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WHY OCCUPY EUROPE?

A Still-Seething Froth of Nazism Remains in Germany—A Major Reason Why American Occupation Forces Must Remain on the Job

By IB MELCHIOR

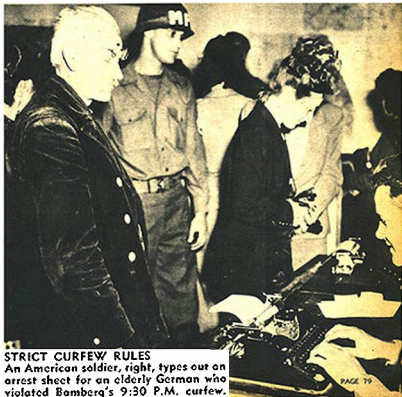
There is an old German saying often heard in Bavaria: "The soup is never eaten as hot as it is cooked." To-day it implies darkly that the Nazis merely are waiting for things to cool off before showing their hands again. Elements hostile to everything for which the United Nations fought still are clinging to power in the American zone of occupation in spite of "denazification." Strong rumors persist that Hitler and his right hand man, Martin Bohrman, are still alive and actively directing an attempt to regain political control!

There is a perfectly logical reasoning behind this belief. General Oswald Pohl, of the dreaded Elite Guard, who was accused of murdering 20 million people and was the most dangerous Nazi known to be at large, eluded capture until as late as May this year. Dr. Helmuth von Hummel, personal aide to Martin Bohrman, was taken during the same month in Salzburg, with \$5,000,000 in gold coins intended to finance a last-ditch fight of the Nazis. If these men avoided capture for over a year it is perfectly reasonable to believe that Hitler and Bohrman, their superiors in everything, could be still at large. The Germans reason this way!

Several underground organizations are known to exist. Many German officials, who sincerely cooperate with American authorities, have been receiving an increasing number of threatening letters. It is their positive belief that, were the occupation forces to be withdrawn, anarchy and civil war would result and former Nazis would try to regain power by any means.

That our job of occupation is even more important today than it was a year and a half ago is clearly shown by recent events in Germany.

Not long ago 80 former officers of the German Army were arrested in Bavaria following discovery of a plot to kill the leading Germans who are cooperating with the Americans. In March, this year, the first major attempt to revive the party was crushed. About 800 Germans were arrested in raids in the United States and British zones of Germany and Austria. The group included such high-ranking Nazi leaders as: Artur Axman, founder of the Hitler Youth and successor to Baldur von Schirach as Reich youth leader; Gustav Memminger, chief of the press and propaganda branch of the National Youth directorate; Kurt Budaeus and Willi Lohel, both major generals in the Hitler Youth organization. These men, who until then had succeeded in escaping capture, planned to revive the Nazi principles in the German government.



STRICT CURFEW RULES
An American soldier, right, types out an arrest sheet for an elderly German who violated Bamberg's 9:30 P.M. curfew.

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Not only through the displaced persons did we get our tips. Our Landkreis bordered on Czechoslovakia and one day, two members of the Czech secret police told us they had reason to believe that an extremely-clever and dangerous Gestapo agent, who had been operating in Prague, was hiding in our area.

All persons not permanently residing in the Landkreis had been required to register. And as we went through our files with the Czechs, they recognized an alias which this Gestapo agent once had used: Pitterman. The age of the man also tallied, and his profession was put down as "salesman," a nice neutral occupation. But we had to make sure. Pitterman was living with a family in the outskirts of a small village, and we drove down the next morning with the two Czech policemen. The description the family gave us convinced the Czechs that it was indeed their man, and we learned that Pitterman was sawing wood in the forest, a few hundred yards behind the house.

The Czechs cautioned us that the man undoubtedly was armed, that he was a dangerous fellow. Furthermore they were sure he'd be suspicious if we went into the forest for him. A gun-duel might result, and they wanted him alive. The best solution, therefore, was to get him down to the house on some pretext and seize him as he walked in the door.

The job of getting him down was given to Milton Frischberg, a young American soldier who had done some very good work for us during several months of occupation.

Milton "borrowed" the village mayor's daughter and, seemingly slightly tight, with his arm around the girl, he walked laughing and talking abominably bad German into the wood where Pitterman was working. When they came up to the man, Milton started to show off for his "girl friend."

"What are you doing here in the wood," he asked Pitterman.

"I'm sawing."

"Who gave you permission to saw?" asked Milton.

Pitterman must have thought him a harmless, stupid fool whom it was best to humor.

"I live in the house down the road, and I am sawing wood for them."

"I don't believe you! Where are your papers?"

Pitterman showed him his identification card.

"Is that all you have?"

"No. I have other papers in the house."

"Let's go down and see!"

Pitterman could not afford to refuse, and he did not suspect anything. So all three wandered to the house.

