

Defeat of Germany Is Total This Time

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The defeat of Germany cannot be compared with any of the great defeats in modern history.

German casualties in World War I were high—more than 7,000,000 men. In this war they probably will be at least twice as high, reaching the appalling number of 15,000,000 men killed, wounded, and prisoners. In the Fall of 1918, the German army stacked arms after having lost 400,000 prisoners and probably 300,000 men killed. In the Winter and Spring campaigns of 1945, it so far has lost more than 3,000,000 men.

Wehrmacht Eradicated

Battles of annihilation of such dimensions never have been fought before. This was not merely physical destruction. The entire German military machine fell apart to the last atom. The destruction of German militarism was accomplished in this war by total defeat.

After the campaigns in Western, Central, and Southern Germany, after the campaign in Eastern Germany, there will be nothing left of the German army but corpses, prisoners, and some deserters. There will be no German army to return home, as there was in 1918. The German army will not merely be dispersed, but its institutions, its officers' corps, and general staff will have been eradicated by the defeat. The human slag which remains after the catastrophe will be useless for any military purpose.

Results of Defeat

Total defeat implies not only military defeat. It will determine all the departments of German national life. Because we have helped so essentially in bringing about this defeat, we cannot ignore its consequences.

Total defeat has shattered the German state and Germany's social structure. It has broken not only Hitler's Third Reich, but its precursors, Bismarck's Reich and that of Prussian Frederick the Great, too. This defeat has cut the line of development of German history; it is shat-

Total Defeat

tering to the stature of the historic figures who have dominated the minds of the German people.

Expropriation

The war and the defeat have carried out a tremendous expropriation in Germany. It started with Hitler's rigid war economy; it was stepped up by the air war's destruction and evacuations and brought to a climax by the battles all over Germany. In the course of defeat, Germany has become a nation of displaced persons and propertyless refugees.

The war has brought about the collapse of the German elite, the ruling social groups, even before the purge proper has started. We cannot drag Mr. Krupp downstairs by the scruff of his neck, as did the American officer who arrested him, and still maintain his authority as manager and owner. Property relations in Germany today are so confused and twisted that their simple restoration is not feasible — and it is hardly likely that American money will establish a German WPA for the restoration of old property rights, with the generous rule of "one million dollars for every poor German capitalist."

Era of Change

In Germany we are facing a country which, judging by American standards, will be the most amazing in the world. But nothing should astonish us there.

The total defeat will have after-effects for decades. The war has opened an era of violent changes for Germany which cannot be simply stopped. Post-war Germany will be even more different from the Third Reich than the Third Reich was different from the Weimar Republic.

The defeat with all its implications has not yet penetrated into the consciousness of the average German. So far he has witnessed and experienced it only on a local scale, in his village, town, and city. He has not yet realized fully the defeat as a national and political fact. But this realization will come very soon. The complete occupation of the entire country will clarify the situation. Then a new political trend will begin.

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