CURTAILMENT OF MILITARY PSYCHOLOGY IN GERMANY

IN its October 15, 1942, issue, which was only recently received in this country, the Swiss medical review *Praxis* reports the following: "The psychological testing service of the German armed forces has been quite considerably curtailed during the course of this year [that is after the first Russian winter], first in the air force (*Luftwaffe*), then in the army. Up to this time the service was charged with essential tasks of aptitude testing for the selection for special branches of the armed forces and for purposes of promotion."[1]

This report of a sharp curtailment of German military psychology comes as a surprise in view of the knowledge of the importance that it had gained at one time.[2,3] Before the war, 200 military psychologists were working in many testing stations all over Germany.

While the reasons for the curtailment are not given, two explanations suggest themselves: (1) the results of German military psychology were unsatisfactory; (2) its procedures proved themselves impractical under wartime conditions.

It does not seem likely that the first explanation should be correct. German military psychology, which was first installed during the first World War for the selection of automobile drivers, was resumed in 1926 and had since then undergone a steady orderly growth up to the present war. This period of 13 years should have given ample opportunity to test the intrinsic value of the testing service, and if continuous expansion was considered warranted, one must conclude that the results were satisfactory.

As to the second explanation, there seems to be some evidence that it is probably the right one. It is the purpose of this note to discuss that evidence.

German military psychologists were not satisfied with the method of standardized group tests as the basic procedure. They wanted to learn more about the testee than his numerical score on a test. What they wanted was a true character portrait of the testee. This was accomplished by the clinical approach. A testee was studied by a group of psychologists, usually six, for two entire days and in many, partly very realistic, test situations. The psychologists' ratings of the testee in these situations were checked with one another, and from the consensus of the ratings a report about the testee was prepared.

While the method was good, it was very time-consuming and required a relatively large staff of highly trained psychological personnel. Before the war only 100,000 men a year could be handled in this way. The selection procedure was always limited to officer candidates, pilots and specialists. The German military psychologists had been aware of the cumbersomeness of their method. In 1940, for example, a new test item was suggested to replace two previous items of the total procedure. The new item would reduce the amount of necessary testing equipment and represent a considerable saving in time. Whereas the old items required 11½ hours of the psychologists' time for the testing and appraising of 16 men, the new item would reduce this requirement to 5 hours.[4]

Eight months after the invasion of Poland, in May, 1940, a shortage of military psychologists in Germany was reported.[5] Particularly in the air force (*Luftwaffe*) an extraordinary demand for psychologists was anticipated in the near future. It seems that it was difficult to meet this demand, because the following year the training of applied (military) psychologists was expanded. In April, 1941, a new academic degree in psychology, *Diplom-Psychologe,* was created. This degree for applied psychologists has lower requirements than the Ph.D. in psychology, up to that time the only German degree in psychology and one of the qualifications for the military psychologist. The announcement of the new degree in the Spanish journal where we saw it began as follows: "Needs of the state, the Army, and business with regard to psychology have demanded in Germany a broader basis for the training of professional psychologists."[6]

In the light of the recent report of curtailment, it would appear that attempts to procure an adequate number of military psychologists failed. This failure —probably largely due to the high training requirements of the method, the new degree notwithstanding —together with the cumbersomeness of the method, is likely to have led to the final decision of drastic curtailment. If the psychological testing service could not be geared to real wartime demands, curtailment was the only alternative since military procedures must be uniform. It is worth noting that the earlier reported shortage of personnel was greatest among *Luftwaffe* psychologists and that it was subsequently the *Luftwaffe* where psychology was first curtailed.

German military psychology considered the clinical approach as basic. American military psychology, resumed from the first World War in 1940, considered the clinical approach as impractical for a program of Army dimensions and concentrated on standardized tests, although the tests "are always used in conjunction with ratings made by trained interviewers, commanding officers under whom the man is serving, or, in the case of officer candidates, special boards of

[1] Anon. *Praxis,* 31, 796, 1942.
[2] H. L. Ansbacher, *Psychol. Bull.,* 38, 370–392, 1941.
[3] L. Farago and L. F. Gittler, Editors. "German Psychological Warfare: Survey and Bibliography." New York: Committee for National Morale, 1941. Pp. 155.
[4] E. Läpple, *Zeits. angew. Psychol.,* 60, 1–63, 1940.
[5] M. Simoneit, *Soldatentum,* May, 1940.
[6] Anon. The title of "Diplome Psychologist" in Germany. *Psicotecnia,* 2, 218, 1941.

selection."[7] The curtailment of Germany military psychology in the emergency seems to support the judgment of the American military psychologists.