When Pitterman entered it, both his arms were grabbed by a strong Czech policeman, and quickly a small, but efficient, gun was removed from his inside coat pocket. The seemingly drunk, stupid American soldier, who spoke German so badly, ordered the former Gestapo agent to get his papers together and prepare to come along—in perfect German, too.

One day a man, and what appeared to be his secretary, showed up at corps headquarters and demanded to see the general. They didn't get that far, but they did get to talk to the assistant G-2.

They told him a fantastic story of the formation of a new German republic with a president named Falkenstein. This man, they said, had worked incessantly during the war to form a government that would put an end to the hostilities after doing away with the Nazi big-shots. He had succeeded in speeding the surrender of many German troops, and was, for example, responsible for the surrender of an armored division directly opposing us. He had ordered the commanding general of this division, in the name of the New German Republic, to surrender or face the consequences. They told that they were emissaries from President Falkenstein, who wanted to talk to the American high command. They showed copies of letters and documents, among them the letter with the ultimatum to the German general. What lent a touch of authenticity to the whole thing was the fact that the dates in this letter corresponded to the dates of the actual surrender of the division.

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The assistant G-2 had the men thoroughly interrogated, but could not pry loose any information as to the whereabouts of President Falkenstein himself. Finally, we were called in to see what we could do. I was sent up to interrogate this emissary from Falkenstein.

After having talked to the man for some time, it became apparent to me that he was carefully hedging and weighing his answers. He told me he could get us in touch with Falkenstein, but demanded absolute guarantee that the man would not be harmed in any way. At the same time, he told us he did not know where Falkenstein was. It was obvious that what he really was interested in was absolute protection for the man Falkenstein.

When I had determined that this was his real goal, I began telling him how interested we were in his story and his proposal; that we were very anxious to get in touch with Falkenstein himself and talk over the existence of his Republic. Then I had the two men put in the nicest accommodations the town could offer and supplied them with scarce rations of all kinds.

The next day when we resumed our discussions, I thought the man was ripe for the \$64 question. I asked him, very frankly, to stop trying to fool me, that I was convinced he knew the whereabouts of President Falkenstein and asked him to tell me. But even so his answer was somewhat of a surprise:

"I am President Falkenstein!"

It turned out that this man was a former sergeant in the armored division he had claimed to have forced to surrender. He had been inducted into the Army after having fallen into disgrace in a civilian job, as director of press and propaganda directly under Dr. Goebbels! Although we had given him no promise of immunity, the treatment he had received and our apparent great interest in his "republic" had led him to believe himself quite safe. Falkenstein was taken into custody and evacuated to a higher headquarters. What ultimately became of him I, unfortunately, was unable to find out.

Some tried to whitewash themselves with the occupation authorities by giving information about others. The son of the Hungarian Gestapo leader gave us leads which led to the capture of one of Hungary's worst war criminals, a man named Gal who was hanged last June, and the discovery of several cases of papers and documents including many personal papers of the Hungarian Nazi leader, Ferenc Szalasi. These documents were buried in the woods near a train in which about 100 Hungarian refugees made their home.

But the best example of such cooperation was the case of an SS major of the Regensburg Gestapo. This man worked for us and was responsible for many of the cases successfully solved by us in that town. He was given a comparably free hand, and he knew that if he did not deliver the goods, he would be interned. As a result, he almost broke his back to satisfy us.

Through him we learned that the complete records of the Waffen SS, fighting arm of the SS, were hidden in the forests around Regensburg.

Only one person remained in the area who knew the places where the balance of the records were hidden. This was a woman who persistently



PRETENDING TO BE SLIGHTLY TIGHT, Milton and the mayor's daughter approached Pitterman who unsuspectingly revealed high Nazi secrets, and the fact that he himself was a former Gestapo agent.

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denied knowing anything of the affair. The SS officer, however, had succeeded in locating one place where a large steel safe was buried. He owned a magnificent dog, trained in all phases of police work. With this dog he went to the spot and had the dog familiarize himself with it; this unbeknown to the woman.

The next day we paid the woman another visit and took her with us into the woods in the general vicinity of the hiding places. With us we had a dozen German prisoners-of-war with shovels and picks.

We told the woman that the entire forest was to be searched, and that even though it might be months before we found the records they would be found. We explained that we knew her denials were fraudulent and that she would be severely punished if we did find any records.

Still she would not give in. Then the SS officer explained to her that we were not going to search the forest aimlessly. His dog, he lied, was trained to point out anything that was buried, and he offered to prove it to her. We started off, the dog leading at the end of a long line held by the SS officer. We were about 300 yards from where the steel safe was buried and the officer imperceptibly steered his dog in that direction.

The woman grew pale as we neared the spot. Finally when the dog began scratching furiously at the earth over the safe, she was ready to tell us about the 13 other hiding places! For two days our PWs dug up chests and boxes containing the entire records of the Waffen SS—their personnel, their war losses, and other interesting statistical documents, which made it possible for the American military authorities to compile complete information on the outfit.

