

Eisenhower's Big Job in Europe Is Instilling 'Will to Fight' in People

BY WES GALLAGHER.

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (AP).—Rearming Europe today is fundamentally a question of morale, not guns and planes.

A large part of Europe hasn't the will now to defend itself.

On a grand scale General Eisenhower is in the position of a football coach trying to instill the "will to win" in his team.

Eisenhower must try to instill the "will to fight." Without it the United States can pour arms into Europe from now until doomsday without the slightest result.

This colors the way Europeans look on the east-west conflict and the way Americans look at it.

Europeans are no less conscious than Americans of the menace of Soviet aggression. The vast majority of French, Germans, British, Italians and other Europeans have no more liking than Americans for communism.

They dislike the Kremlin rulers, poke jibes at Stalin privately and wish Russia never existed.

Keep Poisons on Hand.

But they don't see that they can do much about the situation except commit suicide. And this is more than a figure of speech; I know Germans who keep poisons on hand and swear they will take them if overrun by the Soviet army again.

From the Baltic to Spain Europe has been ravaged and bled white by recent wars. The torrents of bloodshed touching every family have drained away that intangible called morale.

They know that any Soviet attack must be met in the heart of Europe. Whether the attack is held or not they know their homes will be devastated by battle and bombings. They and their sons and daughters will die by the thousands.

By experience they know that there are no winners in war. Even if they are on the winning side they know they will be too prostrate to enjoy it.

They still believe in freedom and wish with all their hearts they can keep it but have difficulty convincing themselves they can do it.

They want to stop the Russians but without "morale" the dangers and sacrifices of rearming seem almost too much to bear.

There are scores of other factors complicating the rearming of Europe. But most of them would fade if the morale problem were settled.

Weapons No Good Unless . . .

This is Eisenhower's big task. Tanks and guns are no good unless the soldiers and peoples behind them have the will to fight and use them.

There are exceptions, of course, among the European nations. Great Britain can be counted on to fight bravely, as she has in the past. British and American Army co-operation in Germany is wholehearted and unstinting on either side. Some of the smaller countries like the Norwegians also are prepared to stand and fight. Unfortunately they are not strong enough to tip the scales in the West's favor.

Great Britain is forced to divide her might among sea, air and land forces. She can not make a large enough land contribution on the continent to deter the Russians even with American and small country aid.

European defense depends primarily on France and Germany

and to a lesser extent on Italy. These are the only nations with the manpower and the strategic position among the Atlantic Pact powers to make a successful defense on the continent possible.

France is depended upon under the Atlantic Pact program to supply the bulk of the ground forces needed in Europe.

Scars Still Apparent.

France was beaten in the war of 1870. She was virtually beaten and bled white in the 1914-1918 war. In 1940 she was overrun in six weeks and put up a resistance that at best must be described as feeble. Four years of morale-sapping occupation followed.

These scars can not be removed overnight and they still are visible today. French morale is perhaps the lowest in Europe when it comes to rearming to the hilt again and making a firm stand against the Russians.

France's position is further complicated by having (1) a weak, divided government which is seldom able to hold power more than a few months and (2) an estimated 6,000,000 Communists in the country.

In contrast to the other political parties the French Communists are a hard disciplined core. They are ruthless. In a crisis they probably could seriously cripple any war effort with sabotage, resistance, strikes and overt acts.

Just how large an infiltration the Communists have in the French armed forces remains to be seen. For the moment there are not many armed forces to count.

The French have three divisions in their army of occupation but only a fraction of these is ready to fight. Their present reserves in France proper are negligible and poorly equipped. The professional heart of the army is fighting in Indochina and can not be counted on for European defense.

Plans for Army.

France has plans to raise an army of nearly 1,000,000 in the

next two or three years. Even if the West has this long, the question remains: Will these forces have the will to fight?

Italy is in a similar position. During the last war the morale of the Italian soldier was notoriously bad under fascism. No one knows whether it would be any better under democracy. There is no doubt the Italian people are war weary and politically cynical. Although the government is stable there is a large and vigorous Italian Communist Party which has proven its ability to torture the country with disabling strikes when opportunity offers.

As an ex-enemy nation, Italy also has been largely disarmed and it will take time and money to rebuild her armed forces.

Western Germany with its 48,000,000 people and large reservoir of trained soldiers is eyed enviously by military men.

I have been asked frequently: "Is it true the Germans really do not want to fight or are they just trying to get some concessions?"

After fighting the Germans in two world wars and having a terrible time in beating them, Western nations find it difficult to believe the Germans really don't want to go back into uniform again.

But the fact is the people as such do not. Those particularly between the ages of 20 and 40 have had a stomach full of war. There is scarcely a family that has not lost at least two close relatives in the last war. Virtually all have lost their homes, their money and their security.

Occupied Country.

On top of this they are an occupied country, treated as second-class citizens, and largely through French fears they are being asked to rearm as second-class soldiers—pawns of nations that defeated them.

The Germans also are military realists. They know the sad state of Western defenses in Europe, compared with the six

10 YEARS EXPERIENCE BACK OF A. P. EUROPEAN WRITER

Editor's Note: Much of the current Great Debate deals with complex problems of re-arming Western Europe and the extent to which United States collaboration will help find solutions for meeting the challenge of Soviet Russia. A first-hand view of these problems is given by J. Wes Gallagher of the Associated Press executive staff, who has just returned from foreign service assignments spanning the last 10 years of European history. The accompanying article is the first of two stories summing up his personal impressions.

Gallagher first went overseas in 1940, arriving just in time for the German invasion of Denmark and Norway. Subsequently he covered the war in the Balkans, captained AP frontline teams in North Africa and on the western front, and organized postwar Associated Press operations in Germany. Friday he will survey strategic angles of the European military outlook.

Soviet armies that rattle their tanks in the middle of Germany along the occupation border. They know that there is no such thing as a "little" rearming such as the Atlantic Pact has thus far proposed for them.

A "little" rearming would provide no defense and only leave them at the mercy of the Russians as an "enemy," should the Soviets attack. They also know any attack would begin in the middle of Germany and devastate a country just now getting back on its feet.

There is no doubt a vote now for rearming would be overwhelmingly defeated if the West Germans were polled.

West German politicians are riding this anti-rearming tide to gain concessions from the West. Even if they got all the concessions they are asking it is doubtful if they could pull the voters over on their side and convince them they must arm.

Should the West become stronger, offering some protection against the threat of attack, and should the West Germans feel themselves equal partners of the Western nations, they might vote to rearm. No one can say for sure.

Germans Hate Russians.

This does not mean the Germans would favor the Russians. With millions of dead and hundreds of thousands of brothers, sons and daughters having disappeared into Russia as prisoners, the Germans hate the Soviets.

It is axiomatic that the closer the Europeans are to the Rus-

sians, the more they dislike them.

Germans say if the West really wants someone to fight the Soviets they should recruit Eastern Germans who live under Soviet rule. It is true that West Berlin, which is completely surrounded by the Soviet army, is the most belligerent and outspoken against them.

The Germans like the rest of the continent must be convinced that what they have is worth fighting for and if they prepare to fight they have a chance of winning without being wiped out in the process.

Under these conditions it is well not to be misled or interpret some European political statements as appeasement or collaboration with communism or just silly unjustified optimism.

It is probable the speaker does not really believe what he is saying but is like the small boy whistling in the graveyard. He hopes for the best but fears the worst.

It is estimated there are some 10,000 mineral springs in the United States—of which at least a thousand have produced water in commercial quantities.

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