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AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA SUFFERED
BY GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR HELD IN THE UNITED STATES DURING
WORLD WAR II

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A Thesis

by

AMY C. HUDNALL

Submitted to the Graduate School

Appalachian State University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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Major Department: History

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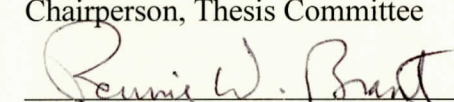
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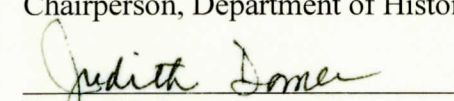
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ABSTRACT

AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA SUFFERED BY GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR HELD IN THE UNITED STATES DURING WORLD WAR II

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Little research has been conducted into the practices of American prisoner of war administration during World War II. As leaders in human rights and with increasing movement toward a global world-view of individual human rights, can the United States create a more humane prisoner of war policy, particularly in the realm of emotional trauma? This thesis is a review of the experiences of German prisoners of war in the United States during World War II. An analysis is made of policies and practices of American prisoner of war camps primarily using documents such as memos and court records. From this analysis, and primary source documentation recounting the prisoners' experiences, a view of the prisoners' psychological frame of mind was formulated. The conclusions formulated in this thesis are confirmed by the insights of Major William F. Matschuliet who, as an active participant in the World War II camp system, observed the flaws with amazing insight. Finally, suggestions are made from this psychological and historical frame of reference for changes in current American prisoner of war camp policies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATIONS

I would like to acknowledge and thank the people who supported me in this process. My daughter, Megan, has lived through the frustrations of a mother who was not always attentive, my mind being in the “land of the prisoners.” With her tolerance and my mother’s support this work came to fruition. This is also true for my mentor, Dr. Peter Petschauer. I often wondered how he could stand to read yet another version of this thesis, and yet, he always did, and always with a smile, a positive word, and helpful suggestions. My friend Julia, poured over the German documents, translating and discussing my ideas and quandaries. She was an endless source of tangible and emotional support. I was very fortunate to experience the care and concern of these four people as well as the rest of my family and friends, who were always ready to lend a hand with childcare, editing, ideas, and analysis. I am very grateful to them all.

This thesis is dedicated to *all* of the people touched by World War II, but especially to the men and women who *silently* suffered the humiliation and fear of imprisonment both in concentration camps and prison camps. Perhaps this and other works like it, in some small way, will encourage changes that we now know can improve the lives of anyone ever held in captivity.

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Introduction

On 20 July 1944, Major William F. Matschullet addressed a gathering of Army officials at the conference, Intelligence Activities in United States German Prisoner of War Camps. Matschullet's topic at Fort Benning, Georgia was the "Intelligence Activities at German Prisoner of War Camps—Segregation and Related Problems."¹ He deftly moved the listeners through the factors involved in discerning, what he called "Gestapo prisoners." Then he focused on the necessity of understanding "the psychology of Continental Europeans," noting that "we are not only concerned with the American point of view, but also with the German point of view."² The effect his presentation made on prisoner care is unknown. However, it is obvious that Matschullet touched on ideas that were remarkably visionary, anticipating today's psychological understandings of impact of captivity on the individual.

The purpose of this thesis is multiple, in part supporting and being supported by the farsightedness of Major Matschullet. First, and foremost, it is an examination of the lives of German World War II prisoners held in the United States. Although a portion of this thesis is devoted to explaining the structure and policy of the prisoner of war camps, it is done only to provide a background for a more intimate view of prisoner experiences. With this

¹ Major William F. Matschullet, "Intelligence Activities at German Prisoner of War Camps-Segregation and Related Problems" Address (Fort Benning, GA, 20 July 1944), file 704 #3, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

² Matschullet Address, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

foundation, it becomes possible to inquire into the mental stability of the prisoners and how their emotional health was affected by American camp policy. In particular, events that might have produced the onset of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome in individual prisoners were analyzed. If experienced by a group or the majority of a group, this syndrome (although not diagnosed during World War II) contributes to the instability of a culture, e.g., the ability to maintain peace, mental health, and cultural frames of reference.

I chose to look at prisoners held in the United States because the United States considers itself a leader in humanitarian rights and is a major participant in humanitarian intervention. As political scientist, Thomas G. Weiss writes of the twentieth century American attitude toward human rights, "[n]o problem was so daunting that the [United States] Security Council would not resolve to pitchfork the UN into yet another complex intrastate operation."² America's leadership in human rights is further accentuated through the financial commitment it makes, and made toward North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN). Throughout most of the life of these two organizations "[t]he United States finance[d] 40 percent of NATO's bills and, until recently, over 30 percent of UN military expenditures."³ During World War II, the United States, as one among the countries at war, maintained one of the safest prisoner of war camp systems. This reality provides an excellent starting point for examining the psychological history of prisoners with the aim of applying this new knowledge to any prisoner of war situation.

² Thomas G. Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises* (Oxford, England: Rowman & Littlefield, Publishers, 1999), xi.

³ Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions*, xiv.

To accomplish this goal, the thesis begins with some background on universal human law. Then, an understanding of the West's attempts at universal peace leads the reader into the story of the American prisoner of war camps, how the camps began, and what those in charge endeavored to accomplish within them. Following this overview of American camp history, I will offer an analysis of World War II camp policy, detailing some of the mistakes made by the American administration. I will then shift to the personal stories of some prisoners as a way of evaluating what psychological trauma, if any, they experienced. What were their sorrows and rages? How did they see their captors? How did they survive the experience? What legacy do they carry today?

American post-war policy, like the Marshall plan, sought to rebuild and reinvent the German nation, economy, and recreate the people as a less "paranoid" society. In many ways, the Marshall Plan was successful, as the Germany of today attests. However, it neglected the emotional impact of wartime experiences on the survivors. As Matschullet understood to some extent, subtle cultural differences are an essential aspect of these narratives that, if ignored, can significantly decrease any captor's ability to manage their captives. It often distorts or hides any mental illness suffered by the prisoners. For example, American doctors diagnosed mental illness according to American cultural norms—norms which allowed men a slightly greater opportunity to express emotions than was allowed in German society. Hence, later inter-camp evaluations of policy were skewed. Finally, using psychological and historical analysis, I suggest ways to moderate the current American prisoner of war policy in the hope of abrogating future mistakes.

Chapter 1

The Evolution of International Law in Regards to Prisoners of War

International Law

Formalized, international humanitarian concern for prisoners of war is a relatively new phenomenon. Through the middle of the seventeenth century, laws that applied to war had addressed the individual behavior of the warrior, a chivalric code. A further movement toward individual rights occurred when European societies began to think "that perhaps the savagery of war could be at least partially mitigated by the combined effort of the precepts of religion, morality, and law."¹ Even Shakespeare, in *Henry V*, promoted the idea of ethical behavior during wartime. Hugo Grotius, the "father of international law," suggested in *De Jure Belli Ac Pacis (On the Law of War and Peace)*, 1654, that laws relating to war could and should be applied across nations.² One hundred and thirty-one years later, the United States became one of the first states to enter into formal arrangements with other nations calling for the humane treatment of prisoners of war (POW). "The Treaty of 1785 between the United States and Prussia" addressed "the treatment of POW's . . . by nations at that time not at war with each other."³ The echo of Grotius' and other intellectual voices

¹ Arthur C. Banks Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War during the Second World War" (Ph.D. diss., John Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, 1955), 11.

² Hugo Grotius, *On the Law of War and Peace*, trans. Francis W. Kelsey (Indianapolis, IN: Boobs-Merrill, 1925).

³ George B. Davis, "The POW," *American Journal of International Law* VII (July 1913): 521-545 in "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," Banks Jr., 16.

over the next centuries resulted in the formal document entitled, "The Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War."

In Europe, the first version of the Geneva Convention was codified in 1863. That same year the United States took its first steps toward establishing permanent laws of warfare; Dr. Francis Lieber's *Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field*, published as the General Orders #100, was written at the behest of Abraham Lincoln in response to Civil War atrocities.⁴ Because the Western world seemed of like mind, the nineteenth century became known for the "organization and systemization" of the development of international law.⁵ Almost all of the nations in the world ultimately ratified this Geneva Convention as further movement towards universal common rights.

The second version of the Convention was written in reaction to the enormous changes in warfare and loss of lives in World War I. "The fundamental purpose of the 1929 code was to guarantee that POWs should be treated with humanity and respect while in captivity."⁶ The attending nations, including the United States, established these guidelines at the Geneva Prisoner of War and Red Cross Convention on 27 July 1929 in Geneva, Switzerland. Two and one-half years later, the United States Senate ratified document was deposited with the Swiss government (4 January 1932), and on 4 August

⁴ See Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field. General Orders No. 100 (24 April 1863), reprinted in *The Laws of Armed Conflicts 3* (Dietrich Schindler & Jiri Toman eds., 3rd ed., 1988) in Theodor Meron's *War Crimes Law Comes of Age: Essays* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1998), 132.

⁵ Banks Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 17.

⁶ Banks Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 84.

1932, President Herbert Hoover officially signed it into law. The pertinent outcome of the 1929 Geneva Convention for this thesis was the "Convention for the Treatment of Prisoners of War," which, at the time, seemed to address every aspect of prisoner care from capture to repatriation.

In general, the Convention for the Treatment of POWs demanded that prisoners of war should at all times "be humanely treated and protected."⁷ The most revolutionary idea in the text was that "prisoners of war are in the power of the hostile Government, but not of the individuals or formation which captured them," therefore reducing the frequently emotional contact between hostile individuals versus a corporate body.⁸ It was a remarkable document, attempting to minimize individual harm caused by the rancor and violence created between states. In addition to proscribing all known aspects of prisoner care, the Convention, in Part VI, Article 79, established the International Red Cross Committee as the agency designated to communicate between belligerent countries.⁹

Indeed, the Geneva Conference created the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention in response to the incredible changes demanded by modern warfare; the necessity of large numbers of men, new and more deadly weaponry, and the realities of a world war instead of battles between individual nations. Those nations that ratified the Convention expected to abide by its tenets in the hope of easing the ferocity of war. Naturally, in a time of gas

⁷ Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva 27 July 1929 Part I: General Provisions, Article 1. Part VII: (2).

⁸ Geneva Convention III, Part I: Art. 2.

⁹ The word *belligerent* is a technical term used as part of the language of the Convention and other peacekeeping documents. Any country at war is a belligerent country.

or chemical warfare, new rapid-fire weapons, and the invention of tanks, there was great concern among the signatories about the potential actions of countries that did not sign the Convention, in particular Japan, Russia, and China. As the world emerged from the horror of World War I, the specter of yet another world war appeared, and the question of how to negotiate between signatory and non-signatory nations became a pressing issue.

Technically, not just the lack of a signature, but also the wording of the document itself, allowed those who had not signed the treaty to handle prisoners in any way they chose. The Convention also neglected to specify how the treaty signatories should deal with prisoners from non-member nations. After World War II, this serious flaw was one of the first changes made in the 1949 revision. Thus, the 1949 Convention states: "The provisions of the present Convention must be respected by the High Contracting Parties in all circumstances. In time of war if one of the belligerents is not a party to the Convention, its provisions shall, nevertheless, remain binding as between the belligerents who are parties thereto."¹⁰

Entrance into World War II

When the United States entered World War II, it did so as a nation sworn to uphold the Geneva Convention. Having, over time, become established as a humanitarian leader, the United States government was deeply concerned with establishing a successful prisoner of war system during this war. However, the government's agencies involved

¹⁰ Geneva Convention, August 12, 1949, Part VIII, Section 1: Art. 82. The revisions of 1949 specifically extended more protection to war correspondents and to civilian members of military aircraft crews. It considered the role of partisans as prisoners of war and added a provision for penal sanctions against those who violated the treaty.

had little experience in the administration of POW camps. Although it is true that the army had maintained camps during the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, and WWI, only in the American Revolution and Civil Wars had large groups of prisoners been interned on American soil, and never before had America housed non-American prisoners within the "Zone of the Interior." The World War II camps were established with the knowledge gained from this meager experience and the guidelines set by international law.

Because of a number of concerns relevant to prisoner care, when the United States declared war in 1941, the American government immediately requested that Switzerland inform the enemy nations that the United States would conform to the Convention of 1929. Japan, Germany, and Italy sent confirmation that they too would comply with those obligations.¹¹ The United States, therefore, planned to adhere to the Convention and it extended attention, time, and money to do so; the first "Basic Enemy Alien" and "Prisoner of War Policy" was set forth by the War Department in 1942. Day-to-day operations were placed under the auspices of the Provost Marshal General's Office (PMGO). Immediately a number of issues arose as the PMGO set out to implement the Geneva Convention principle. Arthur Banks Jr. best expressed these complexities.¹² He wrote:

Law at best is a clumsy instrument of social control. The relationship between law and fact constantly calls forth a stream of new situations and no system of law can carry with it all things necessary for all future issues that will come up under it. Everything essential to the decision of a legal issue is not in existence before the issue arises. Therefore, in many instances, the choice before responsible officials was not whether or not to follow the law but simply what was the law.¹³

¹¹ Telegraph 330 and 331, Secretary of State Hull for the American Legation at Bern, 18 December 1941. Records Service Center, State Department.

¹² Hereafter referred to as the PMGO.

¹³ Banks, "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 419.

A myriad of unexpected problems confronted American administrators. For instance, there was great debate between the military departments and American political leaders over the parameters to establish for acceptable types of work, subsequent compensation, or even if one could expect the prisoners to work at all. In part, these concerns arose because the Convention states "Work done by prisoners of war shall have no direct connection with the operations of the war."¹⁴

Therefore, during the initial planning stage, the PMGO made a formal request to the Red Cross for approval as to specific types of labor. However, the Convention was vague about permissible types of employment, the one recurring phrase being "not military in character or purpose."¹⁵ This clause came to be interpreted as permitting work on and off military bases, but not in any direct war effort, such as building guns or packing food for soldiers. So the final work classifications established by the PMGO were made congruently, according to both American need and the direct approval of the Geneva Convention's governing body. This was only one instance in which difficulty in the interpretation of law confronted the United States.

In some cases, the United States clearly ignored the Convention in deference to a choice between following international law and national security. Articles 45-49, dealing with penal sanctions, were probably most ignored by those running the camps. These violations centered on the responsibility of the captors to enforce violations by the prisoners. The guards often overlooked prisoner-on-prisoner violence, even though it was considered

¹⁴ Geneva Convention, Part III, Section 3, Chapter 3: Art. 31.

¹⁵ Geneva Convention III, Section III, Labour of Prisoners of War: Art. 50.

illegal under the Convention. Generally, though, this was due to neglect, poorly trained personnel, or a lack of understanding of the Convention rules and less to deliberate noncompliance.¹⁶

Continuing correspondence between the Convention and the United States officials became the typical procedure used to mitigate any missteps. Nonetheless, some issues could not be readily handled. The Convention specifically addresses clothing, shelter, and food provided for prisoners. However, the economic reality was that many countries *could not* follow these rules. The United States was able to provide generously for the prisoners in the first half of the internment period, but after the armistice, America was unable to feed prisoners, or provide adequate shelter or clothing on both the European and North American continents. Europe was devastated and any available food went to American soldiers. The United States attempted to adequately feed American soldiers, the devastated European population, and Axis prisoners. But for a time, this effort was beyond the country's resources. The influx of captured soldiers was completely unexpected and some died before they could receive adequate care. Does a body like the Convention prosecute a nation under these circumstances? Eventualities like this are not addressed in the Convention. The Americans uniformly attempted to meet the basic needs of their prisoners. They usually moved captured prisoners off the front line in a reasonable amount of time. And, according to Red Cross evaluations, the prisoners held in Europe were not always housed or fed as well as was expected, but they were cared for in a manner equal to American troops.

¹⁶ Judith Gansberg, *Stalag: U.S.A.: The Remarkable Story of POWs in America* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977).

The International Red Cross Committee

The International Red Cross Committee (IRCC), a significant component of the “Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of the Prisoners of War” linking Axis and Allied powers, originated through a special committee set up by the *Société d’Utilité Publique* of Geneva in 1863.¹⁷ At first, it was a temporary committee whose purpose was to study the proposals made in Henri Dunant’s *Un Souvenir de Solferino*.¹⁸ The General Convention of 1864 incorporated the committee into the Convention protocols, forming the nucleus of the first Red Cross Convention. Later, the national Red Cross Societies throughout the world formed under the League of Red Cross Societies utilizing the IRCC, headquartered in Switzerland, as their international umbrella.¹⁹ The Geneva Convention directed that a “protecting power” be assigned to all belligerent nations.²⁰ The group to oversee the individual protecting powers became the IRCC, which saw its chief purpose as promoting “the adhesion of all civilized States to the Geneva Convention.”²¹ The Convention did not specifically assign the job of inspection to the IRCC, but it did direct

¹⁷ Hereafter referred to as the IRCC.

¹⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross, *The Red Cross: Its International Organization* (Geneva: The International Committee, 1930), 18-19.

¹⁹ Banks, “International Law Governing Prisoners of War,” 27.

²⁰ A neutral state acting to safeguard the interests of one belligerent in the territory of another.

²¹ IRCC, *The Red Cross*, 18-19.

that it was responsible for the safekeeping of prisoners.²² Further, Article 79 of the Convention provides that “A Central Agency of information regarding prisoners of war shall be established in a neutral country. The International Red Cross Committee shall, if they consider it necessary, propose to the Powers concerned the organization of such an agency.”²³ On 14 September 1939, the Central Agency for Prisoners of War opened in Geneva. This independent body, acting under its own laws and soliciting members from the Swiss citizenry, was and is the sole neutral member of the Red Cross movement. It is important to remember this point, because the individual Red Cross organizations, like the German Red Cross, were partisan. A number of instances occurred when shipments of German Red Cross packages arrived with secret messages and propaganda material hidden in the packages. To the chagrin of the American POW camps’ reeducation officers, their “initial encounter with propaganda requiring censorship was in dealing with, of all groups, the German Red Cross. All of the religious pamphlets, calendars, . . .” and Christmas packages, for example, contained Nazi propaganda.²⁴ Because of this, the German or Italian Red Cross involvement had to be dealt with gingerly and with some degree of skepticism. However, the International Red Cross in Switzerland was always the imperative connecting link between belligerents in time of war. The body’s approval as to the care of prisoners was essential to American officials.

²² See Article 88 of the Convention.

²³ See Article 79 of the Convention.

²⁴ Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.*, 91.

The Past, the Present, the Future

Laudable as the 1929 Geneva Convention was, it was untested, based on theory, and approved after World War I, a war which straddled two phases of technological and industrial advancement. The simultaneous use of horses and tanks exemplifies the almost schizophrenic nature of Western society's search for "place." By the close of World War II, it was clear to the nations who adhered to the Geneva Convention that the solutions offered by it had, in some respects, become outmoded and unrealistic. Specifically, unanticipated factors such as "slave labor and concentration camps, total economic warfare, partisan and resistance movements, and the virtual disappearance of neutral powers," became evident.²⁵ Of fundamental concern was the lack of a concise definition for the term *prisoner of war* and when or how the Convention should become operative. The United States cared for approximately 400,000 prisoners in the country proper. Additionally, in Europe, the military was responsible for an equal number. The United Soviet Socialist Republic held millions of prisoners. War had acquired a new face, and therefore, the issue of prisoner of war care gained significant meaning and urgency.

Revisions to the Convention began during the course of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials.²⁶ The Trials, in dealing with cases concerning violations of the 1929 rules, were valuable because "they provided for judicial review which in turn gave impetus to the

²⁵ M.W. Royse, Review of *Prisoners of War* by Ernst H. Feilchenfeld, in the *American Journal of International Law*, XLII (July, 1948), 748 in Edward John Pluth, "The Administration and Operation of German Prisoner of War Camps in the United States during World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Ball State University, 1970), 9.

²⁶ Banks, Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 111.

process of development of the laws of war."²⁷ However, they were held amidst the expectation that a trial such as this would never again be necessary. The subsequent changes to the Convention document in 1949 attempted to rectify many of the problems encountered during World War II and the War Crimes Trial. Once again, the United States emerged as a leader in humanitarian concern. Nevertheless, little evaluation was made in terms of how the United States could improve its own record of POW care. A review of camp management, prisoner and guard interviews, IRRC evaluations, and other documents substantiate examples of both deliberate and accidental noncompliance of the Geneva Convention by the United States. In some instances, these violations had devastating results for the prisoners.

²⁷ Banks, Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 111.

Chapter 2

A Brief Overview of Camp Policy and Life

Planning for the POW's Arrival

The United States military was aware that in the event America entered World War II, POWs would be interned on American soil.¹ Those in charge understood that a need would arise to relieve overseas forces from the task of guarding, feeding, and housing prisoners. In addition, the military considered that the geographical distance between the United States and Europe would greatly eliminate any risk of prisoner escapes. These reasons made the United States an ideal location for the internment of prisoners of war.

Planning for the eventuality of American-based prisoners of war, however, only began in 1941 upon American entry into the war, allowing just a year's planning for prisoner of war management. Throughout 1941, the military focused far more on matters of war than the internment of prisoners. Infighting and bureaucracy over who would manage the prison system also hindered the planning process.² Until the latter part of 1942, military records showed only 431 prisoners transported to the United States, hardly necessitating the mobilization of a vast, military prison camp system.³ However, when

¹ Arnold P. Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979).

² Arnold P. Krammer, "German Prisoners of War in the United States," *Military Affairs* 40: 2 (April 1976): 68-73.

³ Edward John Pluth, "The Administration and Operation of German Prisoner of War Camps in the United States During World War II" (Ph.D. diss., Ball State University, 1970), 70.

the United States began the North African campaign in November of 1942, the military experienced its first flood of captured German and Italian prisoners. Secretary of War Henry Stimson was quoted in a *New York Times* article as saying: "The count for the entire Tunisian campaign (exclusive of previous African victories) is 267,000 prisoners, of which about 125,000 are Germans."⁴

In Africa, and later in Italy and Normandy, POWs were captured or surrendered in growing numbers. Although desertion was rare, a frontline British correspondent reported seeing "an entire German battalion or company . . . hoist the white flag and march into the British lines."⁵ As will be explained later, this was unusual in Africa because the demographics of the soldiers in Africa versus Normandy were decidedly different. This difference influenced the mood of the American prisoner of war camps. In Africa, most of the soldiers were volunteers and had chosen the path of a career in the military. The average age, as established from the POW population, showed the largest group as being born between 1920 and 1923. The men retained their staunch belief in order and military manner throughout their captivity.

The Normandy soldiers arrived in America dejected and with a certainty that the war was lost. These men were older, 35 percent having been born between 1906 and 1914 and remembered a Germany before Hitler. Unlike the *Afrika Korps*, they remembered a life before the Great Depression and a life filled with the grief of war. Because of their broader experiences, indoctrination through the Nazi political party, the NSDAP, or the

⁴ *New York Times* (New York), 21 May 1943.

