GERMAN ATTITUDE TO AMERICAN OCCUPATION

1. In every respect the attitude of the German population to the American occupying forces is less hostile and more cooperative than the attitude of any nation occupied by HITLER ever was toward the Germans. One reason for this difference may be that Germany's defeat is final, while the defeat of her victims was never accompanied by a complete cessation of hostilities in Europe. Another reason may be that the German nation has completely exhausted itself in this war. The attitude of the various individual Germans toward American occupation varies greatly, of course, according to the individual's political and other views and activities. It may be summarized, however, in the following six points:

a. Most Germans are docile and resigned to their fate.

b. Most Germans are satisfied to find the Americans roughly what they expected them to be.

c. Most Germans feel that as long as they have to be occupied at all, the Americans are the least of three evils.

d. Most Germans, used to rigid control, feel that the Americans have not come as oppressors.

2. To gauge the present attitude of the German population toward the American occupation it is useful to trace it back to the time when occupation was not yet a reality but merely an expectation, and to examine the changes it has undergone since then. Intelligence from most German regions, except certain Nazi strongholds such as the HÄRZ, but particularly from the RHINELAND and parts of Northern Germany, pointed to the fact that the majority of Germans eagerly awaited American occupation. To some slight extent this was due to a genuine hostility against Nazism which was expected by its opponents to vanish with occupation; by and large, however, occupation was welcomed because it was regarded by the population as the only conceivable end to a war which they could no longer endure and which, they knew, could no longer come to an end except by total defeat. In other words, the reasons why most Germans anxiously looked forward to American occupation were largely non-political, and the anticipation was shared by people of all social and political groups except the ardent and active Nazis who held influential positions. Despite tremendously stepped up stridency propaganda against the Americans after the fall of AACHEN, there was no real fear of them, and whatever misgivings the people had about occupation by a foreign power, were far outweighed by the eager expectation of the end of bombings, war time restrictions and
continuous uncertainty about the fate of male family members. Therefore, the eternal German clamor "if they would only come" reported before the end of the war from every town and city beyond the fighting lines, meant merely "if it would only come," "it" being the end of the war. When the Americans finally did come, they were greeted in many places as "liberators," a greeting on the part of the population which has been interpreted by some as an indication of strong anti-Nazi feelings and by others as object submissiveness or hypocrisy; intelligence reports indicate that while there were elements of both at the root of the cheering, the basic reason for it was simply joy over the fact that the Americans had "liberated" them from a war from which they could no longer liberate themselves.

3. Wherever the Americans came, there was almost unadulterated relief, particularly in the western regions of Germany, where only those had remained who preferred occupation to a continuation of the war. But also further inland the attitude of the population was such that it would have driven HITLER to chew rugs at an unprecedented pace had he been able to see his VOLKSDEUTSCHEN; the people were pleased and relieved, and the almost complete absence of sniping and related mischief was certainly amazing, in view of the fact that the Nazi government had made desperate efforts to promote guerrilla warfare in a country that was expected to be full of young fanatics unwilling to submit. There were exceptions, and reports from towns that had suffered no damage, such as KOBLENZ or DUSSELDORF, pointed out that Germans were going around with sinister mien, admitting frankly that they were grieved about the defeat, the treason of the generals and the miserable end of a war which they would have liked to see continued from the comparative comfort and safety of their favorable positions.

4. Wherever the first few hectic days of occupation were over, various fears and hopes began to crystallize, separating the population into several groups. Out of the mass of defeated Germans emerged that highly controversial and not easily definable figure which is called the "anti-Nazi," and whose numbers multiplied rapidly. These "anti-Nazis" had harbored extremely high hopes and expectations as far as the occupying power was concerned; they had expected that they would be accepted by the invaders as a full-fledged ally and co-belligerent, for, they said, they had suffered for twelve years, and fought against the Nazi tyranny which the Allies had come to eradicate. They envisaged fundamental political and, in the case of Socialists and Communists, economic changes to be carried out, or at least supported, by the conquerors. As a result, they stormed newly set-up MG offices in every town and hamlet, turning in "black lists" and presenting innumerable suggestions concerning reconstruction. The well-established Nazis, on the other hand, where they had not fled or hidden, were apprehensive and stayed at home. In all, the Americans were not really regarded as enemies, hostilities were looked upon as terminated, and Nazism as finished. The attitude toward the individual American soldier, even if he interpreted the term "conqueror" somewhat generously here and there, was one of good will and, on the part of the young ladies, more than that.

