

ARMY TALKS



***These Guys
fought 'em!***

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EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES ARMY

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

RPF/JKM/obe

AG 353 MGC

29 August, 1943

SUBJECT: Education in Military and Current Affairs

TO: Commanding General, V Corps

1. In the training of the American soldier the purely military and technical aspects are usually stressed. It is essential, however, that in addition, the soldier be mentally prepared for battle. He must know and understand the vital necessity for the successful conclusion of the war.

2. To assist in accomplishing this end, it is desired that you establish within the elements of your command a weekly Education Program to instill in all military personnel the following:

- a. Confidence in the command.
- b. Pride in service and a sense of personal participation.
- c. Knowledge of the causes and progress of the war.
- d. A better understanding of our allies.
- e. An interest in current events and their relation to the war and the establishment of the peace.

3. To further these ends, each separate unit commander will arrange to have matters of current interest as designated in paragraph 2c, d and e above, and matters of leadership and confidence in the command as indicated in paragraph 2a and b above, discussed periodically within his command. Such discussion should be by company commanders personally or by selected Officers and NCO's from the command as deemed best by the unit commander. It is desired to make it clear that the proper presentation of this material is a command function, and should be handled as such. You are authorized to devote one (1) hour of training time per week to this program.

4. The Special Service Section, SOS, ETOUSA, will prepare and distribute the material for such weekly discussions, maintaining in their discretion a reasonable balance between the significance and progress of military events and current events, relations with our allies, etc. This material will be dated and delivered sufficiently in advance for consideration by the staffs concerned at least two days before ultimate use.

5. Direct communication between your headquarters and Special Service Section, SOS, ETOUSA, is authorized in conducting this program.

6. In order to make the plan effective it will be necessary to provide and train an Education Officer of suitable rank in your headquarters, and in each of your subordinate headquarters down to and including divisions.

By command of Lieutenant General DEVERS:

RICHARD P. FISK,
Lt. Colonel, A.G.D.,
Assistant Adjutant General.

It is suggested that the discussion leader call this matter to the attention of his Commanding Officer.

ARMY TALKS

EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

These Guys fought 'em!

RECENTLY an officer of the War Department visited one of the veteran divisions of the United States Army. His mission was to talk to enlisted men who had fought through the invasions of North Africa and Sicily, and who had been in combat against German troops throughout the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns. To start with, he asked them this question :

“ If you could have a half hour talk with a kid brother of yours who had never been in a scrap with the Jerries, and who was sweating out the forthcoming fracas, what would you tell him ? ”

In all, he talked with about 100 men chosen at random on the drill fields, in barracks and dayrooms. They were from infantry, artillery, M.P., ordnance, engineers, medical and quartermaster outfits. Some of them had Purple Hearts, Silver Stars and other decorations. Some of them had been captured by the Germans in Tunisia, and then freed when the Germans gave up. All in all, they added up to a pretty good cross-section, and, furthermore, all of these men had been in combat. What they said is printed here, just as they said it.

Jerry Is A Disciplined, Well-Trained Soldier

Sgt. (Headquarters Company) : “ There is no denying that Jerry is a good soldier. I'd say his outstanding quality is discipline. He does exactly what he's told. I told a Jerry prisoner to stand at attention, and then I was called away. When I got back, about two hours later, the son of a gun was still standing at attention. An American soldier would probably have gone off and smoked a cigarette the minute my back was turned. Personally, that's why I think our boys have Jerry's number. A GI can think pretty good for himself ! ”

Pvt. (Military Police) : “ The Jerry obeys orders. It was easy to handle them as prisoners. If you told their non-coms chow would be served at 5 o'clock, the men were there on time, all lined up, without any pushing or shoving. The Italians were hard to deal with—always pushing and crowding around and yelling. But the Jerry never forgot his discipline. It's ingrained in him, and makes him a damned good fighting man. ”

Sgt. (Infantry) : “ The German soldier is just about tops. For example, near the end of the fight at Troina in Sicily, some of them were told to hold a line with only NCO's to run the show. They were practically suicide

squads—they held that line until they were out of supplies. They have initiative, too, it's a lot of hooey to say they haven't. They shift their positions well, and handle defense situations skillfully."

S/Sgt. (Ordnance) : "Jerry is stingy. When he makes a rout retreat he leaves less equipment lying around than we do when we pull out of a bivouac at maneuvers."

Sgt. (Divisional Headquarters Company) : "What the German soldier has mostly is a lot of training. I questioned dozens of them in Tunisia, and found plenty who had been training as soldiers since they were four or five

Fanatical and furious fighters, filled with Hitler hysteria, a far-from-beaten German army stands guarding the slave continent of Europe—waiting for the Allies to invade.