⁵ *New York Times* (New York), 13 May 1943.

Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, was never as effective as for the *Afrika Korps*. Another statistic that points to reasons for the lower morale of Normandy prisoners was the then high percentage of Polish and Russian soldiers in the German army. By the time the war reached Normandy, the Germans were forcing men from captured territories into the military. These soldiers' loyalty was not with Germany; they only hoped to return home alive. Although the overall percentage of foreign soldiers in the German *Wehrmacht* was lowest at Normandy the nationalities of the foreign soldiers was different from other phases of the war. During the German invasion of Italy, for example, the foreign *Wehrmacht* soldiers in Italy derived mainly from Polish soldiers while later, the German *Wehrmacht* was comprised of a higher percentage of Russians. There was some evidence suggesting that in the hope of remaining in Western Europe, Soviet soldiers caught fighting in the German army wished to be captured by the Allies. This was especially true after the Soviet Union joined the Allied troops because Russian soldiers faced the very real possibility of execution for treason if they returned to Russia. However, in American or British hands there was the possibility of remaining in relative safety.⁶

⁶ U.S. Office of Strategic Services Research and Analysis Branch, "Nationality and Age of German Armed Forces Prisoners Captured in Northern France, June to August 1944," R & A No. 2581.1 (4 January 1945). This study was based on a sample of 10 percent of the first 53,000 soldiers captured in Northern France. The population of prisoners taken in Normandy comprised an average ratio of soldiers and officers, essentially, the same as the *Afrika Korps*; privates constituted 77.3%, non-commissioned officers 18.9%, and officers 3.8% of those captured. The German national soldier comprised 86% of those captured; a low figure compared to previous data. In the next period, May through July of 1944, the total number of German national prisoners was 82.4%.

Complicating the United States' responsibility in Africa was an agreement made with the British government. The British Charge d'Affaires, Lord Halifax, claimed that any sudden influx of prisoners would severely tax Great Britain's resources. Therefore, in August 1942, Britain requested that American Allies house soldiers captured by their military. The initial request involved some 50,000 Axis POWs, mostly Germans. American agreement intensified the need to establish an efficient, safe, and cost-effective plan. As per the Geneva Convention, captured soldiers were transported promptly from the front, and then the captors provided for their continued care. Because of limited resources in Africa, immediate transportation to the United States was essential. "Liberty Ships," which delivered supplies to African-based troops and then returned empty to the United States, became the most cost-effective and logical method for prisoner transfer. Debarkation points logically became Norfolk, Virginia and New York City. The prisoners were then transported by train to their designated camps.

In response to the rapid influx, the Secretary of War assigned responsibility of the prisoners to the Army, which developed an assortment of expedient housing solutions under the direction of the Provost Marshal General's Office. (The Provost Marshal General at the peak of prisoner of war activity was Major General Archer Lerch, 1944-1945.) Internment camps had been established after the bombing of Pearl Harbor to house what were officially called "Civilian Enemy Aliens," i.e., Japanese Americans, and some German Americans. As one-fifth of these camps were unused, the PMGO quickly transformed them into POW camps. These internment camps too operated under the supervision of the Provost's Office, thus simplifying the transfer. In addition, the military took over old Civilian Conservation Corp camps built during the Depression and opened

a number of military posts to house prisoners. Because of imminent shortages, the housing on military bases intended **only** as temporary, became permanent. Ultimately, the largest camps were located on military bases: Florence, Arizona (9,000 prisoners); Forrest, Tennessee (19,000 prisoners); and Dermott, Arkansas (5,300 prisoners). The median size camp, however, only housed about 500 prisoners.⁷ These major camps became base camps and hundreds of **branch** camps spun from them according to available work.⁸ By the end of the war, over 500 camps existed, approximately 155 main camps and 511 branch camps. As indicated, the Army housed around 400,000 prisoners at the peak of American involvement in World War II.⁹

Camp Location

The placement of camps involved a number of considerations. First, the government took into account sources of work, **need** for labor, climate, proximity to mass

⁷ The United States Army, *Prison of War Camps by Location and Principal* (1945), The Forces, The Office [The PMGO Office, Washington D.C.].

⁸ Branch camps were usually fenced areas with tents and existing or portable buildings. Land was rented from local community members instead of purchasing it. Appendix A provides an example of how the Army established a base camp. Unused land, in Marianna, Florida, was leased from a local bank. It was strategically situated near the train station, yet still on the outskirts of town. The property contained an empty barn and some other small outbuildings. A fence surrounded the perimeter and the existing buildings housed the prisoners, an administrative office, and mess hall.

⁹ Lt. Col. George G. Lewis and Capt. John Mewha, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization by the United States Army 1776-1945* (Washington D. C.: Department of the Army, pamphlet 20-231, 1945), 91.

transportation, and military bases.¹⁰ Next, the PMGO considered the geography of an area. Policymakers thought it best to establish camps in regions with no geographical features that might provide cover for escaping prisoners, adequate water supplies, and electrical access. Finally, the prisoners were segregated by nationality, branch of military, and rank. Nationality was determined according to the soldier's uniform and identification cards so the military only recognized prisoners as German or Italian. Therefore, Russian, Polish, and Yugoslavian soldiers conscripted by the German *Wehrmacht* were all considered Germans. As will be shown later, these decisions had unanticipated and long-term repercussions. Categories like Nazi and anti-Nazi were not initially considered.

Considered of the utmost importance to the PMGO was to locate camps away from American borders, be they ocean boundaries or Canadian and Mexican borders. Therefore, it was decided that in order to prevent escape, the camps had to be at least 170 miles inland. As well, the PMGO avoided locating camps near any vital industries or cities. If located adjacent to metropolitan areas, recovery and protection of prisoners became problematic with the possibility of an increased threat of espionage. Because of these stipulations, the South and Southwest became the primary centers for camps, comprising about two-thirds of the facilities by the end of the war. Alabama was the largest recipient of prisoners; the state's main camp located about 100 miles southwest of

¹⁰ At times, the reader may conclude that plans for prisoner care were unchanging. I do not wish to give that impression. There was a steady flux, reevaluation, and shuffling of responsibility. Because these shifts are not the topic of this thesis, I will at times mention a practice that was ultimately established but not the changes that preceded unless they pertain directly to the psychological care of the prisoners.

Birmingham and two miles west of the center of Aliceville. One-eighth of the prisoners were situated in the Midwest, and the remaining were scattered in the eastern and western regions of the United States. Because of concentrated urban populations, the northeast housed the fewest prisoners. For example, in mid-1945, the New England states sheltered only 15,617 prisoners of war; this number comprised four percent of the German prisoner population at its peak. Almost every state in the country contained at least one camp, the exception being Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada, Montana, Vermont, and North Dakota. Alaska and Hawaii were too far away from the mainland; increasing transportation expenses and creating unnecessary escape risks. Nevada, North Dakota, Montana, and Vermont did not contain significant military bases and had low statewide populations, which reduced the amount of available work for prisoners.¹¹

Rural Marianna, Florida was representative of the small, dusty towns in which the German prisoners of war settled. Agriculturally based, and the seat of Jackson County, it lies in the Florida panhandle, 60 miles west of Tallahassee, 100 miles northeast of Panama City, and fifteen miles south of the Alabama-Florida border. Marianna is centrally located between a number of military bases in Panama City and Fort Walton Beach, Florida; Enterprise, Alabama; and Columbus, Georgia. During the war, a small Air Force base operated on the outskirts of town where, according to local memory, American, as well as British pilots trained for combat.¹² The centrality of Marianna to

¹¹ See Appendix B for the locations of the major camps.

¹² The camp in Marianna does not appear on Appendix B but it is listed in another source and its existence, as well as the Air Force base, was confirmed by six residents living in Marianna at the time of the war: Ruth Sherrell, Frank Hudnall, Barbara Hudnall,

military operations, relative isolation from major cities, and a center of agriculture made it ideal for the establishment of a branch camp. According to Fred Wiley, a farmer and World War II soldier living near Marianna at the time, the base camp was Fort Rucker in Alabama, about an hour's drive from Marianna.¹³ The town's population divided relatively evenly between blacks and whites and the main source of income was from farming, especially peanuts and cotton, although small industries in limestone, mining, and timber existed. All other crops were for subsistence farming and not worthwhile for contracting outside labor. However, as was typical across the nation, Marianna was in dire need of crop labor. Men and women not active overseas were driving to the region's military bases to fill the demand for high-paying war labor. The camp in Marianna was indicative of the important role played by the tiny branch camps that dotted the American countryside.

The camp was only one-and-a-half blocks from the center of town, and two blocks from the railroad station. Rented from a local bank, First Citizens, the army established the camp on ten acres called the Hagg Showground. Previously used as the winter home of a national circus, the location had a few large buildings for heavy machinery and smaller outbuildings that housed the circus animals. The army converted the buildings for

Fred Wiley, Thelma Cook, and Dallas Malloy. So many small branch camps existed, some set up only during harvesting or planting seasons, that accurately tracking them was almost impossible. This became especially true after the management of prisoner labor was decentralized. See Colonel Willis M. Everett Jr. G.S.C., Deputy Director, Security and Intelligence Division to Commanding General, Army Service Forces Washington 25, D.C., 10 August 1945, file POW 255 General, Special Projects Division 1943-1946, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

¹³ See Appendix A, Wiley was mistaken about the main camp; it was actually Gordon Johnston Camp near Panama City, which is also about an hour's drive from Marianna.

administrative needs, added tents and a fence, and brought in prisoners. Temporary branch camps were usually established in this manner, and so the majority of base and branch camps grew up alongside rural American neighbors. However, as instituted by the PMGO standard, base camps were expected to conform to a formalized model designed to house 2000 to 4000 prisoners. In reality, camps of this size were in the minority.¹⁴

This standard layout derived from the format of United States troops' military camps. Broken into two separate areas, the POW enclosure remained apart from the camp's headquarters. Those guarding the POWs were instructed to stay outside of the enclosure and have as little contact as possible with the prisoners. Within the compound, barracks formed a semicircle around the main hub of activity, featuring a dining hall, prisoner canteen, recreational facility, and an administrative facility. Prisoners were allowed, in fact encouraged, to govern themselves in most everyday matters.

Inside the enclosure, the POWs designated a German prisoner, called by his comrades a *Lagersprecher*, *Lagerleitung*, or *Lagerführer*, to maintain communication between the guards and the prisoners. He was essential to the smooth operation of the camp and filled many essential roles. For example, the *Lagerführer* was the camp's representative to the Red Cross, the Swiss Legation, and the YMCA. He was also empowered to investigate any possible breaches in the Geneva Convention, such as work conditions. If problems arose, the *Lagerführer* could, and often did, insist on communication with military district heads, demanding recourse against the camp administration. *Lagerführer* Rudolf Hopf, the camp leader of Camp Atterbury, Indiana, wrote directly to the PMGO,

¹⁴ See Appendix C, "Standard Layout for a Camp of 5,000 POWs."

Washington D.C., on 7 November 1945. The report detailed "the mental and political development of former Concordia [Kansas] PW's since their transfer to PW Cp [Camp] windfall and Atterbury."¹⁵

In theory, fellow soldiers selected the *Lagerführer* on the basis of popularity. Often, however, coercion, threats of violence, repression, and fear dictated the outcome of the elections. Hence, the *Lagerführer* was usually a trusted member of the Nazi underground, the prisoner of war culture, and a speaker of English—a prisoner of war *Gestapo* member, as the other prisoners called him.¹⁶ This cemented Nazi majority control from the first arrival of German prisoners because "he [the *Lagerführer*] was the focal point between the prisoners in the camp and the American camp administration."¹⁷

Employment

Employment of prisoners became the overriding issue for those entrusted with their safekeeping. The international viewpoint was that "an active occupation tended to raise the morale of the captives and to make the dread monotony of prison existence a little more bearable."¹⁸ Military departments and American political leaders debated heatedly

¹⁵ Rudolf Hopf, German Camp Leader and Ulrich Mueller-Frank, German Camp Adjutant, Camp Atterbury, IN to the PMGO, Washington D.C., 7 November 1945, file 253.91 General, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

¹⁶ *Lagerführer* were not necessarily an official *Gestapo* member, although they could be. POWs called any staunch Nazi POWs *Gestapo*.

¹⁷ Jeff E. Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke, California: Personal Accounts of 14 Soldiers, 1944-1946* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., Pub., 1996), 57.

¹⁸ Banks, Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 117-8.

over the parameters for acceptable work and accompanying compensation. The resulting policies allowed for work on, and off, military bases as long as none of the work aided the American war effort. In addition, as per the Geneva Convention, a Prisoner of War Employment Review Board was established. To prevent abuse of prisoner labor, each nation was required to establish a formal administrative system to monitor work programs. The War Department directed this newly established American Review Board.

In time, three main areas of employment emerged: agriculture, forest conservation, and the construction of infrastructure like roads and airstrips on military bases. Ultimately, work was broken into three classes. Class I was work required to maintain the camp (other than that of improvement and beautification) and necessitated no pay. This included work in the mess hall, laundry, repairs to buildings and equipment, and secretarial work in the administrative office. Class II was contract labor for private employers. Class III was useful, but *nonessential* (non-military), work on or connected with military installations.¹⁹ The prisoners usually performed manual labor on military bases; they cleared land, built roads and other infrastructure, maintained the facility, and prepared food for soldiers. The type of work in Class III was work that sustained the broad maintenance functions of a normal military base.²⁰ By mid-1944, practically all jobs involved the support of military bases: by 1 June 1945, POWs performed 61 percent of all jobs on military installations.²¹ The estimated worth of prison labor at military

¹⁹ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 108.

²⁰ Banks, Jr., "International Law Governing Prisoners of War," 163.

²¹ Refer to Appendix D, "Analysis of the Distribution of American Prisoner of War Camps by Work Type and Region" and Appendix B.

institutions in 1944 alone was \$70 million and for the three-year period was calculated as high as \$131 million dollars with no way of evaluating the value of having American soldiers freed for the war effort.²² The predominance of work at military installations, versus other more lucrative markets, highlights the tremendous energy America focused on the war. Agriculture, the second largest area of employment, utilized only eighteen percent of the total work force.²³

Class II work, contract labor, was at first established directly between an employer, a farmer for example, and the PMGO. In December 1942, as the war progressed, the PMGO tried to become less centralized, allowing the heads of the individual camps to conclude their own contracts with employers.²⁴ Finally, recognizing that the War Department was not in a position to manage the employment of prisoners effectively, the PMGO coordinated efforts with the War Manpower Commission. On 17 September 1943, the two departments formalized an agreement establishing a distribution channel of prisoner of war labor.²⁵ This agreement stayed in effect until the end of the war and governed all prisoner of war employment on United States soil.²⁶

²² Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 235.

²³ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 235.

²⁴ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 102.

²⁵ See Appendix E, "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" and Appendix F "Prisoner of War Labor Certification."

²⁶ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 106.

The Geneva Convention stipulated that any prisoner of war be paid fair compensation for his work.²⁷ The rate of pay initially was based upon that of an American Army private and was, at first, 60 cents per hour, plus ten cents per day for necessities; this pay rate was modified, rising to 80 cents, as the war progressed. At some camps, earnings came in the form of coupons honored at commissaries within the camp proper. In other camps, soldiers received cash, and were then escorted in small groups to nearby towns to purchase their necessities.

When given jobs that required a minimum of training and skills, the prisoners performed very effectively. This was a reflection of the language barrier and growth of crops unusual to Europe, not the soldiers' abilities. However, many employers utilized innovative methods to overcome the language barriers. They created booklets, translated information, or taught by repetitive example. Heinrich Schünemann, a German prisoner, saved the leaflet he received at Camp Cooke, California. It provided complete instructions in German for picking cotton with accompanying cartoon drawings. It was entitled "*Wie Man Baumwolle pflücken muss*" ("How One Must Pick Cotton").²⁸ The prisoners wanted to work; they looked forward to a respite from the day-to-day tediousness of imprisonment. Rudolf Hinkelmann, also a former prisoner at Camp Cooke, maintained that "none of the labor performed by the prisoners was very strenuous. In fact,

²⁷ There were three classes of working prisoners: officers who worked voluntarily, non-commissioned officers who performed only supervisory work, and personnel of no rank.

²⁸ Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke*, 74-5.

they were happy to work because it helped to overcome the monotony of camp life."²⁹ ²⁸

Prisoners worked in canneries, foundries, forestry, orchards, and fields. Prisoners, a greatly needed source of employment, filled jobs designated in advance by the War Commission and the PMGO as permissible under the Geneva Conference.

Work also facilitated contact with Americans, an opportunity much desired by many of the prisoners. From the Marianna interviews, it appears that the local farmers viewed the German prisoners with less suspicion than they did Asians and local African Americans. This prejudice was even evident to German prisoners. Erwin Schulz noticed that in "Mississippi and Alabama blacks were considered to be lower than low."³⁰ Many Americans perceived Germans as hardworking and honest; a camaraderie between the farmers and the prisoners often evolved. Americans viewed the often industrious and amiable German workforce as equals. Mr. Wiley tells a story about a friend of his, Puss Brown, who employed German labor.

A friend of mine, Puss Brown, was the International Tractor dealer and a farmer. People farmed cotton and peanuts then, [and] these new crops like soybeans. Anyway, he used a lot of the prisoners. He told a story about how at the end of the day, one day, he gave all the prisoners a good stiff drink. The next day all the prisoners wanted to work for him. Puss had to sign a special contract with the camp director that he wouldn't give them anymore alcohol before he could take anymore prisoners. Puss also told a story about how the Germans didn't know what to do with sugar cane. He gave them each a piece and they didn't know that you had to peel it and chew up the pulp but not swallow it. A bunch of them got choked but after they learned how to eat it they were always happy to get some.³¹

²⁹ Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke*, 89.

³⁰ Lewis H. Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners: An Oral History of World War II American and German Prisoners of War* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 173.

³¹ See Appendix A, "Author Interview with Fred Wiley, 18 March 1998."

As problems with workers arose, the question of permissible and effective discipline came into question. Camp commanders were allowed to utilize only certain forms of punishment under Convention Articles 45, 49, and 54-58. An admonishment, or written reprimand, was the first form of motivation. If prisoners continued to refuse to work or to comply with regulations, then privileges could be withheld. In extreme cases, such as a complete work strike, imprisonment was allowed. The punishments/admonitions expressed by the Convention were actualized in a PMGO policy known as "administrative pressure," containing three stages: admonition and reprimand, withholding of privileges including imposition of a diet restriction, discontinuance of wages, and loss of two-thirds of the prisoner's ten-cent daily allowance, up to \$2.00 a month.³² "Since the policy was not intended to be a punishment, the POW could terminate the pressure at any time simply by complying with the order he violated."³³

For problems with work effectiveness, though, the camp commanders quickly learned that withholding food or pay was the most effective measure and the prisoners most frequently resorted to striking. However, in a number of instances, German soldiers formally complained about unusually harsh punishment for work violations. Franz Schenkermayer, from Pöchlarn, Germany, reported to the German government an

³² U. S. Army, TM 19-500, Enemy Prisoners of War, Supplement (25 April 1945), The Forces, 2.31. If the prisoners refused to work or enacted slowdowns, the Army could not use discipline because they were not criminals, they were merely being held by the belligerent country until the war was over. Discipline applied only if they broke American laws.

³³ Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke, California*, 73.

incident in which his sergeant was jailed, and food withheld, for eight days as punishment for instigating a work slowdown.³⁴ Corporal Karl Rausch described a far more serious breach of protocol at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. Rausch was in the camp infirmary but heard of the event from his comrades. The prisoners, believing that they were assisting in the Allied war effort through their work, refused to continue loading military trucks. According to Rausch:

When my comrades refused to load the above mentioned weapons they did not get food and/or they were put between the fences [the double set of fences that separated the inner part of the camp with the outer camp] and had to stand there the whole day without food and drink. Meanwhile they were asked several times, whether they wanted to work and when they said no, they had to stay without food and drink. Once it happened that a whole battalion stayed for a week without food and drink between the fences.³⁵

Abuses like these were intermittent and depended more on individual camp management than on any accepted policy. Then too, the prisoners rarely utilized outright rebellion to avoid work; the majority of the prisoners were more interested in experiencing something outside the camp compound and ways to fill their days.

³⁴ Franz Schenkermayer, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 7 September 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm roll no. 1458, RG 242, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

³⁵ Corporal Karl Rausch, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 7 August 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm roll no. 1458, RG 242, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

The American camps offered a myriad of alternative methods, through the help of the Red Cross, to fill time after work. The prisoners established bands, orchestras, choral groups, and drama clubs. Many maintained their own vegetable and flower gardens. Some camps printed newspapers and journals, then distributed them to other prison camps. Prisoners wrote, printed, and disbursed among the prison population over one hundred newspapers. The Red Cross helped to provide canteens for socializing, set up sports teams (soccer in particular) and crafts rooms, showed films, provided a library, and offered courses on a variety of subjects. A pamphlet issued by the Red Cross asserted that reading "is the most healthy and the most normal escape for prisoners of war and civilian internees in their present unfortunate plight."³⁶

Educational opportunities for prisoners were truly exceptional. After 19 May 1944, the German Reich Ministry of Education offered full high school and university courses for credit to German prisoners in the United States, transmitting the grades through the German Red Cross. The Reich provided the POWs with official booklets to note their educational progress. The German Army High Command, OKW, issued a forty-page booklet called *Studiennachweis für Kriegsgefangene (Evidence of Study for War Prisoners)*. In it, the OKW explained the German grading system and provided a place to list the course, grade, and certification of completion. These booklets served as official

³⁶ ICRC, *Intellectual Relief* (Geneva, Switzerland: The International Committee, 1944).

transcripts and German universities accepted them for full credit.³⁷ Thus, the prisoner's³² leisure time was full and multifaceted. The American captors tried to enhance the prisoners' future by expanding their educational opportunities and reducing the mental stress created by war and captivity.

Reeducation programs

As the war drew to a close, American politicians and the military turned to the question of how to avoid another world war. Of particular concern to the American government was its perception that nothing could change without offering the Germans different ways of thinking about social structures. From this concern evolved a scheme to reeducate the prisoners of war and provide them alternatives to a totalitarian government. American policy makers believed the situation provided the perfect opportunity to promote democracy as an opposing viewpoint to communism and fascism. However, before its inception, the reeducation program had to overcome formidable obstacles, not the least of which came from President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The President and his inner circle (including Secretary of State Henry Morgenthau, the leading proponent for the total destruction of Germany) believed that reeducation was pointless. They theorized that the only way to eliminate German militancy was to destroy Germany's infrastructure and forcibly return the nation to an agrarian economy.

