

MILITARY SCIENCE

Military Toys

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► THE NAZI scientists delight in creating "secret weapons" which have proved to be little more than expensive military toys. Although some of these "toys" have cost many Allied lives and done much damage to civilian and military property, none of them can seriously be considered war-winners.

The "Goliath," a miniature tank, proved a fiasco in Italy and Normandy. This so-called secret weapon is a miniature of a standard tank, five feet nine inches long, of spotwelded light armor construction. Actually it is a remote-controlled mobile land-mine.

The tank is wheeled on a cart to an advance position near enemy objectives. Equipped from the special cart, it is manipulated by an operator with a control box, who crouches in a hideout and unreels 1,800 feet of cable through which he keeps contact with the tank. The German tank cannot move backward, or turn, and it is not radio-controlled.

It was designed to explode mine fields, blow up tanks, and demolish pillboxes. It has failed in all three objectives.

Allied aircraft experts are still puzzled by what the Luftwaffe's "asymmetrical plane, Bv 141" was supposed to accomplish. The single-engine plane is radical in design. The motor is mounted in a thin, cigar-shaped fuselage, slightly off center. A small cockpit, of about the same size as an engine mount on a twin-motored bomber, balances the fuselage in an off-center position. It looks like an Allied medium bomber with the fuselage pushed to the position of the left motor, and the cockpit placed where the right motor is located.

The radio-controlled glider bomb is one of the most famous of German war weapons. This is not to be confused with the even better known "robot" bomb used against England. The radio-controlled glider bomb resembles the standard German bomb, but has short-span wings and a tail. A specially constructed tail contains the radio receiving control apparatus. The propelling rocket is carried in a separate case slung underneath. It is usually carried beneath the fuselage of a conventional plane. When the target is reached, it is released

and from then until the time it explodes it is controlled by radio.

The designing of tricky bombs has been one of the Nazi scientists' favorite pastimes. Recently they developed a "butterfly bomb," with wings that open up as soon as the bomb is released, and act like a parachute to slow its descent. The new bomb is intended for use against troops on the march and in camp. The small but deadly charge explodes a few feet above the ground, showering bits of hot steel on any soldiers within range.

A real radio-controlled tank was first used by the Nazis against the Fifth Army at Anzio. The tank is 12 feet long, six feet wide, and four feet high. It is an explosives carrier rather than a tank, since it carries no armament. Dual controls enable a driver to take the weapon as close to the enemy objective as he dares.

After he leaves, the radio-control equipment is set in operation, guiding the tank to its objective. The machine drops an 800-pound explosive charge, reverses and returns to the driver, who remounts and drives it back to his own lines. Successful drivers of these tanks receive the Iron Cross, second class.

The armor is only three-quarters of an inch at its thickest point. The driver has to expose the upper part of his body to see, since there are neither vision slits nor periscope. The tank has a gasoline motor, and on a good road can move at speeds of about 28 miles an hour.

At least two German weapons have proved to be definite improvements over existing weapons, and very effective in combat. The Schmeisser Submachine Gun MP 40 is light and compact. It takes a nine-millimeter cartridge and can use pistol ammunition. Using the standard cartridge, the range and penetration of the cartridge are superior to that of a .45 caliber gun, but its shocking power is not as great. Soviet soldiers use this gun, captured from the Germans in large quantities, and they are reported to like it.

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NAZI "BEETLE"—United States Navy men take apart an Axis miniature tank loaded with explosives—to see what makes it tick. First used at Anzio, the robot vehicles are sent forward against Allied lines with a mechanism by which they can be exploded at a distance. Allied marksmen in most cases have picked off the "beetles" while they were still too distant to do any damage.