Tough as they are in combat, however, Jerry soldiers have been forced to bow before the might of Allied assaults. They can be killed just like anybody else. Thousands of them have been taken prisoner.

This issue of ARMY TALKS was written by an American officer who visited one of the veteran divisions of the United States Army and talked to men who had been all through the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns. They described how Jerry fights, what makes him dangerous and what makes him weak, and told how he acts when he is captured.

Compiled and edited, the quotations from these veteran Yanks give the composite picture of what you'll meet across the Channel.

years old. First, they were in the Nazi Children's Organizations. Then they went into the Hitler Youth Club. When they were old enough they joined a labor battalion. Some of them were Nazi Party members, and had extra training as Storm Troopers. Then the Army gave them the up-to-date finishing touches with good equipment and plenty of combat experience. All these guys know is war, war and more war. I was born in Germany, and know how it is. It started with Frederick the Great. When they can't get what they want any other way, they pull out a gun and shoot the guy who has it and take it away from him. It's a bad habit they have to be broken of."

Editor's Note : This sergeant was one of the staff who questioned German prisoners for Divisional Headquarters. He makes an important point on how long and how well the German soldier has been trained. He might also have added that, in the past eighty years, Germany has pulled a gun on Denmark, Austria, France in 1870, France again in 1914, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, Norway, Denmark (again), Russia, and finally, on December 11, 1941, on the United States.

Sgt. (Infantry) : " If you're ever up against German paratroops be very careful. They're dare-devils—they attack in small groups—you must kill or wound them all before they're through."

Pfc. (Medical Battalion) : " We had a wounded German officer brought in one day. There was a young soldier with him who wasn't hurt at all. It turned out that Jerry had been ordered to stick with that wounded officer and you couldn't pull him off. He was about 17 years old—a kid who had never even shaved—but he sure was a fanatic."

Obedience Is Part Of Jerry's Make-Up

Pvt. (Infantry) : " I had to guard some of the Jerry prisoners we captured near Gafsa. I got to admit he's a neat, clean soldier. They used the latrine right and kept the pen policed up all the time we were there. They have discipline—it stays with them whether they're fighting or sitting around a stockade."

Sgt. (Quartermaster) : " Don't expect to see a lot of German dead lying around. They do a marvellous job of burying their dead and carrying off their wounded."

Cpl. (Infantry) : " They're careful at camouflage. For instance, they leave hay and grass standing up after they've been in an area for a week. Twenty minutes after we get into an area, every blade of grass around is trampled down."

Sgt. (Divisional Headquarters Company) : " I interviewed lots of German prisoners. I asked one of them, ' What makes you guys such good fighters ? Why did you hold out so long when you knew you didn't stand a chance ? ' He didn't know what to say. Finally he said, ' They ordered



me to do it—so I did it. We never think about not obeying an order. We do what we're told.”

Q. We all know how important obedience is, but what's your slant on the German soldier's brand of obedience?

Pvt. (Infantry) : “Down in Sicily we saw a squad of Germans near a white farmhouse. They spotted us at the same time and took position immediately to fight it out with us. We opened up with our BAR's and wiped them out. One of us killed eight of them; they die as easy as anybody else. But they will fight.”

Sgt. (Infantry) : “About the only Germans we caught were alone, away from their units. Small groups would also give up, but when they're well organized and supplied they fight like hell. You've got to shoot straight and fast to knock them out. When they do surrender, they generally come in without their helmets or arms. They're shaky and nervous—some of them cry like babies. Seems to me they're all hopped up, and the let-down of being licked is more than they can take.”

Pvt. (Infantry) : “Sure Jerry is a good soldier. He ought to be. He's been training and fighting long enough to know the answers—and his father and grandfather were all guys who were out to get what they wanted at the point of a pistol. But the Jerries are just a bunch of dogfaces like us. They're out to sell the world a bill of goods like we are. It's their goods or ours. We hope it'll be ours, and we're proving that Jerry isn't the superman he was cracked up to be.”

Q. : Any comment on this “selling a bill of goods” business?

What Goes On In Jerry's Mind?

Cpl. (Infantry) : “If you dressed up a Jerry in a G.I. uniform, he'd look like a typical doggie. It's what goes on in the Jerry's mind that opens up your eyes. One of them told me the Nazis were the last and only hope of mankind, and that what the Germans were fighting for was to spread those good Nazi ideas all over the world. They were so good they wanted to share them with others and they couldn't understand why we fought Germany instead of shacking up with Hitler, and playing house. He knew all the answers—all the good things in the world, from music to politics, were made in Germany? In fact, he said if America was any good, it was because it was populated mostly by Germans!”

