

ANNEX TO DAILY P & PW INTELLIGENCE

REPORT - 12TH ARMY GROUP

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Dissemination:
Shaeff; Hq
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INTRODUCTION.

The following report is the result of investigations conducted over a period of twelve days in three Russian Refugee Centers. Two are located in the city of LUXEMBOURG, and one in DEFFELDINGEN. It has been the interrogator's objective to gather sufficient data in order to present a complete and integrated picture of the Russians who have been, and of those who still are, under the German yoke. The report will thus consist of three parts. The first will be a brief history of the problem. The second will deal with the conditions, (location, and the number) (see supplement) of foreign workers, particularly Russians, inside Germany, and the third part will describe the current problems confronting groups of displaced Russians in the Refugee Centers of liberated areas.

I. HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM.

Inaccurate estimates show that the German Army evacuated approximately ~~from~~ ten to twelve million Russians over a period of three years ('42-'44 incl). The occupied territories from which these people were taken are the Ukraine, White Russia, and the entire Northwest of the Soviet Union.

In the first months of 1942 the population of the occupied zones was kept below the level of subsistence to induce people to volunteer as laborers to Germany. At this time evacuees were told to take with them their oldest clothing and the barest necessities, since upon arrival they would be issued new German clothing. Then this ragged humanity was exhibited throughout Europe as proof of

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the poverty and misery of the Russian people. This stage was referred to ^{as} "the first transport". Those who managed to escape and join partisan groups began to undermine the German effort by spreading stories of the true horror of Nazi captivity. This in turn resulted in an era of terror and with it reluctance and sometimes strong resistance to evacuation.

The Germans then began to use less subtle methods of coercion. Market places of populated points were suddenly surrounded by the Gestapo and everyone present, regardless of age, sex and health was ^{er}herded on trucks and transported to Germany. At this time organized resistance was impossible due to the retreat of the Red Army, the prevalence of police and traitors, and the application of the ruthless hostage system. Escape from Germany too, was difficult because the Nazis took pains to dress foreign laborers in distinctly shabby clothes. And, in order to facilitate detection, the Nazis acquainted their people, through an extensive propaganda campaign, with the so-called Asiatic-Slavic physiognomy of "Untermenschen" (inferior people).

As yet, only a minute percentage of these people have been liberated in France, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg. (About twenty thousand in all). But, already their liberation has resulted in a variety of problems for American authorities, ^{your} the local population, as well as the Soviet Union. It is therefore logical to assume that, as our armies push deeper into Germany, the problem of control, clearing, disposition and ^{istence}substance will increase in complexity and severity, ^{since} approximately seventy percent of the entire German industry is dependent upon the energies of foreign laborers.

In addition to the civilian evacuees, the German armies took about three million Soviet PWs, which gives rise to a problem somewhat different in nature. In spite of recent large-scale demobilization plans, there are still in existence many units of the R.O.A. (Russian liberators' Army). The consensus of opinion of all the Russians interviewed by this interrogator, ^l

to Gen. [unclear]

is that these units will offer considerable opposition. An explanation of this lies in their pledged allegiance to the German Army and the uncertainty of their fate upon return to the Soviet Union.

The present official policy and attitude of the Soviet Government toward groups of liberated Russians was recently stated by a Lt Col STEMASOV, who, together with high-ranking American authorities, visited the various camps in Belgium and Luxembourg. Lt Col STEMASOV, is a military representative of the Soviet Mission to London; excerpts ^{from} of his speech, heard by this interrogator, are quoted below:

"The Soviet Government recognizes all of you as citizens of the Soviet Union. Those of you who have been soldiers are still soldiers. Those of you who have been officers, are still officers. Do not be under the influence of German propaganda. Eleven thousand of you have already been transported to Russia, the rest of you are here awaiting facilities to return you to your homeland."

