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DABIQ, MUJATWEETS UND DROHVIDEOS

AUSGEWÄHLTE BEISPIELE DEUTSCHSPRACHIGER IS-PROPAGANDA

von Paul Schliefssteiner

DIE NATIONALE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

von Friedrich Korkisch

DIE STEIERMARK UND DER JUGOSLAWISCHE GEHEIMDIENST „UDBA“

von Josef Lausegger

THE US ARMY'S CREATIVITY LAB

by Robert Lackner & Florian Traussnig

DIE ORGANISATION GEHLEN IN ÖSTERREICH

von Bodo Hechelhammer

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JIPSS

The Journal for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies is published by the Austrian Center for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies (ACIPSS), founded at the University of Graz, Austria, in 2004, in order to promote research and understanding of the complex and often inter-related issues pertaining to intelligence, propaganda and security with which man and society are confronted in private and public life. It aims to address both the academic community of specialists in such fields as history, political science, law and journalism and the public at large; it also wants to serve as a public forum for discussion of the issues raised. JIPSS is published semi-annually and is a refereed journal.

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Robert Lackner, Florian Traussnig

THE US ARMY'S CREATIVITY LAB: CAMP RITCHIE AND ITS AUSTRIAN TRAINEES IN WORLD WAR II



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Zusammenfassung:

DAS KREATIVLABOR DER US ARMY: CAMP RITCHIE UND SEINE ÖSTERREICHISCHEN ABSOLVENTEN IM ZWEITEN WELTKRIEG

Mehr als 6.000 vor dem NS-Regime geflohene Österreicher dienten im Zweiten Weltkrieg in der US-Armee. Aufgrund ihrer kulturellen, sprachlichen und geographischen Kenntnisse sowie ihrer individuellen Begabungen und Fähigkeiten waren viele von ihnen auch für die Nachrichtendienste interessant. Nach anfänglicher Skepsis gegenüber den zeitweise von den amerikanischen Behörden als „enemy aliens“ eingestuftem mitteleuropäischen „38er“-Flüchtlingen erkannten die US-Armee und die Geheimdienste bald deren militärisches Potenzial: Rund 650 Österreicher, darunter Prominente wie Georg Kreisler oder Marcel Prawy, wurden deshalb im sogenannten Military Intelligence Training Center in Camp Ritchie, Maryland, ausgebildet. Als kriegswichtige Intelligence- oder Propagandaexperten des Militärgeheimdienstes G-2 bzw. der amerikanischen Propagandaabteilungen waren ihre Aufgaben nach der Landung in der Normandie im Juni 1944 unter anderem das Verhören deutscher Kriegsgefangener, Feindaufklärung durch das Auswerten von Luftbildern oder psychologische Kriegsführung.

In einem vom Jubiläumsfonds der Österreichischen Nationalbank und vom Zukunftsfonds der Republik Österreich geförderten ACIPSS-Projekt, das von Siegfried Beer geleitet wird, widmen sich Robert Lackner und Florian Traussnig diesen österreichischen „Ritchie Boys“ und ihren mitunter spektakulären Beiträgen zur Niederrichtung des NS-Regimes, deren wissenschaftliche Aufarbeitung bislang fehlt. Der vorliegende Artikel gibt Einblicke in die laufenden Forschungen und präsentiert erste Ergebnisse zur Gründung des Lagers sowie zu Kriegsbiographien zweier ausgewählter Protagonisten.

“[I]n the middle of 1943, somebody must have pulled out my punch card and seen my language skills and so I was sent to Camp Ritchie, Maryland, the Military Intelligence Training Center, [...] and after a three month course [...], a group of us were eventually sent overseas [...] to [...] get ready for the invasion [of France in June 1944]. We represented a very new skill for the US army and nobody would quite know how it would work out.”¹ That is how Alfred Diamant describes the way in which he was selected for training in this very special facility of the US Army. The Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC) at Camp Ritchie, situated against a lakeside picturesque backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Maryland, plays an almost mythical role in American military and intelligence history. As highlighted in this article, both the school as well as its graduates were very different from what would usually be expected from the armed forces. As another graduate, Joseph T. Simon, put it: in which army of the world would it be possible to find soldiers and officers with 40 different mother tongues?² Like Diamant and Simon, many of these “Ritchie Boys” were of Austrian origin and had emigrated to the United States due to the annexation of their home country by Germany in March 1938. The current ACIPSS research project, on which this article provides first insights, collects and analyzes selected wartime biographies of these exiled Austrians. Directed by Siegfried Beer and funded by the Austrian National Bank and the Future Funds of the Republic of Austria, it explores the history of the camp and the contribution of its graduates to the defeat of the Nazi regime.³

THE GENESIS OF THE MITC

The reason why the Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC) at Camp Ritchie came into existence was the fact that intelligence training in the US Army was considered inadequate, particularly with an eye towards a possible conflict with Germany or Japan. In spring 1941, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General George C. Marshall, thus undertook the first steps to counter the unsatisfying situation, envisaging the sending of a group of military observers to Great Britain in order to study the intelligence structures of the United States' closest ally and gain first-hand experience. Following the approval by the British War Office, which gave its consent to Marshall's plan in April 1941, four groups with a total of 16 officers were transferred to Great Britain.⁴

After their return, these military observers suggested the introduction of centralized intelligence training and recommended the establishment of a special training center that would serve these needs since the existing training facilities were not considered appropriate to do so. When the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, sent out a circular letter on the question of the availability of specialized intelligence subjects in the schools under the Army's control in January 1942, it became clear that such training was rather neglected there. As the Commanding General of the Army Ground Forces (AGF), Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, later stated, “[t]hese schools [were] handicapped by lack of suitable instructors, adequate equipment, enemy maps, documents, uniforms, etc., appropriate texts for language study and of means for developing the proper military background to meet the situation”.⁵ In McNair's mind, it was crucial to establish a school for interrogators of prisoners of war, interpreters and translators “in the languages of our enemies, allies, and of countries in which the United States troops may be called upon to operate”.⁶

In order to tackle this inadequacy, a course on tactical aerial photo interpretation had already been established at Fort Belvoir in Virginia in 1941, but only two classes had been held between July and October. Moreover, following the recommendations made by the survey on British intelligence structures, a school for the interrogation of prisoners of war had also been founded at Camp Blanding in Florida in January 1942, which was transferred to Camp Bullis in Texas in March of the same year. Besides these actions, the G-2 Plans and Training Branch of the War Department's General Staff prepared a range of studies, also in January 1942, concerning the establishment of a centralized intelligence training center. The project was dropped for the time being but revived again in April 1942 when McNair recommended the founding of such an institution to the Chief of Staff. Following this recommendation, a new study, which was finally approved by the Secretary of War the following May, envisaged a school for interrogators of prisoners of war, interpreters and translators under the jurisdiction of the Chief of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS).⁷ The MIS was an offshoot of the Military Intelligence Department (MID), the Army's intelligence service since 1885, which had been established in March 1942 in order to make the intelligence structures of the armed forces

more efficient. From then onwards, the MID, located in Washington, DC, took on a planning role and served as the headquarters, training site and mobilization base⁸, while the operative MIS units on the spot, i.e. at the various theaters of operations, were in charge of gathering and analyzing information.