Cpl. (Military Police) : “I'll say these Jerries are great guys at believing their own rumors. There was the time when six of their M.P.s showed up in Tebessa, all shined up, and started to direct traffic. One of our Tank Destroyers came along and rounded them up. These Germaius said they'd been told Tebessa had been captured by the Germans and so they'd come down to run things. Even when they were in the pen, they couldn't figure out what had gone wrong.”

Pvt. (Artillery) : "I got this second hand—but one of the Jerry prisoners asked how us Yanks were getting supplies now that the Germans had captured Oran and all our ships and stuff down there. Those guys believe everything they hear on their own radio. Another gang of Jerries begged not to be shipped to the States. They preferred to stay in their own war zone. The reason was they believed all ships trying to cross the Atlantic were being sunk by their U-Boats."

Jerry Is Victim Of Nazi Propaganda

Cpl. (Infantry Battalion Headquarters) : "We captured a 17 year old Jerry infantryman near Villa Rosa in Sicily. I asked him what a kid like him was doing in the army. He said, 'I want to help fight you Americans and English. You are an inferior race.' He couldn't understand how the Germans could be shelled and bombed with stuff that Goebbels said was at the bottom of the ocean. He couldn't understand how the weak, sissy Americans could bring ashore such heavy 155 long toms and howitzers. Boy, he sure was dazed."

Pfc. (Military Police) : "The young German soldier is strictly a Nazi. The first ones we captured had the war all won. They simply couldn't lose. They had nothing but contempt for us. When we told them to go somewhere and sit down, they'd go there and stand up, just to show us they had a mind of their own and weren't taking orders from inferior races like us."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "We took heaps of prisoners near the end of the Tunisian campaign. One batch we captured near Mateur were really funny. When we told them it looked like curtains for Germany, they laughed in our faces. They said they knew for a fact that Oran had been taken by Rommel and we were cut off. They asked us to surrender now, because we'd have to later on anyway. They said New York had been bombed—it had come over their radio. They certainly had a lot of screwy ideas."

Pfc. (Infantry) : "Some of the older Jerries—25 years old and older—were ready to throw in the sponge. But the youngsters don't know what defeat means. They take all the evidence and twist it around to their own way of thinking. Like the end of the Tunisian campaign when we were moving in on them and throwing everything at them but the kitchen sink. You know what those young Jerries said? They said 'You're using up everything you have in one big effort to win. Soon you will have nothing left. We Germans have plenty left. We'll beat you in the end.'"

Young Jerries Are Most Fanatical

Pvt. (Infantry) : "Yes, these Jerries sure think and say funny things. In Sicily, one of them was talking about his officer. The officer had explained the whole campaign to his men. 'We'll let the Americans and British come in and when there are enough of them here with lots of supplies, we step in and capture them all.' When I pointed out that the trouble was

they let too many Americans come in and that we were still coming, he just shut up and wouldn't talk any more."

Q. : How can we convince the Germans that they are losing the war? How can we convince them they are victims of their own propaganda?

Pfc. (Infantry) : "They thought the firing squad was ready for them when I brought them in. I speak German and I heard one of them ask another, 'What would my mother say if she knew I was captured by Americans?' When I asked him what he meant by that, he just shut up. I'm German myself way back, but damned if I can figure out these young Nazis. They're out of this world."

Q. : What do you suggest this German soldier meant by his remark about his mother?

Cpl. (Military Police) : "The younger the Jerry, the more careful you have to be with him. They're deadly—and you wouldn't believe the things they talk about. One of them said to me : 'You Americans have the wrong idea about Hitler. You really should know him better. He always wanted to be your best friend. He only asked for the colonies you stole from us after the last war. He wanted to chase out the Negro troops from the Rhine Valley. He wanted to cure our terrible unemployment—and he did it by building the Westwall and by having a big army. Outside of that, he wanted nothing. This war is a mistake.'"

Some Jerries Are Losing Their Steam

Pvt. (Quartermaster) : "I saw the prisoners coming back from Tunisia. I yelled out to them in German, 'What did you think of the battle—it's just a sample of what you're going to get.' One of their non-coms shook his head. 'I believe, I believe,' he said."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "I got to talking with a 36 year old German. He said he used to belong to the old school and didn't believe much in Hitler. 'We were always told the Luftwaffe would do our fighting for us,' he said, 'but it is days and days since I had one glimpse of a German plane. Most of us older men know this war can't be won by Germany any more.'"

Pvt. (Infantry) : "Their chow is good. Their cheese and pickles and sauerkraut—delicious. And I liked the German's messkit and pack. A Jerry who saw me admiring it said, 'It should be good. We have been paying for it for the last 15 years.'"

Sgt. (Military Police) : "The younger Jerries are fanatics—I'd say those up to 22 or 23 years old. But the older soldiers have their doubts about Hitler and that superman business. One of them said to me, 'I have to howl with the wolves. I am here because they made me.' But the younger men must be beaten in combat before they realize they aren't better than we are."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "When it comes right down to it, Jerry doesn't want to die any more than you do. Even the toughest ones give up when they're out of stuff and the going gets too rough."

