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GIs Think Germans Are Stupid

A Correspondent
Reports on a Bull Session
At the Front

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WITH U. S. 3D ARMY,
GERMANY, Apr. 21.—A
group of American

doughboys and tankmen
were lying in the sun under white-
blossomed apple trees. Chewing
blades of grass during a brief
pause, they discussed among them-
selves tangled world affairs.

They decided that Czechoslova-
kia wouldn't be so bad, that the
German people were the most
stupid they had ever met, that it
was too bad Franklin Delano Roose-
velt and Ernie Pyle were dead but
that "after all, they're just a couple
more guys as far as we're con-
cerned."

Before any eyebrow-lifting can
be expressed over the latter, in fair-
ness to the GIs it may be said they
feel deeply over the death of any
"couple of guys." But there comes
a time when emotion drains dry.

"What about these Russians?"
said one tall tanker, idly tossing his
leather combat helmet about.

They're A-Coming

"Don't worry about the Russians.
If we just sit here they'll just be
a-coming," replied a turret gunner,
a red-haired boy from Pennsyl-
vania.

"Hell. We wait anywhere?" an
armored infantryman broke in scof-
fingly. "We are going on, maybe
through Czechoslovakia.

"I can hardly wait," he went on.
"All those dames with petticoats
and lace, bring us out beer. I'll just
lay out on the grass like here and
let them petticoat babes pour it
down my poor old throat."

He signed in anticipation of that
great day in Czechoslovakia when
U. S. beer manufacturers' advertis-
ing would come to life.

"Czechoslovakia?" interrupted a
Kentucky boy. "Do you like the
idea of messing up all the towns
in Czechoslovakia like we done
in Germany?" He demanded indig-
nantly. "They ain't Germans.
They're Allies in case you don't
read the papers, stupid."

The GI group was silent a min-
ute and then a boy sitting on the
edge of a tank brought up an often-
discussed topic—the German peo-
ple.

Some Good Ones?

"Aren't these Heinies the stupidest people you ever saw?" he asked, reflectively. "This woman whose house we lived at washed all the guys' clothes and put sheets on the beds—after we come to town and kick them all out of their own homes.

"Now what the hell do you make of that?" he finished triumphantly.

"So what's wrong with that. Maybe they ain't mad at you," answered the Kentuckian. "Maybe there are some good people here."

Over at the side a bespectacled Jewish tanker suddenly got serious about this new subject.

"They are good people now," he said. But were these good people when they knew there was a concentration camp like Ohdruf and Buchenwald and everywhere else and they just went on living like they didn't mind?

"Were they good people when they all waved flags and hollered for Hitler? There are still pictures around if you forget that," He finished.

"Well, what would you've done if you were them," the Kentuckian asked.

"I might have sat around at first," the tanker said, "but if I were a German and saw one of my neighbors getting arrested for reading the wrong kind of books or listening to the BBC (British Broadcasting Corp.), then everybody in the block should have been mad as hell and stomped down to get them out.

"And if they did anything to the neighbors from our block, then the whole town should have been aroused to overthrow the camp and then if they did anything to the town, the whole country should have come to the rescue of the town—even the Nazis couldn't have stopped that."

The group was silent. Then the boy from Kentucky issued the afternoon's verdict.

"Yeah," he drawled, "I guess they were stupid, all right."