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## Germany speaks

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### [Germany]

#### Confidence in Victory

A well-known German surgeon, having excellent connections with Nazis in high positions, said in March of last year to one of his friends in a neutral country: "By Whitsun we shall be victorious; I have very reliable information."

His friend contradicted him calmly but forcibly: "I will bet you any sum you like that this is out of the question. The British will not give in, and the German population will have to live through yet another war-time winter. If you are willing to take on my bet, I am prepared to go as high as 10,000 Swiss Francs."

The German surgeon was extremely surprised and replied in a very serious tone:

"If you are really right, our misery will be untold."

#### A Pessimist

A German industrialist reported a few months ago: "The future of Germany looks very black to me. At Hamburg I should have built an aerodrome, but could not finish it. The transport problem was insoluble. The British considerably disorganise transport, and quite apart from that I was short of vehicles, because the Army needs them all. But above all, my machinery is in such a terrible state that I could hardly have used it for executing this job. It has not been overhauled for three years."

#### Udet<sup>[1]</sup>

We hear the following about Udet: "At the beginning of the invasion of Russia he supported Goering, who told Hitler that he could not take responsibility for the Luftwaffe in the event of an attack upon Russia. That Hitler struck at Russia in spite of this warning let Udet to indulge to an even greater extent than before in his habit of heavy drinking. Having been very drunk one night, Udet made a serious mistake in his work on the following day, which had very grave consequences for the production of aeroplanes. When it was discovered that Udet was responsible for this, he was granted leave of absence for two months and was constantly under the observation of two doctors, who apparently were to break his habit of drinking. Whether this earlier incident has any connection with his later accident is not known."

#### Super-Gestapo

"It is known from reliable information that the Gestapo polices the Army and even censors letters which are addressed to General von Stülpnagel<sup>[2]</sup> in Paris as well as

those which leave his head-quarters. The Gestapo in its turn is watched over by a so-called secret police, known as the TOBIS-KLANGFILM-Gesellschaft [3]. The agents of this association also carry out general espionage and have at their disposal unlimited financial funds. Every official of this secret police is of course himself spied upon - by two of his own colleagues."

## **Final defeat 1942!**

"At the head-quarters and within the ranks of the General Staff someone, who frequently has business there, has heard that the greater part of the officers take it for granted that Germany will be defeated during 1942. Further, he reports that there are constant differences between

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the Army and the Nazi Party, which have gone to such extremes that, for instance, an officer has no chances of promotion if he is a member of the Party. Similar differences, and equally far-reaching ones, exist between the Army and the Gestapo. During a public discussion, officials and officers of the German Command in Paris spoke about the Russian Campaign and expressed the view that if the losses of men and materials, as announced by the Russians, were reasonably correct, then it was certain that the German Army would be defeated."

"The brother of a well-known German heavy industrialist was instructed by the Germans to acquire the majority of shares in the various French industries in Paris - be it with their agreement or by confiscation. However, he declared personally to one of our own friends - in contrast to the opinion of his brother, whose political views he did not share - that he thought the war was lost for Germany. A number of other German heavy industrialists from the Ruhr expressed the view to a leading engineer of the Longvy Steelworks [4] that Germany could not win this war."

## **Racketeer Goebbels**

"The German Ministry of Propaganda has purchased up to ten million French Francs through a well-known financier. A short time ago this man was arrested by the Exchange Control Department, when one of his frequently employed illegal methods was discovered by them. All commission earned by him during his purchase of exchange and gold on behalf of the Germans was confiscated. In order to avoid a public trial, which would have been detrimental to Germany's interests, the Exchange Control Department decided in secret session that the man should be released, whereas has the matter been taken to the French Courts, he might have revealed valuable information concerning the ways and means employed by Germany in her purchases of exchange and gold. When released, the man was instructed to continue his purchases on behalf of the Germans, and it was impressed upon him that absolute silence regarding his arrest as well as the nature of his work was imperative, the penalty for not holding his tongue being death."

"A Gestapo agent has transferred her whole fortune, about one million Marks, to Paris, where someone personally known to one of our friends has bought French exchange and gold on her behalf."

## **Effects of the Bombing**

"In Cologne a large part of the two main streets (Hohe- and Breitestrasse) as well as

the waiting room of the main railway station have been badly damaged. Many famous and important buildings were affected (the Gürzenich, Hansa-Haus, Gereons-Haus and -Church) as well as many factories in the industrial area of Cologne (Köln-Deutz and Köln-Lindenthal). It is said that the Merck factory between Darmstadt and Mannheim, as well as about a quarter of the town of Darmstadt, have been completely destroyed. Frankfurt-on Main was also badly hit, and as a result railway traffic ceased for a time.

The Castle of Charlottenhof, near Berlin-Charlottenburg - a suburb of Berlin - was almost completely ruined and it is thought that a section of the German General Staff had their head-quarters there.

In the town of Wiesbaden a mansion received a direct hit by one of the special British high explosive bombs; seventeen houses in the immediate vicinity were also destroyed by the explosion.

