

TOP SECRET

CSDIC/CMF/X 171

Copy No:- 87

The following are the relevant details of the PW mentioned in this report:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer und General der Waffen-SS	Military Plenipotentiary in ITALY and Highest SS Officer
DOLLMANN	SS Oberfuehrer	SS IO to C-in-C SOUTH-WEST

If the information contained in this report is required for further distribution, prisoners' names should NOT be mentioned and the text so paraphrased as to give no indications of the methods by which it is obtained.

RW Snelling Capt

for (W.S. VALENTINE),  
Lt.-Col,  
Comd, CSDIC, CMF.

C.S.D.I.C.,  
C.M.F.  
30 May 45.

In the conversation reproduced in this report WOLFF and DOLLMANN discuss with a British Army Officer the problems which may be expected to occur in occupied GERMANY, and the manner in which they should be met. The main subjects discussed are:-

1. A survey of Nazism and the reasons for its failure.
2. The likelihood of resistance movements.
3. How the German population should be treated.
4. The "Werewolves".
5. The influence of the Catholic Church.

+++++

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
DOLLMANN	SS Oberfuehrer	SS IO to C-in-C SOUTH-WEST
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer und General der Waffen-SS	Military Plenipotentiary in ITALY and Highest SS Officer
B.A.O.		

Conversation held on 22 May 45

1. A SURVEY OF NAZISM AND THE REASONS FOR ITS FAILURE

WOLFF : You mustn't forget that through all these years, right up to the last three months, all the Party members were really wonderfully well cared for. Even last Christmas a lot was done for them. But when the end came no one bothered about them any longer, everyone just packed up and left without saying good-bye to their friends, everyone was left to fend for themselves, no one bothered about his neighbour. That in itself represents a frightful collapse, and you have to remember that the younger generation, or rather the generation which has now entered the so-called best years of a man's life - as DOLLMANN and I have, we were both born in 1900, that is, we're forty-five now ..... Well, I've already been through the first World War. I volunteered when I was sixteen years old. Then, too, we went out to fight for our Fatherland and to defend our ideals, and it ended in a complete collapse, not so much from the military aspect as from the point of view of all our beliefs and ideals; because the KAISER, instead of dying fighting on the steps of his throne, deserted. With that action the monarchic ideal perished. And then the simple, or impecunious, or fanatical, members of the middle class, all the restless elements, began forming the National Socialist German Labour Party. There were only a very few real brains, only a very few gentlemen, with them then, and it was only later, when it became apparent that there would have to be a division between the two schools of thought, when it became apparent that the WEIMAR republic and Socialism had let us down, that it was corrupt and no more than a bureaucracy - then there was a split among the intellectuals into a radical Bolshevist or Communist world, and a National Socialist one. The people between those two extremes were citizens who had supported such parties as the National German People's Party, the Centre Party, the Social Democrats - all movements which were already doomed to failure. And then all those Germans who loved their Fatherland, each according to his own conviction, joined one of the two extremist parties: Communists or National Socialists. By the use of diplomacy the National Socialist Movement came to power and then spent