5. In the course of the occupation, which is as old as nine months in some places and as young as two in others, this attitude has undergone some profound changes. One of the major factors in producing them has been the policy on non-fraternization. At first, the Germans took it for a counter-intelligence measure only and accepted it unquestionably as such. The
principal reasons for the policy, aside from the counter-intelligence motive, were not understood by the Germans, especially not by anti-Nazi, and authoritative explanations of the policy confused rather than clarified the issue in German minds. The gist of what most anti-Nazis have to say on the matter in statements that reach PTD, is neatly summed up by this German comment: "We (anti-Nazis) are you (Americans) used to maintain that this war was waged against the Nazi people - the Nazis and all their mouthpieces used to claim that this war was waged against the German people and not against the Nazis. Your non-fraternization policy which forbids you to shake hands even with the most active fighter against Fascism, proves the Nazis correct, and behind your backs they now maintain toward us a triumphant 'I told you so' attitude. More than that, they claim that the non-fraternization policy proves that we were traitors to Germany by misinterpreting Allied intentions, and that we should have supported the FUEHRER instead of the Allies who reject us as equals." Explanations of the policy with the argument that every German bears some guilt, at least of omission or toleration, in connection with the crimes committed by the Germans, are rather ineffective. "The horrors committed," runs the average reply, "should be all the more reason for the Americans to regard those as complete equals who were exposed to, or at least threatened by them."

6. This leads to the whole question of guilt which is one of the principal factors determining the attitude of most Germans toward the Americans. With few exceptions, the guilt for the crimes committed is not acknowledged by either Nazis or anti-Nazis, though for different reasons, and American emphasis on this point has created a general mental resistance. The Nazis, almost without exception, claim to have known nothing about theombre hagardes and they ask innocently: "How can you be guilty of something that you did not know existed?" Most anti-Nazis, in turn, use the very horror of the concentration camps as explanation and excuse for the sins of omission with which they are charged, and say: "How that you have seen for yourselves what you never believed before, you ought to be persuaded that resistance was impossible." In addition, the anti-Nazi tax issue with the political implication of the general indictment: "By blaming the active German nation," writes one man, "for these unforgivable crimes you stigmatize the Germans as outcasts and, in a negative manner, unification, and wall them together. In this fashion you prevent the democratic elements from outgrowing and eliminating the Nazi elements, and create a resurgence of militant nationalism." Finally, many Germans, both Nazi and anti-Nazi, resent what seems to them the moral righteousness which the occupying power assumes in indicting them. One of the most frequent arguments in this direction is: "If you take the point of view of individual guilt, nobody is guilty except those who actually ordered or perpetrated the crimes, or declared the war. If you take the point of view of collective guilt you, too, are guilty. If statesmen like CHAMBERLAIN did not know or do anything about these things, how could you?" It may be mentioned in this connection that the war guilt prevails for less on the German minds than the atrocities. In both cases, however, Nazis and the majority of anti-Nazis are unwilling to accept the Allied verdict, and are either disappointed or annoyed with the Americans for their view in the matter. While anti-Nazis freely admit that Germany is responsible, they decline personal responsibility, even for sins of omission.

7. The factor that looms largest of all in shaping attitudes to the occupiers, however, is without doubt the political factor. Under the radicalizing effect of the Nazi terror,
the anti-Nazis have become extremely political-minded, and judge the Americans predominantly by their activities in the political field. Their ranks, like the ranks of the French and Belgian resistance movements, are swelled, of course, by vast numbers of men and women who now describe themselves as victims of a system from which they profited handsomely while the going was good. Nevertheless, there is again as in the resistance movements a core of people who were genuine enemies of the system. These people were happy, without reservation, when HITLER-Germany lost the war, and they took an intensely positive attitude toward the American forces of occupation. It is the attitude of these people which has undergone the most visible changes. They have not turned hostile, but their present feelings toward the Americans are bewilderment and disappointment because the Americans failed to bring about, or permitted them to effect, the political changes in their communities which they firmly believed to be among the principal Allied war aims. There is no town, city or district in American-occupied Germany today where proven or self-styled anti-Nazis are not clamoring: "The Nazis are not being kicked out of their positions, and where they are being kicked out, other Nazis are appointed in their stead. The Nazis are not kicked out of their houses, but other people substitute for them. The Nazis are not kicked out of their factories, but other people substitute for them." And while many sigh: "The war was fought for nothing," others quip: "I should have been a Party member. I'd be better off now." For all this true or imagined renascence of Nazism they hold the Americans responsible, and the amount of written outpourings on the subject, addressed to German language newspapers or KG offices in the form of letters, essays or even books, has been increasing steadily in volume and impatience.