The moral effects of the bombing on the population are far more important than the material damage done. We heard from one of our friends that everyone in Cologne who has relations or acquaintances in the country, does his utmost to leave the town. However, all those who have work in Cologne have been forbidden to do this."

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"The German Authorities deliberately publish only average figures of the casualties in the bombed districts. Thus everyone is under the impression that the authorities are telling the truth, because they know roughly the casualties in their own district, while, on the other hand, they are usually ill informed about those in other districts."

## **Notes on Italy**

### **How long?**

An Italian in opposition to the regime, who has recently arrived from Italy, describes the state of his country as the most tragic imaginable. He says:

"One can hardly picture the misery: there is a shortage of food throughout the country and the people are freezing because industry has priority for coal supplies and what fuel is still obtainable is almost beyond the means of the majority of the population, the cost of heating a small house per day being about 60-70 Lira. The Italian newspapers publish only the utterances of the German press. The journalists have become slaves and no longer think for themselves. Apathy is spreading amongst the people, they hardly read any longer. I cannot imagine how such misery can be endured for another year."

### **"An Occupied Country**

"However, the people are without any means of fighting against all this; they know only too well that as soon as any trouble breaks out, the whole country would be occupied by German troops, as the Germans have more soldiers than they need. Already all strategical points throughout Italy are in German possession, and the Fascist Militia works hand in hand with the Nazis."

### **The Opposition**

"A few attempts at rebellion in Sicily were immediately suppressed by force and with

the greatest of brutality. Although this is not known to the general public, many shootings have taken place throughout Italy. Such experiences make revolt in Italy as well as other countries seem an impossibility. For this very reason the recent events in Bohemia made a deep impression in Italy, because intelligent Italians realize that their own country is in an identical position, and regard Italy as a German Protectorate already, or at any rate in the near future. I am sometimes in doubt whether a British victory is possible; the power of the Germans over the Continent is too great."

## **Hatred of the Germans**

"The aversion and hatred of the Germans is deeply rooted in the Italian nation and is daily increased by the shortage of necessities because everyone knows that the Germans are robbing the country. Up to last summer German soldiers were allowed to travel free of charge to Italy; crowds of them came and everywhere behaved as if they were masters. They also enjoyed the privilege of free postage to their homes, and as a result of this the soldiers bought up everything they could lay their hands on and Italy was left in as poor a state as France and the other occupied territories. In order to allay the discontentment a little, the soldiers have had to travel in mufti since summer. - Many shopkeepers constantly refuse to sell anything more to foreigners."

## **The Deceiver Deceived**

"Much bitterness was caused by the fact that Germany made a pact with France, in which the latter was assured that she would not have to give up Tunis, Corsica or Nice, in order that a basis might be established for the collaboration between those two countries - Italy no longer requiring concessions, since she was already under the thumb of Germany. Concessions are made with Italy in the Balkans and never before have they been hated so much as today by the inhabitants, especially the Croats. It is quite impossible that an Italian could hold his position on the throne of Croatia."

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## **German Troops in France**

From France we hear the following:

### **Bypass to France**

"Since about three months ago more and more German troops from the Eastern frontier are being sent to France for recreation and rest and also to repair their equipment, including tanks and other army vehicles. They arrive in a state of exhaustion from the front line. In order to prevent a further lowering of the morale of the German population, these soldiers are not allowed to break their journey anywhere on the way through Germany. Only after convalescing for some time in France are they granted their official leave."

### **In the Rear France**

"The morale of these troops is low. German soldiers in France have always taken too much drink, and those who have recently arrived are drunk nearly every night. They despise the armies and occupation whom they regard as shirkers; naturally this leads to disputes. It has frequently happened that German front line soldiers from the East have, on entering an over-crowded restaurant, forcibly thrown out soldiers of occupation. They

also often have quarrels with the German military police."

## **Hell in Russia**

"During private conversation with Frenchmen, these soldiers often say that Russia was hell for them and that they fear most of all the possibility of having to return once more. Many soldiers have committed suicide when they know that they would have to return to the Russian front. It is known authentically that in Poitiers, for example, quite a number of such suicides occurred. Disregard for their officers and slackness in discipline is very common amongst these troops. I think even you in England will have heard that in Besançon, where more than three divisions from the Eastern Front were quartered, sixty-two men were shot for disciplinary offences. One of the main reasons for the rebellion was that soldiers who had been promised a three months leave in France were informed after only three weeks that they had to prepare for an early return to the Eastern front."

## **Invasion Propaganda**

"German soldiers have very often expressed the view that an invasion of Britain would not be a matter of great difficulty. They had already accomplished so much that they would still be able to manage the five miles, which would be all the easier as an island lay in between. It is known that the German soldiers have deliberately been given wrong idea about the width of the Channel. Many are firmly convinced that at one point the distance between England and the Continent is only five miles, and even that there is an island suitable for intermediary landings between these."

