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Herr Ganzenmueller's Troubles



HERR GANZENMUELLER is not among those Nazi generals or party leaders known beyond the borders of Fortress Europe. Yet he is among the Third Reich's most important war leaders. Thirty-eight years old, Obergruppenfuehrer Albert Ganzenmueller comes from one of the oldest German fascist organizations—the Reichskriegsflagge, a group of adventurers and cutthroats who were brought together by General von Epp, one of the leaders of the Bavarian reactionaries who joined Hitler years ago. When the Nazis took power in 1933, Ganzenmueller was in the Elite Guard. He had specialized in terrorizing railroad workers and in organizing the Guard's railroad detachments. So he was the natural choice for undersecretary in the ministry of transportation.

In 1938 Ganzenmueller drew up the plans for the transportation of troops and materiel when the Wehrmacht occupied Austria. His plans also prepared the way for the invasions of Poland and France. But his masterpiece of organization was the mass deportation of Jews, Poles, Croats, and Slovenes—one of the bloodiest and most ruthless chapters in the history of this war. In cruelty and terror, Ganzenmueller is matched only by his old friend and superior, Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler, who laid down the rules for the deportation of "inferior races." Ganzenmueller's special contribution to these migrations was his invention of the railroad-car gas chamber to exterminate Jews.

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Another big task which Ganzenmueller undertook, and by no means as pleasant as his previous ones, was the mass evacuation of citizens of Hamburg, Cologne, the Rhineland cities, and Berlin after the tremendous Allied air raids. To cope with the situation Ganzenmueller set up an emergency railroad evacuation corps. The loss of thousands of pieces of rolling stock on the Eastern Front made Ganzenmueller's troubles even greater. Special Elite Guard units and Gestapo detachments were incorporated into the railroad detachments to speed up railroad personnel and prevent sabotage. For sabotage also developed into one of Ganzenmueller's biggest headaches. Judging from Nazi officialdom's rare statements on the matter, railroad sabotage is especially fierce in Austria (especially in Styria and Carinthia where railroad men frequently collaborate with Yugoslav Partisans just across the border) and in France, Belgium, and Poland.

For example, German railroad workers in Poland petitioned the Nazi government to place them on the same footing as soldiers with regard to rent privileges for those incapacitated in service. They based their requests on the fact that during July 1943, alone, 385 of them were killed in Poland while "performing their duty"—which is only a small sample of the accidents caused by sabotage. In certain parts of Poland, as well as in Yugoslavia, the Nazis no longer disclose their train schedules, in order to prevent attacks by saboteurs and Partisan bands.

But apparently Herr Ganzenmueller's troubles have only begun. He and his staff expect headaches such as they have never had before. Recently the Nazi press boastfully told its readers that Ganzenmueller invented a mobile railroad station with all facilities for loading and unloading as well as a rapidly convertible freight car. These mobile stations are said to be of tremendous value for the quick evacuation of bombed areas where railroad stations were destroyed. But as the London anti-fascist paper *Zeitung* reveals, this mobile station has more uses than readily meet the eye. The Gestapo is already preparing for civil war in Germany. The Elite Guard is beginning to reckon with the possibility that insurgents will occupy railroad stations. They are also beginning to reckon with that possibility in connection with the forthcoming invasion by Allied forces. The mobile railroad stations will then come in handy. The freight cars will be con-

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nection with the forthcoming invasion by Allied forces. The mobile railroad stations will then come in handy. The freight cars will be converted into coaches to transport Elite Guard shock troops in emergencies.

One of Ganzenmueller's recent orders proves that the specter of insurrection is haunting the minds of Nazi leaders. This order gave new directives for the operations of the Railroad Police and the Bahnschutz—a special railroad guard corps. Qualifications for membership in both these organizations have become more rigorous and every member is thoroughly investigated as to his reliability. Old members are being dismissed and replaced by Elite Guards. And a special emergency division of railroad Elite Guards has been established to deal with "sudden dangers for the Reich transport system."

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