

**THE HISTORY OF MIS-Y:
U.S. STRATEGIC INTERROGATION DURING WORLD WAR II**

by

Steven M. Kleinman
Major, USAFR
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14. ABSTRACT As World War II unfolded, the strategic interrogation programs established by the British, German, and American forces evolved into robust collection entities that proved to be a unique source of critical intelligence. Decades after their closure, the spate of academic research into these programs has only recently begun to be addressed. Whereas researchers have made headway in chronicling the British and German programs, relatively little has been written about the U.S. program in operation during the same period. Using recently declassified material from the National Archives and Record Administration, this thesis seeks to capture the essence of the strategic interrogation program conducted under the auspices of the War Department's Military Intelligence Service (code-named MIS-Y) with the mission of bringing selected German POWs from the European Theater of Operations to the U.S. for the purpose of gathering vital intelligence in support of the Allied war effort. This study examines the key elements of MIS-Y, to include the events that led to its founding; the program's organization and facilities; the training it provided for its interrogation and operational support personnel; its methods for screening and selecting high value POWs; its process for interrogation and					
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to two members of the Greatest Generation.

To the memory of my father, Colonel Theodore H. Kleinman, USAF (1919-1991):

Flying strategic bombing operations with the *Bloody 100th* out of Thorpe-Abbots Air Field, UK, his U.S. Army Air Corps B-17 was shot down by *Luftwaffe* fighters on 4 February 1944, his 11th mission. Forced to bail out of his crippled aircraft and wounded by enemy fire during his parachute descent, he was captured by enemy forces. Along with another member of his crew, he nonetheless managed to escape and, with the assistance of the Belgian Resistance, successfully evade the enemy for nine months before being repatriated.

To my mother, Dorothea Kleinman:

Knowing only that her husband had been reported as missing in action, she bravely waited for his return, her faith never wavering despite the seemingly overwhelming odds against him. There can be no doubt that it was the strength of her love that became the guiding beacon that ultimately brought him home. *It always will.*

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF THESIS: The History of MIS-Y: U.S. Strategic Interrogation in World War II

STUDENT: Steven M. Kleinman, Major, USAFR

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THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dr. David M. Keithly, LCDR, USNR

READER: Dr. Jon D. Berlin, Colonel, USAR

Behind the combat operations of World War II, Allied and Axis intelligence services were locked in an impassioned effort to generate the critical advantage intelligence could provide. More than fifty years later, historians continue to piece together details on the array of intelligence activities pursued on both sides that supported the policymaker and battlefield commander alike.

While the impressive accomplishments achieved by signals intelligence programs such as ULTRA and the daring human intelligence operations conducted by the famed Office of Strategic Services have garnered the lion's share of both publicity and academic research, the role of prisoner-of-war (POW) interrogation has remained largely unexplored territory. As World War II unfolded, the strategic interrogation programs established by the British, German, and American forces evolved into robust collection entities that proved to be a unique source of critical intelligence. Decades after their closure, the spate of academic research into these programs has only recently begun to be addressed. Whereas researchers have made headway in chronicling the British and German programs, relatively little has been written about the U.S. program in operation during the same period.

Using recently declassified material from the National Archives and Record Administration, this thesis seeks to capture the essence of the strategic interrogation program conducted under the auspices of the War Department's Military Intelligence Service (code-named MIS-Y) with the mission of bringing selected German POWs from the European Theater of Operations to the U.S. for the purpose of gathering vital intelligence in support of the Allied war effort. This study examines the key elements of MIS-Y, to include the events that led to its founding; the program's organization and facilities; the training it provided for its interrogation and operational support personnel; its methods for screening and selecting high value POWs; its process for interrogation and exploitation of captured documents; the Allied intelligence requirements that drove its operations; and the nature of the intelligence it produced and disseminated.

A primary objective of this thesis is to add to the Intelligence Community's body of knowledge about the challenges and opportunities inherent in the strategic interrogation of POWs. It will also search this event in contemporary military history for timeless principles in the conduct of strategic level interrogation operations—principles that would guide a more effective intelligence program in support of future military operations.

The thesis begins with a brief overview of the nature and history of intelligence. It then demonstrates how the successful POW intelligence program conducted by the British War Office influenced the development of a similar program in the U.S. The study continues by providing detailed insights into the inter-service struggle to develop a strategic interrogation program, including the selection of Fort Hunt, a Civil War-era military camp, as the site for building and operating a Joint Interrogation Center. Finally, this thesis chronicles the unique training designed to prepare MIS-Y personnel for their duties and the systematic methodology for screening, selecting, handling, monitoring, and

interrogating the thousands of high value German POWs that transited Fort Hunt from 1942-1945.

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CHAPTER 1

THE ACME OF SKILL

There is very little glamour attached to the work of interrogation. The customers are many and often far afield, which makes it virtually impossible for any head of military intelligence to appreciate the full value that a Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center (CSDIC) can give to the common effort. A CSDIC transcends the sphere of purely military intelligence and becomes the handmaiden of all Departments and Sections, irrespective of service or politics. It may best be described as a universal agency from which intelligence can be obtained for the best benefit of the whole war machine, limited only in its capacity of output by the number of interrogators and staff available to the Organization.

Colonel D. Macmillan
Senior British Intelligence Officer
Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff
Allied Force Headquarters, July 1945¹

Behind the combat operations of World War II, Allied and Axis intelligence services were locked in an impassioned effort to generate the critical advantage timely, accurate, and comprehensive intelligence could provide. More than fifty years after the end of hostilities, historians continue to piece together the details of the disparate array of intelligence activities on both sides that supported the policymaker and battlefield commander alike.

¹As quoted in Kent Fedorowich, "Axis Prisoners of War as Sources for British Military Intelligence, 1939-1942," *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 2, vol. 14 (Summer 1999): 156.

The impressive breakthroughs made by signals intelligence (SIGINT) during the course of the war, especially the now famous ULTRA program, have been rightfully chronicled at length. Similarly, the substantial contributions of human intelligence (HUMINT), most notably the exploits of the famed Office of Strategic Services (OSS), have been the focus of a number of academic studies and mainstream books.

Prisoner-of-war (POW)² interrogation, a subset of the HUMINT discipline, played a particularly important role for both the Allied and Axis powers. The interrogation of Allied POWs by *Luftwaffe*³ intelligence at the infamous *Dulag Luft*⁴ proved to be a uniquely valuable source of intelligence on Allied air operations. Across the English Channel, the Royal Air Force conducted an aggressive program for exploiting *Luftwaffe* POWs and other captured German military personnel that was indispensable to the intelligence effort during the Battle of Britain. In addition, the intrepid interrogators of Britain's internal security service, MI5, conducted a

²In modern military terminology, captured military personnel are identified by two separate and distinct terms: POW refers to U.S. and/or allied personnel captured and detained by an enemy force. Conversely, enemy military personnel captured and detained by the U.S. and/or its allies are referred to as enemy prisoners-of-war (EPWs). This is an important distinction for intelligence and operational planning purposes. This latter term was not used by U.S. or British forces during World War II. For purposes of consistency and clarity, this thesis will use the term POW when referring to prisoners regardless of origin or status. The single exception will be the use of the term "P/W," a reference to POWs commonly used by Allied personnel that frequently appears in official correspondence.

³German Air Force.

⁴*Dulag Luft* is German abbreviation of *Durchgangslager der Luftwaffe* (transit camp of the Air Force). This was the primary facility for the intensive interrogation of Allied aircrews during the war.

spectacularly successful program for interrogation – and turning – *Abwehr*⁵ spies attempting to infiltrate the United Kingdom.

As World War II unfolded, the interrogation programs established by British, German, and American forces evolved into robust collection entities that proved to be a unique source of critical intelligence for decisionmakers and military commanders. Decades after their closure, the spate of academic research into these programs has finally begun to be addressed. The topic, however, still remains largely unexplored territory. While researchers have begun the effort to chronicle the details of German and British programs, far less is known about the interrogation program conducted by U.S. forces.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Detailed historical records declassified in the last decade have shed new light on the strategic interrogation operation conducted at a secure facility established at Fort Hunt, a national park located near Washington, D.C. The program, known as MIS-Y,⁶ was a carefully guarded secret. Residents of nearby towns were unaware until many years later that a number of the Third Reich's senior military officers were being held at Fort Hunt where they were systematically questioned about issues of supreme importance to the Allied war effort.

⁵The German military intelligence organization.

⁶This compartmented program was designated by the letter "Y" and conducted under the auspices of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS).

An exhaustive review of available literature, however, has yet to uncover a book or academic study that offers an in-depth examination of MIS-Y. While several books make oblique reference to the program, no single volume offers a definitive study.

The Escape Factory, by Lloyd Shoemaker, and *MIS-X*, by A.R. Wichtrich, both of whom served in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II, make brief mention to MIS-Y along with a cursory description of the program's mission, manning, and organization. These two references also presented useful detail on the processes within the Military Intelligence Service that led to the development and implementation of MIS-Y.

Military Intelligence, an Army Lineage Series publication, offered one of the better contemporary references on the origins and operations of the Military Intelligence Division and Military Intelligence Service during World War II. While lacking depth and academic rigor, it was nonetheless a helpful general overview of the mission of MIS-Y and its place in the greater military intelligence structure.

Prisoners of War, by A.J. Baker, and *P.O.W.: The Uncivil Face of War*, written by Richard Garrett, presented comprehensive research into the POW experience. These volumes included well-researched data on the historical, legal, and psychological aspects of life as a military servicemember in the hands of the enemy. Of additional value were the chapters on British and German interrogation efforts during World War II.

Axis Prisoners of War as Sources of British Military Intelligence, 1939-42, written by Kent Fedorowich, *Into the Horse's Mouth: Luftwaffe POW's as Sources*

of Air Ministry Intelligence During the Battle of Britain, by Kevin Jones, *Camp 020: MI-5 and the Nazi Spies*, produced by the British Public Records Office, and *Escape and Evasion: Prisoner of War Breakouts and the Routes to Safety in World War Two*, by Ian Dear, served as the primary references for details concerning the British strategic interrogation program and its support for the development of MIS-Y. In addition, the Fedorowich and Jones journal articles provide a helpful model for conducting historical research into a military intelligence activity.

Similarly, *Hitler's Spies*, written by David Kahn, *The Interrogator*, from Raymond F. Tolliver, *Stalag Luft III: The Secret Story*, by Arthur A. Durand, and *German Military Intelligence, 1939-1945*, produced by the Military Intelligence Division of the U.S. War Department, offered penetrating insights into the Luftwaffe interrogation efforts throughout the course of the war. The details included in these works provided valuable data from which to compare and contrast the MIS-Y program with that concurrently conducted by the main adversary in the conflict.

The Intelligence War, edited by Lt Col Roger Cirillo, *Intelligence in World War II*, a journal article written by David Kahn, and a JMIC thesis, *Eisenhower and Intelligence in World War II*, prepared by Marilyn McCabe, provided invaluable background on the larger intelligence effort of which MIS-Y was a part. These sources, along with a War Department study, *MIS Contribution to the War Effort*, aided immeasurably through the presentation of the larger intelligence context of the war.

The Laws of War: A Comprehensive Collection of Primary Documents on International Law Governing Armed Conflict, by Michael Reisman and Chris

Antoniou, and volumes 59, 60, and 62 of the Naval War College International Law Studies series served as the fundamental references for examining the legal aspects of MIS-Y's activities. Broadly recognized international law has established a definitive protocol governing the handling and treatment of prisoners-of-war. Guidelines obtained from these sources provided a greater appreciation for the challenges facing MIS-Y in adhering to that protocol.

In the effort to examine the myriad events, processes, organizations, and personalities that led to the creation and subsequent operation of MIS-Y, however, the primary source of literature on this thesis were found in the historical records held at the National Archives and Records Administration. These holdings are comprised of broad spectrum of materials including:

1. Unit Histories
2. War Department and Service Memoranda for Record and Official Correspondence
3. Planning Documents
4. Budget and Finance Documents
5. Biographies of Principals
6. Interrogation Reports, Transcripts of Interrogations, and Transcripts of Taped Conversations (from clandestine monitoring of prisoners in holding areas)
7. Weekly and monthly Lists of POWs held at Fort Hunt
8. Weekly and Monthly Reports on Interrogation Activities
9. Interrogation Training Materials, to included Lecture Notes
10. Military Orders
11. Photographs and Schematics of the Fort Hunt MIS-Y Facilities

These documents, originating from a variety of military agencies, were generated during the period of the war when MIS-Y was operational (1942-1945) and during the years shortly after the conclusion of the war when memories were fresh and supporting documents still readily available. A systematic review of these historical documents facilitated a detailed reconstruction of the MIS-Y program.

SCOPE OF INQUIRY

This thesis seeks to capture the essence of the MIS-Y strategic interrogation program and the challenges of obtaining intelligence through the interrogation of German prisoners-of-war in support of the Allied war effort. This study will examine the key elements of the MIS-Y strategic interrogation mission, to include the program organization; procedures for screening, selecting and handling POWs; training for interrogators; methods of interrogation; Allied information requirements; and intelligence collected.

A fundamental objective of this thesis is to add to the Intelligence Community's (IC) body of knowledge about POW interrogation by describing the organization, operations, and intelligence production of the MIS-Y program. In addition, it will search for timeless principles that guide the effective conduct of strategic level interrogation operations that would enable an intelligence organization to more effectively exploit that unique source of intelligence in future conflicts.

THE SELECTION OF THE MIS-Y PROGRAM AS A TOPIC OF INQUIRY

The U.S. military conducted the strategic interrogation of captured prisoners in every major conflict of the 20th century, to include post-World War II military operations in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. It has even become a topic of significant debate in the media as the early months of America's war on terrorism unfolded. Given the continued employment of interrogation as a tool of modern intelligence collection, there is considerable value to be obtained from an in-depth study of such a program conducted in the past.

In addition to the fact that a research void exists with regard to the MIS-Y program, features of the program itself warrant systematic scrutiny on behalf of the IC. MIS-Y was therefore selected as the topic of study for this thesis based on several important criteria:

1. It was the last time a strategic interrogation program was conducted during a war of global proportions.
2. It was the last time strategic interrogation was conducted as a large-scale, centralized, unilateral (i.e., U.S. only), joint program that remained in place throughout the course of the conflict.
3. It was the last time strategic interrogation operations were managed as a classified program and conducted under applicable operations security (OPSEC) guidelines to shield its existence from unauthorized disclosure.

As this thesis will demonstrate, MIS-Y operations were conducted in accordance with the best traditions of HUMINT tradecraft. The cadre of interrogators was comprised of carefully selected, well-educated, highly trained officers. They were drawn from a broad array of professions, to include academics

recruited from America's most prestigious universities and successful businessmen and attorneys from the private sector. They invested their considerable skills in research, flair in interpersonal relations, mastery of foreign languages, knowledge of international political and economic affairs, and expertise in military-related topics to systematically exploit the extensive intelligence available from the captured German officers and technical specialists they would encounter.