Yet the question arises why Camp Ritchie in Maryland was chosen as the home of the new MITC. In fact, the decision was based on three reasons. Named after Albert C. Ritchie, the former governor of Maryland, the site was already in military use as an encampment of the National Guard since 1926; for that reason, the necessary infrastructure already existed, although further adaptations became necessary in order to meet the MITC's special requirements. Moreover, the relative proximity to Washington and its supervising institution, the MID/MIS, was considered a huge advantage. And finally, the location provided ideal training conditions for field maneuvers and outdoor training in the seven categories.⁹ These were the interrogation of prisoners of war (IPW), military intelligence interpretation (MII), photo interpretation (PI), counterintelligence (CI), terrain intelligence (TI), signal intelligence (SI) and order of battle analysis (OB).



The MITC's main building. Source: John P. Finnegan, *Military Intelligence. A Picture History* (Arlington 1985), 70.

With the opening ceremony on 19 June 1942, in which its commandant, Colonel Charles Banfill, delivered the opening speech, the MITC (the main building of which according to Viennese musician Georg Kreisler looked like the medieval castles of Disneyland¹⁰) was officially activated. From then onwards, a total of 15,564 officers and enlisted men underwent training at Camp Ritchie¹¹, approximately 650 of whom had Austrian origins according to the information provided in their personal history cards¹², on which this statistical analysis is based. In this

context, however, it is not always easy to determine who can be classified as Austrian, as, for instance, the case of Frank M. Brandstetter shows.¹³ Brandstetter was born in Nagyszeben or Hermannstadt in the region of Transylvania¹⁴ in 1912 but apparently was raised in Vienna where he graduated from the renowned Theresianum, a high school founded by and named after Empress Maria Theresia in 1746 in order to train public servants, officers and diplomats. He then attended the Royal Military School in Kőszeg, Hungary before becoming a hotel manager.¹⁵ In this respect, it is not easy to determine whether Brandstetter, who spoke both German and Hungarian fluently and worked in Camp Ritchie as an instructor for the subject "Enemy Armies", obviously due to his previous military experience, can be classified as an Austrian or a Hungarian national.¹⁶ As the evaluation of the personal history cards has shown, the number of persons who cannot be definitively determined as being of Austrian origin totals between 30 and 40 soldiers.¹⁷



Postcard depicting Camp Ritchie, ca. 1940. Source: Private Collection.

But what were the admission conditions or requirements to qualify for training in one of the 24 classes held in Camp Ritchie between mid-1942 and early 1945? For the first class, which was limited to 30 officers, suitable candidates could apply. For that reason, the center's activation was announced via a letter of circulation in June 1942. From the second class onwards, it remained possible to apply for training in Camp Ritchie; the majority of the students, however, was selected by the Officers Branch and Enlisted Branch of the Adjutant General's Office at the War Department, which referred them to the MIS/MID.¹⁸ For that reason, many soldiers were quite surprised that they had been chosen for training in Camp Ritchie. One of these was John Kautsky, a Viennese-born future university professor in political

science at Washington University in St. Louis: "For weeks I had been planning for my furlough [and] by last Thursday morning, after many headaches [and] 2 interviews with the Colonel, I had everything fixed [...]. Well, Thursday afternoon the Captain told me that my furlough was cancelled, because I was going to be shipped out. [...] I have been selected, with 15 others to go to Camp Ritchie, Maryland. Just what they're going to teach me there I don't know, when I do know I probably won't be able to tell anybody."¹⁹

The key qualification that made Kautsky interesting for the MID/MIS were his language skills. In this respect, the War Department, which used punch card machines in order to identify potential candidates, did not necessarily pick only German and Austrian immigrants. As "Ritchie Boy" Hanus (actually Hans Herbert) Burger, a Prague-born theater director, outlines in his autobiography, there were also "indigenous" Americans such as university teachers from German studies who were experts on Walther von der Vogelweide or hotel concierges who knew 25 sentences in four different languages.²⁰

While language skills were a crucial factor, other requirements mattered as well. In order to be admitted to the MITC, soldiers had to have completed basic training satisfactorily and be in good physical condition.²¹ Moreover, a sociable personality as well as a good education were considered essential. Regarding the latter, the successful completion of high school or an equivalent training was required. As the MITC's official history proudly admits, more than 90 percent of the men admitted to the classes had scores above 109 in the Army's intelligence test, the Army General Classification Test (AGCT), and thus were far beyond the average, and many had degrees from leading universities in the United States and abroad.²² The remarkable careers that many graduates were to make after the war certainly underlines the fact that Camp Ritchie was nearly something akin to a refuge of knowledge; especially the quota of future scholars and university professors was particularly high.²³

After their arrival in Camp Ritchie, the abilities of the selected candidates were checked again, and in some cases, men were immediately sent back to their units.²⁴ Even a handful of soldiers of Austrian origin, who possessed suitable skills and later served the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) such as, for instance, a polyglot named Herbert T. Baru²⁵, were rejected. Moreover, even after they had been admitted to one of the classes, the chosen men could still

drop out prior to graduation due to unsatisfactory performance or health issues. Additionally, there were further qualifications required, depending on the curriculum of one of the subjects in which the students were to specialize in. They ranged from additional skills in other European languages for interrogators of prisoners of war and military intelligence interpreters, excellent eyesight for terrain intelligence and photo interpretation, technical abilities for signal intelligence or a minimum of two years of investigative experience for counterintelligence. The most difficult specialization, however, was obviously the so-called order of battle analysis, i.e. to know the exact organization of the enemy's forces including vital strategic data such as strength, equipment and formations, for which the "[e]ducational requirements [were] higher than for any of the other courses given at MITC".²⁶

Another requirement for admission to the order of battle class was the successful completion of the MITC's regular eight-week course of intensive practical instruction. This course was divided into two parts. The first phase consisted of five weeks of basic training in intelligence procedures. In small groups of 35 officers and enlisted men in one group at the maximum, there were general instructions in basic scouting, patrolling and observation as well as courses in field security, aerial photography and terrain and signals intelligence. Then, the candidates had to study both the structure and organization of their own armed forces as well as those of the enemies including their weapons, tactics and identification. From the fourth class onwards, also a course on the United States' allies was held in order to facilitate cooperation and collaboration with units from other countries.²⁷ The second phase was dedicated to advanced training in one of the specialized fields mentioned above, except for the order of battle.²⁸ In this context, it is important to mention that soldiers did not choose their speciality but were assigned to it due to their individual abilities and performance in basic training. Moreover, they were instructed in public relations and censorship, communications, intelligence estimates, dissemination and operation of a combat intelligence section.²⁹