This viewpoint was not uncommon, nor was it based solely in emotion. Then current research in group behavior, social psychology, and anthropology supported, with varying

³⁷ Ron Theodore Robin, *The Barbed Wire College: Reeducating POWs in the United*

degrees of dogmatism, the stance that German society as a whole was flawed and that only dramatic restructuring could cure what appeared to be imperious nationalism. Some of the more extreme, yet well-respected proponents were doctors Richard M. Brickner and L. Vosburgh Lyons who conducted a study on German group behavior. Their diagnosis was that the German culture, as a whole, was *paranoid*. As treatment, Brickner and Lyons suggested that “carriers of the paranoid theme must be treated as doctors treated typhoid carriers. Only people in the non-conforming group must exert influence. Conformers, even in internment camps or in distant labor battalions [which they suggested the establishment of, earlier in the text], could still exert it [the paranoid character] by speech and by mail, if care were not taken to prevent it.”³⁸ They often used the word “reculturalization” to express their view that the unhealthy German culture must be destroyed and rebuilt. As for the conformers, the majority of the population, they were to be controlled and isolated.³⁹ Ultimately, the reeducation program’s design was assigned to the Pentagon, created amidst this surfeit of so-called fact and emotion.

Political leaders in support of the program were concerned that the reeducation of a few Germans would not create a marked impact upon German nationalist ideology; that it might, in fact, push participants toward communism as a reaction against democracy.

States during World War II (Princeton, NY: Princeton University Press, 1995), 194.

³⁸ Richard M. Brickner, M.D. and L. Vosburgh Lyons, M.D., “A Neuropsychiatric View of German Culture,” *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 98:3 (September 1943): 288. Reprinted and distributed through the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.

³⁹ Many of the suggestions by Brickner and Lyons came to fruition, although not to the extreme degree that they or Morgenthau suggested. Internment camps were established after the armistice and Germany was controlled and monitored.

Other misgivings addressed the mammoth responsibility of the implementation and expense of such a comprehensive program. Discovery of the plan by the German government might result in reprisals upon American prisoners in Germany. Finally, if the Geneva Convention concluded that reeducation programs were a breach of promise, there was the risk of ruining America’s global reputation. While the treaty did not specifically disallow reeducation, it did prohibit any form of propaganda. The reeducation program could be defined in many ways, including propaganda that was pro-American and pro-democratic. Geneva Convention protocol notwithstanding, proponents of reeducation believed that the threat posed by massive numbers of enemy captives on American soil warranted the risks. They also felt that prisoners should gain at least a cursory understanding of American society and politics to counteract totalitarianism. Therefore, non-conformers received roles of leadership, and the administration incorporated reeducation courses into prison camp agendas.

Those developing the program enlisted anti-Nazi prisoners from the German intelligentsia. They established a camp at Fort Kearney, Rhode Island, as a think tank. called affectionately “The Factory” by those involved. The camp, set up more like a school or base office instead of a prison, became the ideological center for reeducation. Distributed throughout the camps, *Der Ruf* was a “Factory”-produced, German newspaper for prisoners. The overall format for the paper derived from the joint input of select German prisoners and their American captors.⁴⁰ Efforts to create a popular paper failed; most German soldiers viewed *Der Ruf* as propaganda. Although touted as a great

⁴⁰ Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.*, 89.

success, the attempt to subtly encourage democracy while discouraging National Socialism proved unsuccessful. One prisoner, Elmer Beck, commented, “[t]he Americans should have realized they would have gained more by introducing us to normal, everyday life. . . . I disliked *Der Ruf*. It was a very disturbing paper . . . I know it was written by Germans but it was filled with lots of propaganda.”⁴¹

Although the reeducation program publicly professed to provide German captives with ideological alternatives to National Socialism, its covert purpose was to strengthen democratic values, to provide an alternative, *not alternatives*. Any mention of Germany was done as if Germany was a country of intellectuals with people receptive to facts and treatises, not emotion, a society capable of making logical and positive decisions for itself. In other words, the chosen pedagogical approach was to focus on the positive aspects of American democracy not to tear down National Socialism.

Those enlisted to plan and implement the classroom aspect of reeducation, like the illustrious historian Howard Mumford Jones, were university professors educated in Germanism or politics.⁴² They had no experience teaching outside the university classroom setting or any understanding of the psychology of camp life. Their viewpoints were narrow and they lacked the necessary innovativeness and experience for this unique situation. They did believe firmly that it was their duty to impart the advantages of the American democratic system. Ron Theodore Robin, who wrote the most concise and detailed account of the program, viewed its effectiveness in a negative light.

⁴¹ Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, 114.

⁴² Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, 219.

[N]o plan of reeducation would have made any meaningful difference. . . . [It] played a marginal role in the transformation of German institutions and political attitudes. The magnitude of defeat, the carving up of Prussia, the decimation of the *Junker* class, and the division of the country into two distinct ideological camps are but some of the more convincing explanations.⁴³

Their ineffective approach only intensified the prisoners' reaction; to them these teachers were just different jailers, and therefore the enemy.

As mentioned, the reeducation began on a very small scale as a secret mission. Later, after V-day and plans for the repatriation of prisoners had begun, efforts at reeducation increased. The Special Projects Division of the PMGO, established to run the reeducation project, targeted prisoners who would be especially vulnerable to the training or were needed upon their return to Germany, such as police and doctors. Those chosen received a series of crash courses on democracy, with prisoners exhibiting an aptitude for American political ideals receiving diplomas and awards. The intention was to place these soldiers in the first allotment for repatriation, positioning them for placement in key roles in the German government in the future. Due to the secrecy of the project and bureaucratic confusion, most of these soldiers were lost in the confusion of repatriation and sent to France or Great Britain. After the war, all of the Allies ultimately attempted to conduct reeducation programs for German soldiers. Having commenced a program before the Geneva Convention's unilateral approval, the United States' led the way in later reeducation.

⁴³ Robin, *The Barbed Wire College*, 9-10.

General Feeling of the German Prisoners of War toward

Their Treatment

Overall, the prisoners agreed that Americans complied with the Geneva Convention inasmuch as the prisoners understood the Treaty details. (The average soldier only recognized that one existed and that they had recourse if they felt unfairly treated.) In fact, most Germans expressed surprise at the treatment they received upon arriving in the United States. The journey by boat from Africa was typically overcrowded and not particularly sanitary, but upon arrival to United States shores, those circumstances promptly improved. One German soldier, Reinhard Pabel, commented in his journal

Enemies are Human:

We were marched to the railroad station. There were immediate shouts of "Man, oh, man!" and "How about that?" when we followed orders to board the coaches of a waiting train. Most of us had always been transported in boxcars during the military service. These modern upholstered coaches were a pleasant surprise to everybody. And when the colored porter came through with coffee and sandwiches and politely offered them to us as though we were human beings, most of us forgot a great deal of those anti-American feelings that had accumulated during our late African POW life.⁴⁴

Pabel later escaped from his POW camp and lived for eight years as a successful American businessman before being caught by the FBI. He stood trial, served a mild sentence, and eventually became an American citizen. His experience, although containing some commonalities to other prisoners, must be viewed in that context. To live permanently in America was his dream. Nevertheless, most German soldiers could not

⁴⁴ Reinhold Pabel, *Enemies are Human* (Philadelphia: Winston, 1955), 146.

believe the abundance of food and quality of lodging provided them and stated that never in their military careers had they been treated so well.

Things changed somewhat after the German defeat, because food supplies, in particular, lessened. This reduction occurred for a number of reasons. First, the military was sending enormous amounts of foodstuffs to a devastated Europe, while everyone in the United States was cutting back. Second, the attitude of Americans toward the prisoners changed once they became aware of the extent of wartime atrocities, especially the treatment of American prisoners of war. Heinrich Kersting, who had been at Camp Cooke, asserted, "we had always had generous amounts of appetizing food . . . until after the capitulation of Germany. At that time our meals were noticeably reduced, but were still sufficient." Adolf Kelmer, discussing the American attitude after the defeat, also concluded that, "there was a noticeable change in the attitude of the Americans toward the POWs. Whereas before the surrender an almost friendly atmosphere existed, now the feeling was more reserved."⁴⁵

Despite fair treatment, the bulk of the prisoners spent a great deal of time throughout their incarceration discovering ways to express their loyalty to Germany, taunting and baiting those who imprisoned them. The soldiers' attempts at maintaining their individuality and autonomy, even in small ways, were articulated by Hans-Georg Neumann who was held captive in a camp in Canada.

We prisoners were handcuffed by Canadian soldiers in our camps. Only army officers were supposed to be handcuffed. Thus, we POWs exchanged uniforms; I walked around as a Navy captain. . . . These handcuffed men—just enough to equal the number of Allied POWs cuffed in German camps—had their own building. . . . It

⁴⁵ Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke, California*, 142-3.

became kind of a joke, these men learned how to break the cuffs and throw them over the fence or up into the branches of trees. At one time, the camp even ran out of handcuffs. Even the jails in Toronto were short of them because the POWs were breaking so many, and throwing them away! Years after the war you could still see handcuffs up in the trees around the [former] camp.⁴⁶

Corporal Rausch recounted in his interview a time when, on cue from the *Lagerführer*, the prisoners, en masse, left during the viewing of a film that they perceived as propaganda.⁴⁷ Understandably, most prisoners did not want to stay in the United States and saw their contrary behavior as a way to exhibit loyalty to their country. However, one cannot infer from this behavior that the majority of the German prisoners were Nazis. As I will show in the next chapters, very few Germans were Nazis and their antagonism was neither malicious nor far-reaching in consequence. Their conduct was expected of soldier's held by an enemy.

The Perception of Americans toward Prisoners of War

Americans certainly were angry over the threat created by Hitler and Germany. They were mistrustful of Germans, whether they were Americans of German descent or prisoners of war. Nevertheless, for the most part, the civilian Americans' anger was

⁴⁶ Hans-Georg Neumann, *A Man Worth Knowing: The Memoires of Hans Georg Neumann* (Toronto, Ontario: Natural Heritage/Natural History Inc., 1996), 120. Although Canadians held him, many of the generic responses made by people in captivity are common. In addition, Canadian treatment of prisoners was similar to that in the United State.

⁴⁷ Corporal Karl Rausch, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 7 August 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm roll no. 1458, RG 242, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

generalized and unfocused. Personal reports from German POWs indicate that the prisoners in America suffered few serious reprisals. By contrast, in Europe, American soldiers had a far more difficult time. Trying to hide from the German military before capture was difficult at best; most German civilians immediately turned in American soldiers. Once imprisoned, conditions for American soldiers were horrific. After civilians in the United States became aware of the care of American POWs in Europe, once positive feelings changed to negative. Lucius D. Clay wrote to John J. McCloy, on 29 June 1945, "I feel that the Germans should suffer from hunger and from cold as I believe such suffering is necessary to make them realize the consequences of a war which they caused."⁴⁸

Many Americans agreed with this sentiment. POW camps were often called the "Fritz Ritz"; this term represented the most common resentment registered by the American civilian population. Americans complained that the prisoners were cared for *too* well: the military pampered the POWs, fed them too well, housed them too well, and gave them work that was too easy. Fred Wiley, a resident of Marianna, Florida, and a World War II veteran, recounted an incident with German prisoners while he was in boot camp.

I remember in the North when I was there, there were problems with the prisoners. You see, the prisoners were allowed to buy cigarettes, Lucky Strikes, Camels, and Chesterfields, cheaper then the regular people. We had to pay usually .20 cents a pack for the cigarettes, that is when we could get them. But the prisoners were supposed to get the normal price, not the rationed price. They only paid five cents a pack. The Germans were proud of having cigarettes [cheaper], so when they would ride through town in the big GI transport trucks they would roll up the cloth [sides] all the way around the truck. When they were sure there were lots of civilians watching

⁴⁸ Günter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower and the German POWs: Facts against Falsehood* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 1.

them they would all tap down their cigarette packs and begin to smoke. It really made everybody mad and started a few small riots cause we couldn't get those cigarettes as cheap.⁴⁹

Resentment increased after May 1945. *Newsweek* reported on 7 May 1945, that: "Throughout the nation last week rising indignation was the reaction to Nazi atrocity stories and persistent reports of our own coddling of German POW's."⁵⁰ The magazine sent reporter Diana Hirsh to assess prisoner treatment at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Fort Dix Camp Commander, Lt. Col. G. McKinley Triesch, acknowledged that the soldiers had been well cared for, but that when certain types of food became unavailable to the public, he stopped providing it in the camp. "Butter, for example, disappeared from the POW menu the morning after Colonel Triesch heard his wife's complaints about the butter shortage. Dix has not sold cigarettes to POWs since December."⁵¹

Discussions about the generous care afforded German prisoners were rampant in newspapers, radio talk shows, and at least two congressional hearings. Newspaper columnist Dorothy Thompson sharply criticized the United States' treatment of prisoners. "It is clear," she wrote, "we are going further than the obligations of the Geneva Convention."⁵² Despite the criticism, the Congressional hearings concurred that the

⁴⁹ Refer to Appendix A, "Personal Interview with Mr. Fred Wiley, March 18, 1998."

⁵⁰ Diana Hirsh, "German Atrocities Raise Question: Are Nazi POWs 'Coddled' Here?" *Newsweek*, 7 May 1945, 60-1.

⁵¹ Hirsh, "German Atrocities Raise Question," 60-1.

⁵² Dorothy Thompson, "On the Record," Bell Syndicate, 24 April 1944, in "The Administration and Operation of German Prisoner of War Camps," Pluth, 256.

treatment, except in a few separate instances, was just.⁵³ There was always the hope that the Germans would create reciprocal environments for Americans held captive in Germany. Additionally, evidence showed that in fact, the American standard of treatment had encouraged a number of German soldiers to surrender on the German front, potentially saving American lives.

Somewhat in contrast to the more vocal opinions, a Gallup Poll revealed some interesting statistics about American civilian attitudes toward German soldiers and showed a shift in public sentiment as information about the front became available. In 1942, only 34 percent of those polled believed that Germany was the United States' main enemy, citing Japan as the number one enemy. The following question was also posed, "In the war with Germany, do you think that our chief enemy is the German people as a whole, or the German government?" Seventy-nine percent believed that it was the government, not the German people. Seventy-four percent of the respondents claimed that the German people had no control over the decisions of the German government and, therefore, were not accountable. This attitude generally extended to German prisoners on American soil.⁵⁴

Interviews with townspeople living in Marianna, Florida at the time of the camp's existence, corresponded with the Gallup Poll findings revealing ambivalence toward the

⁵³ 79th Cong., 1st sess., 19 February 1945. Congressional Record; Appendix, XCI, A3359.

⁵⁴ George Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion* (Vol.1. New York, 1972), 337.

prisoners.⁵⁵ The attitudes of Gallup Poll participants mirrored reports of residents near the Marianna camp. But, interviews by the United States Congress, House Committee on Military Affairs, concluded that the average population, nationwide, neither had any general complaint nor felt that the prisoners were too well treated.⁵⁶ Marianna residents confirmed knowledge of the camps and anger towards Germany and Germans, but they (taking into account that the interviews were held 53 years later) emotionally dissociated the Axis prisoners from the prisoners' role in the war. One interviewee, a teenager at the time, remembers her parents telling her not to look at the prisoners. "Look the other way," she was told. She also recalls that everyone called the prisoners *Heinies* and *Gerries*. The townspeople maintained an emotional and physical distance from the prisoners, even though the camp was physically only one and a half blocks from the courthouse and the town center.⁵⁷ Perhaps this sort of mental distancing is a partial answer to America's long-standing disinterest in the camps' existence.

Later in the war, public attitudes changed for the negative, but only slightly. In 1945, the public was asked if the treatment of prisoners was 'too strict,' 'not strict enough,' 'about right,' or 'no opinion.' 'Not strict enough' was the sentiment of 71 percent of the

⁵⁵ Colonel, G.S.C. Willis M. Everett, Jr., Atlanta, Georgia, to Commanding General, Army Service Forces, 10 August 1945, file E459 POW Special Projects DW 1943-1946, RG 389, National Archives. Washington D.C. A branch camp existed in Marianna, FL, as documented in the above correspondence, whose base camp was Gordon Johnston Air Force Base, near Panama City, Florida.

⁵⁶ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Military Affairs, Investigations of the National War Effort, H. Rept. 1992, 78th Cong., 2nd sess., 30 November 1944, in "The Administration and Operation of German Prisoner of War Camps," Pluth, 265.

⁵⁷ Barbara E. Hudnall and Clara Clements Hudnall, conversation with Amy C. Hudnall, 4 March 1998.

respondents.⁵⁸ Yet, in a questionnaire the next month the respondents answered as follows:

After the war, what do you think should be done with members of the Nazi party who defend themselves by claiming that they committed crimes under orders of higher-ups in the party?

Imprison them	42%
Kill them	19
Try them, and punish only if found guilty	19
Try to reeducate them	3
Do nothing about them	2
No opinion	15 ⁵⁹

Americans were feeling stronger about the kind of treatment prisoners were receiving and more convinced that many of the Germans were guilty of a crime. Punishment was viewed as appropriate but revenge was not an overall theme.

American labor unions created another background of underlying tension. Organized labor felt threatened by American businesses' opportunity for cheaper labor. True, the prisoner workforce provided by the prisoners kept national wages artificially low.⁶⁰ The Manpower Commission, however, attempted to avoid conflict by maintaining continued contact with labor groups and refused to be combative when a contract was in dispute. Even with this consideration, organized labor impeded the development of the prisoner of war employment programs, especially in military installations.⁶¹ Three areas of prison labor were especially affected by the unions; meatpacking, railroads, and forestry. The

⁵⁸ Gallup, *The Gallup Poll*, 497.

⁵⁹ Gallup, *The Gallup Poll*, 501.

⁶⁰ Robin, *The Barbed Wire College*, 6.

⁶¹ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 124.

unions feared that at the end of the war the prisoners would still be filling these jobs; the very jobs needed by returning veterans. They also believed that employers, accustomed to paying workers artificially lower wages, would resist paying fair wages in the future. Historians have shown that there was a shortage of workers during World War II and after, thus the unions' apprehensions were unfounded. The need for labor was so great that it did not affect long-term wages.

The War's End

As indicated, after the end of the war, conditions in the camps deteriorated. Animosity among Americans towards the prisoners grew as soldiers returned home and men found their jobs filled by German prisoners. The GIs brought home stories of the death camps, and news about the treatment of American prisoners in Germany became common knowledge. Finally, Americans linked the events of the war directly to the German prisoners.

The plans for repatriation fell into this context, with negotiations commencing immediately after the declaration of the armistice on 9 May 1945. The policy dictated that repatriation occur in three phases: first were to be the sick and wounded, second the belligerent prisoners, and finally the cooperative prisoners.⁶² The War Department's decision created an uproar among American citizens, officials, and German prisoners. All saw the decision as rewarding the Nazi prisoners instead of punishing them, but the command remained. However, the Nazi POWs did not return to freedom. The intention

⁶² Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, 235-40.

was to imprison them in Germany until cleared of any war crimes. Nonetheless, in the melee, individual repatriation did not always happen as planned. Repatriation was implemented in a non-cohesive fashion, becoming drawn-out and confused. Many of the prisoners, though returned to Europe, were conscripted in France, England, and the Allied sectors of Germany to rebuild Europe. Public and official sentiment believed that this was the correct decision, even though many of the soldiers had not been home in four years and were receiving letters of desperation from their families in Germany, a homeland laid waste. According to the Gallup Poll, March 1945, 71 percent of the Americans polled believed it appropriate for the Allies to require German prisoners to assist in the rebuilding of Europe.⁶³ A correspondence from the PMGO stated in reference to the transfer of prisoners to French control: "It is suggested that the assistant executive officers of prisoner of war camps . . . remind the German prisoners of war of the fact that it may well be an example to future generations to have those who wrecked a country rebuild it."⁶⁴

Most prisoners returned home after 1947, but few returned directly home from the United States, instead being turned over to other Allies. The American Army tried to sort through the prisoners and send those with needed job skills, like doctors, immediately back to Germany. The Germans, who provided potential support to the American policing efforts in Germany, and the men directly involved in establishing the

⁶³ Gallup, *The Gallup Poll*, 491.

⁶⁴ BQ, ASF, Office of The Provost Marshal General, Washington 25, D.C. to CG, Fifth Service Command, Columbus, Ohio. ATTN: Provost Marshal General Division, [date illegible], file 253.91 General, RG 389, National Archives, Washington D.C..

reeducation program, were told that they would also be sent back at once.

Unfortunately, they too were often lost in the shuffle and spent many years close to their homes but not free to return.

The number of prisoners in the United States actually peaked in May of 1945, with the last transport of German prisoners arriving in America in April of that year. Almost one year later, in March 1946, 140,606 prisoners remained in the United States. During the transition, full operation of the camps continued, and the prisoners worked until the last repatriation of soldiers in June 1946.⁶⁵ Even after the final embarkment, twenty-four German escapees remained at large in the United States. Of them, all but four were captured by 1953.

⁶⁵ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 90.

Chapter 3

Problems Created by American Camp Policy

The camp system, theoretically based on the Geneva Convention Treaty, intended a safe and efficient manner of care for prisoners of war. For the most part, the PMGO accomplished this goal. However, this in no way disallows the possibility of a more effective way to manage prison camps. This chapter outlines problems that arose during a prisoner's internment period and suggests ways to ameliorate these problems, in particular psychological ones, created by the camp structure. Two major areas will be reviewed: personnel policies and the internal structure of the camps.

Camp Structure

Early in the establishment of the camps, the PMGO decided that it would be best to keep contact and interaction between guards and prisoners at a minimum. As such, the camps were designed with prisoners of war living in an inner, fenced area. Within this compound were the prison barracks, post exchanges, recreation area, infirmaries, mess hall, and German administration buildings. A woven, barbed wire fence with four guard towers, one on each corner, ringed the square. The perimeter housed the American guard and administration buildings, officers clubs, and auxiliary buildings; all of these areas staffed primarily by American employees. Parts of the perimeter were also enclosed, particularly the hospital and heating plant, with three additional guard towers placed at strategic points around this area. The towers were carefully placed to see all hidden

terrain. This design achieved its aim of separating the day-to-day existence of the prisoners from that of their American guards.¹

The purpose for separating the captives from their captors was manifold. The primary reason was to protect both groups from any unnecessary physical danger caused by one or the other. It also allowed the prisoners to manage their daily routine. The PMGO consensus was that the Germans maintain their normal military structure of command. The hope was that the familiarity of their individual military organizations would allow for more security among the captives because the PMGO firmly believed that German military discipline and authority were superior to American military, thus easing the responsibility of the guards. Because of the strict German military background, the PMGO assumed the threat of random violence to be minimal.

