

HEADQUARTERS
2677TH REGIMENT
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES (PROV.)
APO 512, U. S. ARMY

7 February 1945

DATE OF INFORMATION: Beginning of December 1944
SUB-SOURCE : *Joseph*
~~Walden~~ ~~Walden~~ (see other reports)
TO : Reports Office
THROUGH : Chief, SICE
 : Chief, SI
FROM : *Crabbe*
SUBJECT : Internal situation in Germany and
 the fighting spirit of the German
 soldier

Padre Zeiger was attached to a Vatican mission, headed by an Italian Bishop, which was authorized by the allies to visit German Prisoner of War camps. As a German-born priest and officer in World War I, Padre Zeiger was the most important member of this mission. They have visited and will continue to visit PW camps all over Italy. Padre Zeiger is a South German. He has been anti-Nazi from the beginning of the NSDAP. I have known him for about ten years. His opinion was always higher regarded in the Vatican and at the German Embassy to the Holy See.

1. Sub-source states that all German officers and enlisted men contacted by him in PW camps (even men who have been very recently captured) are in a state of psychopathic excitement. They told him that they fight because nothing else remains for them except to fight. They said, and emphasized, that the Western Allies have given no hope to the German people which might help them overthrow the Hitler regime.

2. On the other hand, it was apparent that most of the officers and enlisted men realized that they are responsible for the things that Hitler, the SS and the Gestapo have done. Sub-source told me that he questioned German soldiers and officers about this. He said that several times he called to the attention of German officers during the occupation of Rome, when they were free, the fact

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that there is great danger unless the non-Nazi Wehrmacht intervenes to keep the Nazis from acting in the name of the German people. At that time, in the years of German victory, very few people recognized the Hitlerite danger and most of them reputed any such call to attention. Now, as prisoners of war, they are aware that they missed the opportunity to cut themselves off from the Nazis.

3. Sub-source expressed his opinion that the self-identification of the German people with Hitler became a fact through the course of events, and that they could do nothing else but fight for him. That fact was true of all PW's.

4. As to the situation inside Germany, sub-source stated that several PW's told him that a well-organized underground will act in Germany after the Allied occupation. The PW's could not furnish exact data, but said their information came from their own family connections, from extreme Nazi members of their families.

This information came from Austrian prisoners of war also, and sub-source found many Nazi sympathizers among them.

Comment: Re Paragraph #4--The same statement was made to me by Mohnen, concerning the possibility of a well-organized Nazi underground in Germany.

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