While we were living in Luxembourg City, during part of Rundstedt's Ardennes offensive, we took over a hotel and lived quite comfortably. The only flaw was that the enemy had begun to shell the city with long range, heavy caliber guns.

The Luxembourg shellings had, for the most part, just a nuisance value. But they provided a number of amusing incidents. They began one night at midnight, and an agent named Flanagan and I were sent out to discover whether they were incoming shells or the bombs of saboteurs. All were bursting around the main railroad station.

Flanagan and I located the area and surveyed the destruction. A few Military Police were around to keep people from getting caught in the tangle of live powerlines.

Finally, we approached an MP. Flanagan, a somewhat pompous person, with great dignity asked him: "And what, exactly, are these explosions like, soldier?"

At that moment a shell landed only a few yards behind a railroad car near which we were standing. The explosion rocked the countryside and threw us all to the ground.

Flanagan got up, brushed himself off and turned to the MP:

"Thank you very much," he said brightly, and walked off.

Some of the most pathetic individuals with whom we had to deal were the returned concentration camp inmates, many of whom had been in those hell holes for years. These people had an earnest desire to assist in apprehending Nazi leaders who had gone underground. Although many times the information they gave us was worthless and distorted by their own personal sufferings, it happened that such a tip from a former "KZ'ler" proved extremely valuable.

In our *Landkreis* we had two former concentration camp inmates who handed in reports regularly, about anything which they thought might be of interest to us. They did this entirely on their own initiative. One day a little item on their report caught our eye.

"In Kreuzbach an important Nazi is hiding. He was Hitler's right hand man."

Kreuzbach was a nearby village of perhaps 40 houses. It was not difficult to find out to whom our informants had referred. It was a middle-aged man, living with his sister in a small house. He was a forest worker, unobtrusive and apparently harmless. He was supposed to have come from Munich.

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We drove up to the house to have a talk with the man, and as we entered the door we heard a muffled shot upstairs. We ran all the way to the attic, and there on the floor lay our man. He had shot himself through the mouth.

We found out, then, who he was—Anton Eckl, *Reichsamtsleiter!* The title was of the highest in the Nazi party. He had been economic leader of Württemberg, Bavaria and half of Austria! When he saw us come to his house he knew the game was up, and this was his way out.

On many of the cases where we had to travel to other towns or villages we often used a *Volkswagen*, the German counterpart of our jeep. We had a couple of these at our disposal, complete with German drivers recruited from units not yet dissolved. They were working for the Military Government doing ordnance work and the like.

My favorite driver was a young boy whom we called "Junior" because of his tender years. Junior was anti-Nazi and, besides, was fascinated by the nature of our work. He insisted on helping us in raids, and actually did assist us quite effectively at times. Once he called our attention to a man who was trying to get out the back door of a house being searched, and once he located a collection of daggers and other weapons in the chicken coop of an "innocent" former SS man.

Although Junior was all right, the same could not be said for all his comrades. Some of them took advantage of the fact that they were working for American authorities and, therefore, were in a position to get their hands on many things of value to the German population. Once we discovered a small gasoline-stealing ring. But one of the most serious cases had to do with the aid given to certain SS officers by a German Army doctor whom we had allowed to practise in a little town in our county.

All SS members, with few exceptions, were easy to identify because they had their blood type tattooed under the left upper arm. Only SS men had this distinction.

Our area of occupation, the county of Kötzing, was situated in an out-of-the-way location in the hills near where the German, Czechoslovakian and Austrian borders run together. This probably was the reason why many scientific institutions were moved there, safe from the onrushing fronts. Here they were caught at the war's end. We had groups of scientists who had been working on the German atomic bomb, on death rays and other new and terrible ways of destruction, and we also had the *Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit* (the Institute for German work in the East).

This institute had been moved from Krakau, Poland, to a castle in Zandt, a small village in our county. Along with the Institute came all the staff, all their scientific instruments and data, and the director, Dr. Wilhelm Coblitz. The Institute's main function was the Germanification of Poland and everything Polish. There were departments for history, science, customs and art, and the Institute was under direct patronage of Dr. Hans Frank, General Governor of Poland, recently tried in Nuremberg. An amusing fact is that Dr. Frank denied the fact that he had tried to destroy Poland's art and culture, and that he had removed any art treasures. Actually, the art department of the Institute was the dearest to his heart and we found any number of crates containing art treasures still marked as the property of Polish museums! The director of the Institute was, besides being a full colonel in the Storm Troopers, also a close friend of Doctor Frank.

We apprehended most of the men connected with the Institute and turned over all their material and papers to the American science and art authorities in Munich.

