseph P.

1. Joseph P. has a wife and son, but neither are with him now. His son is in the Army. His wife became frightened during the fighting and left, while he stayed behind. This happened in many other families in Ubach. He wonders whether the wives will be allowed to come back soon when the war is over. He was once a miner, but is now incapacitated for heavy work, and walks with a slight limp. He is a thin man, 45 years old, with a large nose, short hair and grey eyes.

2. He hid in the cellar of the priest's home until the Americans came. Then he had to live in a bunker for several days, because American troops occupied the house. He returned to his own home, finding two mortar hits on the roof, and set to work repairing it himself with materials he found lying around. American troops moved in, and he had to get out. He moved in across the street with some friends. He has been there for seven weeks, and hopes he can now return, since the troops have just left.

3. He worked for two months as a town policeman, receiving 120 RM a month, but was then released from the police force and has done nothing since. (Interrogator's Note: Not for political reasons, as far as can be ascertained). He has no way of knowing whether inflation will return, but "God protect us!"

4. He cannot understand why the empty houses of the Nazis who left are assigned to civilian evacuees, while troops are moved into the houses of the people who remained behind, and they have to get out of their homes. He thinks it would be much more sensible and fair to billet the civilians with the people here, so that the householders could remain at home with their possessions.

D. Interrogation of Heinrich P.

1. Heinrich P., a self-made man, is one of the most prosperous and comfortable seen in Ubach. He owns a modern though small bakery and pastry shop next to his home. His house is entered through a glass-roofed little courtyard, in which green vines grow even now in the dead of winter. The courtyard looks like nothing more than an old-fashioned photographic studio, except that the backgrop is real. The outer door of the courtyard bears ample evidence that he is a man of position. On it the town bulletin board is established, with notices from the Mayor's Office and decrees of MG where people must pass to get their daily bread.

2. P.'s personal appearance is not prepossessing. Though dressed in a neat grey suit, his bulging jowls, massive skull and
thick lips give him the appearance of a contemporary of the Cro-Magnon man. His wife, too, has the features of a prehistoric forest-dweller. Strangely, his two daughters are attractive, with an olive beauty foreign to this country. In fact, they caused the interrogator’s driver much concern. It is likely that he drooled.

3. P. was apprenticed to his trade when fourteen years old. In 1913 when 13, he opened a bakery for himself in Ubach. Called to the army in 1916, he was taken prisoner by the French in 1918. He returned to reopen his bakery in 1920. In 1933 he joined the Nazi Party, because as a man of substance in the town, “I had to”. But, he claims, as early as 1937 he saw there was no good in it. When the front approached, he wrote a last letter to his son in the Army: “We remained here together. We have never harmed anyone, and no one will hurt us”. He continued to bake all during the fighting. Once, when the firing was particularly heavy, he and his wife ran into a bunker with flour still on their hands and waited for four hours.

4. They watched the German troops retreating from Belgium. This, Herr P. thought, is the exact picture of 1918. How the Germans continue to resist he does not know. “Why don’t they quit”. (Dass sie noch nicht Schluss machen!).

5. The “browns” (SA) came three times to evacuate his family, who kept hidden in the cellar. Each time he either said openly, “I will remain together with my family,” or lied, “my family has already left”. Then the “greens” (Feldpolizei) arrived and ordered him to leave. He promised to go, but barricaded the door to the courtyard and waited. No Germans came back.

6. In 1929 they lost their savings of 28,000 RM all but 10% in a bank failure in Kuchen. (At first Herr P. said 24,000 RM, but his wife sharply corrected him, because “the money’s gone anyhow”). Since then they have had no confidence in German money. His savings have gone into building houses, of which he now has five. Before 1933, he also bought land, but the Nazis forbade this because the family are not peasants. He had only 900 RM in the savings bank, and accumulated the rest of his money (4,000 RM) at home, because he “wanted it out of the war”. This he could do easily without crossing suspicion because of the nature of his business.

5. Naturally, he is afraid of inflation now. But such things are unimportant. If his son comes home safely and the family can be together he will have no more worries. The American occupation notes will be our future currency. Eventually the old Marks will be exchanged for it. He knows of the new exchange rate, and that it represents a devaluation. This came “because of the war”. We can thank the Nazis for that.

6. On questions of household expenditure his wife did most of the talking. Their roof and upper rooms were badly damaged. Five men, evicted from Buggendorf, repaired the roof in three weeks of work. They “worked for food”. Men are now at work restoring the plastering in the upper rooms.

7. Possible expenditures on food in Ubach, “depending on the size of the family”, are about 10-12 RM per week. German women “work like horses” and usually buy food in bulk at harvest time for storage in their cellars. Thus they buy less in the winter than in summer.
8. The bakery is operating fairly well, everything considered. Coal supply is difficult, even with some assistance from the town government, but there is enough flour. Everything must now be done by hand, since all the machinery is electric. He hopes he will get permission to run a wire to the emergency cable which supplies the church and runs only 10-15 meters away from his shop. But Herr P. cannot complain. And again he said, with emotion, "If only the war were over".