The regular training days in Camp Ritchie were similar to those in high schools. Instruction usually took place between 7:30 in the morning and 4:45 in the afternoon, divided into eight 50-minute periods. Yet, highlighting the peculiarity of the MITC, an ad-

ditional weekday was added. The usual training week thus consisted of seven days while the eighth day was free. The purpose of this so-called "Banday", named after the camp's somewhat eccentric commandant Banfill, who according to Austrian opera connoisseur and "Ritchie Boy" Marcel Prawy later died in a mental asylum³⁰, was to interfere with the soldiers' routine. Due to the comprehensive training approach of both indoor sessions and outdoor activities, the curriculum also included terrain exercises during the day and at night. In this respect, the highlights were a two-day as well as an eight-day field exercise, which the students had to undergo in order to simulate a combat situation and be tested under physical strain.

In order to graduate, the candidates had to fulfil a range of tasks during the course of training such as short quizzes following the lectures and practical exercises. Moreover, also their performance in the field exercises was taken into account.³¹ The results of these tests provided the basis for job classification, i.e. which position the respective graduate would fill in the specific teams such as prisoner interrogation (IPW) or military intelligence interpretation (MII) that were already formed at the MITC and then attached to units in the various theatres of operations.³² Nevertheless, several of the candidates were also sent overseas prior to their graduation, as their skills were urgently needed at the frontline.

PREVIOUS MILITARY EXPERIENCE				RECORD OF CURRENT SERVICE			
ARM OF SERVICE	YEARS IN EACH	HIGHEST GRADE OR RANK	PRIMARY DUTY	DATE	ORGANIZATION	GRADE	PRIMARY DUTY
N				2-43	QMTR Cp Lee, Va.	Pvt.	Basic
	0			2-43	MITC Camp Ritchie	Pvt.	Student
		M		6-44	Direct Comm. Cp Tirchie		2nd Lt.
			E				
SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE (including COMBAT):				Lectured for clubs, hospitals & organizations on applied psychology--12 yrs. lawyer in Vienna writing "psychology of movements, gestures & handwriting".			
SRWT German, French fluent							
SRWT Italian fair							
SRWT Serb, Croat poor							
CLASSIFICATION							
DR: 6-18-44 2nd Lt.							
TEAM CLASSIFICATION OR OTHER QUALIFICATIONS	DEGREE OF SKILL	DATE OF CLASSIFICATION	MISCELLANEOUS				
Documents			SHORTHAND	No	TYPING	Yes	
			DRIVER	No			
			MANEUVERS	No			
REMARKS: <i>will be a Capt. on Aug 17, 1945 under Sec II</i>							
<i>1-135</i>							
<i>AWT 16-12-44</i>							
			AUS	0555149			
NAME	RANK	A.S.N.	A.S.N.	C.S.N.			
PERL, William	DEML	<i>2/3-24/44</i>	32712824	521	289	<i>High 11/9/13</i>	

Personal History Card of William Perl. Source: NARA, RG 165, E 206, B 45.

INTELLIGENCE WORK IN THE FIELD: THE CASE OF WILLIAM PERL

How diverse the subsequent military careers of the center's graduates were, is shown by a range of well-documented case studies. The majority of the graduates specialized in the interrogation of prisoners of war. One of them was William Perl, a future professor for psychology at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Perl was born in Prague on 21 September 1906 but later moved with his parents to Vienna, where he studied economics,

psychology and law. After his graduation in 1930, he practiced law until the annexation of Austria to Nazi-Germany in March 1938. A devoted supporter of Ze'ev Jabotinsky and his militant Revisionist Zionist movement³³, he partook in the systematic immigration of Jews from Europe to the British Palestine Mandate from 1936 until 1940. He transported them covertly over the Danube and via the Black Sea with the help of Greek smugglers, claiming to have saved approximately 40,000 lives.³⁴ In his endeavors, Perl was also in contact with high-ranking Nazi officials including Heinrich Himmler, who once interrogated

him in Vienna.³⁵ When he was arrested in Greece in 1940 on British orders, he managed to escape and subsequently emigrated to the United States.³⁶

After his new home country had entered the war with Germany, Perl was keen on doing his "share in crushing the enemy"³⁷, as he informed the Navy Recruiting Bureau in May 1942. But his wishes to volunteer in both the Army and the Navy were rejected since he was not yet a US citizen. Only when he made another attempt outlining that he was a resident for the duration of the war, was he inducted into the army in January 1943. Following his basic training at Camp Lee, Virginia, he was finally sent to Camp Ritchie in February of the same year.³⁸ As a member of the sixth class (with the aforementioned Frank M. Brandstetter being one of his fellow students), he first specialized in document examination but then changed to the interrogation of German prisoners of war.³⁹

In May 1943, Perl graduated from the MITC but was not assigned to a theater of operations. Due to his knowledge of and his personal encounters with the Nazi regime as well as his education, he remained at Camp Ritchie and started to work as an instructor, teaching a course on the psychology of the German people as well as on interviewing and interrogation. In his biography entitled *The World of Willy Perl: "The Moses of the Holocaust"*, which is included in his papers at George Washington University⁴⁰, his personal interrogation style is described as a "blend of persuasion and threats, demoralization and misleading hope, appeals to patriotism and ego and to resentment and self-interest".⁴¹ In his mind, it was of utmost importance to interrogate enemies as soon as possible after they had been captured, "while they [were] still in a state of disorientation and shock at becoming prisoners of war".⁴² In his capacity as an instructor at Camp Ritchie, he also introduced a new method of intelligence gathering, which he had already worked on during his time as a lawyer in Vienna: handwriting analysis in order to find out character traits.⁴³ After he had convinced Commandant Banfill of the technique's merits and had set up a graphology section, he and his team analyzed thousands of captured documents that were shipped to Camp Ritchie in order to ascertain the morale and weaknesses of high-ranking German officers.⁴⁴