Given these unique attributes and the invaluable access to detailed program files, an incredible opportunity exists to examine carefully a historic precedent for the conduct of an intelligence collection program. Further, the insights drawn from the study of MIS-Y have the potential to enhance current and future operations and form the basis for a major revision of existing doctrine governing the conduct of U.S. interrogation operations.

THE ISSUES

The examination of MIS-Y operations within the context of this thesis will be driven by the effort to address a number of key questions. These include the following:

1. What were the central political-military and operational factors that led to the formation of the MIS-Y strategic interrogation program? What Allied and interservice factors influenced the ultimate development of the program?

2. How was the program initially funded, organized, and managed? What changes occurred in these areas over time? What events brought about these changes?
3. What was the formal mission assigned to MIS-Y? How did the nature of the mission change over time? How effective was MIS-Y in executing its mission?
4. How were MIS-Y personnel trained for their duties as interrogators and operational support specialists/technicians? What formal and/or on-the-job training programs existed to prepare MIS-Y personnel for their duties?
5. What screening criteria and procedures were established for selecting and transporting EPWs to Fort Hunt for in-depth interrogation? Where did screening activities occur? How did MIS-Y interrogators participate in/support this activity? What guidance did MIS-Y interrogators provide to screeners in the field?
6. What processes were used to conduct the exploitation of POWs (i.e., prioritization, methods of interrogation, means of verifying veracity, selection of EPWs for repeated interrogation, imposition of security and segregation of EPWs, etc.)? What influence did the experienced British interrogation effort have on MIS-Y operations? How did operational methodology compare to the British and German interrogation programs being conducted during this period?

7. How was the information gained from the interrogations recorded, analyzed, evaluated, maintained, and disseminated? What intelligence requirements were levied on MIS-Y?
8. What operational and/or command principles for strategic interrogation, drawn from the experiences of World War II, could be applied to modern day intelligence challenges?

RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis will seek to achieve an overarching descriptive objective through a univariate research design of historicism. Where appropriate, modern-day intelligence terminology will be used to describe key processes. By enhancing the development of the MIS-Y story by analogy, a more relevant framework can be constructed through which the program's critical elements can be examined.

RESEARCH CLASSIFICATION

The historical nature of this thesis and the status of the supporting research materials facilitated an unrestricted examination of the topic in an unclassified format. The entire body of literature reviewed in the course of preparing this thesis was unclassified. As noted previously, the archival records held at the National Archives and Records Administration were either originally unclassified or formally declassified since their creation.

OVERVIEW

Chapter 2 will address important historical and operational aspects of interrogation. The objective here is to provide the reader with a sufficient understanding of the discipline to appreciate the challenges faced by MIS-Y personnel in executing their mission. The brief historical review will provide important insights into the role of interrogation in conflicts dating back to some of the earliest periods of civilization. Similarly, a discussion of the multifold nature of interrogation will help establish the proper context for the examination of interrogation as a means of collecting vital intelligence in support of decisionmakers and military commanders.

Chapter 3 describes the origins of MIS-Y, beginning with the experience of the British interrogation program and its impact on the establishment of an American counterpart. It follows the evolution of the program from a proposal set forth by the Office of Naval Intelligence through a War Department study to the development of a Joint Interrogation Facility at Fort Hunt, VA.

The unique training required of MIS-Y interrogators is outlined in Chapter 4. This includes a review of the basic training presented at Military Intelligence Training Centers and details on the sophisticated insights offered by a uniquely qualified intelligence professional.

Chapter 5 presents an examination of the unique challenges of managing a joint program in the pre-joint military era. It explains the interservice problems that arose

and the effort to resolve them as well as a description of the standard operational procedures that were ultimately created.

Chapter 6 provides a systematic review of the interrogation process. Beginning with a consideration of the collection requirements that drove interrogation operations, this chapter will outline the POW screening, selection and transportation processes, interrogation methodology, and the extensive monitoring operations in place at Fort Hunt.

In Chapter 7, the thesis concludes with an examination of the enduring lessons that can be drawn from the MIS-Y experience along with several recommendations for additional research.

CHAPTER 2

INTERROGATION IN WAR: TRACING THE ROOTS OF MIS-Y

There is no doubt that the role of British intelligence...during the Battle of Britain was a decisive one [and] there is equally little doubt that POW intelligence made a significant contribution to that decision.

Kevin Jones
University College, London, Author
*Into the Horse's Mouth: Luftwaffe
POWs as a Source of Air Ministry
Intelligence During the Battle of Britain*⁷

THE NATURE OF INTERROGATION

The term "interrogation" can generate an array of emotionally charged images and continues to be a source of significant misunderstanding for both the intelligence professional and the layman. Physical coercion—from the subtle to the horrific—has all too often been portrayed in the media as a seemingly integral part of, perhaps even a synonym for, the interrogation process. Unfortunately, the history of the discipline is filled with far too many instances where interrogation was simply a guise for torture; sadly, such inexcusable behavior still remains an option of first choice under certain political regimes.

⁷Kevin Jones, "From the Horse's Mouth: *Luftwaffe* POWs as Sources for Air Ministry Intelligence During the Battle of Britain," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 76.

For centuries, interrogation has been a multifaceted tool employed by one power against another. To better understand this phenomenon, Paul Fein, in his dissertation *We Have Ways...: The Law and Morality of the Interrogation of Prisoners of War*, provides an insightful perspective. In this unique study, interrogation is divided into three general categories based upon objective.

The first category is *Interrogation to Obtain Military Information*.⁸ The fundamental intent of this thesis is to examine a specific instance in contemporary history where interrogation operations were used as a vehicle for the collection of intelligence. Interrogation for this purpose, therefore, will be addressed in substantial depth in subsequent sections.

The second category is *Interrogation in Order to Convert*. In this instance, the surrender or capture of enemy forces, thereby removing the threat they would pose on the battlefield, falls short of achieving overarching political-military goals. As described by Fein: "The prisoner of war was now expected to become one with, or at a minimum to side with, the capturing power."⁹ Under such a scenario, the concept of "political indoctrination" or "re-education" plays a paramount role and is accomplished through a combination of psychological and physical pressures supplemented with hours of compulsory rote memorization of political doctrine. Fein's study credits the Chinese Communists during the Korean War with the first large-scale employment of interrogation emphasizing political objectives over the

⁸Paul Fein, *We Have Ways: The Law and Morality of the Interrogation of Prisoners of War* (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Washington, DC: Georgetown University, 4 November 1994), 112.

⁹Fein, 121.

gathering of intelligence. He describes this event as the "first war in history fought both *for* ideological purposes and *by* ideological means."¹⁰

The third category is *Interrogation in Order to Break the Will*. This form of interrogation is exclusively focused on a single objective: to compel the prisoner, through any means necessary, to perform an action he would not otherwise accomplish under his own volition. While intelligence may be obtained in the course of the interrogation, it remains a secondary interest. The production of propaganda—through, for example, signed "confessions," recorded statements, or staged photographs—is a common objective that drives this form of interrogation. The often brutal treatment of captured U.S. military personnel held by the North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War provides a graphic example of interrogations under this category. In most instances, U.S. personnel were accused of having committed criminal acts and denied even the most fundamental rights of captured prisoners of war under widely recognized international accords.¹¹

During World War II, the temporal setting for this thesis, interrogation was conducted by the intelligence services of all the participants to the conflict. There was, however, considerable disparity in terms of the methods employed and overall objectives. While U.S. strategic interrogators, along with their British and German military intelligence counterparts, employed sophisticated techniques designed exclusively to gather critical intelligence data, other organizations operated with a considerably different agenda.

¹⁰Fein, 120.

¹¹Fein, 129-135.

The *Gestapo*,¹² Germany's internal security apparatus, used interrogation less for the information gathering benefits than as a cruel and highly effective means of mass intimidation. Their methods stood in stark contrast to those employed by the U.S. interrogators described in great detail in later chapters. Joseph Persico, in his book *Piercing the Reich*, provides a graphic characterization of the Gestapo's methods.

The primary objective...was intimidation in support of the greater goal of mass subjugation. Before an interrogation began, the suspect was routinely roughed up for the shock value. The effect of this arbitrary viciousness was to daze, humiliate, and throw the prisoners off balance at the outset in the contest of wills with their inquisitors. Once begun, the process was nearly irreversible. If the prisoner has nothing to say under mild torture, the screws were progressively tightened. He might be dead or dying before his tormentors could bring themselves to accept that he did indeed know nothing. Prisoners were routinely beaten until their kidneys were torn from their protective tissue. They were punched and kicked until the face was a toothless, shapeless mass.¹³

INTELLIGENCE AND STRATEGIC INTERROGATION

The interrogation of captured enemy prisoners of war as an intelligence collection discipline in support of military operations has a history that dates back to the earliest periods of human civilization. Its vital role in providing critical intelligence to military commanders was eloquently captured over 2,000 years ago by the legendary strategist Sun Tzu in his classic treatise, *The Art of War*:

¹²*Gestapo* was an abbreviation of the German *Geheime Staatspolizei*, or secret state police.

¹³Joseph E. Persico, *Piercing the Reich: The Penetration of Nazi Germany by American Secret Agents During World War II* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1979), 81-82.

What enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men, is *foreknowledge*. Now this foreknowledge cannot be elicited from spirits; it cannot be obtained inductively from experience, nor by any deductive calculation. Knowledge of the enemy's disposition can only be obtained from other men.¹⁴

This passage reflects a unique aspect of interrogation that sets it apart from other means of intelligence collection: its ability to gather intelligence through direct and ongoing contact with the enemy. It does not involve remote sensing of images or the passive collection of signals. This is an uncommon feature even within the HUMINT discipline. Operational security concerns in the running of agent operations, for example, often limit the amount of direct interaction a case officer has with a recruited source. In the course of an interrogation, collectors and analysts are not left to question what was meant by a phrase collected by SIGINT or the nature of the activities inside a structure viewed through imagery intelligence (IMINT). These questions, and those that flow from the responses, can be addressed directly by a source—the POW—who can, under the right circumstances, provide immediate answers.

During World War II, POW interrogation played a prominent, if uncelebrated role. Sir Harry Hinsley, who served as the official historian for British intelligence during the war, cited interrogation and the exploitation of captured documents as a principal source of intelligence during the war (along with espionage, aerial reconnaissance, and SIGINT). He notes, however, that while the other collection disciplines have been intensely studied and described in numerous publications,

¹⁴Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, ed. James Clavell (New York: Delacorte Press, 1983), 77-78.

"HUMINT, and prisoner of war interrogation in particular, has suffered from a dearth of academic attention."¹⁵

In interrogation as characterized by Sir Harry—and as examined in this thesis—the primary objective of an interrogation is the collection of actionable intelligence. This is reflected in modern U.S. doctrine pertaining to interrogation as defined in U.S. Army Field Manual 34-52, *Intelligence Interrogation*.

The art of questioning and examining a source to obtain the maximum amount of useable information. The goal of any interrogation is to obtain useable and reliable information, in a lawful manner and in the least amount of time, which meets intelligence requirements of any echelon of command. Each interrogation has a definite purpose—to obtain information to satisfy the assigned requirements, which contributes to the successful accomplishment of the supported unit's mission. The objective may be specific, establishing the exact location of a minefield, or it may be general, seeking order of battle (OB) information about a specific echelon of the enemy forces.¹⁶

Interrogations, like the military operations they directly support, are conducted at three levels of orientation: tactical, operational, and strategic. Few written definitions of these terms receive universal acceptance and the potential for confusion only increases under real-world conditions. For the purpose of this thesis, the use of these terms will be in accordance with the following definitions drawn from the 1997 edition of *An Intelligence Resource Manager's Guide*. As noted in that publication, terms such as operational are essentially "gradations between tactical and strategic."

Tactical Intelligence: Time-sensitive, perishable information about foreign entities that supports military tactics and operations. It is narrowly focused in

¹⁵As quoted in Jones, 60-61.

¹⁶Department of the Army, Field Manual 34-52, *Intelligence Interrogation* (Washington, DC: GPO, 8 May 1987), 1-0. Cited hereafter as Department of the Army, FM 34-52.

scope to meet the needs of its principal consumers, combatant military commanders.¹⁷

Strategic Intelligence: Intelligence whose principal consumers are national-level civilian and military policymakers. This intelligence is broader in scope, and more encyclopedic and/or estimative in nature than tactical intelligence. It provides these consumers with information concerning capabilities, plans, and intentions of foreign entities and serves as the basis for our own military strategy, foreign policy, and other national priorities.¹⁸

In examining the nature of the collection operations conducted by U.S.

interrogators in World War II, a supplemental definition for strategic intelligence provides additional useful context. This definition, drawn from the Joint Military Intelligence College's handbook, *Intelligence Warning Terminology*, details with more precision the overarching focus of the collection effort by describing the components of strategic intelligence as including " such characteristics as biographic data, economic, sociological, transportation, telecommunications, geography, political, and scientific and technical intelligence."¹⁹ The applicability of this particular characterization will become evident in later chapters outlining the intelligence collection requirements and questioning guidance provided to U.S. interrogators.

¹⁷Joint Military Intelligence Training Center (JMITC), *An Intelligence Resource Manager's Guide* (Washington, DC: JMIC, 1997), 5.

¹⁸JMITC, *An Intelligence Resource Manager's Guide*, 5.

¹⁹Joint Military Intelligence College, *Intelligence Warning Terminology* (Washington, DC: GPO, 2001), 34-35.

A CONDENSED HISTORY OF INTERROGATION

As a vehicle for HUMINT collection, the interrogation of POWs has made significant contributions to the intelligence effort throughout military history. In ancient Egypt, intelligence derived from EPW interrogations provided a critical edge to Pharaoh Ramses II at the battle of Kadesh. In modern times, General Norman Schwarzkopf wrote in his memoirs about the unique value provided by EPW-derived intelligence in planning combat operations during Operation Desert Storm. In the current war against terrorism, a formal effort is underway to systematically interrogate members of the al-Qaida network at the strategic interrogation center in Guantanamo Bay.