One of the last men we arrested was a Dr. Drossbach of the scientific department. We raided his apartment and among other things, took a large, sealed envelope marked *Important Material*. Back in our office, we expectantly opened this interesting envelope. To our utter amazement it contained a pictorial record of Dr. and Mrs. Drossbach's membership in a nudist camp!

All this has been but a small glimpse of the serious job of occupation.

The papers, almost daily, carry reports of subversive events in Germany. A train carrying the families of American soldiers was fired upon near Bad Nauheim, 30 miles north of Frankfurt; an

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American pfc was shot to death sitting on a park bench; two others were killed riding their jeep in Nurnberg.

These outbursts are but surface bubbles in a still-seething froth of Nazism. The Nazis have been beaten, but they are not dead. There is good reason for keeping our occupation troops in Germany. We don't want the Nazis back!

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Last May, "Operation Grab-Bag" broke up a far-flung smuggling ring and underground escape-route for Élite Guard men and war criminals, when river craft of a dozen nationalities were raided along the Danube. This raid yielded machine guns, ammunition, radio transmitters and explosives, and a great many arrests were made.

To me, all these developments are not surprising. I'd had almost a year of occupation duty in the Counter Intelligence of the U. S. Army. Our first operation showed us how things stood.

The order certainly had been clear and definite enough: All firearms, all ammunition and explosives, all daggers and similar weapons, all equipment belonging to the German armed forces, and all other contraband material had to be handed in to the American Military Government authorities by midnight, July 20, 1945.

Three days later, we stood looking at the result of the first coordinated raid in the American occupation zone, a raid which, after extreme secret planning, had followed almost immediately upon the expiration of the decree, and had taken the German population entirely by surprise. We looked at what we had discovered in just one small town: A large heap of firearms, from German army rifles to shotguns; from old-fashioned six-shooters to the latest-model Luger—even two brand new machine guns, all well-oiled and ready to use. We looked at a small mountain of ammunition and explosives, including everything from dynamite to time delay mechanisms. We examined hundreds of deadly-looking daggers and dangerous knives; all kinds of German Army equipment, from typewriters to secret documents, and we inspected the two almost new radio transmitters that had belonged to the *Luftwaffe*. In the hospital lay a high ranking officer of the SS (Élite Guard), seriously wounded. The local jail was filled beyond capacity with war and post-war criminals.

This was our beautiful little Bavarian town, where the people seemed so friendly and cooperative, and where we sometimes wondered if Intelligence agent. I had been with this unit through France, the Battle of the Bulge, had crossed the Rhine, swept through the whole of fields and forests were patrolled by mounted cavalry and by foot patrols. When "Operation Tallyho" went into action at 4:30, the morning of July 21, we were ready for it.

My own area lay across the little river. The first house we entered was a large building housing about 50 refugees from all over Germany. Our procedure was to collect the inhabitants in one room, after having ordered them to unlock all chests, trunks, closets and rooms. While I gave each individual a short screening and examined papers, the MPs would search the place.

In the first house, one of the refugees, a man about 45, claimed to have come from Dresden, but his papers were not satisfactory. His name, moreover, rang a familiar note. When I had the blacklist examined he was on it: Chief of German Police in Prague, Czechoslovakia, listed as a war criminal! He admitted his identity and was taken into custody.

Next among the priority targets was a small house, occupied by a farmer and two refugee families; one woman with her little daughter, the other a mother with two grown sons, one of whom recently had been discharged from the German Army. The reason for choosing this house was the fact that an overabundance of visitors from neighboring towns seemed to come there. This might be perfectly all right, but—

The inhabitants were collected in the kitchen. Nothing was wrong with their papers, and their stories seemed logical, so I decided to join the search. The sergeant was in the attic with another man and I went up to them:

"Have you found anything, sergeant?"

"Nothing at all. I've sent the others to go through the barns."

THE AUTHOR—IB MELCHIOR

Ib Melchior, son of the Metropolitan Opera singer, Lauritz Melchior, was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, and has the degree of Cand. Phil. from the University of Copenhagen. Before entering the Military Intelligence in the beginning of 1942, he had a career in Europe and in this country as an actor, stage-manager and director. Melchior was a member of General Bill Donovan's "Cloak and Dagger" organization of the OSS until early 1943; then followed a brief period of broadcasting for OWI to Denmark.



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OCCUPATION ZONES in Germany of the United States, Great Britain, Russia and France.

I noticed that the floor of the attic was on two levels, one about a foot higher than the other—that meant a hollow space.

"Have you looked between the floors?"

"Not yet."

I pried one of the heavy floor boards loose and lifted it up. The space was filled with sawdust. But there was a small piece of green paper sticking up. I took hold of it, pulled, and had a German Army document marked "Top Secret" in my hand!