After the landing of the Allied forces on the beaches of Normandy in June 1944, Perl expressed his wish for participating in the fight against Hitler

more directly and asked for deployment to Europe. Although Banfill was not glad to lose him, as this would also mean an end to the MITC's graphology section, he strongly supported his request, promoting him also to Second Lieutenant: "Lieutenant Perl has an extensive background of training in the fields of applied psychology. I am of the opinion that his special qualifications will be invaluable in the selection of personnel for interrogation at strategic levels. He has conclusively demonstrated his ability to analyze character from the handwriting of the individuals concerned and can isolate their strong and weak points."⁴⁵ Perl was sent to England where he was assigned to the local Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center (CSDIC).⁴⁶ This facility was run by the British War Office in order to enhance intelligence cooperation among the Allies and collect strategic information through the interrogation of captured enemy soldiers⁴⁷, and it was not without irony that Perl was to work there, given the fact that the British had tried to capture him due to his involvement in, from the British point of view, illicit Jewish immigration to Palestine. His British commanding officer, Brigadier General Thomas Kendrick, even knew him very well, as he had been the station chief of the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, also known as MI6) in Vienna prior to the war.⁴⁸ In this context, Perl's affiliation with revisionist Zionism must have represented a major problem for both sides. Kendrick viewed Perl's known links to the Irgun, which had been founded by members of Jabotinsky's movement in the early 1930s, with suspicion, as this militant underground organization was to wage a terrorist campaign on the British Empire due to its policy of restricting immigration to Palestine.⁴⁹ For Perl, on the other hand, the British decision to rigidly close the doors of the Holy Land in knowledge of the Holocaust, especially given his former attempts to save thousands of Jews from the Nazis, was probably only hard to swallow. This might also have been a reason why Perl again asked for reassignment in November 1944, when the Stern Gang, an even more radical offshoot of the Irgun, murdered the British minister for the Middle East in Cairo.

Another aspect was his wish to see combat. Indeed, he had already been sent to France in his capacity for the CSDIC, where he had selected captured Germans close to the frontline, which subsequently had been sent to England for further interrogation.

In order to be among the first troops entering Germany, however, Perl requested transfer to a tactical intelligence unit in the field and was assigned to the Mobile Field Interrogation Unit (MFIU) No. 2, based in Namur, Belgium.⁵⁰ As a result, Perl found himself amidst the Battle of the Bulge. This last major German offensive of the Second World War in the West in Mid-December 1944 caught him completely by surprise as he later stated: “[N]one of the prisoners we had taken could have had any information about the offensive. It was a closely guarded secret”.⁵¹

Attached to the 15th US Army, which entered operational status in January 1945, Perl and his unit were sent to Luxembourg. After the Battle of the Bulge was over and the German offensive stopped, he set foot on German soil in March 1945, ironically in a village called Perl in the Saarland. From then on, it was his job to identify potential sources of national socialist resistance in those areas that had been occupied by Allied troops.⁵² It was also during these days that Perl started to hunt for and interrogate war criminals. This task would remain his major occupation for the next two years. After the war was over, he was assigned to the US War Crimes Branch and in November 1945 became the chief interrogator in the investigation of the Malmedy Massacre, in which Waffen-SS members shot 77 unarmed American prisoners of war during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.⁵³ His role in the trial against the perpetrators held in Dachau between May and July 1946, although highly appreciated by the chief prosecutor Burton F. Ellis, who considered Perl “the best interrogator and investigator that [he] ever had any contact with”⁵⁴, was later heavily debated. Several of the convicted men accused Perl and other interrogators of having tortured them in order to make them confess, even leading up to a Senate investigation in 1949. Perl, who denied having used physical coercion as it was against the Geneva Convention⁵⁵, and would fail anyway, since German soldiers were trained to expect such methods and were prepared to resist them⁵⁶, was finally discharged from active duty in December 1946. Nevertheless, he retained his links with the army; after four years of private practice in New York, he returned to the armed forces as a psychologist, serving in various capacities in Kansas, Germany and Washington, DC, before retiring in 1966.⁵⁷

CAMP SHARPE’S “PSYWAR” COMPANIES: EMANUEL RAPOPORT’S LOUDSPEAKER CAMPAIGN

Intelligence, as described above, did not remain the only purpose of the MITC. During the course of the war, propaganda training was also added to the center’s curriculum, leading to the establishment of a satellite facility for psychological warfare based at Camp Sharpe, Pennsylvania. Given the enormous mass of data and intellectual products generated by the various propaganda and “psywar” branches of the US forces in World War II, they came into existence as functioning Army institutions at an astonishingly late date. Although a Special Study Group for propaganda had been installed by the War Department as early as mid-1941, the field of military psychological warfare was, to a large extent, left to the civilian-led Office of War Information (OWI) and to the Morale Operations Branch (MO) of the OSS in the following months and even years. While the former – deeply convinced of its (left leaning) humanist and political mission – preferred to sing “the gospel of democracy” to the world⁵⁸ and to focus on “white propaganda” (i.e. persuasive news based on facts), the latter focused on any kind of unorthodox and Machiavellian “black propaganda” (i.e. telling plain lies and using other “dirty tricks” to deceive the recipient) – both of which were never fully appreciated by the US Army.⁵⁹

Being ignored or even despised by leading members of the General Staff in Washington and theater commanders in Europe in the early phase of the conflict with the Axis powers, propaganda became widely accepted as an auxiliary weapon and an integral part of warfare towards the end of the war. With the creation of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (PWD/SHAEP) in London in May 1944 and its less important predecessor in the Mediterranean, the Psychological Warfare Branch of the Allied Forces Headquarters (PWB/AFHQ) in 1942 and 1943 respectively, the Army gradually gained control over the civilian “psywar” players in the combat zones. After the Normandy landings and the implementation of the PWD/SHAEP as an authoritative, inter-allied umbrella organization and clearing house for all military related psychological warfare activities in the European Theater of Operations, the often ideological and high-minded political

appeals of the OWI civilians on the one hand, and the somewhat aggressive, experimental and anarchic undertakings of the OSS/MO detachments on the other, were replaced by a military controlled “down to earth” approach. According to Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, a promising military propaganda campaign should not confront the enemy with abstract or sophisticated messages which were “referring to events or values outside the focus of attention and concern”⁶⁰ of an average German Landser. What the US Army needed was therefore a special and “less political” propaganda approach which fitted the pragmatic requirements of the military and also met the basic desires of the enemy audience – as the campaign in Europe had shown, the combination of more or less truthful white propaganda messages with “nonpolitical, commonsense, and straightforward appeals”⁶¹ would turn out to be the most workable formula for psychological warfare against the German ground forces.



“Paraphatroopers” in action. Source: NARA, RG 407, E 427, B 18359.