II. INTELLIGENCE ON THE FOREIGN LABOR SITUATION.

The intelligence data attached herewith is to be evaluated in terms of the following facts:

- a. For reasons of security and control, the foreign laborers are transported, as much as possible, deeper into Germany as the Allied Armies advance. Foreign laborers from Trier, Bonn, Koblenz, Duesseldorf, and other cities close to the front have lately been evacuated to collecting and redistributing points in Stuttgart, Kassel, Erfurt, Hamm, Muenster, Worms, and Mannheim.
- b. Manpower, and therefore production, in industries close to the front have thus reached the minimum due to the absence of foreign laborers.
- c. The frequent shifts of foreign labor ^{power} from one factory to another makes them a source of vital informa-

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tion, which constitutes another reason for their evacuation from the fronts.

CONDITIONS OF WORK.

The great majority of foreign laborers in Germany work about twelve hours a day, i.e. from 0700 to 1845. A "Caffee Pause" lasts from 0900 to 0915. A half^{an} hour to forty-five minutes is allowed for dinner; supper is at eight o'clock in the evening. One day of rest is granted every two weeks.

In the morning the workers are given from 250-300 grams of black bread, which is to last them for the entire day. An unlimited quantity of ersatz coffee is available. For dinner, a broth is served five days a week; on the remaining two days potatoes with a dash of vegetables and bits of meat are given instead. The same broth is served for supper. It is interesting to note that, with the advance of Allied Armies, the Germans, in order to prevent increased desire to resist and desert, decided to add to the meager diet of the Russians an occasional bit of marmalade and margarine. Such an incident occurred in Trier about two and a half months ago, and coincided with the sudden advance of our armies in that region. The lack of subtlety in this move provoked much amusement amongst the Russian laborers. Bombings and black markets afford the only source of extra food. In the first case, when an air-raid is sounded the Russians have pretty much the run of the place, since they are forbidden to enter air-raid shelters, ^{which are} reserved exclusively for the Germans and more favored foreigners. This gives the Russians a chance to run around freely appropriating every available article of food. In spite of the relatively great physical danger involved, air-raids are always very welcome by the Russian workers, not only for the reason mentioned above, but, ^{because} in addition, they provide an opportunity for escape, ~~and~~ rest if the factory is damaged. It is to be remembered that, with the possible exception of Italians, the Russians are assigned the dirtiest and most strenuous jobs available.

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Black markets flourish in all foreign labor camps in spite of attempts at strict control. The French and the Czechs are believed to be the most privileged laborers. Due to the comparatively better quality and larger quantity of food received by these groups, they speculate much in edibles and tobacco. A loaf of bread can be bought for ten to fifteen marks. Fifty grams of tobacco costs thirty to forty marks. The opportunity to buy in the black market is welcomed by all.

The average pay of a Russian laborer is fifty to sixty marks per month. A rare maximum is 90 to a hundred marks. The French, Czechs, and ~~the~~ Dutch receive on the average of 120 to 130 marks a month. In early 1943, a futile campaign was begun to persuade foreign laborers to save a portion of their pay each month. The inducement offered, was a post-war purchase of a house in the Ukraine, or a plot of land. However, the "Schwarzhandel", absorbed the entire income of all the Russian laborers; thus all similar, subsequent schemes proved in vain.

Recreational facilities are almost non-existent. Workers have access to two weekly propaganda papers published in Berlin. One, the "Trud" (effort), is designed to indoctrinate factory workers, while the other is meant for farm laborers. In addition, a great mass of other propaganda material is available for reading in the evenings. Every two weeks an "Ostarbeiter" may apply for a two or three hour pass to go to town. He must at all times wear his Ost insignia, and cannot enter any public place (restaurants, movies, etc). If his insignia is pinned on, instead of sewn on, a fine of ten marks must be paid. If an Ostarbeiter is caught in a movie he is severely beaten and confined to solitary. If he is caught walking with a German girl, he is hanged the next day.