Hanns Scharff, a Luftwaffe interrogator during World War II, demonstrated remarkable skill in extracting valuable intelligence from Allied aircrews. His accomplishments are noteworthy not only for the incredible volume of intelligence he was able to gather, but equally due to the fact that he was able to compel his prisoners to reveal classified data almost exclusively through the use of carefully orchestrated, apparently friendly exchanges with his prisoners. Drawing upon his considerable experience and extensive study of the art of interrogation, he offers this observation concerning the timeless value of interrogation as a form of intelligence collection:

As long as wars have been waged on this earth, captors have taken the right to question captives. As long as POWs are interrogated, they will talk. No patriotism, no self-control, no logic gives any man enough strength to repel relentlessly pressed attacks utilizing accumulated combinations of facts and circumstantial evidence. The methods of wringing these words from a POW

may differ widely, from genuine affability to gruesome brutality, but the results are the same.²⁰

The interrogation of POWs is one of the earliest forms of intelligence collection and a key element of intelligence in support to military operations. In 207 BC, during the Second Punic War, Roman troops captured messengers sent by Hasdrubal to his brother Hannibal. In the course of the subsequent interrogation, the prisoners admitted to having a sealed message from Hasdrubal. This message, which outlined plans for linking the two Carthaginian military formations on the eastern coast of Italy, was used by the Roman commander Claudius Nero to launch a preemptive strike on Hasdrubal's forces. The intelligence derived from the interrogation of these prisoners-of-war enabled Rome to achieve a decisive victory over the Carthaginian forces and continue on its road to building a dominant empire in the western world.²¹

The ancient Egyptians also sought to exploit the intelligence potential of captured prisoners. In one of the earliest recorded instances of prisoner interrogation, the forces of the Pharaoh Ramses II gathered invaluable information from captured Hittites during the battle of Kadesh. The Hittite king had dispatched two Bedouins who presented themselves as deserters to the Pharaoh's forces. The operatives convinced Ramses II to move only a single division forward to Kadesh and bring the other three slowly behind. Fortunately for the Pharaoh, disaster was avoided when Egyptian forces captured two Hittite spies. Under brutal interrogation, the spies admitted that the entire Hittite army waited in ambush beyond the city of

²⁰Raymond F. Toliver, *The Interrogator: The Story of Hanns Scharff, Master Interrogator of the Luftwaffe* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing Ltd, 1997), 114.

²¹David Kahn, *Hitler's Spies* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1978), 27.

Kadesh. While Ramses II was ultimately successful, his focus on the original intelligence failure almost cost him the battle.²² In an almost prophetic glimpse of the future, the Egyptians prevailed despite its failure to take full advantage of this timely information.²³

Interrogation was a frequently employed means of collecting intelligence on an adversary during America's early military history. In the Civil War, interrogation was a mainstay of intelligence gathering. The common language among the opposing forces and broad knowledge of opposing commanders and order of battle made such efforts far less challenging than in other conflicts. A unique aspect of the interrogations conducted during this period was the direct and recurrent involvement of senior officers, including such notable figures as Generals McClellan, Meade and Sheridan in the "thorough and coordinated" examination of captured prisoners.²⁴

INTERROGATION AND THE AGE OF VERBAL INTELLIGENCE

Moving into the modern era, the potential value of interrogation during war gained wider acceptance along with the ascendance of intelligence itself as World War I dawned on the European continent. David Kahn, a prodigious author on

²²Francis Dvornik, *Origins of Intelligence Services* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1974), 12-14, quoted in Fein, 70.

²³The compliance of the prisoners cited in both of these examples is reported to have been gained through the threat and/or infliction of physical duress. The modern laws of armed conflict specifically outlaw such actions as a mode of acceptable interrogation.

²⁴Peter Maslowski, "Military Intelligence Sources during the American Civil War: A Case Study," *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Military History Symposium*, 12-14 October 1988 (Colorado Springs, CO: U.S. Air Force Academy, 1988), 49, quoted in Fein, 73.

military intelligence topics, addressed this key inflection point in his book on Germany's intelligence efforts during World War II, *Hitler's Spies*. Kahn delineates intelligence into two primary categories: physical intelligence (i.e., intelligence derived from things) and verbal intelligence (i.e., intelligence derived from words). He cites aerial photographs and the bodies of fallen soldiers as examples of the former, while a report on enemy morale or a stolen document outlining adversary mobilization plans would be examples of the latter. Kahn asserts that in the course of the first 4,000 years of warfare, physical intelligence provided the preponderance of intelligence for political and military leaders. With the advent of World War I, however, conditions had evolved whereby the collection of verbal intelligence – specifically including the interrogation of prisoners – became the predominant mode. This momentous transition, ushering in an era when verbal intelligence would be accepted over the longstanding preference for the physical, was driven, in Kahn's view, by a simple battlefield practicality: "It gave enough commanders enough time in enough cases to win perceptible numbers of victories."²⁵

As the First World War gave way to the Second, it was a combination of both new technology and the evolution toward verbal intelligence that set the stage for the emergence of SIGINT as a viable means of intelligence collection. Conversely, the rise of verbal intelligence only enhanced the perceived operational value that had long been inherent in the craft of interrogation. But to maximize this potential, it required the creative initiative of a small cadre of intrepid British intelligence officers.

²⁵Kahn, 39-41.

CHAPTER 3

BUILDING MIS-Y: A CONFLUENCE OF EVENTS

If there were to be another long term war, much could be learned from this history. Recommendations would be many and they would be sound. It could be pleaded that there should be an adequacy of trained intelligence personnel. It would be reasonable to have an interrogation centre ready at the beginning of the war rather than an improvization ten months later in the face of an invasion. It would be well to have a war establishment sanctioned in advance to save the time of trained intelligence officers from haggling over the necessity for a warder or a sanitary man. Women are as dangerous as men, but they cannot be housed in a place such as [an interrogation centre] because of democratic inhibitions. The provision of adequate office equipment would make it unnecessary for trained and bilingual secretaries to have to turn the handle of a duplicator, in the manner of a mangle, for five years. As it could go on until the formidable list were complete.

Lieutenant Colonel R.W.G. Stephens
Commandant, MI-5 Interrogation
Centre (Camp 020), 1940-46²⁶

While the personnel of MIS-Y demonstrated an extraordinary degree of ambition and imagination as the program evolved, the fundamental concepts and methodologies were drawn from an American ally with a long and distinguished history of conducting HUMINT operations in peacetime and during war: Great Britain.

²⁶Public Records Office, *Camp 020: MI5 and the Nazi Spies* (Bath, UK: Bath Press Ltd: 2000), 103-104.

THE BRITISH MODEL

Within the context of Kahn's new philosophical construct described in last chapter—the shifting from physical to verbal intelligence—the role of interrogation as a military intelligence discipline was being carefully reexamined. In the closing years of the World War I, senior officials in British Intelligence began to recognize the potential intelligence value to be drawn from both German POWs and British servicemen returning to the UK after escaping from German POW camps. This led to the creation of a small office within the British War Office given the task of examining options for more effectively exploiting these sources. Not unexpectedly, impetus for further action in this area waned as the war formally ended. The concept, however, was not forgotten.

As World War II dawned on the horizon, a formal directive from the British Director of Military Intelligence (DMI) in December 1939 created a distinct—and secret—sub-branch of military intelligence vested with the exclusive responsibility for POW-related intelligence operations. Designated as MI9, the branch was quickly pressed into service, racing against time to adequately organize and equip for the monumental challenges ahead.²⁷

After 50,000 British soldiers were taken prisoner during fighting at Dunkirk in 1940, the intelligence gathering and escape and evasion support mission assigned to MI9 drew increased emphasis.²⁸ Faced with such a challenge, the DMI selected a

²⁷Ian Dear, *Escape and Evasion*, (London, UK: Arms and Armour Press, 1997), 11.

²⁸Lloyd R. Shoemaker, *The Escape Factory* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 8.

dynamic and colorful officer, Major Norman R. Crockatt, as the unit's first chief.

Under his inspired command, the unit established the following primary objectives to be achieved:

1. To facilitate escapes of British POWs, thereby getting back service personnel and containing additional enemy manpower on guard duties.
2. To facilitate the return to the United Kingdom of those who succeeded in evading capture in enemy occupied territory.
3. To collect and distribute intelligence information.
4. To assist in the denial of information to the enemy.
5. To maintain morale of British POWs in enemy camps.²⁹

Long overlooked as a potential source of intelligence, POWs are commonly located near enemy military installations and lines of communication, to include rail lines and airfields. One of MI9's fundamental tasks, therefore, was the development of a host of clandestine communication systems that would facilitate "eyes on target" reporting from the legion of trained observers held as POWs throughout Europe. While this challenge increased in difficulty as POW camps were moved deeper into German-occupied territories and ultimately into Germany itself, the placement of POWs in the heart of the Reich only made their observations that much more valuable.

With the operational environment in Germany growing more challenging as the country was transformed into a police state, it was apparent that MI9's escape and evasion efforts must be supported with the best available intelligence. Reflecting

²⁹M.R.D. Foot and J.M. Langley, *MI9: Escape and Evasion 1939-1945* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Co., 1979), 21.

this philosophy, MI9 evolved into an interservice agency managed under the auspices of the British MI Prisoner of War Branch.³⁰

A key step in the overall MI9 process was the thorough debriefing of repatriated Allied POWs. These individuals provided a wealth of unique intelligence on the German military. In direct support of MI9 intelligence requirements, these repatriated POWs could provide confirmation on the status of missing servicemen as well as important insights into how POWs were handled and the security measures in place at various POW camps. Information on POW camp security was critical in the development of clandestine communications with servicemen still held behind barbed wire. In response to more general military intelligence interests, the returnees could not only offer critical data on enemy forces, defenses, and strategies, but also report back on deficiencies in Allied weapon systems and doctrine, shortcomings that often caused the POW to have been captured in the first place.

As the evasion, escape, and resistance side of MI9 was flourishing, so did the elements assigned to the growing challenge of interrogating the rapidly expanding number of captured Axis military personnel. By May 1945, the number of Axis prisoners being held in the growing network of POW internment camps in the U.K. would exceed half a million.³¹ By September 1939, the POW interrogation effort was off to a vigorous yet rocky beginning. Although considered an integral part of

³⁰Shoemaker, 7-8.

³¹Jones, 61.

the larger intelligence effort, the intelligence derived from interrogation was "initially treated with a certain suspicion as to its reliability."³²

The Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) was established in 1939, initially located within the fabled Tower of London and later at more functional facility specifically built for the CSDIC in the Trent Park section of north London. As the joint organization evolved, the creativity and energy of the Royal Air Force (RAF) cadre, designated as Air Ministry Section AI1(k), took the lead in developing effective methods and processes for exploiting the Axis POWs transiting through the center. In the absence of Air Ministry doctrine on the interrogation of POWs, the RAF interrogators led by Flying Officer S.D. Felkin used this void as an opportunity to devise their own methods to overcome the resistance of the *Luftwaffe* aircrewmembers who were considered of higher intelligence than other prisoners. The experience of AI1(k) would ultimately shape the overall British policy of the interrogation and handling of enemy POWs.³³

Another individual who would leave his mark on British interrogation efforts—and the U.S. program as well—was A.R. Rawlinson. Rawlinson had served as an intelligence officer in World War I, during which time he had gained considerable experience in interrogation and overall POW intelligence operations. A reserve officer, he had been recalled to active service in August 1939 and assigned to the British DMI staff. By 1941, Rawlinson, a highly capable staff officer and creative operational planner, had been promoted to major and tasked with directing

³²Jones, 62.

³³Jones, 63-65.

the activities of MI19, a new and separate MI department assigned the exclusive responsibility for "extracting intelligence from captured members of Axis forces."³⁴

Crockatt, by then a colonel and the Deputy Director of MI for Prisoners of War, retained command of both MI9 and MI19.³⁵

THE BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN POW INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM

From a relatively small office in 1885 primarily responsible for the management of military attaches, the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Division (MID) realized a major expansion with the advent of World War II. As the war progressed, MID grew into a worldwide organization with the mission of producing timely and accurate intelligence on a broad array of topics. A definitive outline of MID's area of responsibilities was forwarded throughout the Army in Circular #59, which charged the division "with those duties of the War Department General Staff relating to the collection, evaluation and dissemination of military information."³⁶

The operational arm of MID was the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Administratively assigned to the Assistant Chief of Staff, Military Intelligence Division, War Department General Staff, MIS was assigned the responsibility to "operate and administer the services of the collection, compilation, and

³⁴Foot, 165.

³⁵Foot, 22-26.

³⁶Military Intelligence Division, *History of the Military Intelligence Division, 7 December 1941- 2 September 1945* (Washington, DC, 1946), 13; MIS-X Historical Collection, World War II Record Group, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency Archives, Fort Belvoir, VA. Cited hereafter as *History of the Military Intelligence Division*, JPRA Archives.

dissemination of military intelligence." Great emphasis was placed on maintaining an operational focus within MIS vice the staff orientation at the MID level. Senior officers on the War Department's General Staff envisioned MIS as an operational agency involved in the "physical running of the group, in the actual functioning and control sense."³⁷

By 15 January 1942, the majority of the personnel slated to man the new MIS had been transferred from MID, including the Chief, Military Intelligence Service, Colonel Ralph C. Smith. MIS was organized into four separate groups. Both the Foreign Liaison Branch and the Military Attaché Section reported directly to the Chief, MIS. The Administrative Group was divided into five sections responsible for "housekeeping" functions, while the Intelligence Group was divided into Air and Ground Sections that were, in turn, organized by theater of operations.³⁸

Although the Prisoner of War Interrogation Center was activated in April 1942, the Captured Personnel and Material Branch (originally named the Prisoner of War Branch) of the Military Intelligence Service was not formally established until 22 October 1942. This agency was charged with the collection of information from captured enemy personnel "whose knowledge of certain technical subjects made them profitable subjects of interrogation."³⁹ In keeping with the British concept of operations, the Captured Personnel and Material Branch also assumed the

³⁷*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, JPRA Archives, 13-14.

³⁸*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, JPRA Archives, 15-16.

³⁹*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, JPRA Archives, 99.

responsibility for gathering information from and about U.S. personnel captured by the enemy. Intelligence collected by subordinate offices pertaining to these two areas of interest would be forwarded through the Captured Personnel and Material Branch to the Military Intelligence Service and, in turn, the rest of the Army.⁴⁰

The impetus for the establishment of Captured Personnel and Material Branch, however, actually originated with a request for support from the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). ONI had conducted a study of the Britain's London-based CSDIC from 25 June to 17 December 1941 and had been impressed with the "great advantages" the Royal Navy had been enjoying as a result of the interrogation efforts led by Rawlinson.⁴¹ As a result of this study, a request was forwarded through the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of War requesting the formation of centers in the U.S. for the purpose of interrogating enemy POWs.⁴²

This submission set forth several explicit recommendations that would have a major impact on the subsequent development of MIS-Y.⁴³ The ONI study made these fundamental observations and recommendations:

1. The experience of the British during the present war appears to have demonstrated—and our examination of the subject would lend support to the view—that a greater certainty for obtaining proper results from the interrogation

⁴⁰*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, JPRA Archives, 100

⁴¹Foot, 45.

⁴²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers for the Interrogation of Prisoners of War*, 1946, Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD, 1. Cited hereafter as *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA.