Prisoners of war were not considered criminals; the Geneva Convention clearly stated, "Prisoners retain their full civil capacity."² Additionally, all necessary care was to be taken for their well being and comfort while they waited for the end of the war. The outer ring provided the Germans some measure of privacy from outside inquisitiveness or hostility, also required by the Convention. It specified that: "They [the captives] shall at all times be . . . protected. . . against acts of violence, from insults and from public curiosity."³

¹ For more information see Appendix C "A Standard Layout for a Camp of 5,000 POWs."

² The Geneva Convention, Part I: General Provisions, Art. 4.

³ The Geneva Convention, Part I: General Provisions, Art. 1, Part VII: (2).

Though this design was thoughtful and effective in considering both the needs of the prisoners and the reality of serious security issues, camp problems actually evolved from an earlier decision regarding the prisoners' segregation.⁴ As mentioned, separation of the prisoners began upon arrival by rank, military division, and the country for which they were fighting. Political affinity was not considered. All of the camps contained political factions, but the degree of difference, and the implications inherent in that difference, appeared unimportant. When the prisoners within the camp did not form a homogenous, primary group, then the design allowed the controlling group to subvert the rights of those not in power. Thus, "the Italian camps experienced bitter and often quite violent political struggles among a variety of factions."⁵ The German camps were comprised of fanatical Nazis, those with no strong political affiliation but loyalty to their country and military comrades, those without any political affiliations, and anti-Nazis. Although in the minority, the Nazis were usually in control. Significant abuses occurred by allowing the most aggressive group, the Nazis, to manipulate the inner workings of the system. The PMGO could not claim ignorance or inexperience when questioned about this serious oversight. The United States and Britain maintained regular and open communication about prisoner procedure. In Britain, prisoners were, from the outset of the war, classified as follows: "Black" for Nazi, "Grey" for "no particular alliance but no use for Allies," and "White" for anti-Nazi. Most of the "Blacks" were sent to Canada or

⁴ Much of the basic design was based upon the layout of American military bases; hence, there was experience with the design of many specific details.

⁵ Robin. *The Barbed Wire College*, 7.

America.⁶ Sidney B. Fay, of Harvard University, chastised the American military in a 1945 praxis for this lack of foresight, comparing British and Russian policies of segregation to the Americans' lack of thoughtful policy.⁷

In particular, British experience and practice were immediately available to American policymakers upon entry into the war and they chose not to utilize it. By 1943, the British had facilitated at least one extensive psychological study into the characteristics of German men. Henry V. Dicks, a British psychologist, interviewed 1000 prisoners of war, collated the data, and began to analyze the results.⁸ Although unable to complete the analysis, Dicks formulated basic personality types for five different groups of German soldiers: fanatic Nazis; believers in Nazism, but with reservation; apolitical; "the divided" (or later called passive anti-Nazis); and active, convinced anti-Nazis. The results from this study might have provided "a psychological technique by which selectors [interrogators] . . . might be helped to distinguish Nazis from non-Nazis without recourse to the very crude and fallacious criteria of reference to formal membership of the Party."⁹

American camp commanders and military administrators discovered too late that neglecting to identify ardent Nazis upon debarkment not only led to increased camp violence, but also to sophisticated systems of espionage.¹⁰ Belatedly, Americans

⁶ Roderick de Normann. *For Führer and Fatherland: SS Murder and Mayhem in Wartime Britain*. (Phoenix Mill, UK: Sutton Pub., Limited, 1996), 27.

⁷ Sidney B. Fay, "German Prisoners of War: A Suggestion for the Proper Treatment of War Prisoners," *Current History*, 8:43 (March 1945), 193-202.

⁸ Henry V. Dicks, "Personality Traits and National Socialist Ideology: A War-Time Study of German Prisoners of War," *Human Relations* 3 (June 1950).

⁹ Dicks, "Personality Traits and National Socialist Ideology," 111.

¹⁰ For further information, see Judith Gansberg, *Stalag USA*, 54-6.

discovered that the Nazi POWs controlled the camp schools, prevented political discussion, influenced religious affiliations, in many camps controlled what was handed out in correspondence or newspapers, and influenced what was listened to on radio broadcasts.¹¹

At the Central Southwestern Regional post office in Camp Hearne, Texas, the Nazis gained access to the incoming and outgoing mail. Their sophisticated system allowed for messages to other camps and the creation of a national anti-Nazi blacklist. Commonly, when a Nazi threatened another prisoner they used the threat of the prisoner's, or his family's, safety. With control of the mail system, this was not merely hollow intimidation but a potential reality. Although no physical evidence was discovered to prove that the group was successful, there were a number of instances in which circumstantial evidence was significant.¹²

The Nazis also infiltrated the camp hospitals filling both the roles of doctors and medics. It was common for a German soldier to choose a fellow German as his caregiver. For this reason, as well as the lack of available American medical personnel, prisoners with medical backgrounds staffed most of the camp hospitals. Nevertheless, the public desire for German personnel might have been arrived upon through Nazi coercion. Gansberg also noted that at times medical care was intentionally withheld, so that unbeknownst to the American staff, if a prisoner was viewed as disloyal to Hitler, the

¹¹ See Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.*; Doll, GSC, Colonel, F.S., Chief, Intelligence Branch-S & I Division, to The Commanding General, 17 October 1945, file 255 Intelligence Plans, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA; and *Historical Monograph: Re-education of Enemy Prisoners of War*. United States Army: 1 November 1945, file E439A, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

¹² Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.* 54-5.

prisoner was refused medical care. Specifically, Fort Monroe received reports about the rough treatment of certain German patients.¹³

Nazi control was also found to have insinuated itself in the camp libraries, and it influenced the prisoners' ability/desire to attend church, watch certain movies, and read certain newspapers or novels. "Before the end of the war, maybe six or seven POWs at Camp Cooke attended regular [church] services. After the war," recalled prisoner, Father Franz Göde, "there were more than one hundred worshipers [once] the crazy reign of the Nazis was finished."¹⁴ Prisoner Franz Krammer of Gundelfingen explained that "the German leaders owned a short-wave radio . . . [and] they would listen to German news . . . In the evening, we would meet. . . . There the German news would be read and commented on by a high-ranking officer . . . as a success for the German armies Presence at the meetings was, so to speak, a national obligation. . . . Absence was taken note of."¹⁵

Even in the education courses some camps reported Nazi infiltration. Krammer also wrote of a German customs officer who taught some of the courses claiming "He [the customs officer] expressed the opinion that those who did not take part in his classes would have disadvantages after repatriation."¹⁶ In almost all of the camps, the Nazi minority had succeeded in controlling the choices and lives of the majority.

¹³ Forrest Burnette Wall, Jr., "German Prisoner of War Camps in Virginia during World War Two" (Ph. D. diss., Carnegie-Mellon University, 1987), 114.

¹⁴ Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke, California*, 122.

¹⁵ Lowell A. May, *Camp Concordia: German POWs in the Midwest* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1995), 32-3.

¹⁶ May, *Camp Concordia*, 32-3.

As an afterthought, the Americans began to establish Nazi and anti-Nazi camps, segregating the prisoners. This practice was encouraged in part, by an investigation of the prison system by a Mr. May who reported to the House of Representatives, 30 November 1944, that escapes "are often actuated by fear of their own fellow prisoners, anti-Nazis who want to get away from Nazis and vice versa."¹⁷ The problem had become public and the PMGO office began to pursue a segregation policy.

The segregation program was promulgated through a variety of methods, like individual records and reportings by other prisoners' observation; but primarily through the observation of an individual prisoner's behavior. Sometimes the men were merely asked to state their political leanings and segregation was then based on the soldiers' responses. For the rabid Nazi, so much emotional strength and self-worth centered on their ability to control their respective camps that they usually responded in the negative, "no they were not Nazis," so, as to remain where they were. Moreover, for the average German soldier, questions about political affinity were regarded with tremendous suspicion, truthful answers were not always forthcoming.¹⁸ Allen W. Guillion, the PMG in 1944, wrote to Congressman Frank Carlson about the difficulties of merely questioning the prisoners about their political affiliations. He explained that: "They [the German and Austrian soldiers] feared that if they are segregated from the Nazis, either in a separate camp or a separate compound, that knowledge of that fact will be used by

¹⁷ Union Calendar No. 655—House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 2nd sess., Report No. 1992, "Investigations of the National War Effort" by Mr. May, 30 November 1944, 2.

¹⁸ Wall, "German Prisoner of War Camps in Virginia."

Hitler and associates to the disadvantage of their relatives in their homeland.”¹⁹ These methods, the only ones regularly employed, were incredibly simplistic and therefore inefficient, for this was not a simple problem. Even so, the military established Alva, Oklahoma, as the main camp for Nazis. Hundreds of men arrived there upon its designation in July 1944. Anti-Nazis were normally sent to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, or Camp Campbell, Kentucky.

However, the segregation was so haphazard that many soldiers were labeled unjustly, placing them in further dangerous situations. The most notorious case involved a submarine soldier, Werner Drechsler. Used for a number of months as an American spy, he had remained at an east coast interrogation camp. There, he was placed in a cell with other German prisoners. Using an alias rank and name he would encourage the soldiers to talk about security matters and then report to the American interrogators. In March 1944, Drechsler was transferred to Papago Park, Arizona, a camp for submarine soldiers, many who had either served with him or met him in the interrogation camp in Washington D. C. The reason for the transfer has never become clear. The military never offered a reason and historians have speculated that he was no longer of any use to the interrogators or that it was a *mix-up* in paperwork. Upon Drechsler’s arrival, he attempted to contact the camp commander to explain his immediate danger. Ignoring his request for help, the guards placed him in the general population; by the next morning, he was dead. Drechsler had been brutally beaten and then hanged. Seven men stood trial for his death

¹⁹ Allen W. Gullion, Major General, The Provost Marshal General to The Honorable Frank Carlson, Congress of the United States, Washington D.C., 20 January 1944, file 704, #3 General POW, March 1944- May 1944, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

and were hanged; it was the last mass execution in the United States.²⁰ This wanton disregard for life was repeated hundred fold in the deaths of Russian prisoners mentioned later in this chapter. The PMGO administration allowed this to occur not because of some intentionality, but because of benign neglect, a lack of accountability, and disbelief that there could be more massacres.

Another incident involved a group of fifteen prisoners sent to an anti-Nazi camp in Blanding, Florida. Berndt von Walther und Croneck [*sic*, the German spelling would normally be with a ‘K,’ Kroneck, but the source uses a ‘C’] wondered, even thirty years later, how he became labeled as an anti-Nazi. According to Walther und Croneck, the Blanding Camp turned out to be a camp of communist prisoners. Spurned by the communist prisoners, he claimed to sleep with a stick in his bed every night in fear for his life. Although Walther was not a Nazi, he assisted Americans later in translating scientific material.²¹ Examples of prisoners being unjustly labeled as Nazis were probably even more prevalent than acquiring the anti-Nazi label. Alva, Oklahoma, became the dumping ground for any troublesome prisoner, their political leaning irrelevant.

Countless stories exist of soldiers being mislabeled and as a result finding themselves in situations that ranged from uncomfortable to life-threatening. The flaws in the segregation policy should have been readily evident given the prisoner’s numerous requests for protective custody and subsequent injuries. The indeterminate, random method of segregation affected the majority of the prisoners, not an isolated few. Men

²⁰ Richard Whittingham, *The Last Mass Execution in the United States: Martial Justice* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1971).

²¹ John Hammond Moore, *The Faustball Tunnel* (New York: Random House, 1978), 108-9.

were transferred back and forth across the country between Alva and other camps as administrators argued over the vague guidelines set up to determine a prisoner's designation. At some point in camp policy, they moved beyond using only uniforms and rank as the tools for segregation, a more complex form of evaluation was incorporated, but it still was not sufficient.

Psychologically, the separation of prisoners from the American camp personnel and public served to strengthen the conceptualization of *them* against *us*. According to Dusan Kecmanovic, "[i]t goes without saying, it is hard to be genuinely emotionally close to people we do not know from our own personal experience."²² People seek to live among like-minded people rather than among people with perceived differences. Inevitably, later interviews of German prisoners who created relationships with Americans showed that they retained strong, positive memories of this country. The Germans who maintained a distance, either because of the edict laid out by the Nazis in control, or because they centered themselves around the Nazi minority, reported only negative experiences of captivity. "This distrust nurtured Nazism more effectively than Hitler himself could have done."²³ In addition, by maintaining a separation, the Germans in power more easily identified a group enemy (the Americans) that "buffered or completely neutralized the intragroup [all of the prisoners] antagonisms."²⁴ "Until now I was only a soldier, I never bothered with Nazi propaganda or with politics," retorted German prisoner Hans

²² Dusan Kecmanovic, *The Mass Psychology of Ethnonationalism* (New York: Plenum Press, 1996), 3.

²³ Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.*, 6.

²⁴ Gansberg, *Stalag U.S.A.*, 36.

Woltersdorf to his interrogator. "[H]ere I am, locked up with nothing but Nazis, . . . and I'm beginning to be interested, . . . and I must confess to you that these Nazis are thoroughly decent fellows . . . If I wasn't a Nazi before, then I'm becoming one now."²⁵ The result of a non-fraternization policy was to exacerbate and encourage an already volatile and conflict-ridden environment by binding the Germans together through their national ideology.

Behind the self-management policy hid the age-old stereotype of the Prussian soldier; partitioning prisoners from the guards was thought to ease the responsibilities of camp management. *The Handbook for Work Supervisors of Prisoner of War Labor* admonished the supervisors to "be aloof, for the Germans respect firm leadership."²⁶ The American policymakers were afraid that fraternizing inferred American weakness to the *Prussian soldier*. Yet, even the anti-fraternization policy, laid out in the *Prisoner of War Circular no. 3*, was unable to keep Germans and Americans apart when, and if, they wanted contact.²⁷ "Fraternization was prevalent and they [German prisoners] received illegal gifts from Americans," responded Karl-Heinz Hackbarth, a former prisoner interviewed

²⁵ Hans Werner Woltersdorf, *Gods of War: Memoir of a German Soldier*. Trans. Nancy Benvenga, Novato, CA, 1990; quoted in Stephen G. Fritz, *Frontsoldaten: The German Soldier in World War II* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 223.

²⁶ Army Service Forces Manual, *Handbook for Work Supervisors of Prisoner of War Labor*, M 811 (July 1945), 15 quoted in Krammer, "German Prisoners of War in the United States," 68-73.

²⁷ U.S. War Department. *Prisoner of War Circular #2 and 3, Regulations Governing Prisoners of War*, [Washington, D.C.]: U.S. War Department, 30 October 1943. Section I-Treatment of Prisoners of War. 1.a. "The fraternizing of Army and civilian personnel with prisoners of war is unauthorized, improper, objectionable, and contrary to good order and discipline. It will not be tolerated."

by Lewis Carlson.²⁸ Instances of German men and American women involved in love affairs occurred, some even marrying after the war. Former prisoner, William Oberdieck, wrote of an affair between his sergeant and an American woman. He described how "on certain days we would hide this lovesick fellow under the trash and take him to the office and warehouse area where he would meet his one and only."²⁹ American soldiers and civilians became friends, or enemies, of German soldiers through fraternization.

What distorted these generally positive encounters was the need for secrecy and thus the maintenance of opposing sides. The policy, as previous policies often did, encouraged the *us/them* duality instead of mitigating it, and subgroups formed within the camps when those who were aware of fraternization hid it from other prisoners and captors. Among the captives, there was more fear and distrust because of politics than there was with their captors. Therefore, the prisoners were unable to relate even their positive experiences and hence influence opinion. Therefore, the need for secrecy undermined American authority and robbed the military of a significant opportunity to influence the opinions of their prisoners.

When Americans became aware of the extent of German abuses in Europe, this pre-established *us/them* dichotomy allowed for increasing prisoner mistreatment. Georg Gärtner recounts that, "[After the war] relations with our camp guards, erratic during the best of times, were becoming ominously tense. Even those guards, often kids themselves,

²⁸ Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, 25.

²⁹ William Oberdieck, *America's Prisoner of War 1943-1946* (New York: Carlton Press Corporation, 1995), 53.

who had befriended the prisoners, were silent and glowering."³⁰ The viability of greater mutual understanding was possible only if the anti-fraternization policy had not been in place.

American Camp Personnel

The second area of concern was with American camp personnel. The PMGO anticipated the rapid influx of prisoners to the United States, but no one expected such great numbers.

In 1942 [the year of exponentially increasing numbers of prisoners on American soil] only 36 military police escort companies had been activated. To guard the prisoners of war on hand, and the 50,000 to be received, the PMGO requested that 32 additional companies be activated immediately in the ratio of 1 company per 1000 prisoners. He [Provost Marshal] also requested that 100 additional units be authorized in the same ratio so that their training could commence at once. The Deputy Chief of Staff, however, approved only the requested 32 new escort guard companies and authorized the immediate assignment of limited service personnel from reception centers to the guard companies.³¹

Every available man was either fighting in the war or working to support the war effort. The PMGO was unable to hire the caliber or quantity of guards and administrators it required. The low ratio of prisoners to properly trained guards was yet another reason that the PMGO allowed the German officers to manage aspects of the camps. They did not realize that a different procedure might have minimized the need for large numbers of guards even further.

³⁰ Georg Gärtner, with Arnold Krammer, *Hitler's Last Soldier in America* (New York: Stein & Day, 1985), 23.

³¹ Lewis and Mehwa, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization*, 86.

The mildest critique of camp personnel maintained that they did not have the necessary skills and were unprepared or untrained for the job of policing. The harshest views claimed that the PMGO hired alcoholics, mentally unstable, or rejected military. Maxwell McKnight attested that “[t]he POW camps were a ‘dumping ground’ for U. S. field-grade officers who were found unsatisfactory for combat . . . We were pretty much dredging the bottom of the barrel. We had all kinds of kooks and wacky people.”³² As late as May 1944, two years after the initial surge of prisoners to American soil, there were still complaints about the quality of personnel. Bernard Gufler, Assistant Chief of Special War Problems Division at the State Department, provided a memorandum to Colonel Berry about the quality of camp administration. In this ten-page memo, he offered not only specific criticisms but also statistics to support them. One of his recommendations was that the camps “must be staffed with a high type of American officers and men.” After describing what, in his view, was a *high type* of man, he censured the military policy stating that:

There is apparently, however, a tendency to infer that the limitation to non-combat personnel justifies assigning the culls to this work. In a shipment of 135 replacements to Campbell [KY], 74 were men disqualified for overseas service, and of these, 60 were disqualified for psychoneurosis or similar mental or nervous conditions.³³

One guard in a Virginia camp complained that his fellow guards were usually “‘crude scum’ that during performances of the prisoner of war orchestra, stood outside making

³² Gansberg, *Stalag, U.S.A.*, 42.

³³ Lt. Col. Bernays, G-1 and Mr. Bernard Gufler, Ass’t Chief of Special War Problems Division, State Department to Colonel Berry, 29 May 1944, file 255 General, POW Special Projects Division, 1943-1946, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria.

noise and banging trash cans in an attempt to disrupt the performance.”³⁴ The best guards proved to be military police trained specifically for guarding prisoners. They were prepared to deal with the unique problems of day-to-day policing. In reality, however, most of the personnel were not competent to perform their duties and this situation resulted in serious repercussions for the prisoners.

Although most instances of guard misbehavior were juvenile and little cause for concern, there were enough harmful incidences to warrant improvement. One can cite numerous cases in which American soldiers attacked a prisoner without cause. One incident occurred on 9 March 1944, when John W. Meadows, a twenty-eight-year-old mess sergeant, attacked *Unteroffizier* Heinrich Jacobs. Meadows, with two prior, yet minor convictions, stabbed Jacobs in the back with a knife for no observable reason. The court records indicate no motive, only that Meadows had been relieved of his duties for drunkenness two days prior.³⁵ One can surmise that his drinking habits instigated the hostile act. With proper supervision and screening before his employment this stabbing probably might have been avoided.

An even more devastating event occurred late in the evening of 9 July 1945. Private Clarence V. Bertucchi, twice court-martialed—once while stationed in England—finished a few beers and drifted back toward the tents that formed a branch camp at Salina, Utah. Climbing the guard tower, he loaded a machine gun and shot directly into

³⁴ Thornton Bryanly, interview by Wall, Jr. “German Prisoner of War Camps in Virginia, 95.

³⁵ A.K. Brown, Colonel, M.C. Post Surgeon, Station Hospital, Camp Swift Bastrop, Texas, to The Commanding Officer, ASF, 8SvC, Camp Swift, Bastrop, Texas, 16 March 1944, file 701 Gen. P/W, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA and United States V. Staff Sergeant John W. Meadows, Dallas, Texas, 2 February 1944, File 701 Gen. P/W.

the forty-three tents. The private succeeded in killing eight men and wounding twenty. Afterwards, no reasonable precipitant for the attack was discovered; his only reason being that "he hated Germans and so he killed them."³⁶

Many other incidents could have been avoided if more thoughtful personnel management had been in place to guide enlisted personnel at the permanent camps. Because of time constraints, camp administrators did not receive adequate training for their particular jobs. Bernard Gufler of the State Department's Special War Problems Division asserted, "no effort seems to have been made to train the officers of the guard personnel for their highly specialized work."³⁷ Officer training, when received, entailed only basic police methods, otherwise officers came to the job with their standard military schooling. But, because the job involved working with foreign, non-criminal civilians, all personnel, especially officers who usually served as role models to the enlisted men, needed different kinds of preparation in addition to police methodology. Areas of training not covered were unique cultural norms, the psychological impact of the imprisonment of innocent men, language difficulties, political differences, and religious differences.

Translators available to work in the camps raised another serious issue; there simply were not enough German speaking, American citizens. A formula for assigning a certain number of translators never evolved, but prisoners complained frequently that they could not understand directions and orders. The shortage of translators became a particularly difficult obstacle on work details when it was not always feasible to assign a translator.

RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

³⁶ "Midnight Massacre," *Time* (23 July 1945), 24.

³⁷ Bernard Gufler, "Indoctrination of German Prisoners of War," Reorientation File, Provost Marshal General Operations, quoted in Krammer, "German Prisoners of War in

The German prisoners also complained that the translators were usually Jewish. Indeed, Jewish immigrants fleeing Hitler's regime naturally filled the job of translator and many Jewish immigrants served in this capacity. Although this was the most logical expedient, to the German soldier, a Jewish translator appeared to be an intentional affront and caused serious impediments in effective communication between Americans and Germans.