When we were through taking out all the equipment in that space, we were armed to the teeth with German weapons, stacks of secret documents, boxes of ammunition and high explosives. The loot included uniforms, radio transmitters, daggers and even a pair of binoculars. In the barn, under the dirt floor, we found a German Army issue motorcycle and many gallons of American Army gasoline.

For 48 hours, we kept up the search and check of individuals. In one house we found three Army rifles suspended in smoke-proof bags in the chimney. Another house boasted of enough dynamite to blow up the large building in which we made our headquarters. One family with three daughters, all married to German officers away in prisoner-of-war camps, had a collection of murderous daggers and knives, beautifully oiled to preserve them against rust, salted away in the cellar. After all, their husbands might some day come back and find good use for them! To complete the list of contraband, we found in one house enough American Army Post Exchange rations to supply a small unit for a couple of weeks.

During the night, between the 21st and the 22nd, a man tried to steal through our town patrols and was shot in the attempt. He turned out to be an SS captain who had belonged to the *Totenkopf Verband*, notorious concentration camp guards.

This was our first large-scale raid, and it came ten weeks after the unconditional surrender of Germany. If there had been any doubts in our minds as to the necessity of the occupation before, they were gone now. The Germans had been beaten, but they were far from harmless.

For us, VE-day was May 8, 1945. On that day, the troops in front of us surrendered and came rolling into the little town of Grafenau, in which we had our headquarters. They came by the thousands, in their own vehicles, under command of their own officers and fully armed. One colonel arrogantly clicked his heels and told us stiffly that he was only a soldier obeying orders; if it had been up to him, he said, he and his men would still be fighting us!

We made up convoys, put the highest ranking German officer in charge, gave him a map with the nearest prisoner-of-war enclosure marked on it and told him to take the convoy there. They clicked their heels, saluted with a slight bow and the convoys rolled on to imprisonment.

Soon routine duties took up most of our time. But it was one of these routine problems which first showed us the frame of mind of the people with whom we had to deal.

Into our CIC office in Grafenau the Military Police brought two women and a little boy, picked up as travel-violators. They looked nice. The women were both about 30 years old, and the eight-year-old boy, son of one of them, was healthy and chubby.

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We did not consider them "dangerous saboteurs" or "spies," but we had to determine their identity and their purpose in using the roads contrary to orders. So we looked at their papers, and asked some routine questions. We soon dismissed one of them, but the other entangled herself in so many contradictions that our suspicions were aroused. We asked if she had any papers in addition to the one identity card she had shown us. This was firmly denied. However, a bunch of papers was found in the lining of her handbag. One document ordering the transfer of a certain SS colonel, was hidden in a little pocket in her slacks. That was enough for us, and the woman was thoroughly searched. In her left sock she was carrying a second identity card, made out to her as the wife of the colonel, and this was the real one. The other was a clever forgery given her by the SS in Prague, from where she came. Then we got her story.

Yes—she was the wife of this high-ranking officer, and the little boy was their son. She was fleeing from the Russians and using false papers because she "knew" that the families of all SS men were immediately put to death by the Americans and she wanted to escape this fate. That this was the truth she never doubted—had she not heard it told over the German radio many times? The Gestapo certainly would have killed her—perhaps even tortured her!

This, then, is what the propaganda of Dr. Goebbels had accomplished!

We assured the woman that she would not be executed, but merely fined or confined for a short while as punishment for violating the Military Government regulations. Her son and the other woman were free to go on or remain in the town waiting for her sentence. And, with that, she was placed in the custody of the Military Government, which gave her a short jail sentence to be served right in the jail in Grafenau.

But even in the lonely cell the voice of Dr. Goebbels did not leave this woman alone. His words were the inescapable truth to her. When morning came, daylight fell upon the grey face of a dead woman. She had hung herself with a towel. A purple, swollen tongue between small white teeth; a pair of pointing, stiff legs on each side of a rough, wooden stool, and a pathetic farewell note written in blood were the result of Goebbels' ravings. What price propaganda!

One of our occupation jobs was to track down high ranking Nazi leaders who had gone into hiding when Germany gave up. Many of them were war criminals and others were to be interned because of their fanatical beliefs in Nazi ideology. Some of these men used to hide in the overcrowded German military hospitals where they could lose their identity among the thousands of wounded and sick. So, every hospital was checked and every patient screened. To do this efficiently the cooperation of the German doctor in charge of the hospital was necessary. Usually this cooperation was willingly given, but once we found ourselves in an SS hospital in Bergreichenstein, Sudetenland. The entire hospital staff and patient body were SS. The doctors were absolutely correct in their behavior, but it was easy to see that no assistance was forthcoming. So we employed a little trick. We became very friendly, produced cigarettes and Scotch, and suggested we all sit down for a chat. Pleasant flattery, a few drinks, and the SS officers produced their own bottle of excellent home-made apricot brandy. When we at last started through the hospital, the chief doctor himself insisted upon accompanying us, and personally pointed out the patients whom he suspected might interest us! Although this was fraternization, it was of a kind that paid off the right way.