⁴³Unless otherwise noted, all memorandum and related documents pertaining to the establishment, management, and operation of the Joint Interrogation Center were originally classified at the secret level. All of the documents reviewed, cited, or quoted in this thesis have been officially declassified by the Department of Defense.

of captured submarine crews, airmen, and a limited number of selected army prisoners, was assured only when it was possible for trained officers to conduct such interrogations in a central interrogation center rather than at the time of capture.

2. Since the joint Army and Navy agreement provides that Naval prisoners of war will be in the custody of the Navy only so long as is necessary to effect their transfer to Army custody, formal interrogation must take place after the Army has taken over. It is, therefore, necessary for the interrogators and the Office of the Provost Marshall General to cooperate in providing, furnishing, and maintaining such interrogation centers as may be instituted.
3. An Interrogation Section has been established in the Office of Naval Intelligence, which will be responsible for all details in connection with the interrogation of prisoners of war of interest to the Naval Service.
4. In order that provision for adequate and continued interrogation may be provided, it is recommended that:
 - a. This section operate in conjunction with such parallel activity as may be established by the Army.
 - b. That the Secretary of War be requested to provide suitable Interrogation Centers in accordance with recommendations to be submitted by the Interrogation Sections, funds for providing and equipping such centers to be provided from appropriations now available to the War Department.⁴⁴

The reception at the War Department was a positive one, in part due to the validity of the ONI study, but also due to the ongoing interest of two very influential officers working independently and, it seems, without knowledge of each other's activities.

The Director of Military Intelligence (G-2) at the U.S. War Department, Maj Gen George V. Strong, USA, had been corresponding with his counterpart at the British War Office, Maj Gen F.H. Davidson, since the fall of 1941 on a variety of

⁴⁴T.S. Wilkinson, CAPT, USN, Office of Naval Intelligence, Memorandum for the Secretary of the Navy, Subject: *Interrogation Sections and Interrogation Centers*, Serial #01564116, 18 December 1941, as quoted in *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 1-2.

intelligence topics, including the British POW intelligence programs MI9 and MI19.⁴⁵ In October 1942, Maj Gen Davidson recommended to Maj Gen Strong that Capt Phillip V. Holder, U.S. Army Air Corps (USAAC), would be an ideal candidate to lead the American program of the interrogation of POWs under MIS. Capt Holder, assigned to the staff of the A-2 (P/W), had gained invaluable experience in POW intelligence matters through his work with Lt Col W.S. Holt in the British POW program. Maj Gen Strong was by then convinced of the value of this concept. Acting upon Maj Gen Davidson's suggestion, Maj Gen Strong appointed Capt Holder the MIS POW Branch where he served as his liaison officer with British Col Dudley Clarke of MI9.⁴⁶

Progress toward the establishment of an American version of MI9 had already gained additional momentum from a separate and unexpected source. Major General Carl Spaatz, US Army Air Corps, arrived in London in February 1942 to initiate preparations for the impending transfer of his Eighth Army Air Force to England. The briefings he received from his British counterparts included an overview of the ongoing activities of MI9. Intrigued by what he had heard, Maj. Gen. Spaatz arranged to meet personally with Crockatt, by then a brigadier himself, to gather additional details and discuss the program's potential for supporting the impending expansion of U.S. combat air operations in the European Theater. An aspect of MI9

⁴⁵See, for example, F.H. Davidson, Major-General, British Army, Director of Military Intelligence, War Office, UK, *Letter to Maj. Gen. Strong*, 1 June 1943; Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA.

⁴⁶Military Intelligence Division, *A History of G-2, ETOUSA*, Washington, DC, 1946, 158; MIS-X Historical Collection, World War II Record Group, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency Archives, Ft Belvoir, VA. Cited hereafter as MIS, *History of G-2, ETOUSA*.

that particularly impressed Spaatz was that it "actively inspired air crews and commanders with the will to escape."⁴⁷ As a result of these meetings, Spaatz formally requested a team of British intelligence officers to travel to Washington to brief the U.S. General Staff on the MI9 concept.

Anticipating what he felt would be the War Department's certain approval for creating an American version of MI9, Spaatz arranged for the immediate assignment of two of his officers to Crockatt's staff. By late February 1942, the first of these two officers had reported for work at MI9 with the mission of learning as much as possible about the POW intelligence program. In March 1942, British Air-Vice Marshal Charles Medhurst traveled to Washington, DC, to brief Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, and General George C. Marshall, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on the MI9 effort. Stimson, whose previous reservations about the appropriateness of an America's intelligence collection efforts brought a premature end to the highly successful Black Chamber program, was unconvinced of the viability of an American version of MI9.⁴⁸

General Marshall, however, ultimately persuaded the Secretary to approve the concept and permit Maj. Gen. Strong to begin building an American version of MI9 under the auspices of the MIS. The Captured Personnel and Materials Branch (CPMB) was thus formed to oversee the operations of two new and secret POW intelligence programs: MIS-X, responsible for escape, evasion, and resistance operations, and MIS-Y, the strategic interrogation program designed to exploit

⁴⁷Shoemaker, 9.

⁴⁸Shoemaker, 10-11.

selected military personnel and technical specialists.⁴⁹ Both of the programs were developed with the extensive advice and considerable support of MI9 and MI19 exchange officers and vested with similar portfolio of responsibilities as their British counterparts.⁵⁰

ADMINISTRATIVE HURDLES: THE PAPER TRAIL

The ONI-initiated recommendation for the establishment of interrogation centers, accompanied by supporting documentation, was forwarded to the G-2 where it was accepted for immediate consideration. During the period 19 December 1941 and 1 January 1942, Lt. Col. Hobbrook, a counterintelligence officer, and Major Bendetson, from the Provost Marshall General's (PMG) office, carefully studied the request. At the conclusion of their study, the officers concurred on the need to establish a joint interrogation facility. Their recommendation noted that "reported success with which the British have operated a similar installation [justified the] substantial cost of such a center resulting from the special nature of the equipment."⁵¹ They subsequently submitted the following recommendations to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2:

That the War Department provide a suitable joint Army-Navy interrogation center at a location to be selected, to be equipped in accordance with the British plan, such interrogation center to be operated as an exempted station by the Provost Marshall General. The staff of the interrogation center will include a

⁴⁹Dear, 72.

⁵⁰Dear, 72-73.

⁵¹Memorandum from W/D Office of the PMG, Aliens Division, Subject: *Joint Interrogation Center*, 24 December 1941, as quoted in *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 3.

number of carefully selected officers from the two services who would report directly to MID and ONI at which offices the result of interrogation would be evaluated for dissemination.⁵²

Ensuing discussions among the interested parties focused on such matters as funding (although at this point, insufficient information was available to arrive at meaningful estimates of the potential funding requirements), the number of centers to be established, and location. Initial consideration was given to emulating the British use of existing country estates that fell within established size, security and location parameters. Surprisingly, it was initially envisioned that a facility would need only be large enough to accommodate 25 POWs at each facility, a number far short of that realized soon after the interrogation operations commenced. With regard to location, the PMG office recommended "the initial establishment of two centers: one within a radius of 100 miles from Washington, DC, preferably in Virginia, and another on the West Coast in the California area, preferably in the vicinity of either San Francisco or Los Angeles."⁵³

On 8 January 1942, the Secretary of War authorized the formal selection of sites for the interrogation centers. Representatives from the Plans and Training Branch of G-2 and the PMG visited a number of sites near Washington as well as near Baltimore and Frederick, MD. Three fundamental requirements guided the search for the site near to be established near Washington. In order to be considered, a location must have the potential to be secure, be located within a 100-mile radius of Washington, and have suitable facilities in place. Several of the sites visited met

⁵²Origin of the Interrogation Centers, NARA, 2-3.

⁵³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 3-5.

these requirements, including Swannanoa, an estate located 129 miles from Washington in the Virginia counties of Augusta and Nelson. An estate in nearby Marwood, MD, was also a leading candidate until publicity about the government's interest in the site rendered it undesirable.⁵⁴

THE SELECTION OF FORT HUNT

On 6 May 1942, Maj Gen Strong wrote a memorandum for the Chief of Staff of the War Department that recommended Fort Hunt as the site for the east coast interrogation center. In this memorandum, Maj Gen Strong wrote:

1. Prompt action to establish a Prisoner of War Interrogation Center in the vicinity of Washington is deemed desirable.
2. All available and suitable sites within reasonable distance of Washing have been examined, and it is agreed by all concerned that Fort Hunt, Virginia, most nearly fulfills the requirements.
3. Fort Hunt at present belongs to the National Park Service of the Department of Interior, and is used by a CCC camp.⁵⁵ The Chief of Engineers states that provision can be made at Fort Belvoir to accommodate the CCC unit, thereby releasing Fort Hunt for an Interrogation Center.
4. It is estimated that the sum of \$221,000 will be required to construct the desired facilities at Fort Hunt and to provide for the accommodation of the CCC activities at Fort Belvoir.
5. It is recommended that the attached letter from the Secretary of War to the Secretary of Interior be signed and dispatched.⁵⁶

⁵⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 5.

⁵⁵Civilian Conservation Corps.

⁵⁶George V. Strong, Major General, U.S. Army, Memorandum for the Chief of Staff of the War Department, *Subject: Prisoner of War Interrogation Center*, Washington, DC, 6 May 1942; MIS-X Historical Collection, World War II Record Group, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency Archives, Fort Belvoir, VA.

War Department approval of Fort Hunt, a former Civil War military camp located on the George Washington Parkway in Virginia, as the site for the Joint Interrogation Center⁵⁷ was issued on 15 May 1942. At the same time, the Acting Secretary of the Interior granted permission to the Secretary of War "to use and occupy for war purposes" the Fort Hunt location and authorized the construction of additional facilities in coordinated with the Superintendent of National Capitol Parks and the Army.⁵⁸

A 6 May 1942 letter from Major D.A. Phelan, the acting District Engineer in the War Department's U.S. Engineer Office, to Colonel Catesby ap C. Jones, Chief of the MIS Captured Personnel and Material Branch, set forth a detailed cost estimate for construction of an interrogation center at Fort Hunt. The estimate included the construction of four new buildings, the renovation of three existing structures, the erection of perimeter and interior fencing, the provision of utility lines and connections, and the installation of telephone and sound equipment. The memo noted that the U.S. Army Signal Corps would provide the funding for the purchase and installation of the telephone, recording, and other sound equipment. The new buildings included a soundproofed bachelor officer quarters, an administration building, an officer' mess and recreation building, and a fire engine and guardhouse. The memo also reported that the gathering of further details to support the preparation of a more accurate estimate had been inhibited by instructions from MIS

⁵⁷Archived documents relating to MIS-Y and the development of an interrogation center refer to the activity at Fort Hunt as the Joint Interrogation Center and, less often, the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center (CSDIC). To avoid confusion with the British CSDIC in London, this thesis will refer to the Fort Hunt program as the Joint Interrogation Center.

⁵⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 6.

planners to "avoid [attracting] local attention to War Department plans" for the site. This notwithstanding, Maj. Phelan's formal construction estimate totaled to \$217,000.⁵⁹

On 25 May 1942, funds in this amount were allocated by the PMG Chief of Engineers for the construction of facilities at Fort Hunt. Orders to begin construction immediately were also issued at the same time. The District Engineer estimated that construction would be completed by 1 July 1942, contingent upon the timely delivery of needed materials. Construction of the Joint Interrogation Center at Fort Hunt was, in fact, delayed due to problems in procuring the critical signal equipment for installation into the structure. The timeline was set back even further when the required guard force failed to arrive on site as originally planned.⁶⁰

By 22 July 1945, construction was completed on the main prison of the interrogation center. By this time, the necessary furnishings had been delivered and telephone service installed as well. The equipment and wiring for the extensive listening system was still in the process of being installed⁶¹ and the guard force was undergoing comprehensive training. On 30 July 1942, all construction at Fort Hunt was completed. Fourteen listening machines had been installed and tested, and the

⁵⁹D.A. Phelan, Major, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Letter to Colonel Catesby C. Jones, *Proposed Construction at Fort Hunt, Virginia* (Washington, DC, 6 May 1942); MIS-X Historical Collection, World War II Record Group, Joint Personnel Recovery Agency Archives, Fort Belvoir, VA.

⁶⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 7.

⁶¹The use of clandestine listening devices to monitor interrogations as well as conversations among POWs within their cells was a major element in the MIS-Y effort just as it had been for the British interrogation effort. Further details on this activity are provided in Chapter 5.

telephone system was fully operational, to include a direct line to Headquarters, MIS, and to the Navy.⁶²

When the Prisoner of War Interrogation Center was activated in April 1942, it was placed directly under the Chief, MIS. The initial allocation of 68 officers and 61 enlisted personnel was subsequently reduced on 3 September 1943 when the number of authorized officers was cut to 41. This interrogation element of MIS was designated as the "Y" section and referred to from this point forward as "MIS-Y."⁶³

While the mission of conducting strategic interrogation operations was relatively straightforward, the chain of command for the MIS-Y program was cumbersome and complex. The interrogation centers were under the control of the Provost Marshall General who was authorized to appoint the commanding officers of the camps.⁶⁴ The PMG line of authority was responsible for much of the logistical support as well as for providing the camp's administrative and maintenance personnel.⁶⁵ Conversely, all interrogation personnel were provided by MIS and ONI. The joint efforts of these two organizations were coordinated at each camp by a senior interrogating officer. The camps, designated as Temporary Detention Centers,

⁶²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 8.

⁶³*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 15-16.

⁶⁴A second interrogation center was established at Byron Hot Spring, CA, in December 1942. This center focuses on the interrogation of captured Japanese military personnel. Although a number of German prisoners were ultimately interrogated there in addition to Fort Hunt, this thesis will focus exclusively on the MIS-Y program as it pertains to Fort Hunt-based activities and its exploitation of enemy POWs from the European Theater of Operations.

⁶⁵The U.S. Army's Military Police remains today as the DoD executive agent for the detention and handling of captured POWs.

were managed by the PMG. Within each detention center, however, the areas comprising the interrogation center were under the authority of Chief, MIS.⁶⁶

This parallel structure quickly proved unsatisfactory. When the G-2 a requested "a unified control be established as more efficient and conducive to improved morale," it was initially disapproved on the basis that it was contrary to existing regulations. The Adjutant General subsequently approved a request to revise the regulations. On 14 April 1943, the Post Commanders at both Fort Hunt and Byron Hot Springs were reassigned and their positions filled by the senior interrogation officer at each location.⁶⁷

INTERSERVICE FRICTION

Despite the new command structure, chain-of-command within the interrogation center was not always clear. As noted earlier, personnel were provided by both MIS and ONI. This joint structure went only so far, however. Naval personnel at Fort Hunt were under the controlling authority of directives issued from the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). This unfortunately led to a series of interservice disagreements over the manner in which POWs would be exploited. As MIS-Y began operations, POWs were allocated for interrogation largely based on an assessment of the prisoner's area of expertise and experience. As time passed, more restrictions were sought by the Navy with regard to access to POWs from enemy

⁶⁶*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 100-101.