six and a half years in preparing for this conflict. They had great - if you like call them temporary - successes, particularly in AUSTRIA, against which "old Fritz" had had to wage three wars, and which came back to GERMANY this time without any blood being shed. Then SUDETENLAND, then BOHEMIA and MORAVIA, and so on. It was another attempt, made mostly by the idealists who believed in a better national and social future for GERMANY. It was made by the same people who had achieved more in the trade unions, or rather the German labour front, in the way of welfare for the German worker and the little man, than the Social Democrats had ever even promised. But that too has now ended in a frightful chaos of ruin and destruction; because although we were poor and unemployed in 1933 when we came to power, at least everybody had a roof over his head, everybody still had a few family belongings, and the family itself was intact. Since then families have disintegrated and been torn to pieces, there is not a family that has not made tremendous sacrifices in blood. Many too have no roof left over their heads, and are left without any income. There are only a few who by mere chance have managed to save some of those things to which human beings like to cling. But worst of all is the fact that the Idea itself has also been destroyed. The FUEHRER himself has destroyed it by two, perhaps three, very important mistakes. The first was that in his exaggerated loyalty towards his old friends who had fought with him in the early days, he never gave the right post to the right people. On the contrary, the oldest and most incapable people were left in office, even after they had shown themselves to be completely inefficient or corrupt or even mentally unbalanced; and they did a great amount of irreparable damage. The second was that the FUEHRER tolerated the things that occurred in the concentration camps - things about which I myself and we here knew nothing. We were fighting down here, a handful of men without weapons, without fuel, without ammunition, always in the lines without a moment's relief, and we never saw what was happening in BELSEN or in DACHAU or in ORANIENBURG, we did not know that the FUEHRER tolerated happenings which no decent person in the world, and no decent person in GERMANY either, could tolerate or approve of. And the third mistake was the mad idea which made him believe to the very last minute that the differences between the three great Allies, particularly between the Anglo-Americans and the Russians, were so big that they would lead to a break in the Alliance, provided that he could defend himself successfully to the East and the West for a little longer. But it was a complete mistake. And then perhaps the worst thing of all was that when he saw no other way out for himself and for a number of his oldest and most loyal collaborators, that instead of fighting his final battle fifty kilometres to the East or West of BERLIN, he fought it within the city walls. That condemns him for all time. I can say quite honestly that the authority of the FUEHRER was still supreme in all its essentials even two months ago, in spite of all the failures he had had for the last two or three years - the only exceptions being small and unimportant successes like the ARDENNES offensive. This authority was questioned and criticised by specialists who knew something about their work, by soldiers, by the General Staff, and also by the economists, who saw exactly what was happening. But there was the devilish alliance with the powerful Gestapo, who in themselves only represented about five per cent of the SS. It was because of that alliance with the Gestapo, who not only attacked all those who expressed divergent opinions personally, but also their families, who were quite defenceless since there was nowhere where they could go or hide - it was because of this alliance that his power was so great that no one, or practically no one, ever dared to speak the real truth.

2. THE LIKELIHOOD OF RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

- B.A.O. : Yes, the hope that the differences between the Western Powers and the Russians might lead to a rift in the Alliance, and therefore a turning point in the war, was certainly a great mistake. But I feel that even now there might be Germans who say: "Now that the common enemy of the Allies has been beaten and the one combining factor has therefore disappeared, the real differences between them will make themselves felt, and therein lies our hope".
- WOLFF : Yes, but what is there left to fight with, and who is to do the fighting? Apart from a few remaining light weapons and a little ammunition, the sort of things which might be hidden in the mountains in ski-huts or shooting boxes or in farmhouses and barns, we have no weapons and no ammunition at all, nor any material basis whatsoever for doing anything on any scale worth mentioning in GERMANY. You will of course always have to expect that if General von SEYDLITZ, for instance, were to appear in the part of GERMANY which will be occupied by the Western Allies, and if he were to take any active part in things there, that he would be shot immediately. But those would only be isolated cases, a pistol fired here or there.....
- B.A.O. : I was not so much thinking of the military position, because it's obvious that to-day GERMANY is neither militarily nor economically in a position to be involved in any major conflict. I was thinking that GERMANY may hope by political manoeuvring to be regarded as an object of value by the East as well as the West.
- WOLFF : Yes, there are people who cherish such hopes. But you mustn't forget that for nearly six years GERMANY was completely shut off from the outside world. It was shattering to realise how completely ill-informed even the great ones were, that is even Field Marshals of the German Army, during the days of the capitulation. When I was fighting for the recognition of the terms signed at CASERTA, after VIETINGHOFF had been temporarily deprived of his command, the first question KESSELRING asked was: "But have you got a guarantee that fighting against TITO and the Russians will immediately continue, side by side with ENGLAND and AMERICA?".
- B.A.O. : Such questions were really asked?
- WOLFF : They really were.
- DOLLMANN : The Field Marshal said to me, too: "How can you go to such lengths at this stage when we still have such a very important political card in our hands?" I asked him what he was referring to, and he replied: "Against RUSSIA". I said: "Well, sir, I think it would be a good idea if you spent three days in SWITZERLAND some time. Or look at the stuff the papers are publishing - we've got quite a few of them here - you should read some of them, then you would have no need to ask such questions".
- WOLFF : When I told the others that they were completely out of touch with reality I was told that I didn't understand what was at stake. I asked the Field Marshal what he meant. "Well", he said, "you would be tearing open our south-western flank and would leave the enemy free to attack the rear of the other three Army Groups by leaving the North Alps and the South East unprotected. And all that because you selfishly want to