A few days after VE-day we had occasion to go to the infamous Dachau concentration camp to check on a story that had been found in the files there. Most of the inmates had been taken away already, and we didn't really feel like seeing the ones who were left. We expected they would look like the prisoners of the political prison of Untermassfeldt, the first such place we liberated. This prison had been run as a war factory, but many of the inmates contracted tuberculosis and were unable to work. The rule of the prison, however, was "no work, no food." As a result, the sight which met us when we entered the cells was indescribable.

But we did inspect the Dachau crematorium, and never have I seen a system of destruction so

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entirely efficient! When a large batch of prisoners was to be cremated they usually came from another camp. Upon arrival in Dachau they were herded into a spacious room and told they were to have a bath before being assigned to barracks. They were ordered to undress and everyone was given a piece of soap and a towel. This towel was left neatly with their clothes and then everybody, soap in hand, went into a big shower room—capacity, about 100 persons. Above the door was a large sign reading "Shower Room." In the floor were heavy grates over the drains, and the ceiling was covered with rows of shower sprays. The prisoners went in gladly and willingly. Some of them had, perhaps, not had a bath for months. There was no trouble at all. The door was closed behind them, and the sprays were turned on, while the SS guards watched from behind the thick windows running the length of the room. Only no water came from the sprays. The Nazis substituted poison gas! When the room was thoroughly aired the dead bodies were taken into an adjoining room, where a few long tables stood along the walls. Here they were thrown on the tables and all gold teeth and fillings carefully removed. Then they were lugged to the crematorium, where each oven took six bodies at a time. The ashes then were poured into big barrels and later parcelled into small urns. A list of the victims' names was made, a name was affixed to an urn, and the urn with the ashes sold to the grieving family of the man whose name happened to appear on the urn.

Complete efficiency! All clothes and other belongings were salvaged, all gold from the teeth. A nice sum was collected on the ashes, and the rest was used as fertilizer. Even the soap and the towels could be used over and over again.

It was not the first time we ran into this utter bestiality of the SS. In April, in a town called Münchberg, Bill, one of my friends, and I had set up a CIC office in the building of the *Bürgermeister*. One particular day we were sitting there resting on our laurels, having just apprehended and arrested a *Gauhauptstellenleiter*. There was a knock on the door and a young girl slowly walked in. She was about 23 years of age, but her big eyes were filled with suffering. That she was a displaced person—probably Russian—we saw at once.

"Please, will you help me?" she pleaded in a trembling voice.

We asked her what she wanted. She just looked at us with her tragic eyes and lifted up her gay-colored skirt!

High on the inside of each thigh, about half a pound of flesh had been cut out. The gaping, open wounds looked raw and angry.

This was the way the SS had shown disapproval because a Russian girl refused to "cooperate."

It was not only the SS troops that could act so cruelly. There seemed to be a hard and incompassionate trait even in the seemingly-peaceful and easy-going farmers of the Bavarian woodlands.

One day, five girls came into our office. They were near collapse from exhaustion, had no shoes on and were clad in tatters. They were Polish Jews and had been taken from Poland three years before with their families. Each girl had been brought to a concentration camp in Germany along with her parents, brothers and sisters. Here they had been forced to assist in the slaughtering and cremation of their-loved ones, one by one, until only they themselves were left. When the camp was liberated they had left immediately, rather than stay with their horrible memories. For two weeks they had been wandering the roads. Everywhere they were turned away by the Germans, who refused them food, clothing and shelter. They were terribly emaciated and their feet were swollen from previous frostbite. We asked them if they had called on the civil authorities in our town, and they replied that the *Bürgermeister* had ordered them to keep going.

I called him immediately and asked if it were possible to take care of the five girls. His answer was that it would not be possible to do anything for them, and that the best thing would be to send them on their way. After all, he said, they were only Polish Jews and former concentration camp inmates! This infuriated me. I told him he had better see to it that the girls were taken care of, or it would cost him his office. I ordered him to procure two rooms with five beds, one for each



United States soldier stands armed guard over Hungarian soldiers in custody after 372 ships were seized this year for smuggling activity.

girl, a complete outfit including shoes and overcoat for each, and to make sure they had a good meal before he called and reported to me again! At 4:30 the *Bürgermeister* humbly reported that it had been his pleasure to fulfill my wish!

While we were still in Grafenau we received a call from a nearby unit to investigate a shooting in the mountains. Nobody had any definite information on it, but we decided to go over and see what we could find out.

As we usually worked in pairs, a young lieutenant by the name of Franz Vidor went with me. Franz was of Viennese origin and a very pleasant and easy-going boy, who had distinguished himself in Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.

There were quite a few Germans and Austrians in the military intelligence service. They had come to this country before the war and because of their intimate knowledge of the enemy country, the people and the language, they were of great value. Most of them did a magnificent job.