⁶⁷*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 101.

naval services and the dissemination of Naval-related reports. In July 1943, the Navy finally pressed for, and obtained, an agreement with the Army that "no operation [sic], technical, or tactical naval information obtained from prisoners of war shall be disseminated by the Army." In response, the Army sought a similar restriction on the Navy. Each service disseminated reports pertaining to its respective sphere of interest through its own channels of communication.⁶⁸

POW HOLDING FACILITY

Fort Hunt was not designed to hold large numbers of POWs during the interrogation process. Therefore, a separate facility had to be designated that could accommodate the substantial flow of POWs and provide an efficient and secure means of transporting prisoners to and from Fort Hunt. To address this requirement, a special holding facility was erected at Pine Grove Furnace, PA. On 5 May 1943, a memorandum was sent from the G-2 at the War Department to the Commanding General, Army Service Forces requesting the immediate activation of the Prisoner of War Internment Camp at Pine Grove Furnace.⁶⁹

The internment camp would be operated under the authority of the Commanding General, Third Service Command. However, its function was to be strictly controlled by MIS. This was articulated in an 11 May 1943 memorandum from the War Department Adjutant General directing the use of the Pine Grove

⁶⁸*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 105.

⁶⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 24.

Furnace Internment Camp "exclusively for a special purpose and any instructions pertaining thereto."⁷⁰ The "special purpose" this memorandum referenced was the holding of POWs pending their detailed interrogation at Fort Hunt.⁷¹

The working relationship between Fort Hunt and the Pine Grove Furnace Internment Camp was outlined in the 10 July 1943 Agreement for the Movement of Prisoners of War between Box 1142⁷² and the Installations and Internment Camps of the Third Service Command. This agreement stipulated the following:

1. Box 1142 will transport Prisoners of War from their installation to Ft. Meade and the reverse.
2. The Third Service Command will move Prisoners of War from Ft. Meade to 3300 SU⁷³ and the reverse.
3. The Third Service Command is responsible for processing all Prisoners of War they receive.
4. Box 1142 is responsible for processing all Prisoners of War that they receive direct.
5. When Box 1142 is through with Prisoners of War that should be shipped to permanent internment camps, Box 1142 notifies Third Service Command and PMGO⁷⁴ that the Prisoners of War are being moved to Ft. Meade to await further orders.
6. When Box 1142 wants to move a Prisoner of War from their custody to 3300 SU, Box 1142 will notify the Third Service Command.⁷⁵

⁷⁰AG 320.2, Subject: Establishment of Pine Grove Furnace, PA, 11 May 1943, Washington, DC, originally classified as secret; as quoted in *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 24.

⁷¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 24.

⁷²Box 1142, the organization's cover mailing address, was the designation for Fort Hunt used in most unclassified and classified communications.

⁷³The Pine Grove Furnace Internment Camp's full military unit designation was 3300th Service Unit (SU).

⁷⁴Provost Marshal General's Office.

⁷⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 25.

The Pine Grove Furnace Internment Camp played an important role in the MIS-Y effort. Geographically it was both sufficiently isolated to provide essential security for the operation, yet was in close enough proximity to Fort Hunt to facilitate regular movement of POWs between the installations. As POWs held at Pine Grove Furnace had been through the screening process and considered potentially useful sources for interrogation, their segregation from other prisoners "forestalled the possibility that prisoners, thought to be valuable, would be 'contaminated' by contact with other more security conscious and less 'cooperative' prisoners."⁷⁶ The arrangement also offered MIS-Y interrogators the opportunity to conduct additional screening on a less time-intensive basis, allowing for the identification and removal of POWs who proved to be of less interest than previously thought. This was an important element of the screening process. In some instances as few as 20% of the POWs originally selected at initial screening for more detailed interrogation would actually be sent forward to Fort Hunt.⁷⁷

At Fort Hunt, the typical detention room was designed to accommodate two prisoners. The rooms were spartan but not uncomfortable. Each room had two beds, two benches, and a built-in writing table. Before a new prisoner was moved in, the room would be systematically searched for concealed messages or other unauthorized items that may have been left behind by the previous occupant. A latrine was located in each corridor of rooms; prisoners wishing to use these facilities

⁷⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 26.

⁷⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 26.

could do so generally upon request, but only under the escort of a guard.

Responsibility for cleaning the rooms and latrines was assigned to the POWs.⁷⁸

Four separate exercise yards were built, one for each of the corridors in the hold facility. The flow of prisoners into the exercise was carefully controlled to maintain the desired degree of segregation among them. Under normal conditions, each POW was authorized one hour in the exercise yards each day.⁷⁹

With the facility finally established, the next major task was preparing a cadre of interrogators and support personnel for the challenges ahead.

⁷⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 30.

⁷⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 32.

CHAPTER 4

INTERROGATION TRAINING: PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Interrogation of prisoners is a difficult and delicate task...[that cannot] be conducted by anybody, anywhere and by no matter what method. It is indispensable, if results of any value are to be produced, that the examination be conducted in a skilled, planned and methodical manner.

Flying Officer S.D. Felkin
Chief, Air Interrogation Section, CSDIC⁸⁰

Identifying individuals who possess the right aptitude and temperament for work as an interrogator is only the first step.⁸¹ These select personnel must still complete a comprehensive training program designed to impart the myriad skills and methods they will need to accomplish their duties at a Detailed Interrogation Center.

BASIC INTERROGATION TRAINING

Interrogation training for U.S. military personnel during World War II took place at several Military Intelligence Training Centers located across the nation. One of the primary Interrogation of Prisoners of War (IPW) training centers for both

⁸⁰As quoted Kevin Jones, 66.

⁸¹No information could be found among the archived materials on MIS-Y that directly addressed a selection process or criteria for MIS-Y interrogators.

Navy and Army interrogators was Camp Ritchie, located in Maryland's Blue Ridge Mountains.⁸² Much of the training at Camp Ritchie focused on tactical interrogation methodology in support of operations as near the front as possible. Time was a major element under these conditions and interrogations were conducted as quickly as possible with the objective of providing useful information for commanders in the field.⁸³

The Army also conducted a formal School for Interrogation of Prisoners of War at Camp Bullis, located just outside San Antonio, TX, that prepared personnel for service as interrogators at all operational levels. This program included blocks of instruction in a variety of topics, including:

1. The German Army: Versailles to Pre-Hitler
2. German Military Order of Battle
3. Examination of the PW
4. German Opinion and Psychology
5. The Military Geography of Germany
6. Interrogation in the Field
7. The German Security Disk
8. Map Reading

This program incorporated advanced German language training into many elements of the curriculum. During both classroom lectures and the numerous field

⁸²Ib Melchior, *Case by Case: A U.S. Army Counterintelligence Agent in World War II* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993), 61.

⁸³Melchior, 103.

exercises, students were expected to perform all phases of the interrogation process in the target language.⁸⁴

ADVANCED TRAINING

At Fort Hunt, time would be a factor only to a limited degree; the real challenge involved extracting as much useful—and accurate—information possessed by a very select group of POWs. To meet this daunting challenge, interrogators required more in-depth training than that included in the basic interrogation courses.

The need for this unique training was provided by an equally unique individual. Sanford Griffith, a former Army major who had served as the Officer in Charge of Subsection G-2, Prisoners and Documents, I Army, during World War I, prepared and presented an original series of lectures that addressed a wide range of methods, philosophies, and ploys specifically designed for interrogating the high value and often obstinate German POW. He combined his previous experience in interrogation with insights from what was then leading edge research in the art of interviewing. His lectures included general observations on human behavior (e.g., why people like to answer questions), specific methodology for extracting information from POWs, and an in-depth examination of modern German history and culture. His

⁸⁴Series of Confidential Papers-Training Syllabi, School for Interrogation of PW, IV Army Corp, undated, Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA. Cited hereafter as Training Syllabi, IPW, IV Army Corps, NARA.

presentation also compared and contrasted the political factors and the general nature of war during World War I and World War II.⁸⁵

Griffith did not underestimate the challenge of compelling a POW to cooperate with his captors. In his view, interrogation, like interviewing⁸⁶ was both a science and art. While a well-developed, systematic methodology existed for the conduct of interrogation, a significant element of the process remained less concrete. As Griffith described it:

Most commercial interviewing and probably 75% of [interrogations] in the Army falls into the category of science. There remains 25% which must be regarded as an art. The unusual prisoner will require the unusual interviewer and delicate handling. Even then if the time is short, this additional information will mostly be lost. But if time permits and if the prisoner has important information, the interviewer can prolong his interview and match wits to coax it out of him. It frequently pays to provide congenial softening surroundings which facilitate this work.⁸⁷

Griffith estimated that at least 90 percent of the information about the enemy during World War II would be derived from the interrogation of POWs and the systematic exploitation of captured documents collected on the field of battle. This figure was slightly higher than the 80 percent he estimated had been the case in World War I. The difference, Griffith explained, was the result of two primary factors. First, interviewing techniques had improved considerably during the interwar years. Second, World War II was more global in scope. In this war,

⁸⁵Discussion I-IV, Series of Talks by Sanford Griffith, prepared for the Third Army School, San Antonio, TX, 20 April 1942, Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA. Cited hereafter as Discussion I-IV, Lectures by Griffith, NARA.

⁸⁶Griffith, by his own admission, frequently used the words "interviewing" and "interrogation" interchangeably.

⁸⁷Discussion I, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 2.

Griffith asserted, contact with the enemy—for example through neutral countries—was significantly reduced. As a result, the interrogation of POWs would play a more prominent role.⁸⁸

To enhance the interrogator's understanding of the larger context of the war they would be tasked to support through their systematic questioning of POWs, Griffith offered the following observations regarding the differences in the fundamental nature of warfare between World War I and World War II:⁸⁹

<u>World War I</u>	<u>World War II</u>
Army only slightly mechanized	Army highly mechanized
Secondary roles for tanks and aircraft	Major roles for tanks and aircraft
Slower turnover in troop units	Rapid Turnover
Radio slightly used in 1918	Radio major medium of communications
Approaching exhaustion of Army	Continued vigor
Actual shortage of all kinds of material	Enough vital materials for the Army
A wide gulf between officers and enlisted	Closer relations between officers and enlisted, but gulf between Nazi Party members of Army Regulars
Units mostly integrated	Units more often split and scattered
Younger classes from 1916 on were of low physical resistance; heavy losses had reduced quality of troops	A tough and drill-hardened youth gives Army strong fighting quality; quality deteriorating from heavy losses in Russia and inferior recruits from World War I
Familiar landmarks; a known trench system; known battery positions	Shifting landmarks and shifting stations

⁸⁸Discussion I, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 2.

⁸⁹Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 1 and 3.

Interviews were mostly of soldiers because civilian population was evacuated	Civilians caught in battle zone and have useful information
Front line unit identifications were what mattered most	Front line identifications often less important than those of units moving into battle from depth of 10-50 miles
Consequently easier to measure scope of operations	Estimates from both prisoners and interviewers are more distorted because of fleeting impressions
U-boat warfare had failed	Damage from U-boats not yet under control and exceeds new ship building
Espionage—little at home; old-fashioned and bungling abroad	Streamlined espionage at home, coupled with 5 th Columns abroad; all are linked to strategy of Nazi High Command

While MIS-Y interrogators were charged with the collection of military intelligence, the strategic mission encompassed a number of political, social, and economic issues as well. To promote a better understanding of how such issues had evolved, Griffith presented an overview of the differences in the Germany that fought World War I and the Nazi Germany of World War II:⁹⁰

The Old Germany 1917-1918

Nazi Germany

The Army made both political and military policies

Hitler makes both national policy and national grand strategy; the Army Staff is relegated to purely military matters

WW I was essentially a war between nations

WWII is between nations and also a civil war of conflicting ideologies (dictatorship vs. democracy)

Hopes—By late 1918, hopes of keeping

Hopes—Nazis still hoped to

⁹⁰Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 2 and 4.

the Reich intact were slim	dominate and exploit the world
Ludendorff was organizational genius but failed in grand strategy	Hitler as been successful in grand strategy, but shows shortcomings in organization
Leadership unable to make decisions and sacrifices to win peace	Hitler asserts continued determination for total victory
Press—fairly independent and outspoken	Press and radio in complete subservience
No race superiority doctrines; people didn't think themselves superior. Widespread demoralization and outward demonstrations of inferiority	Race superiority theories widely mouthed as the new religion in the Nazi State, and other peoples treated as inferiors
Crumbling Wilhelm State where there was much freedom of opinion	Police State where there is no freedom of opinion and constant threat of denunciation and of the concentration camp
Much articulate opposition by the Intelligentsia	Subdued Intelligentsia with very little influence
Social fabric permeated with radical and Communist agitation	No articulate class opposition though a latent restlessness
In the last phase of 1918, political questions were dominant	Political considerations are coordinated with, and subordinated to, the military
Succession of defeats stimulated popular outbursts	Succession of victories discouraged outward resistance
Civilian population was mostly remote spectator of war; Germany as a whole was not invaded	Civilian population is caught in the middle of the fighting; German cities destroyed
Late and incomplete forced labor	Complete forced labor since 1934
Germany was impoverished for raw materials	Germany has sizeable stocks of most war necessities
Private industry and labor enjoyed considerable independence	Industry and labor are submerged into the Nazi state organization

Production and manufacturing declined	Production increased as a result of exploitation of conquered territories
German economic exploitation of occupied countries was kept mostly within traditional limits of international law	Attempted integration of occupied countries' economies into German production system and ruthless exploitation due to war needs involved wholesale plunder of dominated people
Heavy inflation as politicians' easiest way out	Cautious inflation, with haunting fear of another economic collapse

Griffith's training program also encouraged interrogators to examine their personal opinions, attitudes, and approaches to the task of interrogation. His objective was to remove as many intrapersonal and interpersonal obstacles that could diminish an interrogator's effectiveness. At the same time, he sought to enhance their confidence by presenting the challenge of interrogating even hardened Nazi Party members as within the scope of their abilities. To do so, he delivered a detailed address on *"Effective Attitudes in Interviewing German Prisoners."* In this presentation, Griffith's material focused on three primary areas: 1) the general background approach for interrogators, 2) the most effective ways of establishing contact with the POW, and 3) lines of conversation that would best develop the types of intelligence information needed.⁹¹

In describing his *General Approach for Interrogators*, Griffith outlined the following areas in Discussion III:⁹²

⁹¹Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 1.

⁹²Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 1-2.