For attracting the recipients’ attention, such US combat propaganda would directly address the most relevant and existential questions a member of a declining army might ask himself: How can I survive the next day? What is the best way to surrender? What is the overall military situation? How can I get something

to eat? For its fight against the Wehrmacht, the US Army had to create special mobile combat propaganda units able to prepare and print individualized, up-to-date tactical leaflets and perform radio broadcasts or even direct loudspeaker appeals “on the spot”. It needed analytically minded intelligence officers with “[t]he sensitivity and the intimate knowledge of the German psyche”,⁶² who would “sift the mass of incoming data, [...] separate the relevant from the irrelevant and the probable from the doubtful, and [...] integrate what remained into a cogent, reliable and readable summary of [...] intelligence for ‘psychological warfare’”;⁶³ it needed imaginative and creative “symbol manipulators”,⁶⁴ who would write and draw persuasive, substantive and attention-grabbing leaflets; it needed rhetorically skilled loudspeaker men with a charismatic and distinctive voice, willing to take physical risks while directly addressing hostile forces. Overall, it needed propagandists with a special intercultural background and certain cognitive capabilities “to turn [the] mostly prosaic detritus of the crumbling Third Reich into an effective tool of psychological warfare”.⁶⁵ The people with capabilities to meet this desideratum – intellectuals, journalists, authors, graphic designers and the like – could be found in Camp Ritchie.

During the preparations for the Allied landings in North Africa in November 1942 (Operation TORCH) the War Department and the MID/MIS undertook substantial efforts towards meeting the needs described above and to professionalize the propaganda training of the fledgling “paraphatroopers”.⁶⁶ Thus, in December 1942 the First and Second Broadcast Station Operating Detachments were created in Camp Ritchie, which “together formed the First Combat Propaganda Company, the prototype for larger units that were attached to each army overseas”.⁶⁷ Their combat propaganda agenda included “the writing and dissemination of leaflets, oral addresses by loudspeakers, intelligence operations and tactical radio broadcasting”.⁶⁸

With a strength of 39 enlisted men and three officers per detachment, the First Combat Propaganda Company served as a testing ground for the future propaganda companies. Known also as 1st Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company (1st MRBC), it took part in the Mediterranean campaign after Operation TORCH. The initial plans saw the attachment of such a combat propaganda company as a highly mobile and nearly self-sustaining unit to every army in the field

(1st US Army, 3rd US Army etc.). The experiences and setbacks of the 1st MRBC (among its personnel figured conspicuously talented people such as the author Klaus Mann) in the field had shown that the company was “overambitiously organized” and “unwieldy for effective operations”.⁶⁹ As a result of the lessons learned in Africa and Italy, the unit was divided into small task forces and the setup of the later created MRBCs thus changed accordingly. The new MRBC concept resembled a propaganda traveling circus with a high grade of organizational flexibility: “An improvement on the original army propaganda detachments, it was unlike anything seen before. It contained complete public address systems, radios, monitoring sets, loudspeakers, typewriters, printing-presses, and leaflet bombs and was intended to be a self-contained, army-controlled mobile unit that could be dispatched on a moment’s notice to the front for the purpose of conducting tactical propaganda in direct support of military operations”.⁷⁰

In order to provide the MRBCs and their personnel with appropriate facilities and training, the MITC at Camp Ritchie was enlarged by its Pennsylvania based satellite, Camp Sharpe, as the new Psychological Warfare Training Center in November 1943. The rugged landscape there was far less idyllic than the scenery of the main facility in the Blue Ridge Mountains.⁷¹ Camp Sharpe was the “sandpit” of Hans Habe,⁷² a rather ubiquitous propaganda officer and journalist with Austro-Hungarian roots: “Some of the most talented writers and speakers of German-Jewish origin were recruited for this task by the incredibly adroit ‘manager’ Hans Habe, who was able to commandeer an abandoned army post [...] for training purposes and to utilise to the utmost his troupe of Jewish intellectuals for [...] psychological warfare.”⁷³ In Camp Sharpe, the future propaganda specialists learned about the activities of the 1st MRBC in the Mediterranean campaign, composed leaflets and newspapers, simulated real combat situations and wrote scripts for radio or loudspeaker broadcasts.⁷⁴ The camp, which was “loosely organized into the First Provisional Psychological Warfare Battalion”⁷⁵, thus became the nucleus of the 2nd, the 3rd, the 4th and the 5th MRBC – all of which were sent overseas and saw action during or after June 1944.

One of the more spectacular operative jobs for graduates of Camp Sharpe was that of a loudspeaker announcer in a combat propaganda unit. From a distance of only a few hundred meters or less to

the enemy, the MRBC loudspeaker propagandists addressed the listeners from cover or from a mobile talking tank. The mere existence of the latter is a symbol for the remarkable transition the US Army was undergoing regarding the role and acceptance of propaganda and psychological warfare in the field: “The amplifiers, with their sensitive tubes, were installed inside the tank, in a space cleared by removing the ammunition racks. This symbolic act completed the transformation of a shooting tank into a talking tank.”⁷⁶

In mid-November 1944, the city of Geilenkirchen saw one of the first notable combat loudspeaker operations of the US Army on the German Western front. As a minor railroad junction in (today) North Rhine-Westphalia, the culturally rich city was an integral and a relatively strongly defended part of the German Siegfried Line (“Westwall”). For the Allies, Geilenkirchen had “proved itself a tough nut to crack”.⁷⁷ To support the British-led offensive named Operation CLIPPER and the – inexperienced and “green” – troops of the attacking 84th US Infantry Division, the Psychological Warfare Liaison Officer in charge offered the services of his parental unit, the Psychological Warfare Combat Team of the 9th US Army (PWB/9th Army)⁷⁸, to the staff officers at Division Headquarters. For him, the “Geilenkirchen salient”⁷⁹ – which was defended by elements of the militarily weak 183rd Volksgrenadier Division⁸⁰ and other units – would be the ideal place for the use of a tactical leaflet “telling the Krauts that they are encircled and haven’t got a chance”.⁸¹ In his first hand account on the Geilenkirchen operation, PWB commander Edward Caskey points to the crucial fact that, at that time, the city was not yet surrounded. As a follow-up to the proposed leaflets, the PWB liaison officer offered to attach a combat loudspeaker team to the attacking regiments of the 84th Division. After the G-2 and G-3⁸² officers gave their consent to the plan, the aforementioned leaflet was hastily prepared by the PWB/9th Army: “Half an hour later, he [the liaison officer] was sitting in a group, [...] which included the commanding officer, the leaflet writer, the layout artist and the unit intelligence officer.”⁸³

After four hours of intensive teamwork, 30,000 copies were printed and delivered via artillery to the German troops in the city on the night of 18 November.⁸⁴ The message: “Geilenkirchen umzingelt” (“Geilenkirchen [is] encircled”)⁸⁵ should lead the recipients via deductive reasoning to the conclusion

that “[o]nly as prisoners of war can [one] escape annihilation”.⁸⁶ In the early hours of 19 November, the 334th Infantry Regiment and troops of the 43rd British Infantry Division were successfully advancing; from that moment on, Geilenkirchen was actually surrounded and the fresh 333rd Regiment launched the final assault on the city.⁸⁷ Although the statements printed on the leaflets then turned out to be true (the encirclement of the enemy had been rightly anticipated by the bold PWB liaison officer), many German soldiers in Geilenkirchen were not impressed by such written appeals alone. In fact, it was the task of the Austrian-born “Ritchie Boy” and psychological warfare expert Emanuel Rapoport to enforce the messages with direct loudspeaker propaganda.