Some Comment On Jerry's Officers

Pvt. (Infantry) : "I went back to the Infantry P W pen to take back some Jerry prisoners to the Division Stockade. There was a big German captain in my group. I said : 'You're lucky. You're going back to the States and away from this lousy war.' He looked at me with a disgusted look and spit on the ground. 'I'd rather die for the Fuehrer,' he said. Then he jumped into the truck with one leap. He was a damned good physical specimen. But he was soft in the nut."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "I was talking to one of the prisoners we took at El Guettar. I asked him about German officers. He said most of them were 'Made in Germany' and that battlefield promotions were rare. Their officers, especially the higher ones, are all from the old aristocratic class—the same guys who made the trouble in the last war and in the other wars the Germans have been fighting since the days of Frederick the Great."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "It was only toward the end of the campaign outside Feriana that we started capturing their officers. They were tough babies. There was a lieutenant in the batch we took—when he put his hands up over his head, he flipped a small concussion grenade at us. It went off too far from us to blind or hurt us. We found others on him, made of bakelite and small enough so you don't notice them unless you search carefully. Be careful when you search them—they sometimes have small pistols they can pull on you if you're not on your toes."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "Jerry is a damned good soldier—but they'd rather be captured than killed. The funny thing, though, was that we always seemed to capture privates and corporals, but hardly ever an officer. The officers always pulled out before the outfit was captured. I don't know whether they deserted or did it on order, but we never saw anyone above a Captain in the big stockades."

Editor's Note : The facts about German officers, as gathered from official German sources, is that "Germany's pre-war military schools turned out 2,500 officers a year. By 1940, war had changed this system greatly. The school ground out officers at the rate of 6,500 every four months. All candidates for officer grades must have had fifteen months of enlisted service and at least two months' experience in the field as platoon or section leaders. As in all armies war has made it increasingly necessary for the German Army to turn to the ranks for officer material.

What They Say About Jerry's Weapons

Pfc. (Infantry) : "The Jerries are using a very fast machine gun. It shoots short bursts—we call it the 'burp' gun because while ours went 'rat-tat-tat' theirs just went 'burp'! It's about the fastest shooting

gun in the world. But the gun is too light—it jogs around so much it isn't accurate. And it burns up barrels pretty fast. Our machine gun is much more accurate but not nearly so fast."

Pfc. (Ordnance) : "What I've seen of their small arms, they're pretty much on the beam. Some of them look cheaply made, but their performance is first class. Their MG 34 and 42—the 42 is the later model of the 34—shoots a lot faster than ours. But the materials aren't as good. Our artillery knocked them out, and our infantry had guts enough to go in and grenade them. Sometimes their bullets are duds—the primers would be hit but the round wouldn't explode. Maybe that's on account of their forced labor. It seemed to me the Germans are running out of material and labor, but not ingenuity. And they sure know how to use their stuff."

Jerry Has Good Stuff, But Not Enough

Sgt. (Ordnance) : "The Jerries now have a gas operated rifle like our M1 but the serial numbers on them were so low, I guess they were experimental. They didn't look any good to me—more parts in them than a clock, and not well balanced. What the Jerries do have that I admire is a wonderful set of repair tools. They are well kept and well oiled by their armorers."

Cpl. (Ordnance) : "We all had 88 fever. Everything we heard was called an 88. They were so mobile they were hard to capture. Also a few guns could be made to look like dozens. Often guns we'd called 88's turned out to be Italian 75's and antitank pieces. We even caught some French stuff. When the Jerries evacuated they usually left captured stuff behind, but very little of their own."

Sgt. (Ordnance) : "In the beginning of the Tunisian campaign they had A1 stuff. It had early dates on it—1940 and 1941. Later on the stuff carried late dates. They seemed to be building their stuff, shipping it and shooting it in mighty quick time."

Sgt. (Ordnance) : "They have some good equipment, but it isn't standardized enough. They have lots of air-cooled engines : their Volkswagen is air-cooled. It's a good car, but it doesn't begin to compare with our Jeep. Their Volkswagen is too light for military operation. It's a two-wheel drive job against our four-wheel drive ; about the only thing I liked about it was the cute quart oil containers made of paper like milk containers back home. The proof that our stuff is better than theirs is that whenever they capture any of our stuff, like they did at Kasserine, they used ours in preference to their own."

Sgt. (Artillery) : "Where they have one, we have ten. We have more of everything, and by and large, our stuff is better. I'd say their messkit, motorcycle and helmet are better than ours. But so far none of us has

been eaten, run over or crowned by the Jerries, so we can take them—but good!”

