

Torgau Army Jail when the Allies arrived

Nazi Justice

Nazi Justice (First US Army)

When our troops and those of our Russian Allies approached the notorious army jail in TORGAU, HIMMLER had 61 officers and 913 men (all "convicts" or men awaiting trial) placed into a probation unit under the command of a slightly crazy Lt Col LOEBECKE (TORGAU convict and now PW). The unit was marched to ZRISHEIM where it was to be committed. En route the convicts, officers as well as men, decided to kill their Nazi overseers and to desert to the Americans. The leader of this mutiny was Major OSTERMANN (PW), a professional officer and former CO of the 196 Regiment of the 96 Division. OSTERMANN marched the convicts in circles for five days in order to gain time for the attempt to join our troops. Eventually he sent out officer patrols with interpreters to find the Americans. The patrols found a small American armoured patrol which was given the mission to look out for the Russians in preparation for the historical meeting. The German officers convinced the American lieutenant that no Russians were in the vicinity as yet and the American lieutenant agreed to dispatch two of his scout cars each with a German officer as guide in order to bring the battalion of convicts over to the American line. This took place according to plan.

Practically all officers and men were convicted for "subversive activities". These activities consisted merely in utterances in which these men proved that they had preserved some common sense in the midst of the general insanity in GERMANY. In most cases the men were sent to TORGAU because HIMMLER considered the punishment handed out to them by unit court martial as insufficient. In such cases HIMMLER ordered another trial by the "Zentralgericht" in TORGAU and at the same time told the judges to pronounce a harsh sentence, usually the death sentence. The "judges" of course obliged. Here are some typical cases as told by PW:

(i) Lt Dr. BOLL, Pastor of EPPENHEIMER University Clinic in KAMBURG, received five years in jail for the following remarks:

"The war is lost. In a short time the WEST will be occupied by the Americans; the German Armies in the WEST are destroyed. SPALIN will start an offensive and occupy BERLIN. The Allies don't intend to destroy GERMANY. On the contrary, they want

to utilize German workers and physicians. German generals are and were NOT duped by 'SCOPOLAMI'."

(ii) Lt Col LOEBECKE: secured $\frac{2}{3}$ of a pound of bacon from a recruit for his sick son. When the recruit failed to report at prescribed time, LOEBECKE was sentenced to death for "bribery". This was the work of a Major who wanted to get the Colonel's job. (Note: LOEBECKE is a mental case).

(iii) Major OSTERMANN, Regimental CO remarked to the officers of his regiment, "V-2 and V-3 are..... (unprintable). The Volksturm was invented in order to enable Party bosses NOT to get caught in the brown uniforms by the Allies. The life and behaviour of the Party bosses is a public scandal." For these statements the Major received eight years in jail.

(iv) Major REISINGER denounced an old Party fighter as a criminal. He was sentenced to 18 months in jail but HIMMLER requested a sentence of at least 6 years from the Zentralgericht.

(v) Oberstabsarzt Dr Gustav HOPMAN stated, "What can the Führer do if he has nothing at his disposal?" Two years in jail.

(vi) Capt HAUSCHILD, a leading German architect from HAMBURG visited a French factory and accepted a sample valued at 80 pfennig. One year in jail.

(vii) Lt STECKMANN, 18 months in jail for being "too friendly to Serbs."

(viii) Oberzahlmeister GIERBIG stated, "It is a scandal how the Jews were slaughtered in RUSSIA. After the war there will NOT be sufficient lamp posts in GERMANY to hang the SS". Death sentence.

(ix) Stabsintendant BUSCH destroyed the "hitting power of the Army (Wehrkraft)" by using some gasoline for a trip NOT in line of duty. 15 years in jail.

(x) Kanonier Peter MEYER was up for trial for having stated, "Many children who were forced to work in the WEST WALL died".

(xi) Gren Kurt KUNOLD received 5 years in jail for having stated, "The Führer did NOT help GERMANY".

The following German generals were in TORGAU Army Jail for subversive activities:

Gen der Flieger BECK; was executed.
Gen NIEDERMAYER
Gen FEUCHTINGER; sentenced to death six times
Gen v. DEWITZ
Gen der Flieger FLIESS
Gen von HANNECKEN, former Commander of DENMARK;
sentenced to 7 years
Gen KEGLER
Gen MUELLER

Many of the TORGAU men were professional officers. They all implored us to put an end to German militarism once and for all. Said the Pastor of the University Clinic in HAMBURG-EPPENDORF, Lt BOLL, "with Christianity you can't solve the German problem; Christian faith is unsuited for such people. The Germans of the present generation cannot be improved; they are basically bad. Forget about re-education! One can't expect fruits from a rotten tree. You have got to cut the tree in the name of Almighty God."