1. Try to see things from the prisoner's point of view. To be effective at his task, the Interrogating Officer (I/O)⁹³ must be able to put himself in the position of the POW and see the situation from a prisoner's perspective. Thought must be given to their problems, and this comes only from spending as much time as possible with the POWs. The amount of material (intelligence) within reach even from a small numbers of POWs is considerable. If the approach is sound, the question is not how to get the POW to talk, but rather what specific information is desired.
2. Preconceived prejudices of Nazis. Continuous contact with Germans and extensive interrogation are required to correct distorted impressions of the enemy. The best way to overcome preconceived prejudices and outdated assumptions is through obtaining current, objective evidence. Unfounded bias cannot be allowed to warp the I/O's judgment or distort the information reported.
3. Germans are folks, not supermen. Many of the German soldiers are, like Allied soldiers, former businessmen, farmers, and factory workers. This is easily forgotten in the midst of battles during which heavy losses are sustained. To regard them as an army of dominant personalities is to fall for the German propaganda. In spite of a formidable front, they have their individual jealousies, hatreds, and inefficiencies. Their war machine creaks in many places; it is the task of the I/O to pry into the cracks in the war machine and in their wavering personal allegiances.

⁹³Both U.S. and British intelligence during this period frequently used the term I/O when referring to interrogators.

4. Individual Approach. Most people are very interested in themselves; in group photographs, the individual almost always looks first at his own image. Nine out of ten people, when testing out a pen, will write their own name. This applies to POWs as much as to anyone else. The I/O must therefore target questions to the individual—what has the POW suffered, what are his immediate wants?
5. Get at them when they are shaky. The ideal moment to approach a POW is when he is under an acute impression of danger. At this time, the I/O is dealing with a man under conditions of stress and nervous tension. Hitler and the war added repeated shocks of fear and rage. At the beginning of both wars, there was a great deal of heady bravery. Prolonged combat and contact with death on all sides give rise to other emotions. Men often emerge from battle with an intensified urge to live; they are often simply happy to be alive. When they arrive at an interrogation center, they are shaken by their ordeal and anxious about the sort of treatment they will receive.
6. Intimate questions answered shyly. People are sensitive in talking about religious beliefs; Germans even more so under concern for the disapproval of the *Gestapo*. If approached in a reasonable way, however, those with religious leanings will often disapprove of Nazi doctrine and practices. When time permits, it can be worthwhile to explore a POW's possible faith.

7. Hide the focus of interest. It is important that the I/O avoid giving a POW a clue about the type of data being sought. If he can correctly guess, the POW may try to gain favor by presenting the image he thinks the I/O would want. The POW will frequently color and imagine facts to oblige his interrogators, his primary aim being to win favor with his captors. The I/O will continually be presented with a puzzle and quickly welcome the offer of any missing pieces. The I/O's mission is to select the POW who can best provide the information being sought, yet be sufficiently disciplined not to suggest answers he hopes to elicit from the POW.

All the training, experience, and research an I/O invests in preparing for a given interrogation are brought to bear upon initial contact with a POW. Griffith understood the unique importance of this step in the exploitation process. To assist interrogators in making the most of each opportunity, he provided the following ideas as *Some of the Best ways of Establishing Contact with the Prisoner*:⁹⁴

1. A variety of possible relations between the interrogation officer and the POW. There are myriad possible relationships between an I/O and a POW, including:
 - a. Officer of a winning army to one of a defeated army
 - b. Inquisitor shouting down his victim
 - c. Officer to enlisted man
 - d. Friend to friend, or member of one team chatting with a member of another

⁹⁴Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 3.

- e. One soldier on the front talking to another
- f. Special interest approaches (e.g., one good Catholic to another, one musician to another, etc.)

2. Make a good first impression. The I/O must often work fast and making a good first impression upon the POW is particularly helpful in this respect. The I/O should take care of military formalities as quickly as possible and focus on making personal contact with the prisoner. If the POW appears cooperative, direct questioning should commence immediately; if he is evasive, simple questions that elicit a "yes" response should be employed initially. Following up with more complex questions, it is often an effective ploy to repeat the POW's answers and work the next question in to the repetition.

3. Make close name and interest identification. If the POW merits continued attention, the I/O should progress as rapidly as possible from a formal military relationship to a more one-to-one interaction. In this instance, it is vital the I/O gather as much personal information about the POW as possible beforehand. Frequent use of the POW's name, for example, and a focus on him as an individual provides a significant contrast to his previous experience as a small part of a group-machine of the German military. POWs are vulnerable to shifting loyalties, especially when presented with an individual who appears to understand and appreciate his unique qualities.

Perhaps one of Griffith's most important contributions to the training of MIS-Y interrogators was in offering them specific scenarios for approaching the daunting challenge of compelling a POW to cooperate. In his lectures, he provided the following *Lines of Conversation that Best Develop Information We Need*:⁹⁵

1. "Bait the hook to suit the fish." A variety of inducements must be devised to compel POWs to talk and to keep them talking. The I/O must "cajole, hypnotize, stampede, flatter, irritate, charm, and lull the prisoners into talking."⁹⁶ The more resourceful the I/O can be, the more information will be obtained from the POW.
2. "Let the prisoner tell us." An effective I/O must be a good listener and, time permitting, allow the POW to tell his story. While many of the details may be irrelevant, they can be edited out of the I/O's report. The I/O's ability to mention names of the POW's friends and his officers, to bring him up-to-date on the status of his unit, and present a solid awareness of current events in Germany can be very disarming.
3. "Don't look for repentant Nazis." The I/O cannot assume an air of moral superiority. Many of the POWs he encounters will still believe in the Nazi system. The POW may, however, admit to certain shortcomings in the system (e.g., it makes too many enemies). Such an admission provides the I/O with a useful opening. Getting the POW to repent is not the I/O's mission; obtaining useful intelligence is the primary objective.

⁹⁵Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 3-5.

⁹⁶Discussion II, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 3.

4. "Listen to the prisoner's complaints." The POW will often have experienced a number of traumatic events. He will frequently overemphasize his misfortunes. If he has been treated badly, the I/O should try to help him and prepare to take advantage of the POW's gratitude. The I/O is limited by time and circumstances, however, and must remember his duty is as an interrogator not a social welfare worker.
5. "Use some propaganda as a softener." While the job of the I/O is not to propagandize, the injustices of the Nazi system provide an opportunity when presented to the POW. One example is to describe the disparity in the opulent lifestyles of the Nazi elite as compared with the rank-and-file. Often, a particular senior officer may be widely scorned for his incompetence and lack of concern for his troops. The I/O can benefit by regularly invoking this officer's name. This is often most effective when the I/O can refer to this officer by a well known, disparaging nickname the POW would recognize.
6. "Given them paradoxes to worry about." The I/O should challenge the POW with a question that will lead them to a disheartening answer (e.g., "How is it that if you Germans are so invincible, you have not managed to win the war after ten years of preparation and 3 years of fighting?" or "If the proposed New European Order is so wonderful, how is it that none of the other peoples of Europe want it?").

The interrogation process is a system. As with all systems, interrogation has "emergent properties that are not found in their parts."⁹⁷ Griffith sought to capture—and illustrate—these principles in his detailed overview of *Practical Instructions in Interrogating Prisoners* presented in Discussion IV:⁹⁸

1. Timing in Interviewing Prisoners. The I/O should try to question the POW as soon as possible after capture, before he has been fed, and while his nervous tension over his fate and the treatment in store for him are still high. It is also useful to question the POW before he has had the chance to regain his individual self-respect, begins to feel comfortable in his new surroundings, and has been in contact with his comrades. To enhance the effect of such circumstances, the POW should be kept in isolation as circumstances permit before and during interrogation.
2. Requirements of the Good Interviewer. A natural aptitude for interacting with one's fellow man and past experience are essential to good interviewing skills. A few months of training will not make a competent interviewer out of an individual who lacks the inherent aptitude. Even strong language skills will not overcome this shortcoming. However, for an individual with the aptitude for mixing, refined language skills and knowledge of German and European conditions are very useful. Individuals who are unable to repress a violent emotional approach should not be employed as interrogators.

⁹⁷Joseph O'Connor and Ian McDermott, *The Art of Systems Thinking* (London, UK: Thorsons, 1997), 7.

⁹⁸Discussion IV, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 1-3.

3. Intelligence Officers Should Shape Camp Attitudes toward Prisoners. The intelligence officer in command should determine the current treatment of POWs (i.e., liberal and friendly or rigid discipline). The decision in this regard is driven by the type of atmosphere that best serves the needs of the interrogation effort. Intelligence requirements should also determine when interrogations should be concluded.
4. Confused Allegiances. The relationship between interrogators and POWs cannot be described a collegial. The fact that the Germans are prisoners should be made clearly evident. Some interrogators forget this relationship and may fraternize too closely with the POWs. While this is not always a dangerous path, it can waste valuable time and dull the interrogator's edge. A transfer of authority from their German officers to the I/O should be clear. Similarly, the treatment of their officers as prisoners helps POWs recognize this new source of authority over them. The interrogator can benefit from assuming the officer-enlisted authority over a POW. The closer the interrogators conform to the German methods of handling subordinate personnel, the more the POWs will respond with attention and promptly answer questions posed to them.
5. Breakdown by Hunger, then Buildup by Satisfying Cravings. A POW who is hungry and uncertain about his fate can be easily caught off guard. He is also more susceptible to persuasion by means of simple favors, such as offers of chocolate, coffee, or tobacco. This kind of inducement, however, should appear incidental to the interrogation process, presented

in a natural and friendly manner, and not offered as an obvious bribe for information. The degree of previous privation is a fair measure of the potential effectiveness of such inducements.

6. Protect Prisoners Against Petty Abuse and Plundering. POWs should be protected from souvenir hunters among the guard and interrogator staff. The POW should be allowed to keep, where appropriate, his valuables (e.g., watches, jewelry). A POW who is indignant over being stripped of his personal belongings will likely be in an uncooperative mood.

7. The Arm of the Gestapo is Long. German soldiers have often been warned against cooperating with interrogators and advised that the *Gestapo* has sources even in internment camps. One of the I/O's jobs is to encourage a denunciation of the *Gestapo* and, if possible, the Nazi Party. The omnipresence of *Gestapo* agents is grossly exaggerated in the minds of many Germans. It is up to the I/O to deal with these concerns and fill the POW with confidence that he is beyond the reach of the *Gestapo*. One means of doing so is to demonstrate that Hitler's threats leave the I/O unimpressed or that the I/O would welcome the opportunity to deal directly with a *Gestapo* agent.

The interrogator training program concluded with Griffith's insights into how to deal with the unique challenges presented by the interrogation of Nazi POWs. In Discussion V, *Some Nazi Weaknesses to Exploit*, Griffith offers the following guidance:⁹⁹

⁹⁹Discussion V, Lectures by Griffith, NARA, 1-7.

1. Chance in Nazi Victories. The succession of Nazi victories and propaganda proclaiming Nazi omniscience should not be taken at face value. The role of luck and hindsight are often of equal influence as careful planning and foresight.
2. Nazi Vanity. There is a colossal amount of vanity and self-adulation among Nazi circles. While few senior members of the Nazi Party are likely to be found at a Detailed Interrogation Center, lower ranking members with big egos most definitely will. Let the POW demonstrate how important he is. The I/O should remember that the last refuge of weakness and lack of self-confidence is bravado. The I/O should encourage these expressions of ego as a means of obtaining valuable inside information regarding the Nazi Party.
3. Deflating the "rather-die-than-be-captured" Ego. The POW is himself a living contradiction of this assertion. Despite the cliché Nazi assertion of "willing to die for the Fuhrer," volunteers for suicide squads are small. The closer most people come to facing death, the more they instinctively pull back from it. Whether they will admit it or not, most POWs will be happy to be alive. The I/O should be on guard for the period of complete physical and emotional letdown and exploit such an opportunity to the limit.
4. People Seek to Register Superior Intelligence. Many people, including German POWs, have a drive to demonstrate their intellectual superiority

to the outside world. The I/O who makes the POW feel like a great man in his field will be amply rewarded.

5. Nazi Venality. This deserves special study because it is one of the most brazen affronts to all idealism and is a weakness that the I/O must exploit. There has never been a German regime that has engaged in graft on the scale of the Nazi bureaucracy. The I/O should collect stories of how members of the Nazi Party at all levels have personally profited at the expense of other Germans and purvey them particularly to the German soldiers who may have already rebelled at the discrimination in their own ranks.

6. Nazi Lack of Education Privileges. The German education system was one of the first to be completely integrated into the Nazi propaganda structure. The Regular Army Staff has complained that officer candidates sponsored by the Nazi Party have been taught slogans rather than ideas. This lack of education relates particularly to world affairs. The Nazi Party has fed the education system with a distorted view of the world with Germany at the center. This is a weakness that will become increasingly evident when the Nazi morale curve has begun to decline.

7. Consequent Lack of Sense of Proportion in Education. Many Germans know very little about American manpower and industrial capability and are susceptible to a piling up of facts about U.S. resources, industrial capacity, and increasing military might.

8. The School Teacher Urge. German schoolteachers are accustomed to standing before a class and lecturing for hours. During World War I, teachers-turned-soldiers often lectured their interrogators about the nuances of geography, history, and politics of the region in which a battle had been fought. Although they still have the same tendency to lecture, they know more about Nazi practices and policies than any other subject. The I/O should encourage the teacher to lecture and can only benefit by sitting at their feet—during the interrogation.
9. "Ask Me Another, Please." There is a type of soldier who would be comfortable in a quiz game; he is sparked by questions as a way of demonstrating his cleverness. The I/O can employ a wide range of guessing games as an effective means of innocuously collecting information.
10. Over-Bureaucratization. The much-vaunted Nazi efficiency is at its weakest in creating new offices and agencies. It has loaded down its economy with an extensive network of administrative offices and ubiquitous forms and regulations. This dead weight has extended into the Army. For the I/O, physically timorous bureaucrats are often easy to pressure, while German soldiers are beginning to understand that they are the underdogs carrying the weight of the bureaucracy.
11. Building up the Nazi Gangster Ideal. In a police state, spies are everywhere, reaching even into the family where denunciation flourishes. Children have denounced their parents for their lack of Nazi enthusiasm.

S.S. elite units in the ordeal of fire are said to have not stood up as well as their propaganda promised. Behind the Nazi façade, personal animosities exist. All of these aspects offer opportunities for exploitation by the I/O.

12. Bulldogging the Gangster. There is a type of Nazi POW who, from experience, does not understand anything except being pushed around. Having long used such base techniques to frighten others, the idea can be conveyed to him that the tables have turned. While physical abuse of the prisoner is not authorized, stage play of the "third degree" may at times help soften this type of POW.
13. Nazi Double Standards. The Nazis have a code of honor designed for the operators of a Master Race. This code also puts other races in various degrees of inferiority to the German people as a whole. Before pressing their methods outside of Germany, they sowed the seeds of discord within Germany through the abuse of many of their own citizens. The Nazi code is a double standard. While it promotes thrift and industry, its leaders live luxurious lifestyles. These contradictions are rich material for the enterprising interrogator to use in generating discussions with prisoners.
14. Threaten to Double-Cross Nazi Double-Crossers. One in a hundred Germans will try to outsmart their interrogators with a fabricated story. While it is easy to lie about one's identification, it is next to impossible to lie through an entire episode. The German command gives officers elaborate instructions on the kind of misleading information to use in an interrogation. Variations in observations tend to confirm veracity while

uniformity is a tip-off of a rehearsed lie. One effective gambit was borrowed from the Nazi Party. If a POW begins to talk but then resists, the I/O can then threaten to tell the POW's Nazi comrades that he has been talking. In this way, the I/O plays the Nazis against one another.

