

PSYCHOLOGY

Why POWs Collaborate

► THE PHYSICAL torture of "brain washing" was not what caused some of our prisoners of war in Korea to collaborate with the enemy. In fact, the more our men were abused and mistreated, the less willing they were to collaborate.

This finding, resulting from a study of 579 of the POWs repatriated from Korea, was reported to the Eastern Psychological Association meeting in New York by Dr. Julius Segal of the Human Resources Research Office, the George Washington University. The study was made for the U. S. Army.

Instead of giving in as a result of torture, the men who collaborated with the enemy were those who were susceptible to their captor's inducements of preferential treatment. And when they bowed to the captor's wishes, the captor did actually come through with the preferential treatment, the records showed.

But the few who collaborated—only 15 out of each hundred—did not necessarily become Communists. Among all the POWs, only 12% accepted their captor's ideological teachings to any degree, and among those who did, more than half came away with only a mild affinity toward communism. There was only a moderate relation between the degree of acceptance of communism and the degree of actual collaboration with the enemy.

Five percent of the group of returning POWs are listed as "Resisters." These are men who were recommended for decoration as a result of their meritorious behavior in captivity, and those who performed at least two distinct acts of resistance during internment. Also there was no derogatory infor-

mation presented against these POWs.

The collaborators came home in better physical health than did the resisters. This is attributed to the better medical care given the collaborators. The resisters had better mental health, however.

This does not mean, however, that the collaborators were suffering from any mental illness. They showed more anxiety than the resisters because they were worried about what the Army was going to do about them.

Both the collaborators and the resisters might be considered as "deviates" by psychologists. The collaborators acted in ways that brought them into open conflict with the "laws" that govern our national security, Dr. Segal pointed out. The resisters acted in ways which brought them into conflict with the laws which governed the captor's program of exploitation.

The great majority of POWs (80%), called "Middle Men" by Dr. Segal, were no less "neurotic" than the other two groups but they met the situation by withdrawing and doing nothing and so stayed out of trouble for the most part.

Science News Letter, May 11, 1957

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health Agency For Industrial Chemicals

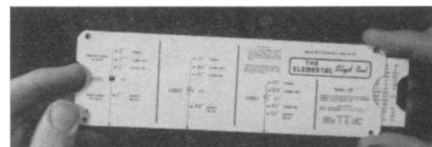
► A TECHNICAL information service to help industry protect its workers from the health hazards arising from the great number of new chemicals introduced each year is being set up by the U. S. Public Health Service.

Named the Occupational Health Information Exchange, the agency will bring together a vast fund of unpublished information from scattered sources, Dr. Harold J. Magnuson, chief, Occupational Health Program, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C., told the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists meeting in St. Louis.

There are an estimated 1,000 to 10,000 new compounds developed every year by industry and one central agency is needed to supply information on their toxicity as well as the toxicity of older compounds and processes, he said.

Science News Letter, May 11, 1957

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