On the arrival of soldiers from the European front, the personnel in charge of determining how to initially direct incoming soldiers were hampered by inadequate policies and training. At first, soldiers employed to interrogate and segregate the prisoners were unaware of potential concerns beyond the most basic, like health and rank. Any further examination, before assigning a permanent camp, focused on matters of espionage and information that would aid in the war effort. "Ideological screening of German prisoners was either ignored or cursorily done early in the war . . ."³⁸ Personnel were unaware of the wide range of ideological and political differences among German prisoners. Nor were they trained to recognize the nuanced differences between a soldier who felt a loyalty to the *Fatherland* and one who believed in National Socialism. They merely asked if the soldier was a member of the NSDAP. As Arnold Krammer noted, personnel soon discovered that: "confidence in Adolf Hitler was not synonymous with an attraction to National Socialism; nor did blind obedience to military orders and tradition

the United States," 68-73.

³⁸ Wall, "German Prisoner of War Camps in Virginia," 137.

indicate a sympathy for Nazism. A prisoner who was anti-American was not necessarily pro-fascist; nor was a German nationalist necessarily an advocate of racial atrocities.”³⁹

Upon the arrival of the first large group of prisoners, men from the *Afrika Korps*, concise segregation should have been in place. As mentioned earlier, the demographics showed that the *Korps* was comprised of the cream of the German *Wehrmacht*. Because of their loyalty to the military first, their country and their leader second, these men formed the core of staunch Nazi radicals. Unfortunately, as the first prisoners captured, they had the advantage of establishing routines in the camps, familiarity with their surroundings and captors, and an understanding of how to manipulate the system. In other words, any soldiers arriving after the defeat in Africa submitted to the leadership and control of men of the *Afrika Korps*. An effective segregation plan would have been disrupted their pre-established chain of command.

Towards the end of the war, a different personnel problem unfolded. “We all heard stories about guards who were particularly trigger-happy men who had been recycled home from combat overseas, or who had been POWs themselves in Germany and were given a ‘soft’ job in the backwater of the war,”⁴⁰ claimed Georg Gärtner. After the war, returning American soldiers often took over the maintenance of the prison camps. They were better prepared to perform these duties than the earlier guards did, but some had been adversely affected by their experiences in Germany. Men negatively affected by the war were not screened out of the pool of available personnel. These soldiers, although in

³⁹ Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, 149.

⁴⁰ Gärtner, *Hitler's Last Soldier in America*, 20.

the minority, often harbored deep anger and resentment toward the prisoners as in the example at Salina, Utah.

The final problem involved the guard to prisoner ratio. Gwynn Tucker states “at the beginning of the POW operations, the United States tended to . . . overguard the prisoners. . . . The original guard to prisoner ratio was 1:7.5.”⁴¹ Later, the ratio was increased to 1:10 ratio. “The guard-prisoner ratio appears to be a corollary to the quality of the guards.”⁴² Not only did the quality of the guards increase, but also by 1945, the Nazis were housed in separate camps, easing the tension and threats of violence among the average prisoner population and allowing for a reduction in guard personnel. Nevertheless, in many earlier instances, especially at camps that superficially seemed well run, the guards managed far too many prisoners. This created unnecessary stress and anxiety so that many of the guards were pushed to the edge of their abilities.

Although isolated incidents of guard abuse occurred throughout the United States, some camps experienced a disproportionate number of problems. One such place was Camp Concordia, the largest camp in Kansas and one of the largest nationwide. It held 4,000 prisoners. After its opening in 1943, the initial stages of the camp's life were fraught with serious mishaps. However, once the source of the problem was pinpointed and eliminated, it became a model for other large camps.

The first commander at Concordia was retired Lieutenant Colonel John A. Sterling. He ran the camp in a relaxed manner and provided the officer-prisoners full control over

⁴¹ Gwynn A. Tucker, “Effects of Organizational Structure of American Enemy Prisoner of War Operations” (M.S. Thesis, Central Michigan University, 1990), 170.

⁴² Tucker, “Effects of Organizational Structure,” 240.

the compound. The deaths of five German prisoners over a six-month period were the results of this *laissez-faire* style. One of the five soldiers died shortly after Sterling was relieved of his command and before the new commander, Colonel Lester Vocke, had full control of the camp. Thus, Vocke could hardly be held accountable for the death. Four of the deaths were considered suicide, but of those four, the autopsies of two listed "suicide under suspicious circumstances."⁴³ Another incident that highlighted the American soldier's unruly nature and lack of discipline, as well as the problems at Camp Concordia, occurred on 23 October 1943, in the American Officers Club. Captain David Roberts, drunk, started an argument with the wife of another officer. A scuffle ensued and the wife of the camp commander, Mrs. Sterling, moving to protect the other woman, was shot in the back.

Nevertheless, even with new leadership, a drop in the guard to prisoner ratio, and the removal of some of the Nazis, suspicious, violent incidents continued. On 11 January 1944, another suicide occurred. The death was the questionable suicide of an avowed anti-Nazi who requested before the incident, protection for his life.⁴⁴

The fifth death occurred on 16 October 1943. Corporal Adolf Hübner was shot and killed while retrieving a soccer ball. The ball was in the *dead zone* and guard, Mike Yaksich, it was determined, "fired in the line of duty."⁴⁵ Authorities claimed that the prisoners were warned several times to stay away from the area and that Hübner

⁴³ "SPMGA (35) 383.6" to Director, Prisoner of War Division, "Violent Deaths of, and Injuries to, Prisoners of War" (24 March 1944), file 704 #3 General PW- March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

⁴⁴ May, *Camp Concordia*.

⁴⁵ May, *Camp Concordia*. 30-1.

deliberately kicked the ball into the dead zone, hopping over the rail and "looking over his shoulder and taunting the sentinel."⁴⁶ The German prisoners saw the incident very differently; in fact, to them it seemed so unwarranted that it continues to be legendary among the former captives. Two separate reports by prisoners who were present at the shooting were very different in the details. One stated that during the soccer game the ball had gone into the security zone a number of times and "the guards permitted us to get the ball. Then they would not permit it anymore, and the guard shot our comrade through the head as he stood."⁴⁷ William Oberdieck, another player in the soccer game, remembers it this way:

The ball landed on the strip between the wire and the fence. We knew that we were not permitted in that area. We assumed that the guard up on the tower would recognize our predicament . . . We looked at the guard, and had the impression that he was considering a solution for the ball's recovery. We stood still, waiting for the next move . . . One of us thought he had seen the OK sign by the guard, but was obviously not 100% sure of what the guard would do. So, while he stepped over the warning wire he kept looking at the guard. A shot rang out, and he had a bullet hole right in the middle of his forehead . . . Some said that his statement [the guard's] about the incident was: "I got the son of a bitch."⁴⁸

One report implies an indifference to the camp rules by both the guards and prisoners, as if written rules were different from the reality. Other accounts of the incident coincide with this assumption. The second witness leaves the reader with the impression that, although following camp rules, the players believed that they had latitude in this

⁴⁶ The *dead zone* was a marked off area between the outer fence and the prisoner's free area. Anyone found in the dead zone was considered trying to escape and the guards had permission to shoot. Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, 126.

⁴⁷ Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War in America*, from interview of Gerhard Grünzig, 30.

⁴⁸ Oberdieck. *America's Prisoner of War 1943-1946*, 46-7.

particular instance. None of the witnesses mention any verbal acknowledgment by the guards, which, given the distance between the guard tower and the playing field, was possible. The situation, even with differing testimony, involved a resolution (death) out of proportion to the crime (walking out of bounds during a game). However, there was enough ambiguity in the case to warrant Yaksich's court-martial. The court determined that Yaksich had fired in the line of duty, while concluding that the shooting could have been prevented.

A similar incident occurred in Macklan, Texas. According to soldier Franz Fahrmeier, a fellow prisoner was shot for walking into the dead zone. He recalls,

Two meters away from these wired fences were white posts. We weren't allowed to go past them. We were only allowed to come as close to the fences as the white posts. We were informed that the guards had orders to shoot if one of us entered the so-called "dead zone." . . . Unteroffizier Stangel . . . walked around the post, presumably because there was a lot of snow. In doing so he entered the "dead zone." It was at night . . . [T]he second shot went off and Stangel was hit. When we found him he was laying half way in the "zone."⁴⁹

The German witnesses to this incident gave conflicting testimony and this raised some troubling questions, one regarding the necessity of fatal force. Guards had the legal right to shoot a prisoner, but again in this instance was deadly force necessary? Was the prisoner trying to escape, the usual premise for fatally wounding a prisoner.

Alternatively, was he testing the limits? Again, there were enough questions to warrant an inquiry, resulting in the same conclusion as the Hübner case. In both of these situations, guards with proper training—different from military wartime training—would have handled the situation differently, perhaps resulting in a less deadly outcome.

⁴⁹ Franz Fahrmeier, Interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 30 August 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*. Microfilm roll no. 1458, RG 242, National Archives,

As discussed earlier, the Germans viewed taunting and bullying of the guards as *part of their job as prisoners*. Wartime training did not prepare soldiers for situations dealing with non-criminal prisoners. Georg Gärtner recounted an incident that involved the shooting death of a prisoner. He recalled that in a "branch camp near Parma, OH a guard shot a German POW after he repeatedly warned him to stop singing a song that ridiculed American servicemen."⁵⁰ The guards were not prepared to deal with this kind of frustration and proper training would have steeled guards against verbal assaults.

Yet another incident occurred due to the camp administration's decision to allow the German *Afrika Korps* officers to maintain order and routine within the camp. Prisoner Rudolph Hinkelmann recalled the shooting of two fellow prisoners late one night in September of 1944. Both men, known Communist sympathizers, stormed the fence at Tagus Ranch, California, in an attempt to escape the *Holy Ghost*. Almost every camp in the nation experienced at least a few *Holy Ghost* incidents, or as they were also called *kangaroo courts*.⁵¹ The term *Holy Ghost* represented a secret trial and inevitable conviction of a prisoner by fellow prisoners. Often the supposed infraction of German code was minor when compared to the punishment meted out. The slightest suspicion of disloyalty to Nazi principles was cause for such a trial. The guards, oblivious to the problem within the camp, assumed that the men were trying to escape and shot them. Hinkelmann was the *Lagersprecher* and therefore called to the main gate. There, he

Alexandria, VA.

⁵⁰ Gärtner, *Hitler's Last Soldier in America*, 20.

⁵¹ Colonel George M. Chescheir, F.A. Commanding Officer, Prisoner of War Camp, Fort Benning, GA, "Intelligence Activities of German Prisoner of War Camps-Detection and Correction of Undesirable Activities," address, 20 July 1944, file 704 #3, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

recalls seeing the “wounded POWs hanging on the barbed-wire fence . . . the two were trying to get away from the camp’s *Schlägertruppen*.”⁵²

An isolated, but important incident conveys the inconsistency of American administrative policy. The PMGO agreed to trade Russian prisoners, most of them captured in 1944 at Normandy (captured while fighting for the German army), for American soldiers in Russia. Under the guise of goodwill, Russia asked that its men be returned, explaining that they had been forced to fight for Germany. Because of the growing number of captives for which the PMGO was responsible, America agreed. In 1943, before the Normandy invasion, the Americans discovered the mass graves of Polish soldiers in Katyn and the Allies suspected the Russians. The Katyn soldiers were executed for “treason,” considering it treasonous to fight for another army, the German army, even if it was by force. The men were not allowed any defense in court. Despite this foreknowledge of Russian policy, the American government gathered the men at Ft. Dix for transportation to Russia. The prisoners begged to stay, some committing suicide rather than return. Ignoring their pleas, American soldiers forced them onto the trains using tear gas. The Russians returned to the Soviet Union certain of execution for treason.⁵³ The United States was responsible, under the Geneva Convention, to protect its prisoners: “They shall at all times be humanely treated and protected, particularly against acts of violence, . . .”⁵⁴ Acts like these did not lend themselves to a humanitarian ideal.

⁵² *Schlägertruppen* is literally “hit troop,” or, as in American colloquialism, a “hit squad.” Geiger, *German Prisoners of War at Camp Cooke, California*, 119.

⁵³ Gansberg, *Stalag: U.S.A.*, 17.

⁵⁴ Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Part I: General Provisions, Art. 2.

Chapter 4

Examples of Prisoner Treatment that Could Lead to the Possible Onset of PTSD

Background

The physical situation of prisoners is not the only aspect of prisoner care for which their captors are responsible. The trauma of war always creates an emotional burden, and each war described the trauma with a new name. In the Civil War, it was *soldier's heart*, in World War I men suffered *shell shock*, and in World War II, the plague was *combat fatigue*.¹ However, World War II arrived on the cusp of far-reaching psychiatric and psychological research that analyzed effects of war on combatants. Awareness was growing of the importance of understanding and nurturing the human mind and emotions. This is apparent in the groundbreaking discoveries by academics and scientists like Erik Erikson, Ivan Pavlov, Alfred Binet, Emil Kraepelin, B.F. Skinner, and Margaret Mead. The importance of the mind also became apparent in other more destructive ways, like the methodical and deliberate manner in which Goebbels created a propaganda “machine” to win the support of the German people. Stalin consciously utilized mind control through terror to maintain his power. Britain and America directed millions of dollars into new programs of reeducation, research, and analysis of the German character as well as their respective

¹ Paula Schnurr, *The Long-Term Course of PTSD* (White River Junction, NH: National Center for PTSD) [database on-line]; <http://www.ncptsd.org/treatment/cq/v4/n1/scnhurr.htm>

psychological warfare departments, all under the auspices of helping to win the war and furthering democratic goals. With this new consciousness evolved a new responsibility, that of the mental health of soldiers, civilians in war torn areas, and prisoners of war. Although the United States strove to provide humane psychiatric care for the Axis prisoners under their protection, the efforts were an abysmal failure.

From the arrival of the first prisoners on American shores, the military was faced with the need to provide psychiatric care for prisoners. Suicidal, depressed prisoners, for example, were sent to the largest nearby military hospitals to be treated by whoever was available. As the number of prisoners, and hence, the number of psychiatric cases increased, two hospitals were set aside to handle all psychiatric illnesses, Mason General Hospital in Brentwood, Long Island, New York and Glennan General Hospital in Okmulgee, Oklahoma.² On 11 February 1944, Lt. Colonel Earl L. Edwards, sent a memo to all of the United States Service Commands, stating that "Mason General Hospital, Brentwood, Long Island, New York, has been designated for prisoners suffering from neurological and neuropsychopathic disorders."³ All such cases among prisoners, regardless of their present location or nationality, will be transferred."⁴ Later, as the number of patients grew, Edwards sent

² Mason General Hospital is hereafter referred to as MGH and Glennan General Hospital will hereafter be referred to as GGH.

³ Technically the terms neuropsychiatric and neuropsychology are sciences that attempt to explain how the nervous system produces human behavior. During the 1940s—though, the terms were used more loosely and applied to an assortment of mental illnesses like schizophrenia or hysteria.

⁴ Earl L. Edwards, Lt. Colonel, C.M.P., Assistant Director, Prisoner of War Division, Army Service Forces, P.M.G.O., Washington 23, D.C. to The Commanding

a second memo concerning psychiatric patients. According to this memo, after 17 January 1945, until the end of the war, both GGH and MGH would be the repositories for patients with mental illness.

At the time, the most common psychiatric diagnoses were combat neurosis, captive (or captivity) psychosis, and various forms of schizophrenia, hysteria, and depression, none of which was satisfactorily defined or treated.⁵ Captive psychosis was considered a mental disorder termed a psychosis because "it resulted in 'impairment that grossly interferes with the capacity to meet ordinary demands of life'" with the onset determined to be the result of captivity.⁶ This broad definition encompassed a myriad of different illnesses and inadequately explained what was occurring with the individual patient. This diagnosis has not been used since the 1940s. The term schizophrenia has also taken on new meaning, becoming more specific and therefore, less frequently used as a diagnosis. Very few mentally ill prisoners today are diagnosed with schizophrenia as opposed to approximately 46 percent receiving this diagnosis in the above-mentioned psychiatric hospitals.⁷ After

General, Fifth Service Command, Fort Hayes, Columbus, OH, 11 February 1944, File 701, Gen. P/W, 5 November 1942-December 1945, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

⁵ For more information see Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 9 and Walter A. Lunden, "Captivity Psychoses Among Prisoners of War," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 39 (1949): 721-33.

⁶ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition (Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1994), 273.

⁷ Dr. J. Gottschick, *Psychiatrie der Kriegsgefangenschaft: dargestellt auf Grund von Beobachtungen in den USA an deutschen Kriegsgefangenen aus dem letzten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1963), table 2, 257.

World War II, psychiatrists realized that these problems usually were not an inborn *mental illness* like schizophrenia or manic depressive illness, but rather a different form of psychological disease that resulted from too much war trauma: *traumatic war neurosis* or *post-traumatic stress disorder*.⁸ As part of the diagnosis, the final process in the hospitals was to evaluate patients for "eligibility for repatriation."⁹ If it was concluded that a prisoner was permanently unable, due to illness, to contribute to the German War effort he was traded for American prisoners and returned to Germany.

Group Identity and the German Soldier

It is now commonly understood that all prisoners of war are vulnerable to mental illness merely because of their captivity. Prisoners must deal with a multitude of stressful situations over and above the difficulty of the war experience. During World War II the German prisoner's ability to recognize and receive help has to be understood through the lens of German culture. Bernt Edelhoff, the current head of public relations for the German Red Cross, described one of the reasons why receiving help was so difficult for a German soldier. "A 'real' [World War II] German soldier, and especially a 'real' German officer, did not speak about those themes [mental illness]. Edelhoff's father, a captain and doctor during World War II, told Bernt "that they were not even made aware that mental problems could exist. Of

⁸ Schnurr, *The Long-Term Course of PTSD*. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder will hereafter be referred to as PTSD.

⁹ Frank W. Choate, Lt. Colonel, AGD, Acting Adjutant General by command of Major General Donovan to Commanding Generals, All Service Commands, 17

course, they [the prisoners] had a lot of somatic problems. But, if they spoke about it they endangered their lives. Army psychiatrists persecuted them like cowards or criminals" so mental illness was not spoken of.¹⁰ The destruction of the soldier's group identity and exclusive military frames of reference coupled with an inability to express their fears, "destroyed all remnants of their [the captive] predictable routine and hurled the surrendering troops into a maelstrom of disorder, uncertainty, and disgrace."¹¹ Because of Germany's rigid military training, all traces of self had been erased during basic training; there was no *self*, only the group. In the important book, *Frontsoldaten*, the author, Stephen Fritz, best articulates the indivisible and intentional bond between comrades as created by the German military. "The *Wehrmacht*'s stress on camaraderie was an essential element . . . : nothing less, in fact, than transforming the *Frontgemeinschaft* (front community) into a *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community), an ideal of harmony and social unity that supplied the vital principle around which a new German society was to be organized."¹² This was especially true among volunteer soldiers and those with long service records. Thus, the loss of his group—their family—tore away a soldier's foundations as his only security. The following excerpts from captured German documents illustrate the

January 1945, file 701 Gen. P/W, 5 November 1942-December 1945, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

¹⁰ Edelhoff, Bernt. German Red Cross, Hamburg, Germany to Amy C Hudnall, Boone, NC. 5 September 2000, Email correspondence.

¹¹ Robin. *The Barbed Wire College*, 30.

¹² Fritz. *Frontsoldaten*, 157.

constant battle for control of the German military for the individual soldier's loyalty and will.

The first piece derives from a training document for officers. After focusing on the leader as the "soul of the defense," the author continued, "Even in desperate situations the leader must be able to force weak men to stick it out. He who runs away will be shot without hesitation. He who weakens must be barked at roughly by the leader. Rather beat up a weakling and thus save the situation than lose the fight."¹³ Much of this is typical rhetoric for military training and codes of honor. The last sentence, though, highlights the use of bullying tactics as a means of control. As I will show later, this was the main method of control used by Nazis in the POW camps, a method they learned by example in their own military education. The second quote underscores the threat feared most by politically moderate German POWs. Warned that if they did not publicly support the Nazis while imprisoned, then upon their return to Germany they would be killed or jailed and their families harmed. This radio message to the High Command of the Panzer Army for distribution to all soldiers states that:

Captured British documents show that German prisoners of war have *shamelessly* [author's emphasis] revealed important military secrets, giving very detailed information. This has aided the enemy in his defense and has resulted in the death of loyal soldiers. These *shameless traitors* will be court-martialed for having knowingly committed high treason. . . . It is to be stressed in this

¹³ Allied Force Headquarters, Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, "Chief of the Army Armament and Commander of the Replacement Training Army General Army Office 34 f.10 Inspectorate of Engineers (Intelligence)," Captured Document, Copy of a copy of a copy, trans. by 1st Lt. Keller, Berlin, 23 April 1942, Document Section APO #512, U.S. Army.

connection that *almost all reports on interrogations of German prisoners of war have been captured* [author's emphasis].¹⁴

The document makes three significant points. The use of the word *shameless* or *schamlos* in German evoked an emotional response, not only questioning the soldier's loyalty to his primary group but also giving a sexual undertone to the action.¹⁵ The soldier's ability to function successfully was based upon a supportive bond within his regiment or primary group; disloyalty to, and shame directed at that group dissolved a bond necessary to the soldier's sense of belonging and place. Second, the memo implied that any information passed to the enemy would result in the death of someone within his primary group, other soldiers. Third, the memo warned the soldier, in a manner typical of totalitarian governments, that the German government was aware of everything said and done by the soldier even if he was a captive. He could not escape! Warnings like this, although subtle, would have a considerable impact on any soldier, but particularly a German soldier.

Capture during battle was a shock; but the trauma intensified if the situation forced a prisoner to fear for his life. After World War II, psychiatrists realized that the psychiatric problems suffered by so many POWs and combat veterans were not usually "an inborn 'mental illness' like schizophrenia or manic depressive illness, but were a different form of psychological disease that resulted from too much war

¹⁴ Allied Force Headquarters, Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, "Chief of the Army Armament and Commander of the Replacement Training Army General Army Office 34 f.10 Inspectorate of Engineers (Intelligence)."

¹⁵ In German, the word *Scham* means either shame or private parts. This prefix is used as part of the word for pubic hair, pubic bone, ashamed, labium or shameless,

trauma: 'traumatic war neurosis' or 'post-traumatic stress disorder.'" In the instance of capture, the possibility of acquiring a more complicated mental illness, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was greatly increased.

PTSD, first coined by doctors working with Vietnam veterans, also accurately explained what happened to many soldiers in World War II or any other war for that matter. In fact, the symptoms listed above, and the accompanying diagnosis, like dissociation, are a part of the group of symptoms experienced by someone diagnosed with PTSD.

The essential feature of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stressor involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate. The person's response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror.¹⁶

Perhaps a more easily understood definition of PTSD is that it "derives from the shattering of basic assumptions that victims hold about themselves and the world."¹⁷ There are three basic assumptions of an individual's sense of reality especially affected by PTSD. They are the belief in personal invulnerability, the perception of the world as meaningful, and the perception of oneself as positive (i.e., decent, worthy, acceptable). If one's personal foundation to the world splinters, all day-to-day

just to name a few. By choosing the word *Schamlos*, the author of the memo increased the soldier's potential sense of dishonor further.

