

communications and provide personnel for signals and intelligence. For these purposes they will presumably be under the operational command of regular Wehrmacht officers, the *Volkssturm* itself having no unit above the level of a battalion. Keitel and Guderian gave them a silent blessing by standing meekly by while Himmler addressed the East Prussian levy, and they heard him exhort the men of the *Volkssturm* to follow the practice of the Navy, by which, if a commanding officer feels he can do nothing but surrender, he must hand over the command to a junior. In the context this sounded like an appeal to the Home Guard to stiffen the morale of the regulars. It has been clearly stated that they are not partisans, and it can hardly have been the *Volkssturm* that Himmler described as "werewolves" falling on the enemy from behind, for he spoke of these as "death-defying volunteers," including women and children, and there are no women in the *Volkssturm*. It is obvious that a force of this kind could not be mobile without disrupting the economic life of the country, and it is probable that it will be raised first in the frontier districts, and may not materialise in the interior. Shortage of weapons may make this a necessary limitation. Another limitation is the importance from the point of view of the Nazi leaders of putting arms into the hands only of those who can be trusted to use them against the right people.

Neither Rommel's funeral nor the formation of the People's Levy produced from Hitler more than a written statement. But in his speech in East Prussia Himmler attempted a general review of the war, such as Hitler has periodically supplied—and which he may still supply, on the 9th November. He made some use of the fact that he spoke on the 131st anniversary of the Battle of the Nations, and of the parallel with the Prussian Landsturm of 1813, which, "born of an apparently hopeless situation," succeeded by untried and unorthodox methods in freeing the Fatherland from tyranny. Among the more interesting references in a rather colourless speech were the attribution of the "tragedy of Stalingrad" to the collapse of allies and the declaration of fanatical resistance throughout the Reich, by women if necessary. Both Hitler and Himmler referred to the end of the war, the former stating that Germany would keep off her enemies until the achievement of a peace which would safeguard the future of Germany and her allies, while Himmler gave new life to the conception of the war becoming "pointless" by reason of the invincibility of the German people. Hitler's edict, although brief, contained two astonishing statements. He said that Germany had fought alone from 1939 to 1941, and that all Germany's European allies had now failed her, a remark which Schmidt had later to excuse as casting no aspersion on the Hungarian and Croat allies of the Reich.

Although the fall of Aachen was not announced until the 23rd the *O.K.W.* made daily mention of the fighting there up to the 21st. The official reference to the city on that day read much like an epitaph—and a justification of the Nazi defence of a doomed outpost: "After 19 days' gory struggle, involving employment of material on a gigantic scale in an extremely small space, the gallant though decimated defenders of Aachen yesterday smashed further strong attacks . . . 25 tanks have been destroyed by the garrison since the 10th October."

As Aachen has gone out of the communiqués, Tilsit and Memel have come in. The fall of Eydtkuhnen, just inside the East Prussian frontier, was revealed by the *O.K.W.* on the 19th. A *Transocean* broadcast explained that the depth of the new eastern defences made the crossing of the frontier of little account: "where the penetration into Reich territory is deepest the Soviets have not broken through the actual defence positions."

The liquidation of the administrative machinery created for the "Occupied Eastern Territories" appears to be virtually complete. Rosenberg's "Ostministerium" is reported, from confidential sources, to have been reduced to some 100 officials housed in a train stationed on a branch line near Berlin. *Dagens Nyheter's* Berlin correspondent announced early in October that Lohse, Reich Commissar for the Ostland, had for a long time been seriously ill and had therefore been replaced by Erich Koch, Gauleiter and Oberpräsident of East Prussia and formerly Reich Commissar for the Ukraine (other reports have alleged the dismissal and arrest of Lohse, and the appointment of Koch as Controller of the Eastern Rearward Areas). Dankers and Bangerskis, Chiefs of the native Self-Administration and native S.S. Legion, respectively, in Latvia, left their country by air just before the fall of Riga on the 13th October, according to the Swedish press of the 12th; their destination was not specified. The number of Baltic refugees in Sweden was officially reported to have reached 21,000 by the middle of October; 19,000 of these had arrived in the course of the previous three weeks.

The German reaction to events in Hungary has been almost according to plan. An official statement broadcast to European listeners on the 16th expatiated on Horthy's treason, and complained that he had never been satisfied with the German help offered him. To the same audience a German spokesman denied that events in Budapest could have any influence on the fighting fronts. Schmidt strove to persuade journalists in the Wilhelmstrasse on the 17th that the new men in power in Hungary "radiated strength, determination, honesty and intelligence." The picture of treason at the top was not thought good for the public of the Reich, who were informed that the Regent had instructed the leader of the Arrow Cross to form a Government that would represent a concentration of all national forces in Hungary.

The note in last week's *Summary* concerning the grip exerted by the Party in German administration is put in perspective by recent evidence of the struggle for power which has been intensified in Germany since the 20th July. It is not yet clear whether dissident elements (both within and without the army) can in present circumstances attempt another bid for power; some reports suggest that if military reverses continue, this will happen. That the Gestapo has conducted a savage and far-reaching purge would seem now to be certain. Military commanders have been changed, notably those of the 18th Army serving on the Eastern front, in which morale was reported in August to be very unsatisfactory. A great number of prominent and relatively independent civilians have been imprisoned or killed. Hostility between Party and army is said to have been fanned not only by Himmler's measures but by the manner of the executions, which in the case of the leading conspirators was slow strangulation, filmed for the edification of the troops. Other reports speak of army officers refusing to take orders from S.S. officers. Captured letters contain strong anti-Nazi expressions. The diary of an n.c.o. in the Sanitary Corps refers to the whole Nazi "Bewegung" as built on nothing but bluff, and speaks of hatred and chicanery as now much too intense in Germany for matters to be settled otherwise than by the bloodiest of revolutions. Soldiers grumble at having to go without a re-issue of clothes and shoes because the O.T. workers are provided with field-grey uniforms. At higher levels, there is reported to be acute conflict over the way in which the war should be conducted. Hitler will not, or cannot, relinquish his determination to fight "until five past twelve," by desperate resistance at all possible points. This was formulated anew in Himmler's speech of the 19th. Many officers think the situation now so hopeless that such fighting is quite useless; they are said to want a quick peace, and if possible an agreement with Russia. Whereas, says one report, there was little opposition by officers to the Russian campaign in its first phases, the majority are now reverting to the old theme of a German-Russian understanding and follow with keen interest the doings of the "Free Germans" in Moscow, to whom Himmler in his Home Guard speech last week made two scornful references.

Digging squads from Vienna and Niederdonau are being sent to the south-east frontier of Austria to start work on fortifications. The building is starting on a small scale, only about 150 men being sent from each Kreis in addition to Hitler Youth gangs, but the gangs are to be continually reinforced. Recently captured enemy mail has yielded items of interest from Austria. Points mentioned were the general discontent, opposition to Hitler and yearning for a free Austria; the impossibility of obtaining shoes and clothing; evasion of military service; contempt for Party leaders, even by former Austrian Nazis; and the conviction that the war will be over by October. Democratic forces inside Austria, however, are reported to be doubtful whether they will receive adequate British and American support, and to fear that they may have to throw in their lot with the Communists.

## ERRATUM.

Page 2, line 50, for "improved" read "imposed."

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

On the 18th October the delegation of the Slovak National Council now in London met representatives of the British and Allied press. In a formal statement they emphasised that the rising in Slovakia was a national struggle of the Slovaks against the Germans, that this struggle was waged "under the banner and with the political programme of the liberation of the Czechoslovak Republic," and that there was complete unity among the Slovaks and with

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