Tactical leaflet of the 9th US Army Combat Propaganda Team. Source: NARA, RG 407, E 427, B 18359.

Born in Vienna in 1914, Rapoport had immigrated to the US already in 1932. After studying at the renowned Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he worked as a management engineer until he entered army service in July 1943. Upon completion of basic infantry training, he was ordered to Camp Ritchie and underwent IPW training, graduating from the 11th MITC class as a “Typist/Linguist”. After a short intermezzo at the Officers Candidate School in Virginia – Rapoport became only a Technician 4th Grade (equal to a sergeant) – he returned to the

MITC in mid-1944, before he was transferred to Camp Sharpe, in order to specialize in the field of psychological warfare.⁸⁸ As a member of the newly formed 5th MRBC, his day in the camp began at 6:45 a.m. and ended regularly at 5:30 p.m., with occasional night instructions. After an intensive training period of three months, the company went overseas and was split up in two smaller detachments. Rapoport’s newly formed combat propaganda unit was attached to the 9th US Army and became operational in September 1944.⁸⁹ Besides his wartime performance as loudspeaker propagandist, he served also as an interrogator and edited intelligence reports. At the end of the hostilities, Rapoport was “ferreting out war criminals in and around Stuttgart”.⁹⁰

As loudspeaker announcer with the Public Address Section of the Detachment “A” of PWB/9th Army, Rapoport delivered addresses to the enemy that stressed the overwhelming superiority of the Anglo-American war machinery and the hopelessness of any further resistance – at the same time repeating the message of the tactical leaflets and offering a remedy for the existential plight and ongoing misery of the war-torn German recipients: desertion or surrender. A description of an ideal loudspeaker broadcast can be found in the Field Operations Report for Psychological Warfare of the 12th Army Group. The herein given instructions for loudspeaker men like Rapoport put their emphasis on the importance of valuable and accurate intelligence. They are also as pragmatic as they are full of ethno stereotypes about the exaggerated obedience of the “Prussians” to any kind of authority: “The text must have a firm note which stresses the inevitability of death or surrender. The enemy appreciates and is impressed by a detailed report on his tactical situations. The script should be short and contain punch lines which are repeated throughout the address for emphasis. [...] The [loudspeaker] address should be personalized and the unit addressed by name if possible, but all intelligence must be accurate. [...] The script should be free from strategic propaganda and should refrain from argument; [...] The best broadcast script will fall flat if not spoken properly. For the Germans this meant a firm commanding voice, harsh and arrogant. As one prisoner, acting as spokesman for the group that deserted with him, said: ‘They [i.e. the Germans] could not imagine that anyone would lie so loudly and publicly.’”⁹¹



Emanuel Rapoport. Source: NARA, RG 407, E 427, B 18359.

How could one obey these instructions in combat? A good example for the method of merging intelligence nuggets into a tactical loudspeaker broadcast and for giving the enemy the propagandistic impression of American “omniscience” can be found in the records of the 28th Infantry Division. In accordance with the motto “Der Starke braucht die Wahrheit nicht zu scheuen” (“The Strong Need not Fear the Truth”), the text provides the “overpropagandized” and at the same time underinformed German listener with plenty of “straight news”. With its use of religious connoted language (“your comrades have chosen to sacrifice you”) it is also a direct appeal to the basic instinct of survival: “Attention, Attention, all German soldiers from the 1055[th] Regiment of the 89th Infantry division. Here speaks an American GI to you, he has an important message for you. This is not a propaganda broadcast, for we realize that you are indoctrinated with propaganda day in and day out, this broadcast is meant to tell you facts, nothing but bare facts. [...] Do you know that Koenigsberg is captured by the Russians? Do you know that Breslau is completely encircled? Do you know that the Allies are just a few kilometers away from Cologne? All these statements are bare facts, but you might not know these facts. You heard the terrific thunder, roaring high over your heads, you might be wondering what they were up to. They are bombing and strafing your comrades, who have chosen to sacrifice you and have [sic!] are fleeing

towards the Rhine. We know that during the past two days you have been moving all your equipment to the rear. They have left you there to hold the line. You know that this is impossible.”⁹²

Before we examine in detail the activities of an “output propagandist” and loudspeaker announcer such as Emanuel Rapoport, emphasis should be put on the essential work of the psychological warfare intelligence (PWI) officers that fed their fellow colleagues and “propaganda performers” with the most important news on the morale of the opposing units. Daniel Lerner, Lieutenant and chief editor with the intelligence section of PWD/SHAEP, explains the importance of the PWI work: “If knowledge of his target is a primary requirement for the propagandist, then propaganda intelligence [PWI] is one of its most important tools. Especially is this true during a war, when even the most expert propagandist is cut off from his normal sources of information.”⁹³ The most important questions for PWI purposes were therefore: How strong is the enemy’s will to resist? Where are the weak points concerning his morale? How can the incoming intelligence be used for the propaganda output?⁹⁴ A key factor for PWI was the interrogation of prisoners. The impressive wartime record of Jacob Tennenbaum, another Austrian born “Ritchie Boy” and MRBC soldier, shows that PWI “differs from other military intelligence in the sense that it must gather material not only for an appreciation of the situation but also for actual production in the various [propaganda] media”.⁹⁵

Like the aforementioned William Perl, Tennenbaum had been trained as an interrogation officer at Camp Ritchie, before he became a propaganda expert with the 2nd MRBC and was transferred to Camp Sharpe. Two days after the D-Day invasion in June 1944, he landed on Omaha Beach as part of an “intelligence-gathering expedition for the psychological warfare operations that were to follow.” The description of that advance expedition is basically the synopsis of Tennenbaum’s duty as a PWI officer in Europe: “He immediately undertook to gain a picture of the general situation and [...] carried out interrogations of prisoners of war at the newly-established ‘cages’ in the vicinity. His principal aim was to acquire as much information as possible that would be of value to the psychological warfare detachment.”⁹⁶ As chief of intelligence and leading “morale analyst” of the combat propaganda unit of the 1st US Army (PWB/1st Army), Tennenbaum

worked closely with the 1st Army's G-2 section. He read and analyzed thousands of intelligence or interrogation reports, many of them written by his Camp Ritchie comrades.

