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Are All Germans Nazis?

By Cpl. KLAUS MANN
Staff Writer

GERMANY

MUNICH, June 26—Military government authorities at Dachau, notorious Nazi concentration camp, have been ordered to "stamp out" all activities of a newly-created "Anti-Fascist Committee" immediately, the Associated Press reported today. The anti-Nazi organization which claims a membership of 4,000 was organized May 9 and demanded "freedom of speech, religion, and the formation of anti-Fascist committees in all towns and villages," AP said. Col. Charles Keegan, military governor of Bavaria, said: "The Germans are a conquered people, and they have no right to demand anything."

—News Item

ARE THERE any real, reliable anti-Nazis in Germany? If a German tells you, "Why, of course, I don't agree with the racial doctrines of National Socialism; but you must admit that Hitler did a fine job in solving the unemployment problem!" — then you know that this man is not a real anti-Nazi.

Another German will assure you: "Naturally, I didn't like the terroristic methods of the Gestapo. But what could I do about it? To begin with, I didn't know what was going on in the concentration camps. And even if I had known, I would have been powerless. You, as a citizen of a free country, can hardly imagine the kind of pressure under which we were living here. Whoever dared open his mouth risked his freedom, if not his very life. If I had said a word against the goings-on at Dachau or Buchenwald, I might have been sent to one of those infernal places myself."

Did he know, then, that those places were infernal, or didn't he? Clearly, he was well enough informed. And if it is true that any protest coming from an isolated individual, would have been futile and suicidal, it also was true that the protest of millions could not have been ignored — not even by the most ruthless totalitarian dictatorship. The trouble was that the German masses were too cowardly to oppose or criticize their criminal masters. That is why the German masses are responsible for the outrages committed by the Nazi regime.

THE GERMAN masses are also responsible for the war, even if the average citizen of the Third Reich may have been bewildered rather than enthusiastic when war broke out in September, 1939. But the average citizen of the Third Reich wholeheartedly enjoyed the initial successes of the Nazi blitz; he hoped and worked for German victory.

This, then, is a criterion, German victory—which would have meant the triumph and the perpetuation of Nazi methods and Nazi philosophy; the permanent establishment of Nazi terror on a universal, or at least a continental, scale; the degradation of the civilized world into one vast concentration camp. Whoever was for German victory has no right to say now that he was against the Nazis.

BUT THERE were exceptions. One of Germany's most famous living philosophers—Professor Karl Jaspers in Heidelberg—told how deeply he suffered during the period of Hitler's military successes. "1940 was the most terrible year," he said. "My depression increased with every new German victory. And I was so alone! All my acquaintances seemed overjoyed as our armies invaded one European country after the other. There was no one in whom I could confide my true feelings..."

There you have a real, reliable anti-Nazi. Jaspers lost his job at Heidelberg University as far back as 1937, and from 1939 his writings were on the black list and could no longer be published. He was in official disgrace—partly because of his Jewish wife whom he refused to divorce, partly because of his humanistic, cosmopolitan ideas which he did not want to revoke.

There were others of his kind—not many, but at least a few thousands of them, scattered all over the Allied-occupied Reich. Nobody who has any

One Answer To A Question Which Everyone Is Asking



These are the faces of the Germany of today.

psychological instinct and is familiar with the German character can mistake this rare species for the hypocritical would-be anti-Nazi who now carries favor with Allied authorities.

YOU CAN recognize the real enemies of the fallen regime, if you are actually out looking for them. They don't have the sick appearance of operators or diplomats. They are men who have suffered, and who show the marks of suffering. They have made sacrifices for the sake of their convictions and ideals. Many of them had to stand torture and the most elaborate, sadistic humiliations. Experiences of this kind do something to a man.

Gustav Eberle, the founder of the "Anti-Fascist Committee" at Dachau, is obviously a man who paid a high price for his political faith. He has spent the past seven years in concentration camps, after having fought in the Spanish Civil War on the Loyalist side. His organization played an active part in the liberation of the Dachau camp, according to the Allied-controlled German press. The mottoes of his political movement were written all over the walls of the Dachau barracks.

