

sometimes make life seem no longer worth living, taking away as they do the last remnants of private peace, have beyond doubt on many a bleak day betrayed us into thinking that it must all end in defeat."

Goebbels has once again publicly attacked this war weariness. His answer to the question, what is the use of doing anything, is that this war will decide everything and that Germans have (if they wish to live) no choice but to become a nation of fanatics: "If to-day the entire nation were to work and fight as its best sons and daughters do at home and at the front, untiringly, like one possessed, faithful and strong-willed, then we should conclude this war victoriously, rapidly and decisively."

There is evidence that the Allied air offensive is being fought with typical German energy and resource. The railway system of Western Germany has been considerably adapted in order to escape air attack. Disorganisation in traffic grew to such proportions during September that marshalling yards west of the Rhine have been relieved of the greater part of their functions and trains in this area have now to be run only by night. The repercussions of this congestion and the effect of traffic restrictions are now felt in varying degrees throughout the Reich. A neutral traveller recently calculated that the journey from Berlin to Bâle now takes anything up to five days. In the case of oil installations, which now enjoy high reparation priority, the rate of repair during October was greater than the rate of destruction. The protection of the population; on the other hand, is proving less successful. Civil defence services are reported saturated and emergency arrangements chaotic, particularly in Duisburg, where many people could neither be fed nor housed without long delay.

A small but significant alteration has been recently announced in the German military penal code. Soldiers who have lost contact with their units and offices are now liable to punishment if they fail to report within *one* day instead of within *three* days as specified in the 1940 edition of the code. The change reflects not only what is now called the September crisis, referred to here last week, but the increasing severity of the High Command in dealing with desertion. A Swiss observer recently watched a troop train in a main German station; in the centre of the train two cattle trucks, heavily wired and guarded, were crammed with deserters, placarded as such and imploring food and drink.

It is interesting to find the expression "Free Corps," with its memories of the illicit Reichswehr detachments of the 'twenties, now recurring in Nazi propaganda. Some of the soldiers left in France have organised themselves, notably in Brittany, into a "Free Corps France," and, according to a recent broadcast to German forces have stocks of food and ammunition and even French recruits fighting with them. Information about Himmler's plans for an organised resistance movement within Germany continues to be received. Men chosen to lead local groups are reported to have been already provided with false papers and even sent to concentration camps. Such men swear eternal fidelity to the Führer and his teaching and accept, according to one report with alacrity, the prospect of an illegal and underground resistance to the enemy in all parts of the Reich. The actual organisation of this resistance seems to owe much to what might be expected to be its model, the partisan movements in Russia, Yugoslavia and France. The unit is a group of five men controlling a single district, such groups having no contact with each other but only with a superior officer. The quick passing of news to the centre is insisted upon as an essential of effective warfare. Both leaders and subordinates would appear to be most carefully chosen by the Security Service of the S.S.

The Volkssturm is meeting heavy weather both inside and outside Germany. Local papers reprove those who think it funny to talk of the new army of old men and cripples, armed with scythes or sticks and playing Red Indians. Field-Marshal Paulus, the senior German officer in Russian hands, has broadcast from the Moscow station "Free Germany" an indignant refutation of Himmler's recent attacks on his comrade, General von Seydlitz, denying that such a man as Himmler, who is "driving the German people to suicide with his Volkssturm," is a fit judge of the conduct of German officers.

Both the Nazi authorities and the population of Austria seem conscious of the fact that Vienna is the next stage on the Russian road from Budapest. Gauleiter Jury has told his people in Niederdonau that there will be no evacuation from the south-eastern frontier districts, and that "the inconveniences necessarily connected with fortification building" must be endured. Party officials would seem to have been recalled from digging in North Italy to superintend the same task at home. The confusion is increased by the influx of refugees, said to be Volksdeutsche from Serbia and Hungary, whom Austrians

are asked to assist and comfort. It is reported that in Linz flats of air-raid evacuees have already been requisitioned for them. According to Gauleiter Hofer, the Volkssturm in Austria is to bear the traditional Tyrolese title of *Standeschützen* and to have field-grey uniforms. A *Stabsführer* has already been appointed for Niederdonau, and leaders' courses have been started in Innsbruck.

The issue of a new list of broadcasting stations to which Germans may listen hardly justifies the assertion that they are not allowed to hear their own foreign broadcasts. The list is little more than half as long as that previously issued in 1943, because of the exclusion of stations now in Allied hands, but the only other changes are of minor importance, the omission of those in Norway and Holland, of Strasbourg and of two Reich stations transmitting for foreign countries. German internal censorship is neither more nor less strict than it has always been. The German Forces transmission, including the frank articles appearing in the military paper *Front und Heimat*, has always been forbidden to listeners within the Reich.

The speeches at the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Warthegau appear to have been censored for transmission to the press. The German Home Service broadcast what purported to be a full account of the proceedings. Guderian specifically coupled together in his short speech the soldiers in his audience, including those who had fought in Warsaw, and the Volkssturm. To the latter he promised an Army issue of equipment and of weapons, which he assured them would be good ones. Himmler's own speech was much more vigorous and outspoken than the later *D.N.B.* account made out. Among notable excisions were, a reference to his "dear old friend" Daluge, the promise of such a resettlement of Germany's eastern provinces as would provide "a fully developed farm... for every soldier of every unit of the Armed Forces," and the prophecy that "sooner or later we shall advance again beyond our frontiers." According to *D.N.B.* Himmler ended his speech with the more politic exhortation to stand firm until the enemies of Germany gradually realised that it would be tantamount to suicide for them to continue the assault against the Reich.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

Reliable information as to the latest developments in Slovakia is now scanty. Bratislava continues to put out more or less credible reports on the situation in Central Slovakia, claiming that the only military operation at present in progress is the mopping up of the remnants of the resistance forces. On the 2nd November the German European Service in Slovak claimed that 12,000 prisoners had been taken and that captured booty included 284 guns of various calibres, 900 vehicles, 92 tanks, 65 aircraft and 28 field-kitchens. A later claim, on the 6th November, added to this tally 3,000 more prisoners, a further 18 guns, 5 tanks, 15 tons of explosives, a large food-store and 479 railway trucks of war material, including 72 loaded with ammunition, 10 with tanks, and 15 with field-kitchens. It is hard to accept these figures at their face value but there is, unfortunately, little cause to doubt the truth of a statement that General Viest, commander of the Czechoslovak forces in Slovakia, and General Golian, his deputy, have fallen into German hands. The latter had been the leader and military organiser of the revolt inside Slovakia, while General Viest, formerly Minister of State in the Czechoslovak Government in London, only arrived in Slovakia to take over his new duties in October. Unless the Slovak leaders are deterred by fears of ultimate retribution these two officers are likely to be executed, for Viest was sentenced to death in his absence some three years ago and Golian has already been indicted for treason for his part in the rising.

The Germans are evidently becoming increasingly concerned to maintain order in the Protectorate and especially in the province of Moravia which, as the Red Army presses westwards, takes on an added importance in the German rear. On the 1st November, what was described as a meeting of the Autonomous Protectorate Government was held at Vestfn, about a dozen miles from the Slovak border. The Premier and the Minister of Agriculture were present and the former addressed a gathering of officials, workers, farmers and tradesmen. He covered the usual ground—the dangers of Bolshevism, the folly of hoping for British and American protection from the Red menace, the useless bloodshed that revolt against the Germans would entail—and promised a rude awakening to "those here in Bohemia and Moravia who are playing at setting up National Committees."

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