

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER COMMENTSLAST YEAR - THIS YEAR

"A year ago this week the German High Command was announcing that 'German troops .... were pursuing the defeated enemy' and that 'a new and vast series of battles of annihilation' had begun," states the New York Times.

"This week they have spoken of 'stubborn fighting', 'stiff enemy resistance', 'inaccessible woody terrain and swamps'. They refer to a 'bottleneck north west of Stalingrad'. The Germans are not 'annihilating' the Russians this year.

"Last year's pretense that 'offensive operations ..... take their planned course' has been dropped. The Germans are glad to take 'several forest positions'.... the Germans decidedly are not so sure as they were a year ago. The war they asked for is approaching totality. They don't quite like it".

NAZIS CANNOT RULE - ONLY KILL

"Marshal Goering's bland promise that Germans will be the last to starve is worth tons of Allied propaganda in Occupied Europe," states the New York Times. "The current wave of terror in northern Norway is partly due to sabotage in the fish canneries, whence the entire season's catch from the Bergen and Trondheim waters has been shipped to Germany. But the unrest is endemic, and the fresh crop of reprisal murders shows again, as it shows in France, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Holland that the Nazi garrisons cannot rule; they can only kill. They invoke terror because they live in terror. They are surrounded by implacable enemies.

"The horror that stalks over Europe is the spectre of their own fear - fear of the hate they breathe in the air, fear of the fate that awaits them if the great gamble fails and they are left at the mercy of their victims.

"The shooting of 25 hostages seems to indicate more than fear of the Norwegians, however..... There is no doubt that Hitler and his generals take the threat of the second front seriously, and the terrorizing measures in Trondheim and elsewhere strongly suggest a nervous awareness of the danger of attack on a coast which controls the vital sea lanes to Russia ..... they would not resort to coercion in Denmark and terror in Norway unless they felt themselves in grave danger.

Part of the trouble in Scandinavia springs from their failure to win collaboration of any kind from the weakest States they have conquered. But mostly it arises from the realization that the time is not far off when the enemy will land somewhere in Europe. Hitler has built great defence works along the shaky shores of France and the Lowlands. The coasts of Norway and Denmark are longer, more vulnerable and just as shaky, and he is trying to fortify them by a second conquest, reconquering the conquered this time by suppression and annexation. It is a policy of despair".

PUNISHING THE CRIMINALS

"Joint announcement in London and Washington of the proposal to create a joint commission representing the United Nations to investigate the crimes of the aggressors inevitably suggests the old recipe 'first catch your hare' ", writes the New York Tribune. "Nevertheless the interests of justice ..... demand that some action be taken at this time to establish retributive machinery . .... The experience of the first world war is valuable in this connection. Then, too, there were stern resolves to punish the guilty..... Germany argued against turning over her war criminals to Allied justice, and proposed to take action herself.....

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The demand for retribution fizzled out in a splutter of protest. If this is to be avoided in the peace that is to come, some form of procedure will have to be adopted in advance. President Roosevelt made a very good suggestion on August 21 when he spoke of those committing crimes against civilians being brought before the courts of the countries in which the offences were committed. ...."

#### ATROCITIES HAVE POLITICAL PURPOSE

Dorothy Thompson, in the New York Post, writes:- "The President's statement warning that persons responsible for crimes against International Law committed during this war would be punished thereafter, and that enemy peoples as a whole would not be held responsible, has a double significance. It is an answer to what has become Hitler's strongest internal propaganda: namely that if Germany loses, the whole German people will be exterminated in revenge for the atrocities in Europe.

"It almost seems as though the Nazis are pursuing the atrocities with a political purpose in mind that goes beyond the subjection of the conquered: namely the conscious creation of such hatred of Germany that the Nazis can warn the German people 'either we win or all perish together.'"

"As a matter of fact Hitler said just this in his last speech. The answer to that is Roosevelt's statement 'the number of those found guilty will undoubtedly be extremely small compared to the total enemy populations'. .... Its second significance is that it closes the door to any compromise peace with the criminals presently ruling Germany. .... This should be made clear to the German people and they should be advised in the interests of saving their own skins to sever any connection they may have with the guilty".

#### BARBARISM SINKING LOWER

Colonel Frederick Palmer, military expert for North American Newspapers Alliance, states: "The inception is characteristically Hitlerian, but the order to put fetters on all Allied officers and men captured at Dieppe is issued in the name of the German High Command. Used as we are to Nazi barbarism sinking lower and lower to the depths of primitive savagery, it was still thought that the German Army Staff could not have had all the sense of soldier decency and all chivalrous respect for a brave enemy storm-trooped out of them. The order of itself is further warrant for the forming of a United Nations commission for investigation of war crimes. .... To fetter soldier prisoners who are disarmed and without any power of resistance against the bayonet prod of a guard is absolutely contrary to International law and all civilized military practice.

"I like to think that all Germans are not yet at heart completely brutalized. The object of the United Nations Commission in investigating war crimes is not mass reprisals, but to punish the ring leaders, which should include some of the members of the German High Command".

#### U.S. OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION