

THE FUTURE OF GERMANY—II

The potentials for a democratic revolution after the destruction of the Nazi state. Differences between that state and the German people . . . An anti-fascist German's viewpoint. By Michel Anders.

In last week's "New Masses," Mr. Anders expressed his opinion on the futility of plans for a postwar Germany that did not strike at the heart of German imperialism or did not give the German people the right to self-determination. In his view, dividing Prussia from the Reich, a plan advocated by Emil Ludwig and others, solves nothing because German monopolists will still dominate their country's economy and eventually break out of bounds to start another war.—The Editors.

BY SEPARATING Prussia from the Reich, it should be clear, the vital nerve centers of German imperialism will not be affected. I return therefore to my central point that only a basic change in Germany's economic structure can prevent the regeneration of German imperialism after it is defeated.

In what form and at what tempo such a change in the economic structure will take place cannot be foreseen. But take place it must in order to counteract the tendency of German economy toward dictatorship—toward a Nazi hegemony such as arose within the country in the past ten years. All postwar planning, therefore, which prevents alteration of German economy paves the way for another form of reactionary dictatorial rule. Of course it is quite possible that the lords of German monopoly may accept temporarily some foreign domination in order to protect their historically outworn position. And there are some circles outside of Germany who have this as part of their perspective for a future Germany. But the effects of such plans would be to heighten the national and social tensions within Germany and in the long run require strong measures to subdue them. Only when the anti-imperialist economic tendencies and democratic social forces in Germany are encouraged and permitted to prevail—only then will Germany no longer be a menace to world peace.

It is important for all of us to understand, at this critical moment, that the development of European economic and social conditions is on a different level from that of the American continent and that between the two there are also different traditions and therefore different perspectives. A change in the economic structure of Germany which kills all imperialist aspirations for power is no menace to any other country.

A Germany minus an imperialistic economy offers possibilities for good commercial relations with the United States with-

out becoming a source of imperialistic danger. The cooperation of nations with different economic structures is not only possible, it is necessary. The best proof that it is possible and fruitful is in the alliance of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China.

It seems to me, then, that the progressive or reactionary character of postwar plans is determined by whether the anti-imperialist forces in Germany are supported or suppressed and whether the initiative of the German people to destroy Hitler is encouraged or hindered. And it is from this point of view that we must examine the plans for a postwar Germany.

ELMER DAVIS is right when he appeals to the German people to overthrow Hitler. But I believe the German people will also want to know what they may expect afterward. We always have to keep in mind Goebbels' exploitation of the fact that Wilson's promises after the last war were not kept. Goebbels applies the same propaganda approach to current Allied postwar plans. He says they are mere promises which will not be converted into deeds. And in addition the slogan "democracy," which was so new and forceful in its appeal to Germans in the first world war, was abused and distorted in the years of the Weimar Republic and by the Nazi propagandists.

The recent events in Italy confirm anew that all plans from the outside cannot replace the initiative of the people; nor can they be strangled whether this is wanted or not by any group or individual. In Italy forces that were driven into illegality more than twenty years ago now openly emerge and act. The same will happen in Germany after ten years of Hitler dictatorship. And one may ignore a nation's development or disregard the people's forces, but the key fact to remember is that the people will always find their way.

IN A RECENT article in the *American Mercury* (April 1943) Kingsbury Smith attempted to set forth "Our Government's Plan for a Postwar Germany." Because of limited space I can only summarize Mr. Smith's article.

The purported government plan involves total disarmament of the German nation; swift, merciless punishment of war criminals; drastic decentralization of the country and the temporary restriction of its economic life to the minimum required for self-subsistence. The plan intends to draw the difference between Germany as a state and Germany as a people. The first

step following occupation is the establishment of a military government by the commander of the United Nations forces. The American planners consider it absolutely essential that an understanding be reached in advance among the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union concerning the joint policy to be followed in connection with the establishment of this military government.

According to Smith's version of the American plan, unless there is prompt punishment of Nazi war criminals through an orderly process of justice it is feared that widespread civil war will develop in Europe. To forestall this German civilian personnel and police forces will be retained as long as they can be relied upon to do their work under strict control. Germany will also be deprived of all armaments except the small arms required by the police to maintain civil order. Since the soldiers of a defeated nation are considered ripe for revolution and since the American planners feel that this must be avoided at all cost, the German army will be completely demobilized. And as part of the plan of preventing revolution and chaos not only in Germany but also in all of Europe, famine and disease must also be prevented.