Pfc. (Infantry) : “A lot of Jerry’s weapons seem more for morale effect than anything else. That weeping willie *Minnenwerfer*, for example—you can see the shells coming and they make hell of a racket. But they aren’t any too accurate, and if you’re dug in, they’re not as bad as they sound. The explosion is terrific. Their rifle doesn’t compare with ours. It has no windage, the sling is useless, and they can’t shoot as accurately as ours. Their weapons scare you—they shoot a lot and they shoot fast—but they don’t make every shot count the way we do.”

Sgt. (Ordnance) : “We can make optical stuff as good and better than Jerry can. I haven’t seen any Jerry glasses as good as our new ones. Theirs have too many parts in them—it cancels out any advantages.”

Sgt. (Ordnance) : “The way I see it, we always have more fire power than Jerry has. When you see all this equipment we have here, compared with what we had in Africa, you know Jerry hasn’t anything to touch it.”

Cpl. (Infantry) : “Some of those German weapons are swell. I’d like to own one of their Luger parabellum pistols. It’s a beautiful gun. So is their Schmeisser machine pistol. It uses the same ammunition as the British Sten gun—9 mm. bullets in 32 round clips. By and large, though, I’m satisfied with our American stuff. You can’t beat our M1, and as for our artillery—well, one Jerry told me he’d never seen anything like it, not even on the Russian front.”

Sgt. (Ordnance) : “The whole question of equipment boils down to this. Their ordnance—small arms and heavy stuff—is damned good. Their vehicles by and large stink. While we were putting all our brains and tools into flivvers and iceboxes before the war, they were fooling around with tanks and machine guns. Well, they’ve been fixed good, I think—but they can’t ever catch up with us on trucks and other transportation, and we’re already ahead of them on most weapons. Sure, their 88 is good, and they have a good machine gun, but what’s wrong with our Long Tom, or our 30’s and 50’s?”

Q : Any comments on the sergeant’s comparison of the German and American industrial set-ups and their efficiency in producing for war—and peace ?

Worried About Jerry’s Mines?

Pvt. (Jeep Driver) : “Jerry is a shrewd customer. He’s up to tricks all the time. He makes jeep driving dangerous business with his mines, but if you keep your eyes open, you can fox him. Stay on the concrete—stay off the shoulders of the roads—and if you see a dirt wash in the road, get out and look before you drive over it. If you know your mine indicators—

like tin cans, barb wire or rock piles—the worst mines can do is slow you down. My advice to every soldier is—keep your eyes open and you won't get hurt."

Sgt. (Engineers) : " We got all our mine experience in the 40 miles from Feriana to Gafsa. Boy, the Jerries sure did plant mines. We learned to read their rock piles, oil cans, chalk marks, tape, barbed wire and other signs. Now we have markers and signs prepared in advance—' road safe ' or ' road unsafe—shoulders not cleared.' We've come a long way since North Africa."

Sgt. (Engineers) : " By far the worst Jerry mine is the S mine—anti-personnel. They come in boxes of three. Jerry usually sows all three pretty close together, and they're usually mixed up among the Teller mines. If you spot one, look for others nearby. Sometimes even the super-duper Nazis forget to put detonators in their mines. One night our men charged a German position and cleaned them out with bayonets. Next day we saw there were mines around, minus the detonators."

Sgt. (Engineers) : " Lots of our men had mine fever. It's unnecessary. Most of the mines put down by the Germans were to cover his retreat. He'd mine the shoulders of roads to catch a driver who pulled to the side. Usually the prepared mine fields were easy to see—Jerry has to put up signs and marks on his own fields, or he'll blow himself up. If you have eyes to see with, there's no excuse for running into mines."

Cpl. (Engineers) : " The Jerries have a big reputation for laying booby traps. That's natural, because he's been retreating. As long as we hear about German booby traps that means the war is going good. Also, every soldier ought to realize that if a man puts anything in there's always a way to take it out. If you don't know how to take a mine or a trap apart, keep your eyes open and your hands off. Mark it clearly so the next man will be warned, and be on your way."

More About Jerry By GI's Who Fought Him

Sgt. (Quartermaster) : " We had a lot to learn when we first landed in Africa. But by the end of the campaign we were outmanoeuvring them and outfighting them in every way. We could move our divisions faster—our transportation worked in all kinds of weather and terrain. My company got so it could pick up and move in half an hour, heavy stuff and all."

