

AGRICULTURE

Food Shortage in Germany

If able to hold out against conquest during the winter, she will have reason to worry about food for the future, with her sources severely cut down.

➤ GERMANY, if able to hold out against conquest throughout the winter, will have reason to worry about food for the future, as her prewar stores of grains and meats are probably exhausted and she has now no sources of food except what can be raised in the Reich itself or in the small portions of adjacent nations that may still be under Hitler's control, such as northern Italy, Denmark, Norway, and western Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The German people have been better fed up until now during this war than they were in 1917-18, according to various sources of information. Hitler prepared for the war during a preceding decade by an actively enforced program to increase the production of farms within the Reich by home gardens, intensive agriculture, scientific farming, increased acreage, heavy fertilization and other means, and in 1938 home production was meeting approximately 85% of the total requirements of the nation.

Also, beginning in 1937, Germany purchased and stored for future use great quantities of grains, fats, sugar and other preservable foods. It also stored large quantities of commercial fertilizers other than phosphates to be used during the planned war to keep up a home production of plenty.

Food supplies taken from the conquered countries during the past five years, added to that in storage, made most articles of subsistence available even if home production decreased somewhat because of a shortage of manpower and machinery. The future food situation for the German people seems now to be beginning to resemble the situation in 1918.

The Balkan states, including Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, have been for four years Hitler's principal granaries, contributing, voluntarily or involuntarily, huge quantities of wheat, barley, rye, oats, corn and other grains both for human consumption and for cattle feed to keep up the Reich milk yield.

These countries contributed, also, great quantities of potatoes, beans, peas, beet sugar, soybeans, and table oils made from rapeseed and sunflowerseed. They sent the Fatherland cotton, flax, wool and hemp for clothing and rope, together with fruit, raisins, wine and tobacco for Hitler's nourishment and comfort. Livestock raised in this area supplied the Germans with beef, pork and mutton.

The principal contributions to the Nazi food supply from Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands, were pork and dairy products. France supplied the Germans with grains, potatoes, sugar, dairy products, poultry, eggs, meat, wines and table oils. Italy's contributions were about the same, but included quantities of nuts and fruit from the northern area, and prior to the Allied occupation of southern Italy, citrus fruits and products, olives and olive oil.

Norway and Finland shipped into the Reich potatoes and grain and considerable meat. Poland and the Baltic states sent potatoes, corn, small grains, beet sugar, vegetables and meat. The Baltic

states raise hens and bees and from them Hitler obtained much poultry and eggs, as well as honey.

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PHARMACOLOGY

Antidote in Dose Makes Curare Use Safer

➤ SAFER ADMINISTRATION of one of the most widely used of drugs, the potent but dangerous d-tubocurarine, is indicated as possible through experiments on laboratory animals reported by Prof. Theodore Koppanyi and Dr. Earl Vivino of Georgetown University School of Medicine (*Science*, Nov. 24).

D-tubocurarine is the purified active principle of curare, originally known as a deadly arrow poison used by South American Indians. It acts primarily by making the muscles powerless. In minute doses it has been found highly useful in situations where muscular relaxation is needed, especially in preventing dangerous convulsions during metrazol shock treatment of mental patients, and in connection with gas anesthesia now widely used in surgery. While highly beneficial in the majority of cases, d-tubocurarine has undesirable effects on some sensitive patients, and has even resulted fatally in a number of cases.

Prof. Koppanyi and Dr. Vivino tried mixing the alkaloids physostigmine and neostigmine, known to be antidotes for curare poisoning, with the curarine before injecting it into the blood streams of their experimental animals. In suitable amounts, this prevented ordinarily lethal doses of d-tubocurarine from producing death. Addition of ephedrine along with the antidotes was found to increase their efficacy in some cases, though ephedrine alone is not effective against curare poisoning.

Another possible significance of the experiments is suggested by the two Georgetown physiologists. The muscle paralysis in curare poisoning resembles in some ways the muscular impotence occurring in the serious disease known as myasthenia gravis. Prof. Koppanyi and Dr. Vivino suggest that the curare antidotes be tried out clinically in the proportions as used in the animal experiments, and together, for the treatment of this disease.

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