III. MORALE.

As a result of several hundred interviews with former Russian laborers in Germany, some outstanding facts have become apparent to the interrogator:

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- a. By far the great majority of Russians have nothing but hate for the Nazis. They are considered slave laborers and are treated as "Untermenschen" (inferior race), or "eine Vernichtungsrasse" (an annihilating race). This is the official attitude of the Nazi party and is not to be understood as a propaganda line only, fed to the Russian laborers. Yet, through years of continuous abuse, exploitation, and degradation, the simple masses themselves have come to feel like permanent slaves of a Fascist regime.
- b. On the ^{whole,} large the German propaganda attempts of ^{including} anti-bolshevism and anti-semitism ~~has~~ proved a failure due to the fantastic claims and obvious contradictions involved. Only one line had its desired effect, and this largely due to the almost total lack of counter-propaganda on the part of the Allies: ~~The~~ Russian workers have come to believe that there is no one who is particularly concerned about them and especially that no one wants them.
- c. The tragic result of this attitude is a continuous wavering and fluctuation between two distinct emotional drives. On the positive side, Russians want to be active against fascism. Incidents of sabotage, killing, plots, and secret organizations have been cited to this interrogator. On the negative side, a feeling of apathy and bitter disappointment exists. Everywhere there is a desperate need for official incentives and instructions on the part of the millions of Russian laborers in Germany. They realize that all other groups except themselves receive assurances and directives from their official native sources. Uncertainty of their status is responsible for a lack of harmony among~~st~~ the Ost workers themselves. The same lack of status-security is responsible for the frequent fights, riots, panic, and atmosphere of mutual distrust so prevalent in the Russian camps in Germany.

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d. The reactions on the part of the Russian elements in Germany to the approach of the Allied Armies should somehow be controlled. This is the opinion of many escaped laborers who are qualified to pass intelligent judgment on the problem. The present state of mind of the Ost workers calls for a concrete plan of action in order to avoid confusion and disorganization which would impair military operations and in order to provide Ost workers with an opportunity and incentive to do harm to the Fascist cause.

e. The widespread insecurity of many far-sighted Germans concerning the outcome of the war has given birth to a new, as yet very limited, attitude towards Russian laborers. Several Ost workers have reported that they had been carefully approached by Germans, self-styled Anti-Nazis, who have invited them to listen to Allied broadcasts in the secrecy of their homes. This was done as subsequent proof of their leanings. In addition to this, many of the Russian girls working as domestic servants in private homes listen to the radio in the absence of their employers. The subject matter of these broadcasts is then widely disseminated among other Russian laborers.

- f. Descriptive of the state of mind of Ost workers are the following questions which are continuously argued:
- (1) What is our present status?
 - (2) Should we resist evacuation, and hide to await the approach of Americans?
 - (3) How can we fight the Nazis at the critical moment? Sabotage? Passive resistance? Arms? Open revolt?
 - (4) How should we act during an air-raid?

~~g. IV.~~ SUGGESTIONS.

It is beyond the scope of this report to deal with the delicate question of why the Soviet Union has left much to be desired in sending propaganda to its citizens in Germany. It is pre-

sumed to be a matter of politics. At the same time the necessity of broadcasts and leaflets has been openly admitted by Lt Col STEMASOV, official representative of the Soviet Union. The colonel stated that it would be beneficial to the allied cause to utilize the following ^{suggestions} assurances:

- a. To convince Russian laborers that they are citizens of the Soviet Union.
- b. That Russia is concerned about them and is awaiting their return.
- c. Russia needs all its citizens.
- d. That eleven thousand Soviet citizens have already been returned to Russia.
- e. That they will be treated well by the Allies.
- f. Urge them to resistance.
- g. Special emphasis was given to the necessity of acquainting Ost workers with the military situation.

IV. MEDIUM.

a. Radio.

Give time of broadcast, use records of speeches, songs, and music. Choose personnel from displacement centers to prepare recordings under censorship of Soviet officials. (Previous attempts were disapproved of by Lt Col STEMASOV as "awkward, not fluent, and politically unsound.")

b. Leaflets.

^{Along lines}
Using assurances listed above.

BORIS KRASS
Interrogator