Sgt. (Ordnance) : " If one American Infantry division can stop two German Panzer divisions the way we did at El Guettar, there's not much doubt about who's the better soldier. They pushed in everything they had, but our artillery and infantry out in foxholes in the plains raised hell with the Jerries and beat his pants off."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "The Jerry doesn't like to fight at night. I was plenty nervous the first time I went out on a night patrol—but I wasn't nearly as shaky as some of the Germans we brought back. All in all, I'd say they're not much different from most guys. They did all right in Africa when they were well fed. But in Sicily we pushed them so hard they often didn't eat for four or five days. They had malaria and dysentery; and their morale was shot. The same cold, hunger, bugs, heat and disease that made our lives miserable raised hell with them, too. Only we were fresher and better supplied—I think we're better fighters, too."

How Jerry Reacted To The Yanks

Pvt. (Infantry) : "They're human beings the same as anyone else. When we caught a few of them in the Ousseltia Valley they pulled out pictures of their mothers and girls, and begged us to let them live—they wanted to go home more than anything else. Another batch of kids we trapped—they weren't older than 17—had all their weapons field-stripped when we captured them. They were afraid if we caught them with complete weapons they'd be killed."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "Don't count on the Jerries being starved and weak. We used to like some of their chow better than ours. Their cheese came in tubes, like toothpaste. It was good on bread. They had good chocolate, too. None of this ersatz stuff you hear about."

Pvt. (Quartermaster) : "The Jerries were plenty scared of the 50 calibre machine-gun we mounted on our convoys. They came over and dropped their bombs anywhere. They used to pop down on one or two of our trucks and strafe hell out of them, but once we mounted the 50's they got cold feet."

Pvt. (Ordnance) : "Their stuff is good but not unbeatable. The human factor is on our side. The Jerries couldn't take our bayonets. In Tunisia they couldn't understand how Americans were crazy enough to charge their machine-guns with nothing but bayonets. They don't like the way we pushed and pushed all the time."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "We first used the bazookas at Bela. We knocked out Mark IV's and Mark VI's with them. Our 155 long rifles shattered them, too. There's nothing they have that's too hot for us to handle."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "They thought we were gangsters from New York and Chicago like they'd seen in American movies. They shot at us all the time, and still we kept right on coming. They were the scariest guys I ever saw. When they saw we weren't going to kill them, boy, were they happy."

Pfc. (Infantry) : "Jerry does most of his attacking at dawn or dusk. They complained when we captured them—'Why do you Americans

fight all the time? You shoot day and night.' They didn't like our bayonets either, and they can't stand a whiff of the old flamethrower."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "One of the Jerries we captured was crying like a baby. He thought we were going to shoot him. 'You shoot all us prisoners,' he said. 'We are told that by our officers. But before I die I'd like to see your *automatische artillerie*'—that means automatic artillery. He said, 'I was in Russia and all through the French campaign, but never have I seen artillery like you Americans have.'"

What It's Like To Be Jerry's Prisoner

Pvt. (Infantry) : "When I was a prisoner they didn't ask me anything directly. They said they knew everything they wanted to know, so they didn't have to question me. They were very friendly—they gave me a cigar and some porridge. Then one of them said 'You're an old army man, aren't you?' They were friendly as could be and first thing we knew we were being pumped. We shut up like clams. They asked how long the war would last. I said, 'You can't win.' They laughed."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "I speak some German. When I was captured by the Jerries, I could hear them talking about our *feuer zauber*—the magic fire of our artillery. It sure did have their wind up."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "Being captured by Jerry was just like they showed us in the training pictures. Right off, they asked me how long I'd been in the army. I gave them my name. 'I didn't ask your name,' the Jerry shouted—but I wouldn't talk. Then they picked one of our wounded men—they figured he was a soft touch but he wouldn't open his trap either."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "I was captured by the Germans near Hill 523 outside of Mateur. We were treated pretty good; except they were curious about our artillery. They wanted to know how much we had, and was it automatic. They said if they had American artillery, they'd have won the war long ago. I sure was proud of our artillery—but I didn't tell the Jerries anything."

Jerry's "Allies"—And How He Treats Them

Pfc. (Infantry) : "I can speak Polish. I talked to a Pole from a German infantry outfit. He told me he had his choice of going to a concentration camp or joining the German Army. He chose the army because at least in the army he stood a chance. He said there was a German behind him all the time with a gun pointed at the Poles—there were 90 Poles and 60 Jerries all mixed in one outfit. He said he hadn't fired a shot in two weeks of combat—and neither did the other Poles. Poles are used only as a last resort, he said—never as first class troops."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "The Jerry sure thinks he's better than the next guy—especially Italians. One of them pointed to an Italian and asked me,

'Did you ever see a soldier lower than that?' When we put water out in the pen, they pushed the Italians out of the way."

Pfc. (Infantry) : "Jerry is kind or cruel, depending on what he thinks he stands to gain most from. When I was shot on the leg, their medics picked me up and patched me up just as good as one of their own men. I figure it was because they knew they were being pushed back, and probably would be captured. One time I saw a group of Italians try to give up about 300 yards from the foxhole I was in. The Germans saw them and mowed down these Italians with their machine guns. If they respect and fear you, they treat you good. If they don't, God help you."