Sometimes, of course, it was quite amusing to hear the heavy accents of some of them. Especially a certain master sergeant in his late thirties, who had a deep hatred for the Nazis. He was a capable member of a prisoner-of-war interrogation team. At one point, his team was shifted from one unit to another and set up a few miles behind the front. The sergeant went out to look over the terrain and on his way back was challenged by an American soldier.

"I am an American sarjent. I am on ze vay to my unit!"

That was enough for the soldier. The sergeant found himself, despite his heavily accented protests, in the prisoner-of-war enclosure along with a batch of newly captured Krauts. It just happened that our forces recently had been warned that a number of American jeeps with German agents clad in American uniforms and possessing complete American identification papers, had been reported sent behind our lines to kill Eisenhower. So, the soldier was perfectly right in what he did.

The sergeant, being nobody's fool, used the time to good advantage. The German prisoners received him as one of their own and he got more information out of them than he probably would have been able to get in an interrogation. He was released in short order.

But let us get back to the story of the mountain shooting.

Franz and I visited the unit which had reported it and, as we couldn't get any exact information, we started by looking over the people in their detention enclosure. We had found from our files that just prior to VE-day the German Air Force general staff had been in this area, and that the commanding general and some of his officers had been captured in the forest there. The general staff had come from Prague and most of the members had not been captured yet. They were, of course, wanted with great priority.

Among the persons in the detention enclosure was a man in civilian clothes with an almost brand-new rain coat. This was an unusual sight and we singled him out for interrogation. When we examined his coat we discovered that it had a label from a shop in Prague! After a little coaxing he owned up to the fact that he had

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been a lieutenant with the German Air Force general staff. We asked him to write down the names of the high-ranking officers on the staff. Heading the list were a Col. Bauer, a Col. Cornelius, a Maj. Joachim and several others. He also admitted that these officers had been in the woods on the mountains.

Franz and I took a few troops with us and went up into the mountain forest to a forester's lodging lying miles from anywhere. The place consisted of two houses, one occupied by the forester and his family and the other by six civilians. We first asked the forester who the civilians were.

"Well, there are two discharged German soldiers, Sergeant Baur and Corporal Joachim," he told us.

Baur and Joachim! Those names headed our list!

But when we asked the so-called sergeant and corporal, they insisted that these were their rightful ranks and denied knowing anything about the Air Force general staff. Although their papers were in order, we, of course, didn't believe them; it would be too much of a coincidence. But where were Cornelius and the others?

Again we went to the forester and warned him that unless he told us everything he knew, he would be held responsible for the fact that Baur and Joachim had been found in his house. This frightened him, and he confided that Cornelius and the others were hiding in the woods—but he had no idea where. Not so his 11-year-old son! The boy was more curious and had sneaked after the colonel one day. He knew just about where their hiding place was. With him as a guide we went into the woods.

We were walking along cautiously when I almost stepped on the top of a German camouflage tent half set into the ground. I motioned to some of the soldiers and bellowed in a stentorian voice:

"Come out—with your hands up."

It was Cornelius all right, and three others were with him. They admitted their identity at once when they saw the game was up. We were told that Colonel Bauer was the commanding officer,



MAIN STREET of Kötzing is picturesque but potentially dangerous for U. S. occupation forces.

and decided to have some fun. One of the captives was a sergeant, and we ordered him to go to his commanding officer, give him a snappy salute and report on their capture.

When we returned to the forester's house the sergeant went up to the innocent looking "Sergeant" Baur, saluted him smartly and said: "Colonel Bauer, I beg to report that we have been captured!"

I have never before seen a man blow his top so completely.

The G-2 of Corps considered our catch important enough to send one of his own officers down to our office to interrogate our prisoners. All through the night he tried to pry information from them, but to no avail. They stood on their rights as German officers and prisoners-of-war, and refused to talk at all. The next morning we were ordered to take them back to the Army interrogation center.

I went along on the trip with another agent. It was a 200-mile drive. At noon, we drove off the road to a pleasant little lake, stopped our vehicle and prepared lunch. When the smell of the coffee started drifting towards the colonel's nostrils they became restless.

"Won't you join us in a cup of coffee and a bite to eat?" we asked them. Our invitation was promptly accepted.

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NAZI PARTY FILES, like this, were found by American troops in an old mill in Munich.

For an hour and a half we sat there talking art, German literature and politics. Little by little, we steered the conversation to the activities of the Air Force general staff. A bit of not too-obvious flattery, arguing a point which had to be proven, and a genuine interest in a really fascinating conversation did the rest. Before we resumed our trip we knew the entire story, including the fact that Colonel Cornelius had been in charge of the Office of Collection and Evaluation of Information for Future Air Wars—an organization which had collected all available information, both Allied and Axis, pertaining to air activities. They were well prepared! We even knew the place near Munich where the records were hidden.

