

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

700
Rehabilitation program

FROM: WW

DATE: December 1, 1947

TO:

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COMMENTS:

APR 11 1950

SUBJECT: RF, Germany, and WW

First let me remark concerning each of the three impressions you got concerning my attitude toward helping Germany. These three impressions were certainly incorrect, at least in part: and for that I am responsible.

1) Do I think "of the German nation as a monolithic whole, all of whose members are to be thought of as sharing equally in Nazi guilt and to be dealt with as a unit"?

I do not. If I held any such view, I could hardly choose certain elements with which I would propose that we work, and other elements with which I would propose not to work, at least for the present.

2) Do I want to apply Old Testament principles to the Germans "with their continued suffering an accepted result"?

I do not. I prefer to apply the New Testament. I think that, by New Testament standards, the Nazis sinned foully, and that all Germans bear some share of the responsibility. I think that for this they will inevitably suffer, have suffered, and should suffer. I think that all the world must to some extent share this suffering.

3) Do I favor the "rebuilding in Germany of a new intellectual life and culture of any depth"?

I do. But I guess we differ as to the desirable first steps.

It does not seem to me that projects in the upper reaches of advanced scholarship can sensibly be aided in a setting of starving people, homes without heat, school boys without pencils, libraries without books.

Furthermore, advanced knowledge can obviously be used either for evil or for good. One has no right to aid the acquisition of advanced knowledge unless he thinks the chances are at least better than even that the resulting power will be used, and will be used wisely. The economic, social, and political instability of Germany raises real question as to whether such aid

will actually result in power that will be used; and the record of the last 35 years raises a reasonable doubt as to whether the power would be used wisely. These seem to me additional reasons for concentrating, for the present, on more basic needs in Germany and waiting a bit before starting to give them advanced intellectual armament.

As to the remainder of your memorandum, I agree unreservedly with the five points you list under the heading "Morals."

Under "Our Own Self-Interest," I agree wholly with the first five points. As to the sixth, I think an honest intellectual life must be developed in Germany just as rapidly as possible. But I think the presently compelling part of this development relates to reform in elementary and immediate education, youth leadership, and democratic mass leadership through such media as movies, radio, press, etc.

Under the heading "The Effects of Our Policies on Ourselves," I wholly agree with everything you say.

What I would favor is simply this:

A) Concentrate for the present (review within one year) on an effort to establish contact between the German people - particularly German youth - and democratic ideals and procedures. This would involve RJH's recommendations 1 and 2.

B) Conduct this on a broad Foundation basis but not on separate divisional bases.

C) Do this at a level of support that is reasonable from the point of view of our obligations to other countries which may both need and deserve more. On the other hand, we cannot properly disregard the importance of Germany to Europe, nor the enormous potential value of a decent and intellectually active Germany.

D) No divisional actions, for the present, by NS, MS, H, and SS. All divisions would, of course, contribute their knowledge and their suggestions to the general program. IHD program in Germany to be reported in early discussion stages to the person or group responsible for the general German program; and elements of IHD program should not be activated in Germany until it has been mutually agreed by the President, Director of IHD, and the "German Director" that the IHD moves are consistent with the general German program.