8. The anti-Nazis - in nine cases out of ten - are leftists. They consist of workers, employees, intellectuals, KZ inmates. Most of them do not appear to be more revolutionary than they ever were. (To quote LENIN's famous phrase: If German workers want to stage a revolution at the RR station, they first buy tickets). They are, however, inexorably anti-Nazi, and all their thoughts that have centered for years around nothing but the removal and punishment of all leading Nazis in major and minor positions, still center around this subject. The majority of these people had found it possible to withstand the mental and physical tribulations of the Nazi regime merely because they drew courage from the conviction that there would be a war, that the war would be lost and that the victorious Allied powers would help them to subdue that ravenously tyrannical and militarist element of the German nation which they could not subdue themselves. These anti-Nazi intellectuals who expected to be the nucleus of the political reorientation in Germany, are now thoroughly demoralized as a result of Allied efforts to be "unpolitical" which, they charge everywhere in Germany, has been instrumental in maintaining Nazi rule in every field. "Had the Nazis known how well they were under American occupation," they say, "they would have given up this war three years ago."

Also the anti-Nazis are distressed about the fact that all anti-Nazi organizations have been suppressed. Nevertheless, there has been no evidence of German leftists actively opposing those KG measures which they condemn; rather, their reaction is that of disillusioned lethargy, similar to the attitude they showed after the last war when the Allies failed to support their efforts to suppress the warmaking, imperialist element in Germany. At the same time they do not appear to look to Russia for guidance either. Others, however, continue political activities in the narrow frame open to them: they organize committees to aid returning KZ inmates, and form, or prepare the formation of
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labor unions. In some few cases, they overstep the bounds set for them by present directives by printing and distributing leaflets of an anti-Nazi character. In general, however, they follow the rules, do very little more.

9. Much less obvious, is the attitude of the Nazis and their "non-political" fellow-travellers and "little men" lackeys toward the forces of occupation, and the changes this attitude may have undergone. With the exception of a limited number of genuine Nazi "Idealists" the rank and file of the Nazis and their helpers were merely opportunists, and they have remained exactly that. For this reason, they are grateful for any bone thrown to them by the victors and neither in words nor writing take issue with Allied measures and policy. They are careful not to express their convictions on controversial matters, and the chances are that, as real opportunists, they have no convictions; therefore they look upon the occupier merely as someone who can bring them personal salvation or destruction, according to what they do or say. The only change in attitude noticeable as far as they are concerned is a decrease of the unreasonableness and fear of the Americans, anti-Nazi Germans and foreign workers which they experienced in the beginning. To some extent they believed the GÖERBELS line that all Germans would be exterminated; to some extent they had also believed the Allied line that Nazism would be extirpated, and therefore feared a particularly political revolution to follow in the wake of defeat. Neither event having taken place or being imminent, they have regained some of their composure and, as the anti-Nazi rightfully charge, some of their impertinence and arrogance. Whatever the present attitude of the Nazis toward the Americans may be, however, it is not one of virulent enmity, as was actually expected; on the contrary, they have come to look on the Americans to some extent as protectors against vindictive fellow countrymen and, in more cases than one, would no doubt be sorry to see them leave for fear that the intense feelings of their political adversaries might then erupt against them. At the same time, they hope for, and quite confidently expect, a new rise of Germany. This rise they do not visualize as taking place against the will of the occupying forces or behind their back, but rather in accord with them. They expect armed conflict between the US and the Soviet Union and they expect to participate on the American side. For this reason, one of the most ubiquitous rumors is the talk that German aviators are being drafted into the American Air Forces, and German boys frequently inquire where they can apply. As far as the American point of view in matters of war and atrocity guilt is concerned, the Nazis disagree with the indictment but welcome its extension to the whole German nation because they feel that spreading the responsibility reduces the individual guilt and punishment.

10. The attitude of the Church, both Protestant and Catholic, toward the American forces in Germany is one of painstaking political neutrality. Before the end of hostilities, churchmen, though friendly and helpful to American personnel, steadfastly refused most requests to make statements that would be of use to the Allied war effort in propagandistic or other ways. They claimed, and still do, that they cannot leave the realm of the spiritual, and on the whole have not officially greeted the Americans as the liberators from a system which was out to destroy them. Their attitude, best characterized by the Bishop of AACHEN, who stressed the non-political nature of the Church even in questions of Nazism, and the Bishop of Münster, who underlined the fact that the Americans were enemies, has remained
substantial; unchallenged, and it cases are known where church-
men have spoken in positive terms of the Allies from the pulpit.
Rather, none have indirectly taken issue in their sermons with
Allied accusations by asserting the moral responsibility of all
of mankind for the horrors of the past.