Of courses it is not always that one must spend a long time and employ tricks to get desired information. I remember how we caught a graduate of one of the best spy schools in Germany in three minutes flat, and all because of one little overlooked detail.

This man came into our office one day, and asked for permission to return to his home, far into the area of Germany already occupied by us. He claimed that he was a German-born war correspondent for a Swedish newspaper. His family, he said, was in Sweden, but he had never lived there and didn't speak the language. He had been a correspondent for this certain paper for three years, and used to send in his stories in German. His story sounded plausible. His papers were in order and he had come to us voluntarily.

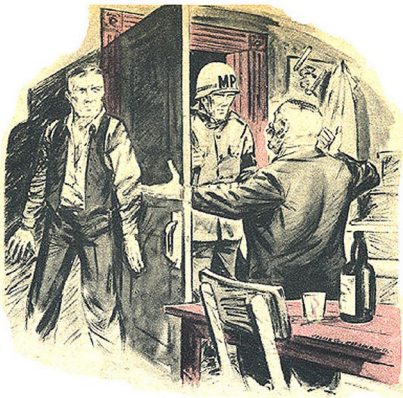
Now, it so happens that I speak Swedish. Just to make sure, I asked him to write the name of the newspaper for which he worked. He did, and made a glaring spelling error! A man who has worked for a paper three years at least knows how to spell the name of it! The man was so dumbfounded by the oversight of this minute, obvious detail that he didn't even have wits enough to deny his true identity and purpose.

Most of the time the slave workers, the displaced persons, were of great help to us. Of course, it happened that an occasional bitter forced laborer, who for years had given his toil for nothing, would denounce his "employer." But most were honest in the information they gave.

In this way, we received a tip from an Estonian slave-worker that a family by the name of Zollner had weapons and ammunition hidden. Although he had been threatened with death if he revealed this knowledge to us, he felt safe in doing it because he was to be repatriated in a few days.

At this time I was working with a good friend, Tom Winkler, a clever boy of Hungarian birth. Tom and I went to the farm house of the Zollners and found that the family consisted of five persons; the old people, two daughters and a son recently discharged from the *Wehrmacht*. We separated the two men, assembled the rest of the family plus the farmhands in the kitchen and proceeded to make a thorough search of the house. Although we even went as far as to break up the floor and dig in the earth underneath, we found nothing of a contraband nature. But we both had

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PART OF OUR JOB in occupied Germany was to track down high-ranking ex-Nazi party members.

a feeling that something was wrong in the household, and we began a sharp interrogation of first the father and then the son. We deliberately had kept them apart since we started our search. But neither would admit anything. The son, however, was extremely nervous, possibly because during his career in the *Wehrmacht* he had seen what could happen to people who refused to talk. When, finally, we took a blind chance and told him that his father had admitted hiding weapons and ammunition in the woods near their farm, he broke down and told us it was true. He even confessed that the weapons consisted of four rifles and three pistols with ammunition, all well-oiled; greased and packed in tar paper.

Of course, the father had told us nothing, but we were reasonably sure that the weapons would have to be in the wood. We then went to the father and told him what his son had said, but the old man kept his mouth shut, refusing to believe us. Then we took the two of them and ordered them to show us the place in the forest where the weapons were hidden. This was a mistake which almost cost us the case.

After we had walked about half a mile we discovered that father and son had been able to talk together despite our efforts to keep them apart. They had found that neither actually had told us where the weapons were hidden. Suddenly they stopped: When we asked what the matter was the father shrewdly announced that what his son had told us was not true. The boy, he said, had been so frightened and confused that he hadn't realized what he said.

But Tom and I had been in similar situations before. After threats and cajoling drew consistent blanks, Tom took the father and I took the son and we went in opposite directions into the woods.

We had a plan. The son was the easiest to break, as he had shown us before, and as we walked on I worked on his nerves, pointing out to him that if I were to shoot him down nobody would know the difference. I could simply say it had been in self defense, I told him. I swore to kill him if he did not show me the weapons. When I thought he was frightened enough I stopped near a small cave formed by a couple of big stones in the hillside.

"Get into that cave as far as you can," I ordered him. Tremblingly, he obeyed.

"Turn your back to me and put your hands on your head!"

He began to whimper. "Please don't shoot me! Please don't shoot me!"

"Will you tell me where you have hidden the weapons?"

"Please, please! Don't shoot! Don't kill me!"

At this moment a shot rang out and echoed through the forest. Tom had done his part.

I cocked my gun. "Well?"

He came out, horror in his eyes. We did not have far to go. He led me to another cave and began digging the top soil away with a stick. There were the tar paper packages!

I gave a long whistle and in a few minutes Tom joined me with old Zollner, who was furious. His son looked at him as if he couldn't believe his eyes, but made no sound.