In addition to disarmament, reparations, economic and political decentralization, Germany's cartels will be broken up and the industries left intact will be placed under Allied control. Later as the German people give evidence of good faith in helping in the peaceful reconstruction of Europe, benefits will be increased until full equality of commercial opportunity is achieved by Germany. In addition a great educational plan will have to be undertaken in Germany to erase the stamp of Hitlerism.

The above is more or less a brief abstract of Mr. Smith's article.

Its central shortcoming is that it is a plan to be imposed on the German people and not a base from which the German people can fulfill their rights to self-determination. Because these American planners would prevent a democratic revolution in Germany, then German initiative to destroy the Nazi gang and their imperialist supporters is not promoted. On the contrary the planners envision the retention of German police forces to maintain order. But who comprises the German police force? Without exception it is and has been the tool of the hangman Himmler.

The planners also shower Germans with the threat that they will be made to pay most severely for following "Hitler

in his mad movement of world conquest." The German people, as we shall see in time, will consider it their obligation to indemnify and repay for the indescribable damage that has been done to other peoples. But to burden them with such punishment as will crush them and obstruct their desire to cleanse Germany of its gangsters and war criminals is the height of folly. The Germans will naturally ask why not also impose such punishment on the men outside Germany who helped Hitler to power, nourished him, and let him take Austria, Czechoslovakia, etc. Whoever fears a German democratic revolution inadvertently admits that the German people are eager to make amends and set their house in order.

And in this connection I should like to say a word about the reeducation of Germany for democracy. There is no greater democratic education than is to be gotten from a democratic revolution. The American people matured and made themselves ready for democratic government and life by waging a democratic revolution. In the American revolution the country achieved its independence and national integrity. In this struggle the American people had the support of many good Europeans, and even Germans. The English and the French learned the principles of democracy through their own revolutions. Why not let the German people have the same schooling? Let the German people dethrone their monopolists and junkers and they will destroy forever the devil that is German imperialism. For this the German people need no "gauleiters" but weapons and help through active propaganda. Whoever stands in the way of this natural development will for a time perhaps succeed in making a colony of Germany but he will not succeed in bringing everlasting peace.

It is worth examining the plans of the Free German National Committee in Moscow. Inasmuch as the Soviet press has widely publicized the recent manifesto of this Committee, the Soviet government seems to be in agreement with these Germans' desire to reinforce the initiative of the German people to purge themselves of Nazi tyranny and the right of the Germans to self-determination when the war is won.

In all their statements the Soviet leaders have left no doubt of their determination to destroy Nazism forever and to punish mercilessly the Nazi war criminals. But Stalin has at the same time also declared that "... it would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German state. History shows that Hitlers come and go, but the German people and the German state remain. Lastly, the strength of the Red Army lies in the fact that it does not and cannot entertain racial hatred for other peoples, including the German people, that

it has been brought up in the spirit of the equality of all peoples and races, in the spirit of respect for the rights of other peoples. . . ." (Feb. 23, 1942). On Nov. 6, 1942, Stalin asserted "It is not our aim to destroy Germany, for it is impossible to destroy Germany, just as it is impossible to destroy Russia. But the Hitlerite state can and should be destroyed. And our first task in fact is to destroy the Hitlerite state and its inspirers. . . . It is not our aim to destroy all organized military force in Germany, for every literate person will understand that that is not only impossible in regard to Germany, as it is in regard to Russia, but also inadvisable from the point of view of the victor. But Hitler's army can and should be destroyed. Our second task, in fact, is to destroy Hitler's army and its leaders."

In the same speech Stalin makes it clear that the Nazi war criminals will not escape punishment. "They have converted Europe into a prison of nations. And this they call 'the new order in Europe.' We know who are the men guilty of these outrages, the builders of 'the new order in Europe,' all those newly baked governor generals or just ordinary governors, commandants and sub-commandants. . . . Let these butchers know that they will not escape the responsibility for their crimes or elude the avenging hand of the tormented nations."

These quotations, it seems to me, accord the German people the right to self-determination and are in agreement with the manifesto of the Free Germans in the Soviet Union. It is these Germans who show how to reeducate Germany by letting the German anti-fascists prove their ability to make Germany a democratic state.