¹⁶ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 424.

¹⁷ Lana R. Landrum, "The Role of Dissociation in the Late Life Adjustment of World War II POWs" (Ph.D. diss., University of Louisville, 1991), 12.

functioning becomes overwhelming. A prisoner exhibits PTSD through a variety of symptoms like dissociation, somatic complaints, and/or avoidance. He/She will commonly demonstrate a "diminished responsiveness to the external world, referred to as 'psychic numbing' or 'emotional anesthesia.'" The soldier will re-experience the traumatic event while attempting to avoid any reminder of the event. The person will have "persistent symptoms of increased arousal such as difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, irritability or outbursts of anger, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance, and/or exaggerated startle response." All of the above help to create the next symptom, which is "significant distress in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning." Finally, a diagnosis of PTSD only occurs when the person experiences these symptoms as ongoing for at least a month.¹⁸

The captives are often forced into a situation of helplessness and intense fear at the moment of capture, markers for the onset of PTSD. Franz Fahrmeier, a 21-year-old corporal, was captured near Porto Farino. He spoke of the following incident while imprisoned by both French and American troops. "The mentioned French man called us 'Deutsche Schweinehunde' while he was toying with his pistol [as if he would shoot them]. He also made the German officers run around the camp with a wheelbarrow, driven forward by a drunk Negro soldier with a bayonet on his rifle."¹⁹ In that moment, Fahrmeier was unsure if he would survive.

¹⁸ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 425-9.

¹⁹ Franz Fahrmeier, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 30 August 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm Roll no. 1458, RG 242, National

In addition, the environment for German prisoners captured in Africa was especially severe. Compounding the difficulty of creating a habitable prison in such a climate was the fact that Africa was the front in which the majority of prisoners were captured. The armies' resources were strained to their maximum during the African campaign. The intense heat, and lack of ready supplies, exacerbated the already tenuous atmosphere of war. Often the temporary prison camps were in the open and the soldiers had no way to protect themselves from the heat. Food and water was provided indiscriminately. Moreover, their captors, according to the majority of the interviews, frequently stole the prisoners' possessions. At times, the prisoners experienced inhumane abuse. Mistreatment and harsh conditions upon the initial point of capture played a significant role in the captors' later ability to care for the POWs. If the prisoner arrived in the permanent camp already suffering from PTSD, efforts to convert political ideologies, maintain discipline, minimize physical and mental illness, and divert deaths through suicide or murder were tremendously hindered.

Ernst Alfred Graudenz (who returned to Germany in April 1944 due to illness) provides an example, albeit extreme, of the intense experience of POWs in Africa. He spent eleven months as a prisoner in the United States, most of it in a hospital in New York. Graudenz' report, although accurate in his basic claims, are shaded with extreme paranoia, rage, and fear—emotions that seemed to heighten as his internment lengthened. Throughout his imprisonment, he suffered from an assortment of minor

Archives, Alexandria, VA. The term *Deutsche Schweinehund*, literally German

somatic problems, a common symptom of PTSD. While I describe only his first serious incident with the Allies, in fact he experienced others, among them minor surgery without anesthesia.

On the 27 April 1943, I fell off my motorbike on a night messenger trip. I broke my shoulder and bruised my ribs. Because of these injuries, I was taken to the infirmary in Tunis. I was in this infirmary when all the patients were taken as English POWs on May 8, 1944 [this date is incorrect, it was May, 1943]. Because I was only slightly injured, I was sent to a camp. We were there for three days, and during this time, we did not get food. We ate only what we still had from the infirmary. We were under open sky and slept on the ground. We still had our blankets from the hospital. During the walk to this camp a soldier from an approaching troop, I didn't know whether it was an American or English soldier, took my watch which I had hidden behind my belt. In the camp my ring, my wallet with all its contents, and all my personal belongings were taken. I never got my money back. I didn't have any medals, but some of my comrades were relieved of their medals. Then we were taken to another camp of which I do not know the name. From there, a group of four of us tried to flee. After a few days, I was caught and was given a punishment of 28 days of strict confinement. The punishment was in a space 2 meters by 2 1/2 meters and big wooden pillars that I had to put in the ground myself and then wrap barbed wire around created it. It was outside and I did not get a blanket. During this time, I was only let out twice to go to the bathroom. Otherwise, I had to go to the bathroom at the fence. Because I was not covered, I suffered from the intense heat and sun. At night, I froze because I didn't have a blanket. Because of that, I could hardly sleep. My guards changed every two hours. Depending on whom the guard was, when I asked to go to the bathroom I was often hit in the face, stabbed with a rifle, or kicked with a foot. As food, I got 500 grams of bread daily and 1 liter of water. After about 8 days, another unit replaced the English unit in charge. The sergeant of this new troop gave me a can of fish and little bit of butter secretly. After two or three days, I was taken to another camp. The punishment was not continued at this camp.²⁰

pigdog, is a very serious epithet in Germany.

²⁰ Ernst Alfred Graudenz, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 30 August 1944, *Wehrmachtsrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm Roll no. 1458, RG 242, National Archives, Alexandria, VA. In an earlier interview in his hospital room and not under oath, Graudenz claimed that he had been forced to stay in confinement for the full 28 days. It seems that once under oath he changed his testimony in some parts. All other aspects of the interview have been corroborated and there is no reason to doubt this transcript. Eight days in the blistering sun with minimal water, food, and

Although Graudenz' captors were British, his narrative mirrors that of many of the captured soldiers. These experiences, whether perpetrated by Americans or not, informed the mental stability of the soldiers that ultimately arrived in America. Another prisoner, Corporal Hans Lindan recounted a friend's experience at Oran when a few German soldiers attempted an escape through a sewage pipe. "A guard saw this and called the alarm after he shot onto the pipe. The guard company [American], they stood by and a French officer started shooting into the camp. Then the whole company shot into the camp so that we prisoners had to duck down. One prisoner was shot in the belly and another prisoner, Corporal Rechtfeld, was shot into the calf. A German doctor that wanted to help the wounded was not allowed to do so by the Americans."²¹

Whether the perpetrator was American, French, Polish, or British is irrelevant. Incidents like these, and others even more serious, meant that many soldiers arrived in the United States suffering from mental illness. The reactions to their experiences later manifested themselves in many ways. Sometimes the prisoners became more violent and dogmatic about their country's political ideology, as Graudenz seemed to have done, or withdrawing completely, evidence of somatic problems, severe depression, or suicidal tendencies. These illnesses colored the American camp experience.

protection is significant punishment, especially for committing an act that was considered, universally, the obligation of a soldier during wartime.

²¹ Obergefreiter Hans Lindan, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 30 August 1944, *Wehrmachtrechtsabteilung*, Microfilm roll no. 1458, RG 242. National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

On American Soil

Once in America, the German soldiers experienced additional traumatic events. As mentioned earlier, the lack of trained personnel, positive contact with American civilians, and disparate, sporadic incidents of violence between American guards and German soldiers transpired. In addition, the German prisoners suffered issues common to any state of captivity, like boredom, guilt, and shame. The most serious problem within the camps, threatening any possible stability for the captives, originated with the threat posed by strident Nazi prisoners. American policy unintentionally established a situation in which the control of moderates fell under the direction of the radical fringe. Neglecting to segregate Nazi prisoners from the point of debarkation proved to be the source of the most violent and coercive experiences of German POW's.

Prisoner of war, Georg Gärtner, in his book co-authored by Arnold Krammer, saw the lives of POWs as entailing three basic problems—heat [he was in New Mexico], "a potential brush with the Nazis and unbowed militarists in our midst; and boredom."²² Boredom, which entails not only the lack of things to do, but also the time to obsess about things that were out of a prisoner's control, was the prisoner's constant companion. Boredom provided the environment in which the prisoners could sink into depression or other forms of mental illness. For this reason, both the German and the American governments encouraged the prisoners to work. The previously introduced Graudenz, a 33-year-old soldier from Essen, saw a letter sent to a fellow

²² Gärtner, *Hitler's Last Soldier in America*, 18.

sergeant from Swiss Ambassador Fischer. The ambassador stated that the German government also wanted the POW officers to work, so that they stayed fit in body and *mind*.²³ Another way the men dealt with boredom was to plan escapes. Internationally, the military views escape as honorable and expected of captured soldiers. The German POWs were no exception and spent inordinate amounts of time planning various escapes. Few of the soldiers actually carried them out, for the escapes were always difficult and dangerous, and once successful they had no place to go.²⁴ However, such planning succeeded in filling the time in a manner that seemed honorable.

The soldiers often believed themselves disgraced due to their capture. The image of the staunch, proud Prussian soldier was a stereotype that many German men wished to fulfill. Capture was not part of the picture and anything less was failure. For many soldiers, death would have been a more honorable end. These feelings intensified as the war progressed. The letters from home were full of reports of terrible devastation—their families had little food, homes were destroyed, and relatives killed. Held behind barbed wire fences, fed three solid meals a day, and living without fear of the next bombing attack evoked guilt and shame among the prison population.

²³ Graudenz, interview by the German Legal Division z.b.v. #406, 30 August 1944.

²⁴ Fifty-six German deaths were attributed to escape attempts; a review of the records provides doubt that all the deaths were for the same reasons. A number could have been suicides.

Emotions like shame, guilt, and boredom were natural to the situation, and the Americans, anticipating them, struggled to minimize their effect. What was not expected were the controlling Nazi factions which directed the most damaging experiences within the camps. One sarcastic solution posed by an American officer for discovering the Nazis and anti-Nazis, highlights the tremendous control wielded by Nazis in the camps as well as the impotence felt by the Americans in charge. The officer quipped that: “about the only possible way you can tell a Nazi from an anti-Nazi is to pick out the man being chased by a mob of about fifty people who have murder in their eyes; your lead man is an anti-Nazi and you can pick him out easily.”²⁵

The United States military officials tried to pinpoint the number of militant Nazis among the population but the number varied significantly according to which document one used. The most consistent guess by the army estimated ten to fifteen percent of the enlisted men to be hard-core Nazis.²⁶ This seemed to correlate with the British estimates of ten percent Nazi, ten percent anti-Nazi, and 80 percent categorized in a conformist classification. Arnold Krammer, the leading American scholar in this field, claimed that: “studies confirmed that approximately 40 percent of the prisoners could be considered pro-Nazi.”²⁷ However, in parentheses he then maintains that only eight to ten percent were fanatic. The confusion seems to lie in the

²⁵ Major William F. Matschuliet, “Intelligence Activities at German Prisoner of war Camps” address, 20 July 1944.

²⁶ Gansberg, *Stalag, U.S.A.*, 47.

²⁷ Krammer, *Nazi Prisoners of War*, 149.

terminology. Each country or department had its own method of determining who was a Nazi and who was not—were they the men who believed in Hitler, party members, or anyone who was not an anti-Nazi. Through a study by Henry Dicks, the following groups and distributions were devised. For the British, five groups were established; 11% hard, active Nazis; 25% near Nazis; 40% apolitical, 15% divided, passive anti-Nazis; and 9% active anti-Nazis.²⁸ These numbers do not negate Krammer's 40 percent figure, the figures only clarify; as Krammer explained, the 40 percent combined many men with varying attitudes. Dicks' study also correlated with the sporadic interviews conducted by the American military. The conclusion among experts in America was that the German prisoner showed no signs of political consciousness, and once Germany's defeat was inevitable, no speculation on the possibility of Hitler's overthrow. The political apathy was generally voiced in the same manner. "The prisoner declares that he is a 'little man.' Although he does not like the Nazis, it is his duty to fight and not to seek out the answers to troublesome problems of state."²⁹

Clearly, a small minority actively devised forms of violence. A larger group, comprised of moderate Nazis and those whose political leanings were toward Hitler

²⁸ Dicks, "Personality Traits and National Socialist Ideology," 120. Taken from a sample of *ca* 1,000 German POWs held in Britain during September of 1944 and October 1942-July of 1944. The percentage of Nazis in the United States would have been higher than the British figure, because Britain sent fanatic Nazis to the United States and Canada.

²⁹ Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, "German Military Morale in the Light of Prisoner of War Interrogations," April 1944, File 255 General POW Special Projects Division, 1943-1946, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA. A review of POW interviews for the period December 1943 to January 1944.

and the NSDAP, meted out the punishments. Political apathy promotes a person's feeling of hopelessness. For the German prisoner there seemed to be no moment in which they were in control of themselves. This apathy and resulting hopelessness merely strengthened a soldier's need to cling to the familiar, i.e., the German military structure, hierarchy, and a belief in **their** leaders' invincibility. The studies conformed to sociological and psychological evaluations of group behavior. Most of a population remains apathetic and will act in accordance with the demands of the in-group, justifying those actions in any form necessary.³⁰

The need to remain a member of a primary group was essential to the German soldier's sense of worth, even his very life. Lloyd DeMause, suggests that the ability to dissociate occurs on not only an individual level but also a group level. He argues that German social structures, in particular child-rearing practices, contributed to that society's need and ability to dissociate from one's actions. If a soldier was to remain within the prisoner of war group, he had to detach himself from the realities of the war—that Germany was losing and reports of atrocities were becoming increasingly frequent—and the behavior of the officers within the camps. In fact, DeMause argues, "dissociation into traumatized alters occurs more in groups because one feels more

³⁰ Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: the Origin of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Pr., 1989). The book discusses studies that he conducted on behavioral patterns among populations involved in in-group violence. Of particular focus are early environmental and cultural factors that perpetuate violence and what moves a bystander to change roles—either to perpetrator or rescuer.

helpless and more depersonalized in large groups.”³¹ He proceeds to suggest that “When we think of acting in society . . . one feels more open to attack, to humiliation. . . . Our first line of defense when in a social trance is to cling to a ‘strong’ leader or a ‘strong’ subgroup, merge our alters.”³² At every opportunity, Nazi Germany preyed on this need to assert personal control, even when the soldier was out of the government’s direct influence. The Nazi prisoners of war maintained the fear inherent to German Nazi culture. Further, the inability to function outside of the group created an even more traumatic situation than might otherwise have occurred. To denounce the Nazi group within a camp isolated a soldier from every aspect of camp society. Violence did not always have to occur, shunning by the group is an untenable situation, especially when the isolated person lives in close proximity to his tormenter.

Josef Krumbachner was a divinity student before being drafted into the *Wehrmacht*. He remained, throughout the war, an ardent anti-Nazi. In a recent interview, he expressed his dismay when he discovered upon arriving in the United States as a prisoner of war that the Nazi’s ran “these camps also.” He remembered that most of the fanatical Nazi’s were from “upper levels of society and so deeply believed in the anti-Christian ideology that they had lost any sense of reality.”³³ The majority of the Nazis, by virtue of their age, had little memory of a Germany before

³¹ Lloyd DeMause. “War as Righteous Rape and Purification,” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 27 (4) (Spring 2000): 369.

³² DeMause, “War as Righteous Rape and Purification,” 369.

³³ Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, 149.

the devastated Weimar Republic. What they had lived through was Hitler’s subsequent renewal of their *Heimat*, or homeland. Because of this experience, their loyalty was difficult to unsettle. Of the Nazi camp population, demographics showed that ten to fifteen percent of the soldiers were between the ages of 26 and 35, and most of the men had been captured in Africa.³⁴ As the first contingent of German prisoners, the staunch Nazis gained, early on, a familiarity with the machinations of the prison environment. The *Afrika Korps* men had already acquired the skills necessary to smoothly move through the camp system when the next two large groups of prisoners arrived. This afforded the *Africa Korps*, the largest contingent of Nazis, a decided advantage over the soldiers from the Italian Front and the Normandy Invasion and they utilized this advantage to the fullest.

Although the percentage of the Nazi population was small, the power its nucleus wielded was enormous. The problem was so serious by 1944, that the Army had established Nazi and anti-Nazi camps, conferences were conducted to train camp commanders on how to manage problems that occurred due to the Nazi influence, and the army began to re-interview soldiers to separate radicals. In an address by Major William F. Matschullet given on 20 July 1944, Matschullet acknowledged the lack of protocol for handling this issue. He stated “The problem, although an important one, is one which has not been developed to a great extent. . . . No clear uniform procedure has been set up by which Camp Commanders or those concerned with the

³⁴ United States PMGO, Projects II and III, “Training Anti-Nazi POW as special Police, War Dept. Summary Sheet,” 23 May 1943. File OMGUS AGTS 19-10, RG260, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

Administration of Prisoners of war can be guided.”³⁵ He summarized by reiterating that “We have made some progress . . . but we still have a considerable distance to go. The establishment of fixed policies [e.g., proper segregation policies and/or guard training] by the War Department, and an opportunity to train Intelligence Officers for exclusive intelligence duties at prisoner of war camps would be a big step in the right direction.”³⁶

The following cases offer a better understanding of the insidious nature of Nazi control over camp life. The Nazi ability to corrupt every area of inner camp life made it difficult for prisoners to escape, as well as for the American military to detect it.

Case 1 Corporal Hans Palmiere

Hans Palmiere fought as a corporal in the German army. He was 32 years-old and before the war lived with his wife and three children in the small village of Vergale, Italy, near Bologna. His nationality lists at different times as Italian or Swiss-Italian, although it was finally confirmed that he was born in Switzerland. According to Palmiere, he was drafted into the Italian army but when his Swiss citizenship was established, he was transferred into the German Army. On 12 May 1943, *Obergefreiter* Palmiere, was captured in Tunisia, Africa and sent to a prison camp in the United States. On 12 December 1943, Palmiere was admitted into the hospital at Camp Hulen, Texas for severe lacerations, contusions, and abrasions. According to

³⁵ Matschullet, Address, 20 July 1944.

the prisoner, he was attacked in the barrack by five unknown prisoners “his attackers threw a sheet over his head and threw him on the floor . . . [O]ne of them held him down by the throat while the others kicked and hit him with their fists and with sticks.” Palmiere was subsequently sent to another camp. The request for transfer came, according to the camp commander, because Palmiere was a *moral pervert*. He transferred to Camp Hearne and then Camp Maxey, with the trail of correspondence revealing a fourth request for transfer, but this time the reasons were different. Lt. Col. Hugh L. Carnahan stated in his request that one night Palmiere was picked up outside his quarters by the night patrol. According to Carnahan, “He gave the reason that he was afraid to go to sleep in his barracks.” The only location where he could be protected, according to Carnahan, was the guardhouse. However, Carnahan felt that this solution would be inhumane. He further commented on the claim that had haunted Palmiere since Camp Hulen, that of Palmiere’s moral perversion. “At Camp Hearne, Germans told the camp authorities that he was a moral pervert. Careful observation does not indicate anything of this character. It is thought that the Germans made this charge in the usual Nazi manner so that suspicion would be thrown upon him [Palmiere].” Although the ultimate resolution for Palmiere is unknown, the last discovered correspondence was between Palmiere and the Swiss Embassy, requesting, from Camp Campbell, Kentucky, acknowledgement of his Swiss citizenship and then hopefully his release.³⁷

³⁶ Matschullet, Address, 20 July 1944.

³⁷ See Correspondence from Hans Palmiere, Camp Campbell, KY to The Ambassador of Switzerland, Washington D.C., handwritten translation of letter, 26

Palmiere's case study illustrates the fear that the Nazis could elicit, the difficulties in remaining protected from them, and the Nazis' ability to manipulate the American military's viewpoint about other prisoners. Usually, the Nazi soldiers caused little outward dissension, they maintained order, were neat and hard working. They were not the "monsters under the bed." This outward illusion created difficulties when trying to discover the perpetrators and ringleaders of the subversive group.

Case 2a Capt. Felix Tropschuh

Felix Tropschuh died at Camp Concordia, Kansas, on 18 October 1943 due to strangulation from hanging. Records indicate that his suicide resulted from psychological and physical coercion by other camp prisoners. The German officers acknowledged an awareness of Tropschuh's intention to hang himself and, in fact, the senior German officer and spokesman, Colonel Alfred Köster, encouraged it. Impetus for the suicide derived from harassment and threats by his comrades. He finally came to believe that his only alternative was suicide. Tropschuh, according to the camp's *Lagerführer*, stood trial among his peers and was then sentenced—although no records show specifically the nature of his sentence. The Nazi group convinced Tropschuh that he would be unable to escape his disgrace and because of his alleged

April 1944; Correspondence from Carl B. Byrd, Lt. Colonel Camp Campbell, KY to Provost Marshal General, Washington, D.C., 3 May 1944; "Extract of Clinical Record," Station Hospital Camp Hulen, TX, 28 December 1943; Correspondence from Cecil E. Stiles, Lt. Col., Camp Hearne, TX to Commanding Officer, Hearne, TX, 20 December 1943; and Correspondence from Hugh L. Carnahan, Lt. Col., Camp Maxey, TX to Commanding General, Eighth Service Command, Army Service

betrayal, the safety of his family was threatened—that was, unless he punished himself. To Tropschuh, the only recourse appeared to be suicide. Both this case and the following case were widely publicized due to the suicides of four prisoners within a six-month period at Camp Concordia. Two were ostensibly a result of mental illness and the two cited here were an outcome of fear of their comrades. The publicity resulted in a methodical and thorough investigation. Most of the officers involved in the deaths were transferred to the Nazi Camp at Alva, Oklahoma, but none were accused of any wrongdoing.

Tropschuh's case is the most out of the ordinary. His fellow officers tried, and denounced him as a traitor on 18 October 1943. Earlier in the day, Tropschuh requested an interview with the American in charge, Captain Dietz, stating that he was in fear for his life and requesting to be moved from the compound. Dietz went to the German camp leaders and received "a pledge of honor . . . that no personal harm would befall Captain Tropschuh."³⁸ He deemed this pledge sufficient and left Tropschuh in the compound. During the German *Holy Ghost* trial, Tropschuh unsuccessfully tried to escape by climbing onto a passing guard truck. A scuffle ensued, whereby his insignia tore from his uniform. Colonel Waltenberger, German Senior Officer claimed that "T. expressed that nation is only a word to give the soldier a reasonable excuse for his sacrifice of life. He tried repeatedly to desert and

Forces, Dallas 2, TX, 7 March 1944, File 704 #3 General PW March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

³⁸ Colonel Waltenberger, German Senior Officer, Camp Concordia, KS. to Lt. Col. Vocke, Commanding Officer Camp Concordia, KS, 30 January 1944, File 704 #3 General PW March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

broke thereby his military oath and therefore *can't be considered any more as a German officer* [author's emphasis].³⁹ Tropschuh was then removed to an empty building and two German soldiers were set as guards outside. A rope was left with Tropschuh and he was provided with a suicide note written by German Lt. Richard Roedel. The guards, lieutenants Franz Oswieczenski and Humbert Engels, were instructed not to allow anyone to harm him but not to protect him from harming himself. A few hours later Tropschuh was found dead. The German officers refused to participate in the funeral or allow him to be buried in the prison cemetery next to the only other deceased German soldier.