15. Soldiers in General Tend to Be Superstitious. This is true of German soldiers as well. The more isolated they become, the more the prisoner develops superstitions. This was especially noted among submarine crews. They develop curious notions about lucky numbers and under privations began to hear strange voices. Belief in horoscopes runs from Hitler on down. If the I/O presents himself as a superstitious person to a really superstitious prisoner, he can often get anything he wants.

16. Crave Outside Recognition...Hostility of Fellow German-Americans Distresses Germans. Some German POWs crumple when they realize that German-Americans have no use for Hitler's race theories and are willing to prosecute the war against Germans as long as necessary to defeat the Nazi system. The superior race theory itself is easy to debunk; most German POWs will feel they are on shaky ground when trying to defend this theory. Younger POWs may be more thoroughly convinced in the correctness of the race theory. The employment of German-American I/Os in dealing with type—and asserting the American right to exterminate Nazi-Germans—usually deflates POWs of this nature.

17. Difference Between Nazi Theory and Practices. The significant differences between espoused Nazi theories and actual practices have

been insufficiently emphasized. Some of the Nazi theories, such as the mythological and racial dreams espoused by Hitler, are too grandiose to be workable. Similarly, the political rantings of Hitler are accepted by the German people more on an emotional level than a rational one. Skilled presentation of these discrepancies by the I/O can be an effective leverage into the POW's cooperation.

QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

Questions are an interrogator's basic tools of the trade. The ultimate quality of the information obtained from a POW is directly related to the quality of the questions asked. While an I/O typically asks questions of the prisoner from the first point of contact, the actual questioning phase "commences when the source begins to answer questions pertinent to the specific objectives of the interrogation."¹⁰⁰

During basic interrogation training, MIS-Y I/Os were taught the fundamentals of questioning. Such training commonly included the use to questioning guides. These guides provided a detailed list of questions specifically designed for different specialties (e.g., bomber crewmembers, airborne troops, tank commander, etc.).¹⁰¹ An example of the questioning guide for Parachute and Airborne Troops produced by the Army's IV Corps School for Interrogation of POWs-German is provided at Appendix C.

¹⁰⁰Army FM 34-52, 3-7.

¹⁰¹Training Syllabi, IPW, IV Army Corps, NARA.

CHAPTER 5

MANAGING A JOINT INTERROGATION CENTER

In the violence and muddle of war, common sense often has to go out of the window. It is the task of the commander of insight, and of the staff officer of real capacity, to mitigate that effect: to bring some sense of purpose, and some hope, into the chaos of fighting and of waiting about—much more waiting than fighting—of which war consists.

Brigadier M.R.D. Foot
British Army¹⁰²

The challenges of managing a sensitive intelligence operation during a major conflict such as World War II are manifold. In the case of MIS-Y these fundamental challenges were greatly magnified by the struggle to introduce the concept of joint operations to a military that was still several decades away from the changes the Goldwaters-Nichols Act would introduce.

As noted earlier, the major impetus for the creation of an American joint interrogation program similar to that so effectively executed by the British originated with the Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence. This notwithstanding, the U.S. Army maintained authority as the executive agent within the U.S. Government for the handling of prisoners-of-war. The agreement in effect during World War II specifically identified the Army as being "charged with the custody of all prisoners

¹⁰²Foot and Langley, 19-20.

of war."¹⁰³ As a result, MIS planners envisioned a joint effort where, in accordance with this agreement, the actual administration of interrogation centers would be the responsibility of the Army. Unfortunately, their definition of the scope of this administration was not entirely shared by their Navy counterparts.

While Navy officials acknowledged the Army's stipulated role in supporting the management of the Joint Interrogation Center, they did not accept the concept that Navy I/Os and other personnel would be under the authority of the Army at Fort Hunt. Their view was a major departure from the concept of "joint" as it was employed at the British Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center. Instead, the Navy saw the relationship with the Army as a "parallel" one, with each Service constructing a system that would best meet its individual requirements.¹⁰⁴

Despite the presence of such dissenting views on the roles and responsibilities of the Services, a workable solution was ultimately achieved. Under the arrangement that was finally agreed upon, the Post Commander—an Army officer—would be responsible for the "operation and coordination of all Army and Navy activities within the Center."¹⁰⁵ At the same time, the Navy was able to retain a large degree of independence in crafting and conducting its exploitation efforts. Even the formal organizational charts were carefully drawn to reflect this connected yet independent relationship.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 43.

¹⁰⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 43-44.

¹⁰⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 44.

¹⁰⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 44.

The primary wedge being driven into this joint effort was the fact that each service was managed under separate and often conflicting operational directives. For the Navy cadre, all directives "governing the substance of naval interrogations would originate with the appropriate branch of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations."¹⁰⁷ Concurrently, Army personnel assigned to Fort Hunt were under the Army's administrative and operational authority as managed through MIS chain-of-command.

A source of friction that appeared early in the planning process for the Joint Interrogation Center were the service prerogatives pertaining to the interrogation of specific POWs. The Navy's initial policy preference would have granted its I/Os exclusive access to all relevant POWs (i.e., all POWs from, or with information pertaining to, the naval service) and similarly control the dissemination of all intelligence reports pertaining to its sphere of interest. With the beginning of operations at Fort Hunt, however, a POW interrogated by one service would be made available for follow-up interrogation by the other service. While this policy appeared to work well at the operational level, it was not acceptable at the senior policy level. Once again, the Navy reasserted its initial position that "no operational, technical, or tactical naval information obtained from prisoners of war shall be disseminated by the Army."¹⁰⁸ After initial hesitation, the Assistant Chief of Staff,

¹⁰⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 44.

¹⁰⁸MIS, *Memorandum for General Strong, Subject: Comments on Paragraph E of Proposed SOP for Interrogation Center*, 16 July 1943; Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA.

G-2, and the Chief of the Prisoner of War Branch, MIS, acquiesced on the following grounds:

In view of the fact that the Navy is shortly taking over the Anti-Submarine Command, lock, stock, and barrel, this meaning that the Army Air Forces as such will not participate in anti-submarine warfare, it is not considered advisable to pursue further the point with the Navy that we should be able to disseminate information which [the Navy would] obtain from German naval prisoners of war.¹⁰⁹

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

As a result of the agreement, a new policy was drafted for the handling and exploitation of all POWs transiting through Fort Hunt. Pursuant to this policy, an extensive list of actions, responsibilities, and processes were encapsulated in a formal standard operating procedure. The agreement outlining these procedures was approved by Commander John L. Riheldaffer, USN, Head of Special Activities Branch, Division of Naval Intelligence, and Col. Catesby ap C. Jones, Chief, Prisoner of War Branch, MIS, and put into effect beginning in July 1943.¹¹⁰

PRISONER IN-PROCESSING

The first area addressed in the agreement was a set of detailed procedures for handling and processing each new group of POWs that arrived at Fort Hunt. Under

¹⁰⁹Memorandum for the Colonel Catesby ap Jones, Chief, Prisoner of War Branch, Washington DC, 18 July 1943, as quoted in *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 45.

¹¹⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 45-49.

this framework, the Chief Interrogating Officer (Chief I/O) and Chief Monitoring Officer (Chief M/O) were tasked with preparing a berthing plan sufficient to accommodate newly arriving POWs. This plan would be drafted in consultation with the Officer of the Guard before being submitted to the Commanding Officer for approval. In instances where naval prisoners were involved, the berthing plan was also coordinated with the Naval Officer on duty at Fort Hunt. All incoming POWs were processed under the supervision of the Chief I/O and the Chief M/O, with a Naval officer present in cases where naval prisoners were being processed.¹¹¹

Searches were conducted by the guard force under the supervision of the Chief I/O who would make the final decision with regard to the disposition of any articles discovered as well as the assignment of these effects to an officer for examination. Once again, a Naval Officer would accomplish this task when it involved naval POWs.

INTERROGATION PROCEDURES

All requests for the interrogation of POWs were to be directed to the Chief I/O who would make assignments to specific interrogation rooms, order the movement of POWs, and maintain all records of interrogations. Additionally, the Chief I/O was the sole authority for approving requests to visit a POW in his room, approving proposed schedules of interrogation, and ordering, through the Chief M/O, all required recordings of interrogations and POW interactions. Despite the rigidity

¹¹¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 45.

built into the SOP, there was some room for flexibility. The I/O in charge of an interrogation, for example, had the option of requesting changes to the daily schedule as necessary in the actual conduct of the interrogation.¹¹²

As soon as possible after the completion of an interrogation, the I/O was expected to submit a brief report to the Chief I/O that provided the following information:

1. Date, name of POW, name of I/O
2. Estimate of P/W's personality
3. Military history and background of P/W
4. Outline of topics covered in the interrogation
5. Specific information, such as proper names, localities
6. Technical details should be included as fully as possible
7. Special points of interest for monitoring
8. Suggested lines for further interrogation¹¹³

All information gathered from POWs during the course of the interrogation would be subsequently made available for evaluation in one of the four following formats:

1. In instances where no recording was made, a detailed report would be prepared by the I/O from memory or on the basis of notes taken during the interrogation.
2. Recordings and/or notes taken by monitors of selected portions of a given interrogation based on the assessment of the monitor or by way of a prearranged signal given by the I/O.
3. A full recording of the entire interrogation and the subsequent preparation of a detailed report made after listening to the playback. In such cases, portions of the recording may be selected for full transcription.
4. A full recording of an entire interrogation along with a full transcription.¹¹⁴ The transcript would be edited to remove material deemed unessential.¹¹⁵

¹¹²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 46.

¹¹³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 46.

¹¹⁴An example of a complete transcription is provided at Appendix D.

¹¹⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 46-47.

It fell to the Chief I/O to ensure all POWs were returned to their assigned rooms upon the conclusion of an interrogation. Furthermore, explicit instructions were issued to all personnel that these POWs were not to be disturbed for an extended period after returning to their rooms. The objective here was to create a situation that was most conducive to capturing potential intelligence data from the conversations among POWs that often took place after an encounter with their interrogator. Thus, an unspecified period of time was formally planned to monitor the POW's reaction to the interrogation experience and, hopefully, gather useful information spontaneously offered up by the POW.¹¹⁶

An I/O working alone required the support of the monitoring team to cover the room to which the POW had been returned. While the I/O began preparing his report, monitors listened carefully for any bits of relevant information uttered by the POW. In instances where I/Os worked in teams of two, one member of the team would be assigned to assist in monitoring the POW's room until the lead I/O had time to prepare his report. At that time, the watch would be assumed by members of the monitoring team on duty.¹¹⁷

The agreement also stipulated that the Chief I/O would be responsible for the following miscellaneous functions:

1. Coordination of all advance information available on an incoming group of POWs. In the case of naval prisoners, this information was to be furnished by the Chief I/O, Navy, or his representative.

¹¹⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 47.

¹¹⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 47.

2. Initial briefing of I/Os and Chief M/O and such subsequent briefings as were necessary. In the case of naval prisoners, these briefings were to be presented by the Chief I/O, Navy or his representative.
3. Coordination and direction of room changes as requested by I/Os or Chief M/O. In the case of naval prisoners under interrogation by the Navy, the room changes were made in consultation with the Chief I/O, Navy, or his representative.¹¹⁸

MONITORING AND TRANSCRIPTION

All monitoring activities came under the immediate supervision and direction of the Chief M/O. This individual worked in close coordination with the Chief I/O (and, concerning issues pertaining to naval POWs, with the Chief Naval I/O). A key area of responsibility was the selection of rooms that would be consistently monitored, a decision that had to be reconsidered each time a new group of POWs would arrive at Fort Hunt.¹¹⁹

The management of the Monitoring Subsection focused on three functional areas:¹²⁰

1. The acoustical and electrical engineering aspect—this included research and development, manufacturing, selection and installation of equipment, and maintenance.¹²¹

¹¹⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 47.

¹¹⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 47-48.

¹²⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 69.

¹²¹The acoustical and electrical engineering challenges during the Fort Hunt interrogation program were considerable. The work of the signals officers and enlisted personnel in this subsection was integral to the ultimate success of MIS-Y. While the innovations they generated were impressive, further research and documentation of their activities—and the lessons they offer for future programs—will be left to others with a more in-depth understanding of technology to pursue. The other two aspects of monitoring—linguistics and administrative—are addressed in greater depth in subsequent sections of this thesis.

2. The linguistic aspect—the "listening-in" and recording of interrogations and conversations among POWs.
3. The administrative aspect—liaison with the other subsections and with the services.

As the monitoring effort unfolded, it yielded its own tradecraft designed to produce the best results possible under often difficult—and tedious—circumstances. To enhance the individual's ability to clearly hear the conversation, monitors were directed to wear headphones at all times. To ensure that the POWs remained unaware of the monitors' presence and activities, complete silence was also mandated.¹²²

The schedule established for monitoring operations called for a full complement of monitors to be on duty during the hours of 0700 to 2200. Allowances were made, however, for additional monitoring services when "special circumstances shall require longer monitoring."¹²³

Monitoring was performed by three teams (referred to as Groups I, II, and III). Each 15-hour duty day was divided into three shifts. Two of the three shifts were spent either performing monitoring duties or transcribing the recordings. The other shift was set aside as a mental and physical break from the surprisingly demanding and mentally exhausting effort. The order of these shifts changed on a daily basis.¹²⁴

In the majority of the cases, transcriptions were accomplished by the same individual who made the recording. Exceptions to this policy were made only under

¹²²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 48.

¹²³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 48.

¹²⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 48.

the authority of the Chief M/O. Transcriptions were made following an established procedure:

1. Recordings were to be transcribed in the original language (e.g., German) in two copies—an original and a carbon copy—and submitted to the Chief M/O for review.
2. After carefully reviewing the transcription, the Chief M/O would pass it to the Chief I/O. The Chief M/O was responsible for keeping a log of all transcriptions produced.
3. Transcriptions of recordings made of an interrogation would be provided to the respective I/O for his review.
4. Words in a recording that were unclear and could not be resolved would be marked in the transcriptions by a series of dots (.....).¹²⁵

EVALUATION, EDITING AND DISSEMINATION

After the transcript was submitted to the Chief I/O, it would be distributed to the representative of the appropriate service for preliminary evaluation. This officer would edit the transcript as necessary before returning it to the Chief I/O who, in turn, would forward it to the Army or Navy Evaluation Section. Personnel working in these sections would extract useful information, often combining this with relevant material from other interrogations. This information was formatted into a report for dissemination through the respective service channels.¹²⁶

As previously noted, the Navy vigorously defended its perceived exclusive right to collect and disseminate naval-related intelligence derived from the

¹²⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 48.