Cpl. (M.P. Battalion) : "First-class fighting troops like the Hermann Goering division are usually good Nazis—they've swallowed all the master race business hook, line and sinker. Those boys are tough before and after you beat them—you can't relax while you're fighting them or searching them. But the Poles, Alsations, and Czechs and troops like that from conquered countries had no fight at all—they gave up in droves. The first thing they asked us was permission to take the Nazi insignia off their uniform. That's also true of some of their drafted soldiers."

Jerry Doesn't Like Our Allies Either

Pvt. (Infantry) : "We learned to be glad to fight beside the British. Those Limies have guts aplenty. I've seen them keep attacking machine-guns time after time with nothing but bayonets and grenades. They talk soft, but they fight tough."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "My hat off to the Limies. We had one of their battalions fighting on our right, and we learned to know that any part of the line held by the British would either be held or pushed forward. I think our artillery is better than the British, but you can't beat their infantry for toughness and courage. And didn't Jerry know it!"

Pvt. (Infantry) : "If anybody is left who doesn't think the British are great soldiers, he should have seen the Eighth Army in action in Africa. What got me was their snapping back and smearing Rommel after they'd been beaten by him time and time again. It takes plenty of character to get off the ground in the last round and land a knockout punch. One of the big reasons why this war will be won is because we have allies like the Limies."

Sgt. (Infantry) : "I wouldn't want to be a Jerry if there were any Goums around. These Goums don't know how to read, write or figure, but they are crack scouts and terrific knife fighters. Jerry was afraid the Goums would cut his ears off—it made me realize that Nazis can be scared stiff the same as anyone else, only maybe more so."

Editor's note : Goums are Moroccan soldiers, expert scouts and extremely fierce fighters.

Cpl. (Infantry) : "We were fighting the crack Hermann Goering Division in Sicily. There was a battalion of French Goums in the sector at the time. The Goums would get behind their lines and hold up their vehicles on quiet roads. Then they cut the Jerries to pieces. When we captured some of the Jerries they begged and prayed that we wouldn't let the Goums get them. They had been told by their officers that the Goums were being paid big prices for sliced-off Jerry ears. You should have seen these supermen cry like babies."

Some Rules For Fighting Jerry

Sgt. (Infantry) : "Jerry has sharp eyes and good optical equipment. I'd advise men to stay off the skyline. Dig in whenever you can. Always have an alternate position picked out. Don't shine up your messkit. In short, don't attract Jerry's attention. He'll fire that 88 of his all day trying to get one dumb doggie who showed himself."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "The guys who get hurt are the guys who forget the rules. They expose themselves, flash their messkits and attract attention, or are too lazy to dig in. More doggies are hurt by their own damned carelessness than by Jerry."

Cpl. (Infantry) : "I think one of the big differences between the Jerry and us is marksmanship. He sprays his target—sometimes he gets hits and sometimes he doesn't. But we are taught to aim and shoot to kill. I think that's the better way. If we aim at the portholes and openings in pillboxes and tanks, we can shoot the Jerry in the eyes and kill him. But if we try spraying a whole pillbox in the hope that maybe one shot might go in, we'd be out of luck. I think we shoot better—and that's one reason why we win."

Pfc. (Ordnance) : "At night it's the flare that scares you more than the bombs. We used to sweat out those flares. The men would start whispering to each other and someone would yell 'Shut up!' as though Jerry could hear us. Usually the bombs fell far away—if you're dug in, you're okay. I remember they bombed the beach at Gela all day, and threw their 88's at us, too, but we were dug in and didn't get hurt."

Pvt. (Infantry) : "DIG! Just keep on your toes—and dig in every chance you can get!"

Editor's note : This advice was offered by almost all the men.

A Few Words On Fear In Combat

Pvt. (Heavy Weapon Company) : "At first you're scared when you go into combat. Fact is, you're scared all the time. But after your first dose of fire, you're okay. You razz each other about what States the guys come from and horse around just to let off steam. One corporal read the comics in Stars and Stripes in the light of a German flare at El Guettar. You keep telling each other stories, and first thing you know you realize

you're under fire and not nervous at all. Besides, you're sure all the time that nothing can happen to you."

Pfc. (Infantry) : " In your first battle you can almost feel the heat of the tracers as they go by and you hear and feel the grenades and H.E. all over the place. All of a sudden you realize how much you can go through and still be alive—it's plenty tough, but somehow it isn't as bad as you'd imagined it would be."

