

# LOOK OUT BELOW!

## Back In Germany

By REV. (Lt. Col.) FRANCIS L. SAMPSON

To bring you up to date—Father Sampson, chaplain of the 101st Division, U.S. Army paratroop corps, cluted into Normandy on D-Day and later into Holland and after the War's end and a year in an Iowa parish, he returned to Chaplain's duty with the Paratroopers for service in Korea.

### CHAPTERS 22 AND 23

As we disembarked at the Port of Bremerhaven in early March, we ran into the last big storm of the worst winter Germany had had in thirty years.

This great port city still bore the scars of the terrific bombing it had taken ten years previously. Traveling the five hundred miles to Augsburg, Bavaria, by train gave us an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the German countryside.

As soon as the storm had abated at midday, the people were out in the fields preparing the land for planting.

Everywhere new buildings were going up, and the intense activity in every town and city went through showed that the Germans were recovering very fast. The collapse of their economy which followed the first world war was not being repeated after the second.

Augsburg, which was to be our home for the next three years, is a city of about two hundred thousand people, surrounded (the old city, that is) by a medieval wall and great protective gates which were vital to the defense of the city in the days of feudal states. It is one of the oldest cities in Germany, having been founded in 14 B.C. by Augustus Caesar, and it still retains many of the old Roman ruins.

The fabulous Fuggerei, probably the wealthiest German merchants in the Middle Ages, had built Augsburg into a thriving and beautiful city. It still retains a touch of its medieval charm in the early Renaissance style of its architecture, in the beauty of its fountain squares, and even in the leisurely manner and the colorful Bavarian costumes of its inhabitants.

Fuggerei village in the heart of the city is said to be the oldest industrial welfare project in history. The head of the great Fuggerei firm built this housing project for his workers. Each worker paid only one and a half marks per month (approximately thirty-five cents in American money) for a small but quite adequate house to live in.

In addition, each family was obligated to say an Our Father and a Hail Mary daily for the Fuggerei family. Local legend has it that the Fuggerei family, Protestant themselves, will continue to survive as long as these prayers are said.

After almost five hundred years the same rate of rent is charged to workers who live there, and the prayers continue to be said by the residents. The village had been completely destroyed by bombs during the war but has been rebuilt by the Fuggerei family.

Though the city was gutted by bombs during the war, the shells of the buildings were reinforced and the original architectural style maintained.

psychologically unfit for military service and sent back to the States. Eventually, however, the division shaped up in good style and became a real credit to the airborne, worthy to be "The Shield of Bavaria."

I had come to Germany with some prejudices against these people, as had many other Americans, a natural carry-over from World War II.

I remembered the villainousness of "The Geek" and "Little Adolf" of Stalag II-A. We remembered the laughter of the innocent of Lidice and the burning of the people of Gradof. We had all seen the evidences of Dachau, Belsen, Buchenwald, and numerous other concentration camps.

The Dutch and the French and the Belgians had described the massacre of hostages. Could I ever forget the eighteen thousand Russians that had been tossed like dogs into common graves after being starved to death in Neubrandenburg?

We are all inclined, I suppose, to blame an entire nation for the actions of its most vicious element. But I was to learn in the next three years that Germany, like our own country, had its good people and its bad, as well as those whose lives are directed by the political expediency of the moment.

Any analysis I might make of the character of the German people must in the very nature of things be somewhat superficial, for who can really know a people unless he is only one of them and sees them not only from the outside but from the inside as well?

Without a doubt the Germans are among the most talented, energetic, and disciplined people in the world. Nearly every major city in Germany had been totally destroyed by our bombers yet in ten years these people had entirely rebuilt them along more beautiful lines than the original.

Roads, factories, schools, churches, public buildings, hospitals, railroads, shops, and places of culture had risen in this short time from the ashes and debris of war to match their counterparts in the most progressive nations of the world. The home and family life were evidently strong and wholesome; religion was publicly and strongly supported; war reparations were being paid without default; Germany's international trade was to leave France, Italy, and even England far in the rear.

The shake-down period for the division was a rather rough one in some respects. The average age of our troops was only twenty, and many of them were only seventeen or eighteen.

Their first experience with the heavy, potent German beer was more than they could handle. In many ways, these boys seemed far less mature than those I had known in the 101st during World War II.

These young men today were mere children during the last war, and their parents were often both working; they lacked some of the home discipline that should be inculcated under normal conditions. Many of them had to learn the hard way that their actions in the Army could not be dictated by the whim or caprice of the moment.

Greater leadership was demanded on the part of the officers to control these men. Then, too, we were in a country where our prestige rested on the conduct of each and every soldier. The bad conduct of a single soldier reflected upon the entire division and upon our country as well.

We had some serious incidents of crime, perpetrated by a tiny percentage of our men, but these men were either tried by court martial or declared



Notorious Nazi and Jew-baiter Julius Streicher was captured at Berchtesgaden in May, 1945, by troopers of the 101st Airborne. Major Henry G. Plitt guards the prisoner.

The Nazi regime was put in drums, and this promise Hitler made that it had a greater ambition than to exterminate Germany's strong opposition Hitler many from its economic do-

What choice did the people have between two dogs of the same breed?

By the time the Nazi party had clearly exposed its world conqueror's ambitions, every means of communication, down to including a conversation over a beer in the village gashaus, was controlled in one manner or another by the read-

Nevertheless, the German people must take some of the responsibility for accepting from the very beginning the Nazi and Semitic program, which all but exterminated the Jewish people in the territory the Nazis controlled.

One might seriously wonder, however, how the course of history might have been changed had the government of Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, 1930 to 1932, been given a better chance by the Allied powers to restore the self-respect of the German people and the economy of the nation. Of course the validity of this hypothesis can only be determined in time by the dispassionate research of impartial historians.

NEXT WEEK—German character.

### New Orleans

## Catholic Schools To Be Integrated

New Orleans — (NC) — Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel of New Orleans has reaffirmed his intention to integrate Catholic schools, saying it will begin as soon as possible, but not later than the public schools.

The announcement was made in a statement issued by a spokesman for the Archbishop. It is the first indication since 1956 of a time when the 75,000-student school system will start a large-scale program of racial integration.

When local public schools will begin desegregation is unknown, but a Federal court now has under advisement a third appeal by the public school board from a February, 1956, ruling that desegregation begin "with all deliberate speed."

THE STATEMENT issued in behalf of Archbishop Rummel said that "it is the sentiment of the Archbishop that integration in education must come."

Just when it will come is very difficult to forecast at the present time, the statement continued, but certainly as far as the parochial school system is concerned, it will come at the earliest possible opportunity, and definitely that time will not be later than when the public schools are integrated.

In the meantime, the statement said, "the church will continue to declare and maintain the correctness from the spiritual and moral standpoint of integration in principle in the various human relationships where enforced segregation is now imposed, notwithstanding our profession of faith in democracy."

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