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TRANSLITERATION OF ENGLISH NAMES IN RUSSIAN

IF the transliteration of Russian names into English is a mess, that of English (and other) names into Russian is doubly so. The Russian alphabet, with all other Slavic alphabets except the Polish, has no *w*, which is of little consequence, its place being taken by *v* (as it is, more or less, in the pronunciation of many English words); but for some strange reason the Russians in general do not transliterate the *w* in English names by *v* (though they do so in various German words), but by *u*. Thus Wendell Willkie is "Uendel Uilki," New York is "Niu Iork," Shaw is "Šo," etc. But this is not all. For some unknown reason the Russian, alone among the Slavic and other European languages, has no *h*, though the sound is present in the Ukrainian and other Russian dialects. Thus Houston, for instance, would be given as "Giustn," Ohio as "Ogio," Hall as "Gol," etc. There is also no *th*, it being replaced by *f*, so that Thomas is "Foma," etc. An effort furthermore is to write foreign names phonetically, which involves further corruptions.

It is plain that to science all this will be of serious and growing disadvantage, as it must be of much impediment to foreigners learning Russian, as well as to Russian youth who learn foreign languages.

The remedy, at least for scientific publications and catalogues, would seem to be fairly simple—the printing by the Russians of all foreign names as they are and in italics; and the general adoption of the letter *h*. The all-powerful Academy of Sciences of the U. S. S. R. could readily effect these changes and they would be very much to its credit.

The Russian alphabet, as is well known, was taken, with orthodox Christianity, from Byzantium, and is essentially the Greek (Ionian) alphabet; but the Greek had both the sound of *h* and its alphabetic representation. The Greek too had (and has) a special letter for *th*.

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ARTHUR WILLIS GOODSPEED

IN his excellent obituary of Arthur Willis Goodspeed,[1] Horace C. Richards pays tribute to Goodspeed's important pioneer work with x-rays. It is noteworthy that Goodspeed's profound interest in the physical properties of x-rays and in their practical applications was probably due to the fact that he *almost* discovered the phenomenon himself six years before Röntgen. This incident is described in my biography of Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen,[2] from which I quote:

> Goodspeed and a friend by the name of W. N. Jennings were photographing electric sparks and brush discharges on the evening of February 22, 1890. After some such experiments had been completed, the table was still littered with loaded plate holders and other apparatus when Goodspeed brought out some Crookes tubes and demonstrated them to Jennings. The next day, Jennings reported that when the plates were developed he had found a very curious phenomenon: two round discs superimposed upon the spark tracings on the photographic negative. No one could explain this curious effect, and the plates were put aside with other freak photographs and were forgotten. Six years later, after the discovery of the roentgen rays had been announced, these negatives were unearthed and reexamined. Another exposure was made with the same apparatus and under similar conditions, and the results were the same; that is, two discs with a sharp boundary on one side and a blurred boundary on the other side were visible on the plate. Goodspeed concluded a lecture on roentgen rays at the University of Pennsylvania on February 22, 1896, with the story of his early experiments, and said: "We can claim no merit for the discovery, for no discovery was made. All we ask is that you remember, gentlemen, that six years ago, day for day, the first picture in the world by cathodic rays was taken in the Physical Laboratory of the University of Pennsylvania."

Before publishing this account an inquiry in regard to the authenticity of the reports of this event brought from Goodspeed the following answer:

> PHILADELPHIA, February 15, 1929
>
> . . . The accidental roentgen effect which W. N. Jennings and I produced in 1890 was real and authentic. Because of our laxity in not following the matter up we do not claim any credit whatsoever, but the facts are as stated in such articles as you may have read.

CLEVELAND CLINIC FOUNDATION OTTO GLASSER

QUOTATION

POOLING RESEARCH

SIR JOHN ANDERSON'S visit to Washington and Ottawa marks further progress in a movement which began long before the United States entered the war and which has already yielded fruitful results. The immediate object is to set up a committee of scientists to act as a clearing house for information on scientific research. The committee would be formed, to begin with, by the Governments of Great Britain, the United States and Canada; but it is hoped that in due course the participation of other Governments will be secured

[7] The Staff, Personnel Research Section, Classification and Replacement Branch, The Adjutant General's Office, SCIENCE, 97, 473–478, 1943.

[1] SCIENCE, 98: 125, August 6, 1943.

[2] Springfield, Ill., Charles C Thomas, 1934.