Pfc. (Infantry) : " It isn't any use saying that combat isn't tough, and that you aren't scared. But it wasn't like I'd always pictured it. At first I thought it was like maneuvers, only not as hard. Then stuff started to fly around me, and I got scared as hell. Then I figured that if I was going to get it I'd get it—there was nothing much I could do about it except what I'd been trained to do. Right away I felt better. Later one of my buddies got hit in the check—and my blood started boiling. Once you get mad you lose all fear. I didn't get nervous again until the battle was over."

Cpl. (Aid Man) : " Combat is tougher than anyone ever imagined. But you're so busy trying to pick out where the other guy is—things are happening so fast—and you're trying to do your job in the best way possible, so you're not scared. Afterwards you realize how bad it was, but not during the battle. Actually, the worst time is before the fight begins. If you can sweat that out you're over the worst."

Pfc. (Infantry) : " You won't worry much about hitting the beach. Your main worry will be that you don't reach it. If you're as seasick as I was going over you'll be damned glad to get there. The Jerry looked good to me after the shaking up I had on that LCI (Landing Craft, Infantry) off Sicily."

Pvt. (Infantry) : " I'll willingly admit I was nervous all the time while I was in combat. But it isn't as bad during action as it is before. In action you concentrate on what you're doing. You get so concerned with shooting the other guy, you forget about yourself."

Teamwork

Pvt. (Infantry) : " The artillery is what knocked Jerry silly in North Africa and Sicily. If it weren't for the artillery it wouldn't be the — Division ! "

Pvt. (Artillery) : " We used to wonder about that poor bloody infantry of ours. Night after night, while we were sleeping under four blankets, those poor guys were out in the foxholes in the cold and rain, and fighting like hell all the time. If it weren't for the infantry, this wouldn't be the — Division ! "

Pfc. (Engineers) : " I can't say too much about our artillery and infantry. The artillery would knock them out at night and the infantry cleaned them out by day. That's what makes the American Army click—we keep pushing."

How to prepare this Army Talk

1. Read the story for information and point of view.
2. Make an outline from the headings.
3. Have a veteran of Tunisia, Sicily or Anzio in the group if possible.
4. Read some sections to the group as part of the introductory talk.
5. Keep your introductory remarks to within ten minutes.
6. Use the following questions and answers to start the discussion.

GERMAN DISCIPLINE

How does discipline in the German Army compare with the discipline of the American Army?

German discipline is so ingrained in the German soldier as to amount to rigid regimentation. In some cases this may lead to lack of initiative and flexibility. Frequently it pays off handsomely. This discipline is revealed in the statements about the loss of German equipment in "rout retreat," camp camouflage, discipline, preventive maintenance, etc. Here we have something to learn from the German soldier. The American's military experience is usually a matter of months; the German's is a life-time habit. The whole German attitude was summed up in the sentence, "They ordered me to do it—so I did it."

BATTLE TECHNIQUE

What suggestions are made regarding battle techniques? The boys with battle experience tell us to observe the following: First and

most important, dig in well when the situation demands : When moving keep low, most enemy fire is about 30 inches high : Avoid the skyline, make the sniper's work difficult : Don't have any shiny equipment on you, it may give your position away : Take care of your weapon, your life may depend on its smooth operation : Don't waste your ammunition. Remember the "sight-picture" lessons of basic training days. It's hits-per-minute, not shots-per-minute that kill Germans : Stay on your toes and keep your eyes open—you live longer that way : Be watchful at all times.

THE MASTER RACE

What do the Nazis think about other nations ? The Nazis believe all other races are naturally inferior and destined to be ruled by the German or master race. If there is any good in the English or American peoples it is because of their proportion of Teutonic blood. He despises not only his enemies, but his allies as well—especially the Italians. He feels that the proof of our degeneracy lies in our maintenance of a democratic way of life.

GERMANS AND THEIR PRISONERS

What is it like to be Jerry's prisoner ? On the whole the German attitude towards American prisoners is reported as being fairly decent. When he is winning he is inclined to be rough. When he is losing he is careful to observe the rules in order to avoid retaliation and punishment. He's losing now and knows it. The Intelligence officer is a smart fellow. Be careful. The sure way and the right way to block him is to give name, rank and serial number and nothing more. He may try to trick you or frighten you. Keep your mouth shut.

MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS

What about booby traps and mines ? When you hear about the Germans using mines and booby traps, the chances are that the fight is going in our favour because they are employed for the most part by retreating forces. The Germans, for the protection of their own forces, must mark their mines—sometimes with barbed wire, chalk, rocks, etc. Learn these signs and avoid danger. Neutralize the mine or mark it for the benefit of those following you. Jerry is thrifty—be suspicious of good equipment left behind. It may be a clever bait. Do not make yourself at home in any building or installation formerly occupied by the Germans until the place has been thoroughly checked for booby traps.



NEXT WEEK :

ARMY TALK

by

ADOLF HITLER