With his "Weekly Report for Psychological Warfare" he published a widely distributed overview of the incoming propaganda intelligence. For a frontline propagandist like Rapoport, many of the "Inside the Wehrmacht" stories collected in these PWI reports were "grist for his output mill".⁹⁷ In the history of the 5th MRBC the intelligence efforts of Rapoport's 9th Army team are also depicted as a *conditio sine qua non* for producing useful propaganda: "Into the P[risoner of]W[ar] cages went the men, interrogating thousands of German prisoners, writing reports and surveys. From these voluminous reports, G-2 of the Ninth Army was enabled to keep up-to-date on German activities. The information also [...] spewed back at the German Army in the form of radio broadcasts and leaflets."⁹⁸

Whereas the quality, accuracy and timeliness of the "morale intelligence" gathered by the PWI men determined in many cases the results of a loudspeaker broadcast, the well-balanced combination of the various American propaganda stimuli was also a crucial and often decisive factor for the effectiveness of a tactical campaign. In order to undermine the morale of the Wehrmacht soldiers, the PWB combat teams launched a synesthetic assault on all the senses of the recipients, using a nerve-wracking multimedia mixture of leaflet "bombardments", radio programs and loudspeaker addresses.⁹⁹ If, for instance, a war-weary and ideologically disillusioned German Landser¹⁰⁰ who had already been "softened up" by strategic propaganda as well as tactical "how to surrender" leaflets, found himself in a militarily hopeless position (which was often the case in the Geilenkirchen pocket), he was generally more likely to be receptive and "willing to call it quits"¹⁰¹ while hearing a loudspeaker address. As the PWI expert Jacob Tennenbaum noted in one of his reports, it "became evident that leaflets played a vital part in the mental process since many of those deserters admitted having behaved according to instructions issued on our leaflets including the words 'I Surrender.'"¹⁰² Another colleague of Rapoport, the loudspeaker announcer Si Lewen, remembers the address he gave to the enemy after a series of surrender leaflets had been dropped over the German lines and he had moved in with his talking tank: "I

shouted: 'Did you get it already? Ei Sörrender! [German phonetics for the English phrase "I Surrender"] Come on, repeat my words: Ei Sörrender! It's just that simple! Ei Sörrender.' Well, at the end they were able to memorize that."¹⁰³

Having this in mind, we can shed light on Rapoport's performance at Geilenkirchen. A report prepared for the highest PWD/SHAEF echelons came to the conclusion that in one single day (19 November) the transmittal of three loudspeaker broadcasts by Rapoport's team in Geilenkirchen (the last one took place in the devastated city itself) resulted in the capture of 350 prisoners of war.¹⁰⁴ In his somewhat hyperbolic account, the historian of the 5th MRBC writes about the performance of the "first 'official heroes'"¹⁰⁵ of the company: "The activities of the P[ublic]A[ddress] section got off to a rather sensational start with the Geilenkirchen operation. Bombarded first with leaflet section's products, Rap[oport] and Plice went in with their PA and told the 'Jerries'¹⁰⁶ they had better come out with their hands up. They did, 350 of them!" Plice and Rap got the Bronze Star for their labors.¹⁰⁷ The recollections of the Geilenkirchen campaign of another member of Rapoport's company illustrate the interdependence of the various types of propaganda and point strikingly to the fact that being a loudspeaker announcer meant in many cases also being the first target: "The night before, we fired leaflets at the Germans. Then about 10 a.m. we made our first broadcast. We were about 1,000 yards from the town. I put the loudspeaker on top of a bunker of the Siegfried line and Sergeant Rapoport talked from inside the pillbox. The prisoners began coming in very slowly. At 11:30 we broadcast again from another spot on the Siegfried line which was just outside Geilenkirchen. A few more prisoners wandered in. Our troops then entered the town. [...] Then we went into the middle of town and went into a house which was supposed to have some Germans left in it. About that time, Sergeant Rapoport opened up with the loudspeaker and 47 prisoners walked out of the house with their hands up. Ninety per cent of them were carrying our leaflets and were only waiting for us to arrive for them to surrender. I got a jeep full of German sub-machine guns and other things. [...] We started back toward the jeep walking along the road. A sniper opened up on us – and we hit the dirt again. I shall never forget the whine of those bullets."¹⁰⁸

In an article on the Geilenkirchen “psywar” operations, Edward Caskey describes the content of Rapoport’s speeches: “The announcer told the Germans that they are gallant soldiers, and had done all in their power for their Fatherland, but their country could gain no possible advantage from the useless sacrifice of their lives. He pointed out that retreat was impossible, because we held the ground in their rear, and that their only sensible recourse was to surrender.”¹⁰⁹ Caskey stated that the ordinary German soldier would not have known that his position was untenable if he had not been informed via leaflet and loudspeaker by the Americans: “How many American lives would it have cost to take the town, if those 350 Germans had fought instead of surrendering?”¹¹⁰

Towards the end of the campaign in France and Central Europe, the talking tank replaced the open ground broadcasts more and more¹¹¹ – increasing the mobility and immediateness of the loudspeaker operations and reducing the risk for the announcers of being killed or wounded by enemy fire. Although telling mainly a story of unbroken success, the historical report of Rapoport’s PWB company is honest enough to admit that many of the post-Geilenkirchen loudspeaker activities brought “[n]o immediate results”.¹¹² Of course, space should be given here to the legitimate skepticism regarding the self-proclaimed effectiveness of the propaganda efforts of Rapoport and his comrades. The retired German Bundeswehr noncommissioned officer Norbert Rosin, for instance, argued that he could not find any notice on this episode in the records of the 183rd Volksgrenadier Division. For that reason, he supposed that the figure of more than 300 German prisoners taken due to loudspeaker propaganda is identical with the overall figure of captured German soldiers at Geilenkirchen, and that Rapoport’s unit only tried to boost its statistics, as others did as well.¹¹³

Rosin correctly stated that even in the book *The Men of Company K* no mention was made of the PWB loudspeaker efforts.¹¹⁴ Whereas Rosin’s opinion can be seen as a subjective and critical counter narrative of a non-American, post-World War II soldier, the account of the Company K soldiers is based on the – definitely US patriotic – wartime memoirs of infantry men who were members of the 333rd Infantry Regiment of the 84th US Infantry Division in Geilenkirchen. The S-2 journal of this unit mentions that in the early hours of 20 November 1944 (the day

after Rapoport’s broadcasts), a total of 275 prisoners had been taken in its sector since the beginning of the attack.¹¹⁵ It is difficult to estimate how many of them surrendered because of the broadcasts. Another intelligence report of the 9th US Army refers to a synoptic group interrogation of 39 members of the 183rd Volksgrenadier Division, a part of whom had been captured at Geilenkirchen. The main motivation for their surrender or capture seemed to be the overwhelming firepower of the Americans, not their leaflets or loudspeaker addresses: “The U.S. Army attack [on] 18 Nov[ember] was described by [the] PWs as the heaviest and most demoralizing art[iller]y barrage they had ever experienced. Tanks followed so close behind barrage that many troops were too dazed to fire a shot.”¹¹⁶ Even if many of these men might have reacted positively to propaganda, the main credit for the capture of hundreds of German prisoners in and around Geilenkirchen on November 19th has to go to the infantry, the artillery and the armored units.