9. Herr P. offered to show us his bakery, and after inspecting it we left. From outside we could hear a piano playing. A man would be a fool, one thought, to leave a piano, a baking oven with a tiled front, electric dough mixing machines, a pleasant home and a business representing years of work, for the insecurities on the other side of the Rhine.

E. Interrogation of Josef D.

1. Old Josef D. keeps a pipe clenched between broken teeth as he talks. His wife, too, is old. Her thinning gray hair is tied in a knot on the back of her head. Their daughter, about 24, is short and solidified with much work. Their family life is close-knit. Talking to them is like holding conversation with a Greek chorus. The husband and wife answer questions almost simultaneously, while the daughter, giving them a few seconds head start in deference to their age, tries to supplement their replies shyly. Sometimes, she has to repeat the questions or translate parts into dialect, since her parents are obviously unaccustomed to the tempo of the modern world, which can even bring an American lieutenant into their house with strange questions and a queer accent.

2. Josef D. has been at work for forty years, 25 years as an above-ground laborer at Carolus Magnus alone. When the front approached he took his wife and daughter to a brother in Boesweiler, then returned to Uebach. On the 19 September the Nazis told him he had to leave for Julich, but "we did not want to go. If I must die, I will die here, at home". So he went to Boesweiler to join his family. They lived for twelve weeks in a bunker, spending three months in all in Boesweiler. D. became impatient. He wanted work. He tried to get back to Uebach without permission, was caught on the road and given two days in jail. Then, three days ago, he and his family were allowed to return, brought back in a truck by the Americans.

3. They found their house badly damaged, only the kitchen habitable and that cold and with crevices in the walls. They are now applying for a new house, and as soon as they are quartered, D. will go back to work in the mine.

4. But damage to their house and property is unimportant. Says the daughter: "the main thing is that we are healthy and can begin to live". Adds the mother: "And are together". Adds the father: "And not like the poor people who have gone away". Things have never been easy for them. They were always poor, always had troubles. Since 1914 they never saw a golden age in Germany.

5. The family had several hundred Marks in the bank and a similar amount in paper money at home. Inflation is improbable, because the Germans are not likely to come back. But, most likely, another currency will replace the present Reichsmark. D. had not seen the occupation currency. His first impression
was that the paper used was good, better than that on which the German Marks is printed. But the really important thing about money is its value, and this, he agreed, is determined by what it will buy.

6. He certainly does not want the Germans to return. Perhaps the Rhineland can remain "América". If the Germans regain control they will be enslaved again (wiedergeknöbelt) sooner or later. To him, America is "the good heart" (América - gutes Herz). Unfortunately the Americans and Germans cannot make themselves understood because of the language barrier. But things will improve in time. The food situation, for example, will be better regulated later.

7. The French were also good people, and worked well here during the war. Though the people want foreign occupation, they would never like Dutch rule. Even before the war the Dutch hated the Germans. There are many good individuals, but all Dutchmen now want revenge on the Germans. "That's the Nazis' fault", the old man said, "the fault of the war. They've caused hate, and now the good and bad must suffer alike."

F. Interrogation of D. family

1. The D. family is merry, and well they may be. They live in Marienberg, a village strung along the Waubach-Geilankirchen high road, just on the Dutch border. Herr D. is a master machinist, who works in the glass factory at Herzogenrath. He is 55, and has worked for forty years. His face looks younger than this, except for his smooth white hair. Except for a few broken panes of glass, his house was undamaged. They have a cow and a garden. His three sons are in the German Army, but his wife is with him, and so are his two young daughters. Though these bulge out in unexpected places they seem to find favour with the current supply of males. It was sometimes difficult to hear the father talk, because his two daughters sat close by, giggling loudly at every remark.

2. He determined to remain behind with his family. "Because I do not want to have anything to do with them (the Nazis)". Some people obeyed the first order to leave, but his family stayed. He was working at the factory in Herzogenrath when a friend brought the news that his wife and daughters had been loaded on a wagon for evacuation. He hurried back, caught up with them, and pulled them off. They hid in a forest until night, then walked to the factory and hid there for three days. At 4:30 on the 19 September he met the Americans for the first time.

3. His former salary was 350 RM a month. He did not deposit in a bank, but had about 1,000 RM saved at home. Present expenditure for food for the whole family are about 5 RM per week, supplemented by their own produce. Shown the occupation money he was puzzled: "Is that a Mark?" But he felt it was good enough for wartime, and indignantly refuted the suggestion of his wife that civilians probably would not use it to buy things.

4. The last inflation was "the greatest deception they could have made". (grosse Betrug die sie machen konnten). He does not believe the Allies will allow things to reach such a state again, because "then you would have no power over the masses. Hunger knows no law" (Not kennt kein Gebot).
5. They are a border population (Grenzbevölkerung), therefore they naturally do not like the Dutch. But Herr D. can understand the bitterness in Holland towards the Germans.

6. Everybody hopes and waits for things to slowly go back in motion. If they don't have to leave their home, like a friend of theirs from Gengelt, everything will be fine.

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