German Senior Officer Waltenberger, in a letter to the camp administration, defended their actions. He referred to Tropschuh as a deserter, although Waltenberger did not clarify what behavior constituted desertion. Waltenberger also claimed that "he [Tropschuh] tried repeatedly to desert and broke thereby his military oath. . . . He was advised to live in a separate room thus avoiding that somebody might injure him out of general feeling of disapproval . . . hanged himself because he thought that he would be held responsible for his behavior in case of his return to his country. . . . No German officer . . . would have suffered that a fellow-officer deserts and would not be punished by segregating him."⁴⁰ However, in this part of the letter Waltenberger clearly stated what the accepted punishment for a deserter was, ostracizing, not death.

³⁹ Colonel Waltenberger, German Senior Officer, Camp Concordia, KS. to Lt. Col. Vocke, Commanding Officer Camp Concordia, KS, 30 January 1944.

⁴⁰ Colonel Waltenberger, German Senior Officer, Camp Concordia, KS. to Lt. Col. Vocke, Commanding Officer Camp Concordia, KS, 30 January 1944.

In the majority of the beatings and deaths, the Germans rationalized their violent solutions as deserved punishment for traitors, but Waltenberger disclaims death as an appropriate punishment in lieu of shunning. A review of Tropschuh's records indicates no prior attempts to desert or charges of treason. In fact, the only negative actions revealed on Tropschuh's part during the investigation were for having "expressed anti-Nazi sentiments in his diary and had been slow to obey orders of the compound spokesperson [*Lagerführer*]."⁴¹

It was evident, with his request for protection earlier in the day, that, Tropschuh did not wish to take his own life. Nonetheless, his comrades forced him into an untenable position in which, it can be surmised, he believed himself to be left with no choice but suicide. Not only did his fellow officers betray him, but, also his protectors, the Americans.

Case 2b Pvt. Franz Kettner

Franz Kettner, also at Camp Concordia, slashed his wrists three months after the suicide of Tropschuh and while in American protective custody. Private Kettner's investigation also resulted in an official cause of death as suicide, stating that Kettner

⁴¹ May, *Camp Concordia*, 32. Also see Col. E.C. Rose, Deputy Chief of Staff to Major General Allen W. Gullion, The Provost Marshal General, Washington D.C., 8 March 1944, file 704 #3 General PW March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA; Major General Allen W. Gullion. The Provost Marshal General to The Honorable Frank Carlson, Congress of the United States, Washington, D.C., 20 January 1944, file 704 #3 General PW March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

died “by multiple self-inflicted incisions on dorsum of wrists.”⁴² Captured in Tunisia, Franz Kettner arrived at Camp Concordia in August 1943. He was of Austrian birth, living in a part of Austria annexed from Italy after World War I. It can be speculated that his Austrian nationality was at least part of the reason that he came under threats from the Nazis in Camp Concordia. One report of the death, suggested that after the return of Kettner and the other men in his prison company from a branch camp (December 1943), the group ostracized Kettner. Apparently, the other German prisoners refused to include him in the “‘community of fellowship,’ since he was of Austrian birth, spoke Italian fluently, and was probably an anti-Nazi. Threats of bodily harm to himself and his family had been made by fellow prisoners at Peabody side camp.”⁴³ Over a period of months, his fear grew until it reached a peak in January 1944. Placed in protective custody, Kettner waited for his transfer to another camp. But “due to verbal threats of recriminatory action, believed made by Nazi party members and Gestapo agents, against himself and his family,” his fear became so intolerable that even while in the guard house he was unable to feel safe and as a release from that fear he committed suicide on 11 January 1944. Even the final paragraph in the letter from Brigadier General B.M. Bryan to Mr. Bernard Gufler

⁴² Brigadier General B.M. Bryan, Assistant Provost Marshal General to Special Division Department of State, Mr. Bernard Gufler, 25 January 1944, file 704 #3 General PW March 1944-May 1944, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

⁴³ “Investigation Report of Felix Tropschuh and Franz Kettner” to Commanding General, Seventh Service Command, Omaha, NB, 29 January 1944, file 704 #3, General PW, March 1944-May 1944, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

concedes that this appeared to be “a *compulsory suicide* [author’s emphasis] decided on in a kangaroo court trial.”⁴⁴

Following these two suicides, and subsequent newspaper articles, Waltenberger, the German Senior Officer, provided a rebuttal to the negative reports of German atrocities. He delivered to Camp Commander Lt. Col. Vocke a four-page document (also mentioned in Case 2) defending the necessity for the deaths. In the letter, he claimed, first, that all of the prisoners were National Socialists and that “Everybody in this camp [prisoners] has a deep belief in our county [*sic*] and in its chancellor.”⁴⁵ Waltenberger proceeded to explain that he believed that “K. [Kettner] gradually understood that as a deserter he had broken his military oath. He saw no more any way-out [*sic*] . . . K., after having reflected his deed for two weeks, inded [*sic*] his life. . . . He was overwhelmed by his conscience.”⁴⁶

Tropschuh and Kettner were two of the better known suicides blamed on the Nazi German soldiers. They were committed not because of depression, as many others

⁴⁴ Brigadier General B.M. Bryan, Assistant Provost Marshal General to Special Division Department of State, Mr. Bernard Gufler, 25 January 1944.

⁴⁵ May, *Camp Concordia*, 32. See also correspondence from Col. E.C. Rose, Deputy Chief of Staff to Major General Allen W. Gullion, The Provost Marshal General Washington D.C., 8 March 1944; Correspondence from Major General Allen W. Gullion, The Provost Marshal General to The Honorable Frank Carlson, Congress of the United States, Washington, D.C., 20 January 1944.

⁴⁶ Brigadier General B.M. Bryan, Assistant Provost Marshal General to Special Division Department of State, Mr. Bernard Gufler, 25 January 1944. See also Colonel I.B. Summers, Director, Prisoner of War Division to Commanding General, Seventh Service Command, Omaha, NB, 12 January 1944, file 704 #3, General PW March 1944-May 1944, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA; “Investigation Report of Felix Tropschuh and Franz Kettner” to Commanding General, Seventh Service

were, but out of fear of reprisals at the hands of their comrades. It was more common that a soldier received a severe beating as his punishment, but it is difficult to know how many of the other deaths in America occurred this way. Through the negligence and/or conscious policy of their captors, many prisoners felt that every day was spent in active survival from their own countrymen. As Judith Herman reminds us, "Captivity, which brings the victim into prolonged contact with the perpetrator [which in this instance was their comrades], creates a special type of relationship, one of coercive control."⁴⁷ This kind of control can be so invasive that without being the physical agent of the death, agency should still be assigned to the perpetrator that incited it.

In addition, Waltenberg's rebuttal illuminates the typical feelings of German officers; they were completely justified in murdering anyone, if that person threatened their political beliefs. George Orwell described a feature of the totalitarian mind in 1984: "We are not content with negative obedience, nor even with the most abject submission. When you finally surrender to us, it must be of your own free will."⁴⁸ Nothing short of complete emotional allegiance and subservience was acceptable; anything less was treason. Across the country, men like Waltenberg controlled the internal camp structure through the support of American administrators and the coercion of a minority of German prisoners. The Lagerführeren were respected by

Command, Omaha, NB, 29 January 1944, file 704 #3, General PW March 1944-May 1944, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

⁴⁷ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 74-5.

⁴⁸ George Orwell, *1984* (New York: New American Library, 1949), 210.

their American counterparts and feared by their fellow German prisoners. As Brigadier General Paul B. Clemens described Col. Waltenberger, "He is dignified, quiet and reserved."⁴⁹ This image of the good leader is common to this type of personality. Herman describes the perpetrator as "exquisitely sensitive to the realities of power and to social norms."⁵⁰ Waltenberger's normalcy is what stands out. "Only rarely does he get into difficulties with the law; rather, he seeks out situations where his tyrannical behavior will be tolerated, condoned, or admired. His demeanor provides excellent camouflage" and hence deceived many camp commanders into believing that it was wise to turn the daily routine of the prisoners over to Waltenberger and other German senior officers like him.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Brigadier General Paul B. Clemens, Director, Security and Intelligence Division to Major General C.H. Danielson, 4 March 1944, file 704 #3 General PW March 44-May 44, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA. He goes on to concede that aside from Waltenberger's demeanor, he was an ardent Nazi. Waltenberger was not found guilty of the death of Tropschuh because, although he encouraged the death, he was not actively involved in it. Waltenberger was transferred and participated in one of the period's most notorious escapes called the Faustball Tunnel. On his return to Germany Waltenberger became a manager of the Lübeck branch of the Bavaria and St. Pauli Brewery. See John Hammond Moore, *The Faustball Tunnel*.

⁵⁰ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 75.

⁵¹ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 75.

Case 3 Anton Fischnaller

The wounding of Anton Fischnaller seemed straightforward. He deliberately walked into the *forbidden area* and was shot.⁵² During a hot June afternoon in 1943, at Camp Huntsville, Texas, Fischnaller walked four to five feet over the white picket line and thus into the forbidden area. This zone was designated off-limits verbally and in a notice written in German and posted on the German POW bulletin board. A guard in the nearby tower, easily within hearing distance, cautioned Fischnaller to move back. He simply stood there and the guard cautioned him again. As Fischnaller continued to stand in the forbidden area, the guard shot once, wounding him. Officially, the incident lists simply as “wounded by shooting while in the forbidden area.”⁵³

Although it cannot be determined exactly what Fischnaller’s intent was, given the situation, attempted suicide seems likely. There was no indication of coercion and no warning signs that he was contemplating suicide or was severely depressed. Judith Herman explains that there are those who have lost the will to live, as in concentration camp survivors and those who periodically contemplate suicide as an act of retaining some personal control. As she elucidates, “people in captivity live constantly with the fantasy of suicide, and occasional suicide attempts are not

⁵² Another term for the dead zone.

⁵³ “SPMGA (35 & 41) 383.6” to Assistant Chief of Staff. G-1 thru: Deputy Chief of Staff for Service Commands, ASF. 18 November 1943. file 704 #3 General PW, RG 389, National Archives, Alexandria, VA.

inconsistent with a general determination to survive.”⁵⁴ This behavior is the opposite of what one expects; it is a sign of resistance and pride. So, a new look at Fischnaller’s case suggests, given that his relationship with his comrades seemed positive, that he attempted to commit suicide as a defiant act against his American jailers.

After the War

After the war, even prisoners who earlier showed no signs of abnormal stress suffered long-term effects. For many, prison formed their seminal life experience, especially for younger soldiers. Soldier Guy Sajer mused, “There was the war, and I married it because there was nothing else when I reached the age of falling in love.”⁵⁵ Captivity, war, and lack of personal control formed any future responses to life experiences. Later in life, prisoners suffered from a number of symptoms that affected their ability to perform normal daily functions. Psychiatrist Leslie Caplan, a consultant for the Veterans Administration and professor at the University of Minnesota, cites the more common symptoms of long-term effects of “wartime/POW trauma”:

⁵⁴ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 85.

⁵⁵ Guy Sajer, *The Forgotten Soldier* (Washington D.C.: 1967 rpt., 1990), 223.

- Inability to maintain proper weight
- Hypersensitive to danger
- General nervousness
- Excessive sweating
- Visual defects including optic atrophy
- Cardiac and gastro-intestinal problems
- Bone defects
- Sleep disorder
- Sensitivity to noise⁵⁶

Follow-up studies of the psychological effects of being a POW later in life have been conducted in Australia, Canada, and the United States. Random samples of Allied POWs from Japan, Germany, and Korea provide some idea of the long-term effects for anyone held in captivity. Their physical and mental complaints mirror those listed. Gilbert Beebe discovered some startling information in a twenty-year follow-up study of POWs. In particular, the study showed that the POWs' most enduring consequences of imprisonment were in the area of mental health. Beebe concluded that the POW experience caused two types of harm, somatic—which was

⁵⁶Leslie Caplan, quoted in Lewis H. Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, 235. Some of these side effects occur in severe instances of abuse, for example, they are more consistent with prisoners held by the Russians, but many of the American-held prisoners also experienced serious malnutrition, heatstroke, and other life-threatening events prior to their transfer to the United States or while captive in Europe. In addition to these ailments, serious physical problems also can occur like arteriosclerosis, hypertension, neoplasms, allergies, cirrhosis of the liver, peptic

essentially short-term—and psychological—which appeared to be essentially permanent.⁵⁷ “For older war veterans, especially POWs, PTSD has been dismayingly frequent, yet under-diagnosed. For many, the extraordinary persistence and severity of their PTSD symptoms have been at least baffling, and (for most) painful for them and their families.”⁵⁸ Shame, guilt, and surprisingly, the positive care given to them by Americans, have caused many of the German prisoners either to under-report symptoms or to report them much later in life, so late that they did not immediately link symptoms to their captivity.⁵⁹ Other studies showed that veterans experienced “both higher than normal mortality and considerable ongoing physical and psychiatric morbidity.”⁶⁰ A great deal of the research, especially since Vietnam, focuses on the psychological problems of the combat veteran. Though worthwhile, it is now clear that no matter how carefully prisoners are cared for, they are at greater risk of

ulcers and anemia. For more information, refer to the *Ex-POW Bulletin* (Feb. 1996), 2.

⁵⁷ Gilbert W. Beebe, “Follow-up Studies of World War II and Korean War Prisoners: II. Morbidity, Disability, and Maladjustments.” *American Journal of Epidemiology* 101 (1975): 400-22.

⁵⁸ Brian Engdahl and Raina Eberly, “Assessing PTSD among Veterans Exposed to War Trauma 40-50 Years Ago” (White River Junction, NH: National Center for PTSD) [database on-line]; <http://www.ncptsd.org>.

⁵⁹ Schnurr, “The Long-Term Course of PTSD,” 1. Dr. Schnurr provides some interesting statistics about long-term affects in American World War II veteran prisoners. Her data, and those of Zeiss and Dickman, suggests “an overall decline in the number who were seriously troubled from 61 percent in the first year after repatriation to 48 percent in the years 1980-1983.”

⁶⁰ Christopher C. Tennant, M.D., M.P.H., M.R.C.Psych, M.R.A.N.Z.P. and Kerry J. Goulston, M.D., F.R.A.C.P., and Owen F. Dent, M.A., Ph.D., “The Psychological Effects of Being a Prisoner of War: Forty Years After Release,” *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 143:5 (May 1986): 618-20.

psychological illness than soldiers in combat are.⁶¹ For those who “experienced captivity, this extraordinary stress produced after-effects that differed in degree rather than in kind from those suffered by other war victims.”⁶² As one former World War II prisoner said to Lewis Carlson, “If there is such a thing as post traumatic stress disorder, and I think there is, we too were afflicted. We just had to try and deal with it on our own.”⁶³ Prisoners of war narratives and the studies of aging POWs provide particularly compelling reasons for improving the psychiatric health care of all POWs.

⁶¹ Landrum, “The Role of Dissociation in the Late Life Adjustment of World War II POWs.”

⁶² J. Segal, E. Hunter, and Z. Segal quoted in “The Role of Dissociation in the Late Life Adjustment of World War II POWs,” Lana R. Landrum. Major William F Matschuliet. “Intelligence Activities at German Prisoner of War Camps-Segregation and Related Problems.”

⁶³ Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, 250.

Chapter 5

Conclusions-Policy Change

Enumeration of Specific Policy Changes

In no instance is it appropriate to compare POW experiences, neither Russian to American to German to Japanese. They all relate very different narratives. However, one can ask what changes in American policy will establish a more humane environment for future prisoner of war camps? I believe there are avenues of improvement, necessary avenues if America wishes to continue viewing itself as a leader in the United Nations and the global movement toward human rights.

First, as Matschuliet elucidated, the lack of thoughtful, American military planning was immediately apparent by the manner of delegation for prisoner responsibility. Arnold Krammer concurred, pointing out that this:

was reflected at the onset by the government's inefficient division of responsibility: division between the War Department, charged with guarding, feeding, and housing the prisoners, and the State Department, charged with negotiations for their repatriation via neutral actions. The War Department, in turn, reassigned some responsibilities to the Army Service Forces, headed by Gen. Somervell, which in turn, controlled the Office of the Provost Marshal General, under Maj. Gen. Allen Gullion.¹

A well-structured chain of authority is essential to the success of any large organization. Because systems management is always under scrutiny by the military

¹ Krammer, “German Prisoners of War in the United States,” 68-73.

administration and receives constant attention and refinement, it will not receive attention here. However, there are other, less obvious problems to address such as:

- Maintaining primary control of the camp by the captors, not the captives
- Screening guards for mental health problems, racial or cultural biases, and other personal issues that might impede their ability to objectively evaluate events within the camps.
- A thorough training program for guards which at a minimum, frames the job as one in which the guards are responsible for people who are not criminals. The guards are not fighting the enemy; they are not guarding men hardened to violence. The camp guards are monitoring prisoners who are trying to maintain a sense of belonging and security in a very insecure environment. Training should include a background in conflict resolution, cross-cultural differences, basic language skills, as well as rudimentary training in group and individual behavior.
- Prisoners should be provided with the opportunity to examine and perhaps to participate in American life (for example, having an authorized meal with the farmers they worked for), allowing them the occasion to minimize a source of war—a sense of the Other as the enemy.

As Matschullet argued fifty-nine years ago, the most overlooked area of policy was segregation; it should have been implemented before the prisoners' arrival. Somehow, internal World War II prisoner of war violence was never anticipated by the military. Why did the commanders not immediately isolate the Nazi indoctrinated prisoners from the average soldier? Why did the PMGO not utilize available knowledge gleaned from

the British experience? As I have shown, Nazis were a minority among the captives; hence, isolating them from the other Germans was feasible. Arthur L. Smith, Jr. points out that in addition to other reasons, segregation was tolerated because control of the prisoners by the Nazis eased the camp commanders' responsibilities. However, as violence heightened, this path proved to be untenable.

Major William F. Matschullet confirmed the Army's failure to segregate the incoming prisoners adequately. He called for the development of a clear procedure and recommended ways to accomplish the segregation. He stated in his address, that the problem of intelligence activities and segregation "is one, which has not been developed to a great extent. . . . No clear uniform procedure has been set up by which Camp Commanders or those concerned with the administration of prisoners of war can be guided."² He suggested solutions that are internationally applicable today and exhibited an insight into the situation that has yet to be articulated in official policy. In particular, Matschullet called for the development of a standing procedure for segregation; one that was in place prior to the arrival of prisoners and implemented before the prisoners had an opportunity, due to the confusion and anxiety of a new life, to become firmly entrenched in their chosen ideologies and political persuasion. Thus, segregation must begin upon embarkment, that is, while prisoners are still unsure of their future.

Removal of fascist prisoners from the general population and a camp administration based on democratic ideals would have provided a setting for fewer camp conflicts. In addition, an early awareness of the segregation problem would have increased the

² Matschullet, "Intelligence Activities at German Prisoner of War Camps."

protecting soldiers' ability to care for the prisoner, and yes, also to influence ideologies. According to trauma specialist Judith Herman, the healing of traumatic events like captivity and war requires a supportive social context. This social context is "created by a political movement that gives voice to the disempowered."³ Partitioning offers a forum for the disempowered which both furthers the United States' political agenda and the well being of prisoners.

A facilitator to successful segregation and the management of a supportive and peaceful camp environment is the training of guards/soldiers in cross-cultural differences. Matschullet made this suggestion, as he recognized that German prisoners lived with cultural mores different from Americans. Individuals do not divide themselves along national lines but use other more subtle aspects of the culture to effect the segregation. America has a poor record of protecting its citizens and/or prisoners from the effects of internal pressure. It is imperative that policy begin to remedy that record, differentiating and recognizing diversity in prisoners by respecting their need to be either among their own nationality or among those of similar political or cultural persuasion. With this understanding, prisoners should be segregated, for example, according to differing ideologies, religions, cultures, or ethnicities. If the goal of war is to promote peace, an odd but longstanding policy, then soldier and guard education must entail programs that reduce the duality of *in* and *out* groups; when prisoners are considered the Other, it is easy to treat them indifferently. Often, these differences are the starting point for violent interchanges between guard and prisoner.

³ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 13.

The implications of cultural misunderstandings are broad, and apply not only to an ability to manage a peaceful camp, but many other aspects of prisoner care. Attention to cultural differences is a natural segue into the final, most subtle, and most significant policy change. Without the context of specific cultural difference, a guard cannot anticipate a myriad of potential problems such as suicide, escape, or prisoner-on-prisoner violence. These problems, if predicted and redirected before they occur, reduce the probability of the onset of mental illness like PTSD. The Germans, for example, had a far more stoic attitude about mental health issues. Anticipating mental health issues from an American frame of reference implied, in the case of German prisoners, that there were very few instances of mental illness. American doctors looked for the wrong symptoms; they expected the German soldiers to present their symptoms more directly. However, German culture had inculcated the belief that a *healthy German never experienced psychiatric problems*; when, in fact, this "insight" has proven untrue. Approaching the situation with some cultural awareness and a proactive, educated stance minimizes the need for more guard personnel, medical personnel, and other varying expenses.

America succeeded in protecting hundreds of thousands of foreign prisoners during World War II, but that success does not preclude that, if greater attention had been paid to the above-mentioned details, the prisoners' mental and physical health—as well as the reputation of the United States and democratic ideals—would have been greatly enhanced.

A Present Day, Global Perspective of Prisoner Care and its Implications
for Long-Term Peace

Overall, World War II veterans returned to families and neighbors who loved and supported them. Great Britain, France, Italy, and America joyfully welcomed the return of their men. So, what became of the German prisoners of war? As shown, most of the soldiers were forced to work outside of Germany until 1948, *three years* after V-E day. They lost the war and, along with other German citizens, shouldered the blame of six million deaths via the Holocaust. Their nation, the average soldiers' most poignant reason for fighting the war, was split, dividing families and friends. Prisoners of war suffered guilt and shame for capture, for being part of the Nazi regime, and for being unavailable to their families in a wasteland. Only now, more than fifty years later, are some of the soldiers beginning to talk about their haunting experiences.

The culture of the camp's inner societies, Germans against Germans, is different from the narratives heard immediately after the war. This culture was life-threatening and many veterans today still live with the aftermath. Compounding the injury, the American policy to "sell" German prisoners to other Allies as a means of rebuilding their countries' infrastructures was made with no concern for the breach of Geneva Convention law or the prisoners' care. America transferred 674,000 soldiers to other countries for reconstruction work instead of repatriating them, as agreed, and in direct contradiction to the Geneva Convention. Thus, its leaders perpetuated one more betrayal of those it claimed to protect, only deepening the wounds inflicted by war and captivity. The recognition, and subsequent recording, of these soldiers' experiences provide America a

more complex historical understanding of the period, and further guidelines for future POW treatment on a global basis.