The “Talking Tank” as mobile propaganda weapon. Source: NARA, RG 407, E 427, B 10649.

The sources and voices mentioned above hardly correspond with the exaggerated figures and the optimism (and, in several cases, plain naiveté) featured in the unit history of Rapoport’s 5th MRBC. An example reads as follows: “The leaflet section [of PWB/9th Army] [...] produced numerous leaflets, so outstanding and convincing that it was exceedingly difficult for a ‘superman’ to resist surrendering. [...] Rod and Plice [both colleagues and/or successors of Rapoport as loudspeaker announcers] were credited with 4000 prisoners. The [public address] section [...] did a lot to make the job an easier one for the Infantry.”¹¹⁷

Thus, when confronted with the often mono-causal conclusions and simplistic “stimulus/re-

sponse” logics of the American propagandists and the auto-affirmative nature of their “reports”, a fair share of skepticism seems to be in order. Although American propaganda units obviously tried to boost their records with questionable figures, and the war was not won with words alone, one fact should not be neglected: The propaganda products of the PWB teams in the field might often have been created in an ad hoc manner (as was the case in Geilenkirchen), but in general they were not produced haphazardly or without analytical guidance. Quite similar to the hermeneutic circle, the “output propaganda” of combat propagandists like Emanuel Rapoport was intertwined and updated with a steady stream of “intelligence input” that derived mainly from the “morale interrogations” of prisoners of war. The collection and analysis of the latter by PWI officers like Jacob Tennenbaum influenced and improved the quality of the former: the production of leaflets and texts for loudspeaker or radio broadcasts were thus part of a never ending, cyclical work in progress. Especially the (PWI-) “interrogation efforts developed into a continuous, multi-voiced dialogue with the German ‘Volksgemeinschaft’”¹¹⁸ which enabled the Americans to harmonize the work of the frontline propagandists with the observed “effects” of the US propaganda and “responsive actions”¹¹⁹ of the German soldiers. With this dialectic, yet down-to-earth approach, the knowledge, skills and activities of the American psychological warfare units were continually extended, (re-)assessed, and placed on a higher, more subtle level. William E. Daugherty claims that this highly pragmatic practice was based rather on empirical learning than on academic rigor: “[O]ur failure to inject exactitude or certainty into our assessment of propaganda effects should not discourage us from making such progress as is possible. [...] ‘Evaluation is based more on experienced judgement than on scientific measurement.’”¹²⁰ As this article and the selected biographies of Austrian-born “Ritchie Boys” in the field have shown, this approach was truly “American”.

CAMP RITCHIE’S SPECIAL CHARACTER

Concluding these first insights into the current ACIPSS project, the extraordinary impact the MITC had on its graduates should be highlighted. As the two case studies have indicated, Camp Ritchie was something very particular; it provided an outlet for the openly anti-militaristic attitude but also the remarkably creative energy of many camp “inmates”, such as the handwriting analysis of William Perl or the persuasive power of Emanuel Rapoport. Formulated in a different manner: typical military features such as hierarchy and authoritarian militarization were softened by moderate anarchy and a stimulating creativity, neither shaking the structural conditions of US wartime society nor those of Camp Ritchie itself. With the MITC and its satellite for propaganda warfare, Camp Sharpe, the US Army had an instrument at hand to take advantage of the creative and intellectual capabilities of these young men. Committed communists such as Hanus Burger were sent to propaganda companies and later deployed as radio editors in the psychological fight against the fascist enemy. Soldiers with an obvious lack of discipline such as Georg Kreisler were still accepted in the camp and later used as entertainers in order to improve the troops’ morale. This created a remarkable, not necessarily militaristic, esprit de corps among the center’s graduates¹²¹, which outlived their training at the MITC and continued to exist during the operative phase of their military service. As the journalist Doris Griesser stated: “In order to channel the strategic skills of these men and use them for its own wartime purposes, the US Army did not insist on the usual military discipline but fashioned Camp Ritchie as a creativity lab in the Blue Ridge Mountains.”¹²² This conclusion is certainly in line with Commandant Banfill’s conviction that “men and not animals win wars”.¹²³

ENDNOTES

¹ Alfred Diamant, Interview with Margarete Joseph, most likely recorded on 6 June 2004. Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Veterans History Project, Alfred Diamant Collection (AFC/2001/001/4944).

² Cf. Joseph T. Simon, *Augenzeuge. Erinnerungen eines österreichischen Sozialisten. Eine sehr persönliche Zeitgeschichte*. Herausgegeben von Wolfgang Neugebauer (Vienna 1979), 278. Translation by Robert Lackner.

³ The authors especially owe their gratitude to US historian Daniel Gross, who generously has shared his long lasting research on Camp Ritchie with them.

Corrections and Notes by the Authors

As our research draws towards its end, we have gained more detailed insights into this fascinating episode in American military history than we had when we published this article in December 2015. Therefore, we would like to take the chance and make some minor corrections, which however have no impact on the major conclusions of this article.

More details on Camp Ritchie itself and its (Austrian) graduates and their wartime biographies, based on primary sources from NARA and other public and personnel collections, will be published in our forthcoming book(s), scheduled for mid-2018 (see also www.acipss.org/research-teaching).

Nevertheless, as we are eager to share our findings with the research community and engage in discussions as soon as possible, we have decided to publish this article for free on the internet, with only one restriction. In order to protect our sources, we have removed the end notes. If you are still interested in the full version, you can contact the Austrian Center for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies (office@acipss.org).

We sincerely ask for your understanding.

Florian Traussnig and Robert Lackner, June 2017

Page 8: MID stands for Military Intelligence Division. It was only formally established in 1918. Its forerunner, the Military Information Division (also MID), was founded in 1885.

Page 9: There are different figures in the MITC training records. If we take into account all of the various courses which were ever held at Camp Ritchie, the total number of trainees amounts to approximately 19,000, as Finnegan correctly states. If we take into account only the eight-week regular course, there were 11,637 graduates; 3,616, soldiers were admitted to the training but did not finish it for whatever reason.

Page 9: Frank M. Brandstetter only spend one year of his childhood in Vienna, where he attended the Theresianum. Later, he spent another year at a school in Upper Austria before moving to Hungary.

Page 9: Altogether, there were 31 classes of the eight-week regular course from July 1942 to October 1945.

Page 11: Perl was not in contact with Heinrich Himmler but with Adolf Eichmann.

Page 12: At the time when Perl arrived at the CSDIC, Kendrick had the rank of a Colonel.

Page 13: Perl was assigned to MFIU No. 1 and not to MFIU No. 2 as stated in his biography.