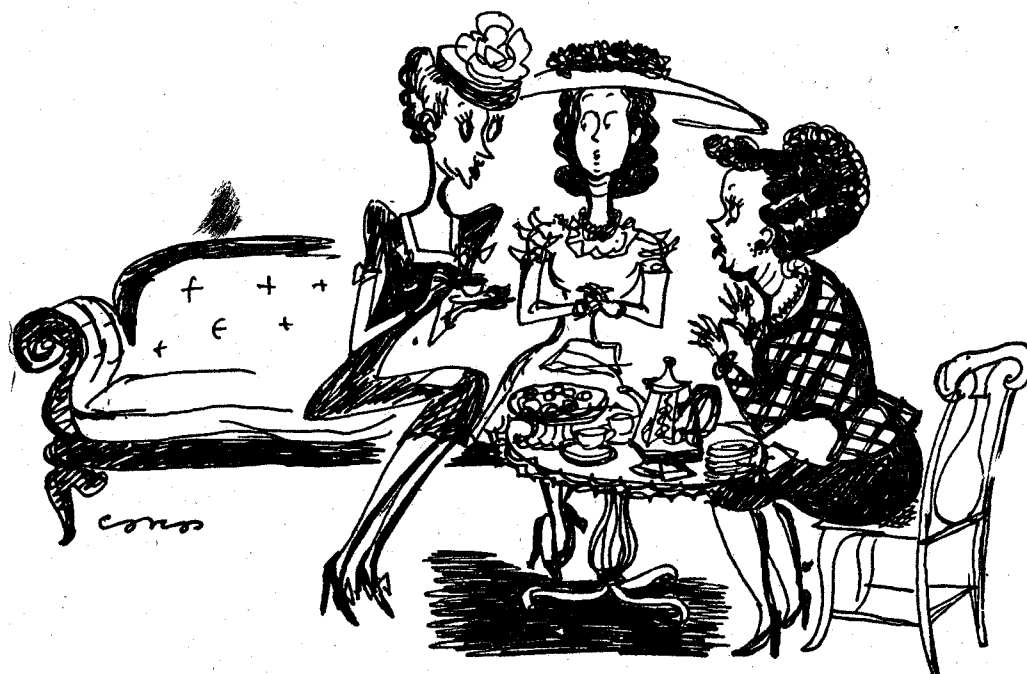
Their manifesto speaks clearly and firmly to the German people. Its psychological effect on the German people is and will be profound since it comes from Ger-

mans also. It tells Germans that the war is lost and that they must act now to overthrow Hitler. Since no one will conclude peace with Germany, the manifesto asks for the formation of a genuinely democratic German government. This "government will support itself on the fighting groups that will unite to overthrow Hitler. There are forces in the army that are loyal to the country, and the people must play a decisive role. This government will immediately cease military operations, will recall the German troops to the Reich's frontiers and embark on peace negotiations, renouncing all conquests."

This government should be a strong democratic power and not a helpless Weimar regime. It will annul all laws based on national and racial hatred. It is a government which will protect lawfully acquired property and restore property to their lawful owners and confiscate the property of those responsible for the war and of the war profiteers. It will give amnesty to all Hitler adherents who in good time renounce him and join the movement for a free Germany. It will provide for freedom of the press, speech, assembly, and religious beliefs.

In this Free German Manifesto, it seems to me, is an excellent model on which Allied plans for Germany should base themselves. It recognizes that the German people can determine their own destiny, that they will acquire democracy by fighting for it. It points to the creation of a Germany that will live in peace with the United States and all the United Nations. It points to the ending of German imperialism by rooting it out at its source. And who will deny that the destruction of German imperialist aggression is in America's national interests. All plans that fall short of that goal can only lead to another conflagration in the future.

MICHEL ANDERS.



"... so then she had to let her chauffeur go and now she can't BEAR to look at a uniform."



IRA WOLFERT'S PEOPLE

A discussion of the Pulitzer Prize winner's two books on the Pacific War and a novel of the depression period. An author who both writes and fights.