safeguard your own favourable terms". There was some sort of an idea of a central headquarters that was to rule and defend the whole mountain redoubt.

### 3. HOW THE GERMAN POPULATION SHOULD BE TREATED

WOLFF :

I firmly believe that now more than ever before there is a general readiness on the part of all decent people in GERMANY to acknowledge the gigantic mistakes that have been made by us, and a realisation that only we can atone for these things by putting all our energy into the alleviation of the suffering we have caused, whether to the Russians or to the Western powers. There is a great desire, after the frightful experiences we have gone through in the first World War and again now, to find peace at last and to be able to lead a quiet existence somewhere, an existence which conforms to the German way of life and is compatible with the dignity of man. It is this desire which will help you to sow the seeds of a peaceful future. I am certain that there has been a really fundamental psychological change in the overwhelming majority of the people. I should say that at least eighty per cent of the people -- and the Teutons are a brave race -- when they see that they have been completely beaten, the great majority of the people would be grateful for generous treatment. If they see that they are not oppressed and maltreated, as for instance a Frenchman would illtreat them, or a victorious Italian, or these Roman and Latin races in general, or rather if they see that they are treated even better than their sense of justice gives them the right to expect, then you will find that you can get their complete co-operation. Then you will find a change in youth and in the general character not only of the next generation, but of many generations to come. But let us hope that apart from a few individual cases, which are not of course to be taken tragically, no great and serious mistakes will be made in the treatment of the German nation, so that this really good and genuine will to make amends will be psychologically exploited and actively used. What I am afraid of is that this might not be done, that the Western powers may lose their interest in GERMANY, particularly Western GERMANY, too early, or that they may just leave everything to FRANCE and withdraw altogether. And RUSSIA will act with great skill in BERLIN and VIENNA. They will pose as liberators. They will waste no time in placing wreaths on the graves of old Beethoven, Mozart, and so on. That is of course a tremendously skilful move because after that sort of thing everybody will say "Well, what can you say against the Communists now? They are much better than GOEBBEL's propaganda made them appear. It must have been just the same as his lies about the new weapons and so on. The Russians are all right". And especially if one were now to be too harsh or too clumsy, or if anyone in GERMANY were to be seriously and grossly wronged, then the whole mass of the people -- after their experiences of the monarchy and of National Socialism -- will only have one thing left to them, and that is Communism. And Communism is after all what we -- what we as well as others -- have been fighting passionately all our lives, because our culture and our education and our national instinct to command (Herrrentum) alienate us from the Asiatic way of life. And that might be a great danger.

DOLLMANN :

I said yesterday and I repeat now, that it is in the greatest interest not only of the Western Powers, but also of ourselves, to eradicate ruthlessly and from the very beginning, any mad and foolish attempt at a new resistance movement wherever we find it, and in that way assist the Western Allies.

WOLFF : Yes, if resistance movements were tolerated, then anyone who accepted a post in a civil administration which had representatives of a military or Anglo-American government, might expect to be shot at any moment. But I am certain that if this problem is handled intelligently, and use is made of the friendly and positive elements of the population, and of the decent people who will carry out the Allies' terms faithfully and energetically - and people like that will be found among all classes of German society - if full use is made of these people, then we shall really be able to build a new world.

4. THE "WEREWOLVES"

B.A.O. : On the other hand, there may be certain types of people in GERMANY - men who have lost everything now because they gained their positions through National Socialism and the war - who will now devote their energies to organising the "Werewolves" only because there they see their chance of continuing their old work, even if it must be done underground and on a small scale.

