



Germans maneuver

FOLLOWING the Nazi party convention in Nuremberg (see September 25 number) come the annual German army maneuvers in backwoods Mecklenburg and Pomerania, northeast along the stormy Baltic shore. Berlin is blackened against "air raids" for a week (like London and Paris in World War days), as the new German navy takes part in the military fiesta. Thus do soldiers, sailors, and 4 million burghers coöperate in totalitarian 1937 war.

Hitler goes up to Mecklenburg to see the biggest show ever: 200,000 men in field-gray, massed between the rivers Oder and Elbe. He stays five days according to schedule. Many foreign celebrities are there, especially from Italy, and including Marshal Badoglio, conqueror of Ethiopia. Also Suhl tanks, Heinkel and Junkers airplanes, monacles, old war dogs, young war horses; and motorcycles.

Motorcycles—a cool million of them—have become a German army specialty. The new Wehrmacht specializes in them. (It knows it will be short of horses; as when in March, 1918, the Teuton cavalry arm was virtually abolished, west front and east.) The British and French have only half a million machines apiece. Each German motorcycle-*cum*-sidecar carries three or four mechanized men; more mobile and versatile than a truck carrying some 8 to 15 men. A motorcycle column travels twice as fast as a column of transport trucks: 20 to 40 miles an hour. With tank coöperation, motorcycles can make frontal attacks, infiltrate, out-flank, or strike in rear.

With a mere third of the motorcycles available, Fritsch's entire German regular army plus all of Himmler's blackshirt praetorians (a million men) could be transported faster than the League of Nations speed-limit.

Paradox: an army inclined to prefer its "enemy," Russia, to its "ally," Italy.