I CAN'T think of an American writer who has piled up a more impressive record than Ira Wolfert in this war. Few readers knew his name before Pearl Harbor, even though his fine short stories were included in the prize collections of the late Edward J. O'Brien. Today his frontline reports are syndicated by the North American Newspaper Alliance to approximately 150 papers. A graduate of the Columbia University School of Journalism, this former taxi driver, streetcar motorman, and sports writer scooped the world with his account of the Free French capture of St. Pierre and Miquelon. Last October and November he was at Guadalcanal in the thick of the "git or git-got" fighting. For the brilliant dispatches from that front he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize. In the first half of 1943 he published no fewer than three volumes: two stories of the Pacific fighting, *Battle for the Solomons* and *Torpedo 8* (both Houghton, Mifflin, \$2), and a novel, *Tucker's People* (L. B. Fischer, \$3). Wolfert is back in the Pacific now, watching our men slug the Japanese, taking a hand himself on occasion, filling his notebooks with stormy scenes and American talk that may add up to another exciting book before the year is out.

Wolfert's excellent work illuminates the kind of fighting-writing integration some of us have been talking about. He is not only a reporter but a novelist. He has the reporter's eye for the exact detail and the novelist's ability to give that detail the right shade, the bold image, the dramatic connotation. He avoids two opposite difficulties of so many of the eye-witness war books which have recently appeared. His is neither a literal diary-report that fails to build a structure of suspense and climax because it is loaded down with unrelated data; and neither is it a romantic adventure story that uses a few real incidents as the occasion for another piece of pulp fiction. Most of the time you can reduce the difference to this: a feeling for the right words at the right time. Wolfert's language has muscle, and the only way you can explain that is to say he is in there fighting and thinking every minute of the way. He reminds you a little of Lieutenant Larsen of *Torpedo 8*, who wanted to get the war over with: "That was his idea, get into the war and get it over with, and

do your fooling around when it would be fun, when you would have nothing hanging over your head to make you think that maybe today's fun was not going to have any tomorrow."

THE first paragraph of *Battle for the Solomons* means business, setting the language tension high: "At about eleven o'clock in the morning, ship's time, one of the escort vessels smelled something and went to find it. It had been mousing along up ahead of the convoy, whiskers twitching, as they say to indicate that its mechanical feelers were spreading restlessly and combing out the water for the dynamite. Now it gave up fooling and went. The bow threw up white water in a snarl, a whole snootful of it, and made the ship look as if it were lunging with teeth bared." It doesn't take long to describe the essence of a military problem: "The enemy has got one of his big teeth stuck deep into us there, and what we were doing was skirting the edge of that tooth to get where we could do some drilling on it. That's a real old-time bucket of blood that we are heading for in the Solomons." The battle-torn landscape is not lovely: "Huge trees which were felled or severed by shells are stick-

ing up like gaunt, amputated limbs, like the wounded of the last war in Vienna who had turned beggars and used mutely to hold up unbandaged stumps to passers-by."

The following passage is neither maudlin nor excessively tight-lipped; it's just what it should be, and you don't forget the picture: "Our fellows have elected to die here, too. Along the road pounded through by our trucks lie several graves, one of a private. His friends have trimmed its mound pathetically with coconuts and fashioned a rude wooden cross for a headstone. A helmet with three holes in it, the holes as blank as dead eyes, tops the cross and on it is penciled, 'A Real Guy.' Against the cross stands a photograph of a very pretty girl, staring silently. The sunlight is very bright here and you can see the brown color of the eyes in the photograph and seem to be able to look deep into them down past the look she gave the Dodge City, Kansas, photographer and his camera. Her dead man must have loved her truly, for he carried her picture into battle."

Wolfert has a real feeling for those American boys and men who are doing a job that you can't appreciate by reading the cold communiques. He likes the grim humor of the soldiers washing their clothes in a river and complaining that this would be a real washing machine if only the Japs would open up with three more batteries. He finds most of the men practical, realistic, hard-headed, ready to swap their lives for something they feel is worth the price. If we have many heroes, it is the "ordinary run-of-the-mill guy" who has to be relied on for victory in the long run, like the transport pilot who would like to be in a bomber instead of a "flying truck," but who keeps driving the truck all the same. Wolfert gets sore when he recalls that "Most of the fellows now doing the fighting have taken a lot of abuse in the recent past from the newspapers, and orators, and mostly the Republican politicians against the New Deal 'pampering,' and other worriers who were trying to scold and abuse and insult them into being tough about the depression, or food rationing, or soldiering, or what-the-hell."

In describing how Swede Larsen's bomber squadron avenged their buddies



Ira Wolfert