WOLFF : Well, yes, that sort of thing can't, of course, be avoided in a nation of many millions of people. There will probably always be small groups of fanatics. People who will need very special watching in that respect are all those so-called National Socialist "Fuehrungs Offiziere" - the NSFO's. The NSFO attached to Army Group nearly cost me my life. And then there are the fanatical officers who came straight out of the Hitler Youth and who have spent the most important twelve or fifteen years of their lives under the regime. But what are people like that to live on? The German REICH which might have been able to support them out of its fund of captured or, well, stolen gold, or its reserves of foreign currency, or other possessions, no longer exists. And who would be interested in supporting an organisation of that kind? Who would really believe and hope that after this colossal break-down it could serve any purpose at all? No, these are only romantic notions which will play a part for a while and which will need to be intelligently and energetically watched and controlled.

DOLLMANN : Yes, all that is needed is an efficient supervision.

WOLFF : The danger exists, of course, but it is a danger which will affect only such a small percentage of the nation that it will have very little practical effect. The greatest danger to my mind lies in the fact that hasty decisions might be made as regards GERMANY while the victor nations are in the first flush of victory, and full of power and hatred - feelings which might easily take hold of the mass of a nation who do not know the true state of affairs and who may not find it easy to keep clear and cool heads. If, for instance, they suddenly wanted the whole of the Party wiped out. I am very much in favour of punishing very strictly everybody who is guilty, everybody who has committed a crime. But there are so many decent little Party members who've never hurt a fly. And if all those were now to be put into some camp - because someone in NEW YORK or SAN FRANCISCO who is ignorant of the true facts makes a sweeping decision - or if the whole of the SS or the whole of the police were to be eliminated or sent to concentration camps in PALESTINE, that would be quite wrong and a great deal of injustice would be done. As things are at the moment, there are no men in GERMANY who have the power to avenge such an injustice, but the sense of wrong that had been done would rankle. And then there would be unrest amongst the next generation, or new wrongs would be

committed in revenge. And surely, for once, we want to have done with unrest, we at least want to know that after we have lost so much of our lives our children will one day be able to live in a better atmosphere and will be able to look towards a brighter future.

5. THE INFLUENCE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

DOLLMANN : And the decisive factor in the new life will be the part played by the so-called Catholic Church. I don't think that that factor can possibly be overestimated. And the threads which even to-day still link the members of the Catholic Church in GERMANY with those in the outside world will determine the nature of the future German state.

B.A.O. : Even in the Protestant provinces?

DOLLMANN : Yes, there too. The original PRUSSIA, the PRUSSIA of Luther, will come more or less under Russian influence. So there remains South, West, and part of middle GERMANY which are almost entirely Catholic. And figures such as the Graf von GALEN, who is best known abroad, and also Graf von BREITEN, with his Bavarian connections, are of course much more open to influences from outside countries than all the Werewolves and similar things together. Because the Church has always been in possession of the best system of information. Their connections extend in every direction, and during my visits to the cardinals here last year, in accordance with General WOLFF's wishes - connections, by the way, which I kept up to the very end - I noticed again and again how marvellously well informed these people were, and how deeply interested they are in the future shaping of GERMANY. And perhaps that is a point which should be continually borne in mind, and which should be incorporated into your programme for reconstruction and re-organisation.

B.A.O. : But that will have to be confined to the areas which are occupied by the Western Powers, and which are predominantly Catholic districts. Or do you think that the Church will attempt to exert a counter-balancing influence in the areas which are occupied by RUSSIA?

DOLLMANN : I don't think the Church would dare to do that. They might like to, but they haven't sufficient power. They will therefore bring all their influence to bear in one direction, in all those areas where they have strong connections with the Western Powers. And there their influence will certainly be very strong. They will without doubt use all their powers of propaganda - and that has always been their strength. There's the idea of sacrifice - they've got confession, they have the women behind them - they've got so many things which to-day nobody else has got. And that problem too will need very careful watching.

+++++