Some of these posters read: "There is only one way to freedom! Fight for democracy! Keep anti-Fascist discipline! Believe in the solidarity of all nations! Help in building a free, democratic Europe!"

One has to remember under what kind of conditions this simple credo was written, and in what kind of surroundings it was displayed, to appreciate its significance. Concepts like "Freedom" and "Democracy" must have been more than just hollow slogans to men who kept up their faith throughout years of darkness and agony.

They were able to endure so much because they had something to look forward to. They, too, were waiting for "the day"—which, in their minds, was by no means the day of German victory but, quite the contrary, the day of Hitler's collapse. Realizing that there was no chance for a German revolution, they pinned all their hopes on the success of Allied arms. The triumph of the democracies—they thought—would also be the rehabilitation of the German democrats. To them, the fall of the hated Nazi regime was bound to result in an immediate revival of liberal politics in Germany.

AS ALL of us know—and as the German anti-Fascists must understand by now—these were naive, erroneous ideas. A conquered people, as

Col. Keegan put it, has no right to demand anything. The German anti-Nazis—even if they cannot be blamed for crimes of which they were the victims—still belong to a guilt-laden, bankrupt nation. To say it as bluntly and realistically as possible: After what the Germans, as a collective body, have done, no German individual, however innocent or even worthy he may be, is entitled to claim anything as his moral or political "right." If it is necessary to forbid all political activity by Germans, no anti-Nazi should protest against such a measure. For the German anti-Nazis know better than anyone else what a deadly danger Nazism has been, and they also know that this danger has not yet been overcome. It may be that the temporary suspension of political life in the Reich is the best way to guarantee and speed up Germany's de-Nazification.

Yet the question remains if that is actually so. This writer, for one, is inclined to doubt that the "strictly unpolitical line" maintained by the American Military Government in Germany is indeed advisable or necessary, from the Allied point of view. The Russian policy in this respect seems more constructive and realistic. Recent dispatches from Moscow and Berlin describe the reestablishment of German anti-Nazi parties which were dissolved or went underground when the Nazis took over. At the same time, we read about bans on similar political groups in Bavaria and the Rhineland. If the Russians are not afraid of Nazi elements which might infiltrate into anti-Nazi organizations—why should we be unable to prevent such attempts from succeeding?

GERMAN anti-Nazis—the real, reliable ones!—could be very useful to us, if we only wanted to use them. But we don't. We just tell them that they have no right to demand anything. But can Nazism and Fascism be eliminated in Germany and in Europe, once and for all, without the help of the German anti-Nazi?

Don't let us fool ourselves! Nazism is still alive, even if it does not manifest itself, at this point, in the form of organized sabotage or murder. But the whisper campaign going on in the Reich today bears the unmistakable marks of experienced Nazi demagogism. If you fail to see any werewolves stabbing GIs in the streets of German cities, you do hear a lot of weird talk from German civilians which sounds rather on the "werewolfish" side.

A Catholic priest in Cologne—an intelligent man with a good political record—asked whether it was correct that the United States and Great Britain were on the point of declaring war against the Soviet Union. The clergyman had been told by a British officer—who, in turn, had his information from "an Allied-appointed high German official"—that the Americans had suddenly stopped releasing any German prisoners-of-war. All Germans in American captivity—according to this fantastic report—had now to choose between these two alternatives: either to remain prisoners for an indefinite period of time, or join the U. S. Armed Forces and help the Allies in their coming fight against the Red Army. Any landsman willing to participate in this "anti-Soviet crusade" would be granted American citizenship!

THERE ARE innumerable rumors of this kind circulating throughout Germany. The surviving Goebbels agents, true to their master's tradition, try systematically, to undermine Allied unity and to exploit any existing or potential disagreement for the purposes of German nationalism.

Can we meet such dangerously political maneuvers by remaining "unpolitical"? The "anti-Fascist committees in towns and villages" which Gustav Eberle "demanded" might have been instrumental in refuting this flood of venomous fabrications and in tracing the sources from which they originated. Did we help to stop the Nazi whisper campaign by forbidding the foundation of the suggested anti-Nazi cells?

There can be no doubt that the real, reliable anti-Nazis—the same men and women who hailed the arrival of Allied troops, just a few months ago—

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