11. The attitude of German youth toward Allied occupation
has been and still is one of acceptance of the superior foe.
Raising to worship power and the instruments of power, young
Germans have been vastly impressed by American planes and armor.
By and large, they never believed the atrocity threats, and were
never really afraid of the Americans. To the propaganda of the
Werewolf, whose strength they were to be in GOEBBELS’ favor
imagination, they hardly reacted at all and what was expected
was the most fanatical and hopelessly indoctrinated generation
has, so far, done hardly more than cut a few wires. Army Intel-
ligence in recent summarization leaves open the question whether
the complete failure of the Werewolf was caused by the unwilling-
ness of the young to participate or by the speedy and complete
elimination of all the organizational leaders, but makes the
unqualified statement that the organization may be regarded as
eliminated. In any event, the attitude of German youth toward
the occupying power is not one of hatred, as scheduled in Nazi
post-war plans; at the same time it is not one of affection. The
boys who condemn the atrocities but praise their Nazi organizations,
who have no feeling of guilt and no inkling of what democracy is,
regard the Americans with a mixture of suspicion and genuine
adolescent curiosity. The girls who are eager to lavish their
favor upon American soldiers do so for personal gain,
because of the glamour surrounding any conqueror or simply be-
cause of the color, as an aspect of German color: there are no
indications that the Nazi way of life which they supported in
larger numbers and with greater ardor in times of glory then
even their male compatriots, has been superseded by any sudden
awakening to the blessings of liberty.

12. [As far as returning Pows are concerned, it may be said
that they are the Germans most resigned to their lot, whatever
it may be.] The majority of them have been in the fighting lines
and have experienced themselves, in the East and the West,
how they were clearly and surely defeated by military superior-
ity. They feel that the conqueror, by the rule of war, is
entitled to do what he pleases with the defeated and merely
trust the Americans will not exterminate them. It must be kept
in mind, however, that only the majority, and by no means all
the returning Pows, show this attitude. Among soldiers returning
to civilian life from years of battle there are always some who
will not adjust themselves, and whatever trouble American
occupational authorities may have in the future, the unadjustable
elements among German discharged soldiers are likely to be a
party to it.

13. Finally, there are the little people who are not polit-
ically conscious or articulate. They are not to be confused
with the "KLEINE MANNER" who merely shrink responsibility and
hide behind that innocent pose. They are the vast mass of those
who never knew where the next meal will come from. To them
food and money matter most, and they judge the Americans exclu-
sively by their willingness and ability to keep things in such
shape that wages can be saved and food purchased. All things
stand today they harbor certain grievances and suspicions against
the occupying forces. First, they all give credence to the very
widespread (and possibly Nazi-inspired) rumor that the Americans
burn or otherwise destroy quantities of food that come from their tables as leftovers. Secondly, they claim that the Americans make it difficult for the Germans to feed themselves because, they claim, the Americans fail to help them reconstitute their transport system and, moreover, eat some of the German food themselves.

14. As far as the intellectual hunger is concerned, the radio programs and newspapers offered to the population are avidly accepted everywhere, though their popularity has somewhat decreased of late because of insistence on collective German guilt and the "enemy" character they are said to have. Most important grievance, however, is the Allied silence on Germany's future fate. This has produced a good deal of suspicion and given vent to the most absurd yet very persistent rumors, such as the stories of the prohibition of German marriages, heavy fines for begotting children, etc. The rumors, born of suspicion, in turn inflate the suspicion prevailing.

15. The trend of German attitude to the American forces of occupation has described a curve. It set out at a rather high point of confidence, rose still further when final remaining doubts about American "humaneness" were dispersed, and began to sink when, after the end of hostilities, the political changes failed to occur that had been anticipated. It reached its lowest ebb at the time when Radio Berlin began to be heard and to be believed, and when the most fantastic tales about Russian occupation came back from the Soviet controlled zone. After that, suspicion set in against Soviet claims and stories from Soviet territory, and the curve resumed an upward swing again.

16. One thing is established beyond all doubt, that the Germans in their vast majority solidly prefer American to any other occupation. Their attitude toward the Americans is a mixture of many ingredients; it is a brew of submissiveness and self-righteousness, of suspicions and expectations, of probing how far the cut will permit the mouse to go, of fear and apathy, disappointment, relief and resignation. Almost completely absent are true enmity and true understanding.

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