## **Notes on France**

### **Political Assassinations**

"If citizens of Paris are asked who organises the assassinations of Germans, one nearly always gets the answer: 'We in Paris believe that the Germans do it themselves because up to now the assailants have never been discovered, and at times these assassinations take place in buildings to which Frenchmen have no access such as Gestapo offices, or officers' quarters.' The correctness of this view may be questioned, but it is symbolic of the feeling of the people."

"Information from the occupied zone indicates that some of the attacks are actually organised only by small groups of terrorists."

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Others originate in outbreaks of spontaneous infuriation of Frenchmen, aroused by causes other than their national hatred. For example, many of the attacks can be traced back to the simple fact that Germans have had an intimate relationship with the wives of some Frenchmen. In some instances even the French police know very well that the root of the trouble lies with brothel house keepers. This is the case with the German officer who was stabbed in the back at the tube station of Barbès. It is even possible that such disturbances sometimes originate in quarrels within the German army. Such disputes often arise when the soldiers have been drinking heavily. Further, it is not impossible that under some circumstances the assassinations are the work of the Gestapo who in this way rid themselves of unwanted elements within their own ranks. For instance, the murder of the Commandant of Nantes took place at 2 o'clock in the morning, a time

when all Frenchmen in the occupied zone have curfew. Through the darkness this officer was walking across the main square of Nantes accompanied by two other officers. The opinion is prevalent in that town that this murder was organised by the Gestapo; this seems all the more likely in view of the fact that this man was not disliked by the French people."

## Sabotage

"In factories which are producing for Germany in the occupied zone, many ways of sabotage are found by the workers, and not infrequently even by the employers. Such sabotage often takes the form of passive resistance, in wasting time and doing everything possible to interfere with and hold up production. The same applies throughout the railway industry."

"Small organised groups also exist which do more than this; they systematically destroy or damage railway coaches and important machinery. It is usually forbidden to report such facts in the press. During the last summer and autumn especially did the activities of these groups play an important role. This diminished, however, when the Germans introduced the terrible reprisals of shooting hostages."

## Preparation of the German Offensive

From Paris Mr. A. H. Berkemeyer [5] wrote a letter on the 1.12.41 to the D.K.W. Customers' Service Department in Chemnitz [6], which read as follows: [7]

"Mr. Green informs me that Mr. Walter has asked him to arrange by the 20th December for the return of the mobile fitter Reichert, who is at present occupied at Mr. Green's war workshop in Paris. The changed situation would place Mr. Green in a very difficult situation should Mr. Reichert have to leave his workshop. I have just heard from the military authorities that notwithstanding previous regulations, all our motor-transport workshops here in Paris will have to increase their capacity considerably, the aim being to double this. The new order is necessitated by the fact that large numbers of motorized units on the Eastern front will gradually be substituted by troops from the occupied territories, and that advantage will be taken of this opportunity to repair and overhaul the vehicles damaged on the Eastern Front. As a result of this Mr. Green has already been put in charge of a new workshop, which is double the size of the present one."

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## Editorische Anmerkungen

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1 - Ernst Udet (1896-1941), im Ersten Weltkrieg Jagdflieger, in der NS-Zeit als Generalluftzeugmeister zuständig für die Flugzeugproduktion (ab 1938), Generaloberst (1940), Selbstmord (1941).

2 - Karl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel (1896-1944), General, Oberquartiermeister im Generalstab des Heeres (1938-1940), Leiter der deutsch-französischen

*Waffenstillstandskommission (1940), Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich (1942-1944), Anschluss an die Widerstandsbewegung gegen das NS-Regime, nach Aktionen gegen die SS vom Volksgerichtshof zum Tode verurteilt und hingerichtet (1944).*

3 - *„Tobis-Klangfilm-Gesellschaft“, zeitweise auch „Tobis Industrie GmbH“ und „Tobis Filmkunst GmbH“ (mit Emil Jannings als Verwaltungsratsvorsitzendem), 1927 als Zweigunternehmen der Schweizer „Tri-Ergon-Musik-AG“ gegründet, wurde Tobis nach der Ufa größte deutschen Filmproduktionsgesellschaft der NS-Zeit, ab 1939 reichsmittelbare Firma, 1942 Eingliederung in den Ufa-Konzern. Die heutige „Tobis Film GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin“ hat mit dem Tobis-Konzern der NS-Zeit nichts zu tun.*

4 - *„Longvy Steelworks“, lothringisches Stahlwerk in Longwy.*

5 - *A. H. Berkemeyer. Biographische Daten konnten nicht ermittelt werden.*

6 - *„D.K.W. Customers' Service Department“ in Chemnitz, Kundendienstabteilung der Marke DKW (Abkürzung für „Das kleine Wunder“), die von der 1906 gegründeten Firma „Zschopauer Motorenwerke J. S. Rasmussen AG“ (Zschopau) herausgebracht wurde, 1932 Fusion mit der „Horch AG“ und den „Audi-Werken AG“ (beide Zwickau) bei gleichzeitiger Übernahme der Automobilabteilung der „Wanderer AG (Chemnitz) zur „Auto-Union AG“.*

7 - *Biographische Daten über die im Folgenden genannten Personen konnten nicht ermittelt werden: Green, Walter, Reichert.*