Matschullet was not interested in the future: he hoped to improve the situation "right then" for American guards and German prisoners. At the time, he was not concerned about universal human law but only a specific, narrow context. However, unlike his attempt to understand the immediate, one cannot come to understand American policy nor make meaningful suggestions about future prison camps without understanding its history.

Although the United Nations altered the Convention to correct flaws in the 1929 version, and has since added copious addenda and written conventions, the question remains whether the Treaty provides any real protection. Have the United States and the member states of the United Nations the power to demand compliance? The establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998 (called the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court), is the latest attempt to force countries into compliance of international humanitarian law, but it is yet to be fully tested. What it has accomplished so far is to establish the idea that war crimes, like Waltenberger's, can carry with them individual guilt. The most recent conviction by the Rwanda International War Crimes Tribunal involved the trial of the Belgian host of African radio, Georges Ruggiu. Ruggiu was sentenced to 12 years, beginning immediately, for crimes of genocide. He was found guilty of inciting Hutus to kill Tutsis as well as releasing information to Hutus as to the location of Tutsis seeking asylum before the 1994 massacres in Rwanda. The fact that Ruggiu was sentenced and imprisoned infers the

possibility of success, especially as he was the only non-Rwandan charged with genocide crimes.⁴ In addition, the earlier conviction of Croatian General Tjhomir Blaskic for crimes against humanity, would lead one to be optimistic that this aspect of human rights advocacy and the authority of the United Nations to enforce these rights may prove successful.⁵

Today's notion of individual guilt is very different from earlier conceptions. The Nuremberg Trials pronounced individual culpability, but the Nazi abuses were considered an anomaly. Attention was not given to the ongoing possibility of genocidal crimes, and hence, concepts and referents were established within that frame. If one looks at conflicts since World War II, it becomes clear that this was not the case. Thirty years later, the United States is still actively mourning the variety of losses created by the Vietnam Conflict. "The moral legitimacy of the antiwar movement and the national experience of defeat [in the United States] in a discredited war [Vietnam War] had made it possible to recognize psychological trauma as a lasting and inevitable legacy of war."⁶ More recently, in Rwanda, the United Nations peacekeeping units helplessly stood by (because of the legal restrictions imposed by the UN and the Geneva Convention) and

⁴ "Rwanda Journalist Jailed over Genocide," in *The Age.Com.Au* [online database]. Australia: *The Age Newspaper*, 3 June 2000. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/20000603/A34905-2000Jun2.html>.

⁵ "War Crimes Tribunal Sentences Croatian General to 45 Years," *New York Times*, 4 March 2000, A7.

⁶ Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, 27.

watched the Tutsi's brutal attempts to eliminate another ethnic group.⁷ On 5 February 2000, Russian soldiers executed at least sixty civilians in a suburb of Grozny. The soldiers claimed that they were looking for Chechen rebels. Convention law demanding that prisoners be "humanely treated and protected" appeared to have been forgotten on that day.⁸ The consequences for Convention noncompliance are often considered ineffective, such as when the American, World War II administration subverted Geneva Convention definitions to establish propaganda programs disguised as reeducation, drawing into question its ability to influence governmental behavior.

Perhaps a portion of the Convention's impotence can be attributed to the changing nature of war. Neither war nor genocide, as defined by the Geneva Convention, is occurring, or has occurred, in Chechnya, Croatia, Serbia, Colombia, Rwanda, and East Timor. How does one define prisoners of war when there is no admission of war? What terms applies to the deaths of prisoners in these conflicts—murder, accidental death, or intentional death in the line of duty? Because of current conceptualizations of war and genocide, humanitarian principle, and the rights of nation-states, many of the laws that might protect prisoners, victims of forced displacement, and the use of child soldiers—to name only a few abuses—cannot be legally applied. Recently released Chechen prisoners report unabated brutality and torture. The largest and most lethal conflict in 1999, between Ethiopia and Eritrea, warranted a mere glance by international concerns.

⁷ Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 1999).

⁸ "February 5: A Day of Slaughter in Novye Aldi," in Human Rights Watch [online]. Available from http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/rissoa_chechnya3/Chech006.htm

I argue that the genocide in Rwanda, the war in Chechnya or Colombia, the amputations in Somalia, and the concentration/prisoner camps in Bosnia are intrinsically linked—both to one another and to World War II policy. The gray area between wartime law and genocide (in which the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide is applied) allows for uncontrolled abuses. One must consider a broader range of definitions.

However, the reality is that decisions by UN members and other nations have always been cloaked behind the cover of economic needs. This is not to say that economics is the driving force behind conflict. It is merely to claim that economics or political doctrine in Western society, is an *acceptable* basis for war, whereas *distrust* of another group is not. Moral and economic imperatives are, more often than not, treated as if they are mutually exclusive. “Civil and political rights on the one hand and economic and social rights on the other were regarded not as two sides of the same coin but as competing visions for the world’s future.”⁹ Resolution of these conflicting goals *must* be achieved before *any* international law can ensure the safety of victims of war, in particular prisoners of war and civilians. “To act from the past in the present we have to form an idea, a vision, if you wish, an ideal of a future in which mass murder [in any form, whether it be wartime deaths or genocide] has been halted.”¹⁰

⁹ United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), iii.

¹⁰ Charles B. Strozier and Michael Flynn, eds., *Genocide, War, and Human Survival* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996), 61.

As implicit in Matschullet’s observations, the United States must clearly define a philosophy by which to manage future POW camps, incorporating non-traditional and non-military agendas. The World War II policy was based on the decision to establish healthy and generous camps for three primary reasons: To encourage other Germans to surrender and end the war more quickly; in the hope that American soldiers would receive reciprocal care; and finally, because it was politically advantageous to promote democratic values and present itself as a humanitarian leader. These reasons, listed in order of priority, are still valid; perhaps now, the order has changed, placing the drive for democratic, humanitarian ideals first. This has become increasingly necessary with America’s support of globalism. Matschullet was moving in a direction that viewed solutions from a global perspective, not merely in *our backyard*. If America chooses to continue claiming humanitarianism and world peace as national, motivating goals, and if it is to remain involved in the lives and politics of people around the world, then it must treat all people under its jurisdiction with equal concern and care, including prisoners of war.

Postscript

New studies conducted by respected scientists and humanitarians like Robert Jay Lifton, Bessel van der Kolke, Rachel Yehuda, and Yael Danieli have incontrovertibly shown that mental illness derived from abuse, PTSD, and other forms of acquired mental illness extend multigenerationally. Some of the studies suggest genetic transmission such as decreased levels of serotonin; other studies clearly explain how the illnesses transfer

behaviorally.¹¹ While collecting interviews for his book, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, Lewis Carlson came face-to-face with the multigenerational and lasting effects of captivity. Carlson recounted how he met one former World War II prisoner over Christmas who confessed, "Over the last couple of years I have attempted to commit suicide during the holidays." Another one of his interviewees admitted to attempting to murder his son during an uncontrollable rage.¹² These responses to war dramatically influence the behavior of those around the original victims. The victims provide a violent and negative role model to their children and family members. Lifton described this process of moving from one generation to the next, from victim/captive to survivor as *formulation*. "There is powerful evidence . . . that the offspring of survivors must do the same, except in their case the meaning sought has to do with their own relationship to an event that took place before they were born. Their parents' experiences loom as both dreadful and mysterious, almost unknowable."¹³ The psychological damage does not end with one generation; those that follow live in the fear and violence of their predecessors.¹⁴ Given the knowledge that violent experiences can result in multi-generational legacies, it becomes obvious that without a conscious effort to heal those wounded in war, society's ability and desire to end violence will be fruitless. The psychological damage is so great and far-reaching, that it will always influence one

¹¹ Yael Danieli, ed., *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma* (New York: Plenum Press, 1998).

¹² Carlson, *We Were Each Other's Prisoners*, xii.

¹³ Danieli, *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies*, xiii.

¹⁴ Danieli, *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies*, xiii.

society's capacity to interact successfully and peacefully with other societies, thereby making the care of POWs not just one nation's problem, but that of all groups.

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APPENDIX A

Personal Interview with Fred Wiley

Personal Interview with Fred Wiley

Marianna, Florida

Telephone, 18 March 1998, 12:30 p.m.

Mr. Wiley is a white male, about 75 years old. He was born and raised in Marianna and flew for the Air Force during WWII. He had limited information about the POW camp in Marianna during the war. While training in the North before transferring overseas, he encountered prisoners. On temporary leave in 1944, he visited the camp in Marianna.

I stopped by the camp because I thought I would talk to the prisoners; let them know that things weren't so bad over there in Europe. You see I had just come back from East Europe. But those guards, they looked at my ID and wouldn't let me on the camp. They called a lieutenant over and he said I had no business there. The only thing the prisoners did was gathering and harvesting crops. Every morning the farmers would come to the camp and pick up six or seven prisoners. They had big PW letters on their shirts and they had to wear armbands. The soldiers would get all the prisoners numbers and send them off. One guard would go with them and they usually didn't carry guns. Anyway, about my visit, you know the prisoners didn't get much mail. It wasn't our fault, the Germans in Germany were censoring the mail sent overseas. I heard they burned a lot of it, so the prisoners didn't hear much from home. This camp was a branch camp from Fort Rucker, Alabama. A friend of mine, Puss Brown, was the International Tractor Dealer and a farmer. People farmed cotton and peanuts then, and these new crops

like soybeans. Anyway, he used a lot of the prisoners. He told a story about how at the end of the day one day he gave all the prisoners a good stiff drink. The next day all the prisoners wanted to work for him. Puss had to sign a special contract with the camp director that he wouldn't give them anymore alcohol before he could take anymore prisoners. Puss also told a story about how the Germans didn't know what to do with sugar cane. He gave them each a piece, and they didn't know that you had to peel it and chew up the pulp but not swallow it. A bunch of them got choked but after they learned how to eat it they were always happy to get some.

The camp was on the Hagg Showground, ten acres, near the train station and two blocks from the courthouse. Old mister Hagg died and the circus went bankrupt. The bank foreclosed on the land and then they rented it to the Army. The army used mostly the building that had been set up for the circus, there was a big building for repairs and maintenance that they used and little buildings that the animals had stayed in and then they added tents for the prisoners.

People in town didn't really care a whole lot about the camp. You know those Germans, they are really hard workers and they couldn't get any workers to work the crops. There was a 40 percent drop, I would say, in manpower. People were either in the Army or they were commuting to the bases in Panama City or Fort Rucker, in Alabama. They could make a whole lot more money there. So people were happy about the camp being there.

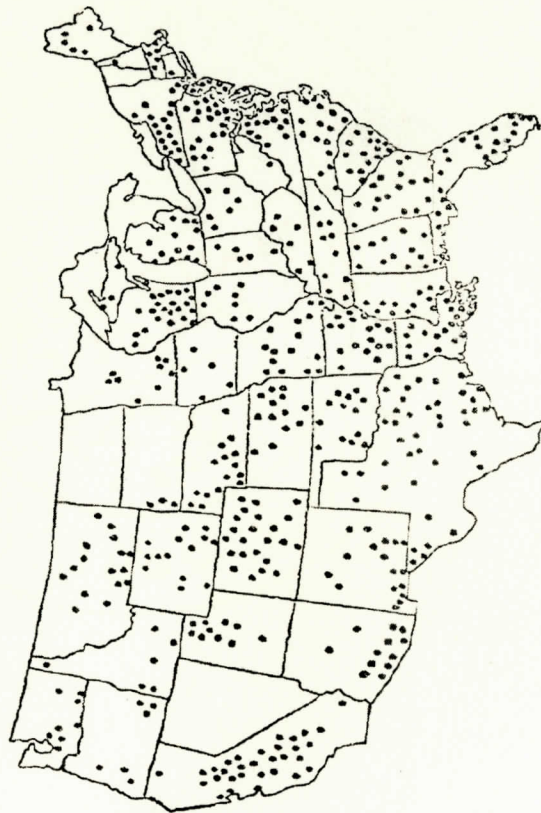
I remember in the North, when I was there, there were problems with the prisoners. You see the prisoners were allowed to buy cigarettes, Lucky Strikes, Camels, and

Chesterfields, cheaper than the regular people. We had to pay usually twenty cents a pack for the cigarettes if we could get them. But the prisoners were supposed to get the normal price, not the rationed price. They only paid five cents a pack. The Germans were proud of their having cigarettes, so when they would ride through town in the big GI transport trucks, they would roll up the cloth all the way around the truck. When they were sure there were lots of civilians watching them they would all tap down their cigarette packs and begin to smoke. It really made everybody mad and started a few small riots 'cause we couldn't get those cigarettes as cheap.

They were all healthy and well cared for; you know we had to follow the Geneva Convention. People didn't look down on the prisoners, they were really hard workers. As far as I know, nobody ever had any trouble with them. When I returned in July of 1945, the camp was closed.

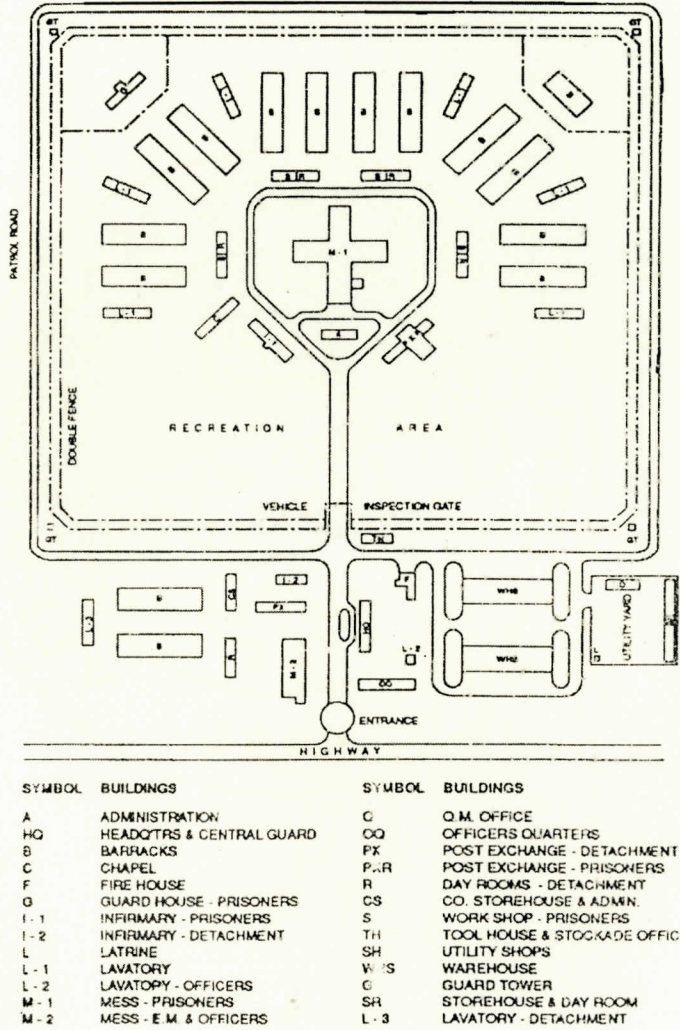
APPENDIX B
The Location of Main Camps in the United States

APPENDIX B
Location of the Main Camps in the United States



APPENDIX C
Layout of Typical POW Camp in the United States

APPENDIX C
Layout of Typical POW Camp in the United States



APPENDIX D
Analysis of the Distribution of American Prisoners of War by Work Type and Region as
of June 1, 1945

APPENDIX D

Analysis of the Distribution of American Prisoners of War by Work Type and Region as of 1 June 1945*

STATE	TOTAL # OF CAMPS	TOTAL # OF PRISONERS	FORMS OF LABOR FOOD	FORMS OF LABOR			
				FARMING	FORESTRY	FOR MILITARY	MISC
ALASKA							
ARIZONA	16	16,594		2,542		14,052	
CALIFORNIA	40	18,180		7,471		9,938	771
COLORADO	31	13,972		6,961	310	6,701	
HAWAII							
IDAHO	8	3,374		1,775		1,599	
MONTANA							
NEVADA							
NEW MEXICO	17	4,684		22,320		2,364	
OREGON	3	2,055		750		1,305	
TEXAS	53	42,341	362	5,059	4,824	28,226	3,870
UTAH	9	6,576	1,590	297		4,389	
WASHINGTON	6	6,053		590		5,463	
WYOMING	7	3,342		757	250	2,335	
TOTAL	190	117,171	1,952	28,522	5,384	76,672	4,641

STATE	TOTAL # OF CAMPS	TOTAL # OF PRISONERS	FORMS OF LABOR FOOD	FORMS OF LABOR			
				FARMING	FORESTRY	FOR MILITARY	MISC
CONNECTICUT	1	254				254	
DELAWARE	9	3,491	748	566		1,070	1,107
MAINE	4	4,729		1,967	1,966	398	398
MASSACHUSETTS	4	6,717				4,869	1,848
NEW HAMPSHIRE	1	244			244		
RHODE ISLAND	1	182				182	
VERMONT							
TOTAL	20	15,617	748	2,533	2,210	6,773	3,353

STATE	TOTAL # OF CAMPS	TOTAL # OF PRISONERS	FORMS OF LABOR FOOD	FORMS OF LABOR			
				FARMING	FORESTRY	FOR MILITARY	MISC
ALABAMA	13	30,817		5,661	6,379	18,776	
ARKANSAS	31	5,400		3,066	249	2,085	
FLORIDA	19	6,782	887	560	451	4,765	119
GEORGIA	23	11,381	248	2,643	1,946	5,517	1,027
KENTUCKY	6	6,276				6,276	
LOUISIANA	31	16,570	1,422	6,172	1,253	7,623	100
MISSISSIPPI	17	16,064		3,147	1,958	10,959	
NORTH CAROLINA	13	9,502		1,483	2,484	5,035	502
SOUTH CAROLINA	20	8,258		1,357	3,867	3,034	
TENNESSEE	7	22,868		376	465	22,027	
TOTAL	180	133,918	2,557	24,465	19,051	86,097	1,748

STATE	TOTAL # OF CAMPS	TOTAL # OF PRISONERS	FORMS OF LABOR FOOD	FORMS OF LABOR			
				FARMING	FORESTRY	FOR MILITARY	MISC
VIRGINIA	23	17,136	589	872	4,850	9,878	1,003
MARYLAND	15	9,492	2619	1,059	1,185	3,120	1,509
NEW JERSEY	5	4,723	2012			2,325	386
NEW YORK	18	7,097	2829	433	290	3,429	116
PENNSYLVANIA	15	4,882	530	661	1,063	1,458	1,114
WEST VIRGINIA	3	973			41	932	
TOTAL	79	44,303	8579	3025	7429	21,142	4,128

*These figures were analyzed from data provided by the United States Army in the document "Prisoner of War Camps, by Location and Principal." The breakdown by work type is only an approximation as the prisoners shifted between kinds of work and the numbers were listed in combinations for some camps. For example, a camp in Soledad, CA listed principal work types as "agriculture" and "other" between a population of 469. For this analysis, population's like Soledad's were divided evenly between the areas for an average of workers by type.

APPENDIX E
Certification of Need for Prisoner of War Labor

APPENDIX E
Certification of Need for Prisoner of War Labor

31 May 45 TM 19-500

CERTIFICATION OF NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

CERTIFICATION OF NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

To: Commanding General,
Service Command

Attention: _____

The _____ certifies that:

1. The employer to whom this certificate is issued and whose name, address and place of business are listed below, has need for the labor herein-after described for essential work at his establishment or farm.

a. Name of employer _____

b. Address of employer _____

c. Type of business _____

d. Location of work (if not at above address) _____

e. Labor needed: From _____ (date) to _____ (date)

For period of approximately _____ days - months

f. Detail of type of work, number of prisoners, and wage rates:

Number needed	Occ. Title and Code for Industry or Nature of Work Done for Agric.	Man Days or Hours Required	Unit of Work	Prevailing wage per unit

g. If at piece rate, average civilian labor will complete _____ units per day.

h. The employer usually furnished the following services free of charge to civilian labor: *

i. The employer _____ supply transportation to and from the prisoner-of-war enclosure.

j. The employer _____ provide the noonday meal.

k. Length of work day in this locality for this type of work is customarily _____ hours.

*Enter, if appropriate, one or more of the following: transportation to and from work; noon meal; housing accommodations.

APPENDIX F
Prisoner of War Labor Certification Form

PRISONER OF WAR CIRCULAR
 No. 30

WAR DEPARTMENT,
 Washington 25, D. C., 24 May 1944.

PRISONER OF WAR LABOR CERTIFICATION FORM

1. The unnumbered form, "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War," attached as Enclosure 2 to letter from The Adjutant General (AG 383.6 (23 Aug 43)01-.q-A-lei), 24 August 1943, subject, Employment of prisoners of war off reservations, addressed to Commanding Generals, First to Tenth Service Commands, will not be accepted after 1 July 1944.

2. A new form entitled "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War," a copy of which is attached, has been adopted by the War Manpower Commission (n.s.) form number assigned), and by the War Food Administration (Extension Service, The Department of Agriculture) as Form No. EFL-19. This form will be accepted by all prisoner of war camp commanders and contracting officers, effective immediately.

3. Paragraph 2c, letter from The Adjutant General (AG 383-ro (23 Aug 43) OB-S-A-kl), 24 August 1943, subject, Employment of prisoners of war off reservations, refers to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the certification. This reference is amended to read paragraphs 2 and 3 of the revised certification. Other References to specific paragraphs of the former certification will be considered as applicable although the monitoring is different.

(A.r., 38'-x.i5 (19 'lay 44).

By order of the Secretary of War:

G. C. MARSTIAL,
 Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL: I
 ROBERT H. DUNLOP,
 Brigadier General,
 Acting The Adjutant General.

1 Incl I
 Certification.ii of Need for Employment of Prisoner of War (Form)

APPENDIX F
Prisoner of War Labor Certification Form

VITA

Amy C. Hudnall was born in Tallahassee, Florida. She attended elementary school, high school, and college in there. In 1998, after an extended time in the work force, she received her Bachelor of Arts summa cum laude, in German Studies and History at Appalachian State University, spending half a year of her study in Germany. Her interest lies in a historical understanding of modern-day, violent conflict and its impact on mental health. She will continue to work in the area of human rights.

The author is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, Alpha Chi, and Alpha Epsilon Lambda honor societies. She is listed in *The National Dean's List*. She currently lives in Boone, NC with her daughter and is the book review editor for the *National Women's Studies Association Journal*.