¹²⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 49.

interrogation of POWs. As a result, this prerogative—granting such authority to both the Navy and the Army—was incorporated into the agreement and made an integral part of the standard operating procedure that guided administrative and operational activities at Fort Hunt. Section E of the Standard Operating Procedures for Interrogation Centers included the following clauses:

1. No operational, technical, or tactical naval information obtained from prisoners of war shall be disseminated by the Army.
2. No operational, technical or tactical military (Army) information obtained from prisoners of war shall be disseminated by the Navy.
3. Information of a general nature, not covered by paragraphs 1 and 2 of this section may be disseminated by either service after evaluation on the spot by the service having cognizance of the prisoners from whom it is obtained.
4. Dissemination of evaluated information will be made by the cognizant service through regularly established channels.¹²⁷

ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERROGATION CENTER

While the fundamental organization of a Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center would include by definition Naval, Army, and Air sections, the preponderance of specific intelligence requirements tasked upon the effort often led to the creation of specialized subsections on either a temporary or, more commonly, a permanent basis. This proved to be the case at Fort Hunt, where a number of such specialized sections were created during the course of the facility's period of operation.

¹²⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 49.

The *Enemy Intelligence Subsection* focused on counterintelligence, espionage, and "underground" activities conducted by enemy (i.e., Axis) forces against Allied interests. An officer who served as the chief of this subsection provided the following overview of the unit's origin and areas of responsibilities:

The Enemy Intelligence Section was organized in order to centralize research in German espionage, Sabotage, and Counter-Intelligence for the benefit of the entire interrogation staff.

At the outset, a group of officers secured briefing [*sic*] and studied the major fields of enemy intelligence with the intention of instructing screening teams. When suitable P/Ws arrived, a picture of German Intelligence, both historical and timely, was secured. Personality files, specialized reading materials, and liaison information served to keep abreast of all *Abwehr*, RSHA, SD¹²⁸....and underground movements in Germany.

Closest liaison with other interrogating sections prevented too narrow a compartmentalization permitting utilization of specialists in codes, scientific subjects, and army O.B.¹²⁹ to work closely with [the] Enemy Intelligence Section.¹³⁰

The *Army Subsection*, as the name implies, specialized in areas of intelligence of particular interest to the Army. This included order of battle, details on the German General Staff, organization of military units, weapons, equipment and enemy personalities not within the scope of the Enemy Intelligence Subsection.¹³¹

The *Air Subsection* dealt with intelligence relating to weapons and technical equipment employed by the Luftwaffe. As time passed, increasing interest was paid

¹²⁸The *Sturmabteilung* (SA) was the military arm of the Nazi party. A component of the SA was the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), Hitler's elite bodyguard detachment. One of the most powerful elements of the SS was the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA), the state security section of the SS. The *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD) was the long-range intelligence branch of the R.S.H.A.

¹²⁹Order of battle.

¹³⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 50.

¹³¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 50-51.

to the German rocket program, specifically the V-Weapons program. This subsection also had responsibility for intelligence in support of the Allied strategic bombing campaign in Europe.¹³²

Personnel in the *Scientific Research Subsection* were responsible for intelligence on Germany's considerable scientific capabilities. This included information about Germany's scientific and technological research centers, progress in research and development programs, and details about the key personalities in the scientific community.¹³³

The *Industrial Economics Subsection* focused on enemy economics and finance issues. Information was also sought on German industrial production and the status of critical production centers. Of primary interest was the state of Germany's economy and its ability to sustain its war effort through production in key industries.¹³⁴

The *Eastern European Subsection* had a broad portfolio of interests in the region. Of particular interest was intelligence from POWs concerning political, industrial, economic, and military issues. The subsection examined these areas from both a national and regional perspective.¹³⁵

In addition to specialized subsections, the Joint Interrogation Center also had a number of subsections organized by function. The *Evaluation Subsection* was responsible for evaluating and editing interrogation reports and transcripts from

¹³²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 51.

¹³³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 51.

¹³⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 51.

¹³⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 51.

recordings as well as for the dissemination of finished reports through MIS and ONI channels.¹³⁶ The *Morale Subsection* supervised the state of morale among POWs with an emphasis on maximizing their utility as sources of information. The *Monitoring Subsection* orchestrated the extensive monitoring efforts, listening to and recording both interrogations and conversations among POWs in their holding rooms and preparing transcripts of these exchanges.¹³⁷ The *Library Subsection* served as a specialized reference center for I/Os and support personnel, providing a variety of materials, files, and maps to support the exploitation effort. Finally, personnel in the *Document Subsection* systematically studied the large volume of captured documents arriving with an incoming group of POWs or discovered in the course of the careful search of the POWs conducted during their in-processing.¹³⁸

¹³⁶Additional information on the role of the Evaluation Subsection is provided in Chapter 6.

¹³⁷A more detailed account of the responsibilities and operations of the Monitoring Subsection are provided in Chapter 6.

¹³⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 51-52.

CHAPTER 6

INTERROGATION OPERATIONS AT FORT HUNT

"Know how to analyze a man. The alertness of the examiner is matched against the reserve of the examined. But great judgement is called for, to take the measure of another. It is far more important to know the composition, and the properties of men, than those of herbs, and stones. This is the most delicate of the occupations of life: for the metals are known by their ring, and men by what they speak; words show forth the mind of man; yet more, his works. To this end the greatest caution is necessary, the clearest observation, the subtlest understanding, and the most critical judgment."

Baltasar Gracian
*The Art of Worldly Wisdom*¹³⁹

The Fort Hunt Joint Interrogation Center was given the mission of collecting strategic level intelligence through the detailed exploitation of German POWs.¹⁴⁰ In fact, the primary impetus behind the War Department's establishment of MIS-Y was for the purpose of conducting "special interrogation, as distinguished from the bulk of interrogation carried on at the ordinary P/W enclosures, and by interrogation teams operating with tactical units."¹⁴¹

¹³⁹Aphorism 291: Know How to Analyze a Man, Balthasar Gracian, *The Art of Worldly Wisdom: A Collection of Aphorisms* (Boston, MA: Shambala Publications, 1993), 250.

¹⁴⁰A small number of Italian POWs also flowed through Fort Hunt during the early years of the war. However, the main focus of the effort—and the predominant source of useful intelligence—was captured German military personnel.

¹⁴¹MIS, *History of G-2, ETOUSA*, 161-162.

In accordance with this mission directive, the collection mandate reflected the far ranging information requirements levied by senior decisionmakers and military commanders. The nature of the information sought by interrogators at Fort Hunt encompassed a challenge degree of breadth and depth, to include such areas as:¹⁴²

1. All matters having to do with overall strategic intelligence.
2. All ordnance, signal, and technical intelligence involving theoretical or scientific knowledge of the principles upon which armament, signal equipment or other technical equipment, are contracted or operated.
3. All non-operational intelligence, including such subjects as the war economy, industrial development, war finance, and civilian morale.
4. Organizational details of enemy high command, military staff organization, espionage and counterespionage, hospital organization, organization of railways and highways for military transportation, the study of objectionable political groups or organizations, or groups and individuals more likely to be considered as friendly to an invading power.
5. All order of battle information pertaining to the German military, including command structure, recruiting programs, the nature and employment of special units, hospitalization, and general discipline.
6. Information concerning the methods with which Germany deals with occupied countries, including policing, economic organizations, and the employment of local agents.

COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

Individual I/Os, while experts in the actual craft of interrogation, rarely possess equal mastery in the broad spectrum of specialized intelligence topics. In the course of lengthy experience, many I/Os did, in fact, gain an impressive degree of expertise in certain areas; nonetheless, continuous support from intelligence specialists was a

¹⁴²*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 102.

critical part of the interrogation process. From the beginning of interrogation operations at Fort Hunt, a close working relationship was established between the Joint Interrogation Center and a variety of agencies with interests and/or expertise in such areas as signals intelligence, technical intelligence, and ordnance intelligence. To ensure I/Os were prepared to exploit the knowledgeability of POWs to the fullest extent possible, MIS-Y operating policy viewed general briefings on specialized intelligence topics as insufficient; "there must be constant liaison so that the interrogators may at all times be fully oriented as to specific information desired."¹⁴³

The interrogations performed at Fort Hunt were largely driven by the information needs expressed by various intelligence and operational organizations and commands. These were articulated in the form of collection requirements memorandums submitted through the Prisoner of War Branch of MIS. While no specific format was required, the statement of collection requirements commonly included an overview of the submitting organization's scope of intelligence interests as well as a summary of the current intelligence regarding the topic of interest. In general, these memoranda included a description of general information requirements or a list of specific questions the agency wanted posed to the POW.

The following provides examples of two such memoranda.

A 24 July 1942 memorandum from the War Department's Psychological Warfare division submitted to the Chief of the Interrogation Branch, MIS, outlined what it described as "information of the highest importance to the conduct of psychological warfare in a theater of operations [including] attitudes and conditions

¹⁴³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 19.

leading to loss of morale, loss of fighting efficiency, surrender, or capture." This memo went on to list the following information requirements:¹⁴⁴

1. The effectiveness or non-effectiveness of propaganda, particularly leaflet propaganda, among the enemy armed forces.
2. The extent of distribution to the rear of our propaganda by the enemy military personnel.
3. The credulity of the prisoner in what has been told him by our propaganda.
4. What, if any, measures have been taken by the enemy to repress or counteract our propaganda effort.
5. Any information concerning conditions in the home of the prisoner.

A 24 August 1942 memorandum from the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, of the Eastern Defense Command and First Army sought intelligence derived from the interrogation of POWs that "could be of material aid to instruction of Army Air units."¹⁴⁵ The memo forward as an attachment a 21-page list of specific questions that addressed a broad array of interests including:

1. Airplanes – Quality of German night-flying instruments; status of built-in cameras in German aircraft; confirmation of German aircraft with turbine engines and short broad wings that makes a 'howling noise' when taking off.
2. Economic – Shortage of cobalt and manganese in Germany; congestion in railroad repair shops; decline of coal shipments to Italy; increased use of foreign labor; quantity of Ukrainian wheat available in Germany.

¹⁴⁴*Memorandum for the Chief of the Interrogation Branch, M.I.S., Subject: Examination of Prisoners of War for Psychological Warfare Purposes*, 24 July 1942; Record Group 179, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA.

¹⁴⁵ *Memorandum for the Military Intelligence Service, G-2, War Department*, Officer of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, Eastern Defense Command and First Army, 24 August, 1942; Record Group 179, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA.

3. Order of Battle – Information concerning Army, Divisional or Regimental numbers not included in most recent Order of Battle book; evidence of motorization of infantry divisions; names of commanding officers and staff officers at Army, Corps, and Divisions levels; status of materiel and rations in army units.
4. Submarines – Confirmation of a 750-ton submarine reportedly operating off the Brazilian coast; method of entering harbor at Brest; identify depth at which submarines are reasonably safe against aircraft or destroyers; use of small (250 to 300 tons) submarine in the Black Sea shipped via rail or the Danube River.
5. Bombing Targets – Information on camouflaged harbor at Hamburg; location of airfield and air signal school in Landerneau, France; location of electro-, diesel-, and steam-motor schools at Kiel; status of concentration of 50,000-75,000 men stationed at the Hanover Grounds at Munster; status of U-Boat and Torpedo Officer School located in Flensburg.
6. German Ships – Location and current status of the *Europa*, the *Franklin*, the *Graf Zeppelin*, The *Kap Arkona*, and the *Hansa*.
7. Flotilla Commanders – Details concerning known naval commanders (identified by name); identification of commanders of specific commands/vessels.
8. Radio devices – Information regarding antenna for sending and receiving; U-Boat wireless codes; direction-finding apparatus; call signs and letters.
9. Miscellaneous References – Information on new 88 mm anti-tank gun; new type of German bomb with a blast radius of 500 meters; evidence of changes in German fighting methods in North Africa; status of coastal defenses.

SELECTION OF POWS FOR INTERROGATION

To fulfill its strategic and technical intelligence mission, MIS-Y sought POWs with intelligence potential from a variety of sources. The bulk of the prisoners processed through Fort Hunt came from three primary points: 1) the theater of operation, 2) POW camps in the U.S., and 3) Ports of Debarkation and Embarkation.

A number of Detailed Interrogation Centers were established in and near the European and North African theaters of operation. Initial interrogation of POWs was effected at centers located in North Africa, Italy, France, and England.¹⁴⁶ While much of the information gathered at these facilities was more time-perishable and tactically oriented, these overseas camps played an important role in the MIS-Y process. In addition to collecting tactical intelligence, interrogators in and near the combat theaters proved invaluable in screening the large number of POWs flowing through their centers and selecting those with potential value to be gained from more extensive exploitation efforts. Those POWs with "long term technical or strategic information...who possessed such detailed information as to require continued interrogation over a long period and under the guidance of technical advisors" were designated for transport to the U.S. for examination at Fort Hunt. All information previously obtained from the POW was sent on as well.¹⁴⁷

To enhance the effectiveness of the screening effort, interrogators needed an understanding of each service's respective intelligence requirements prior to interrogating a POW. Interrogators at overseas locations were thus briefed not only on the specific types of information MIS-Y sought, but provided with a detailed overview of the qualifications that a prospective source would need to possess in order to fulfill those information requirements. POWs transiting overseas camps that

¹⁴⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 18.

¹⁴⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 20.

were assessed as meeting MIS-Y criteria were immediately identified, segregated, and marked for expeditious transfer to Fort Hunt for continued exploitation.¹⁴⁸

Occasionally, however, some difficulties were encountered in this process. One of the most vexing problems involved turf battles over priority access to POWs. While the very existence of MIS-Y was in large measure the result of the unselfish support and encouragement of the British CSDIC counterpart, the two programs often struggled over control of the most valuable POWs. Even with an American section working alongside British counterparts at the London-based interrogation center, there was never "an equitable distribution of desirable prisoners of war established between Fort Hunt and CSDIC U.K."¹⁴⁹

The use of overseas Detailed Interrogation Centers as a source of POWs was, nonetheless, a successful venture that grew even more so as the war continued. The 6824th Detailed Interrogation Center in France, for example, made a concerted effort to provide a steady supply of useful POWs to Fort Hunt. This flow gradually expanded until it ultimately generated a sufficient number of POWs to require a twice-monthly transport of POWs by air from France to Fort Hunt.¹⁵⁰

During the early years of the war, MIS-Y screening teams traveled to the various POW camps in the U.S. in search of useful sources. Those prisoners selected for further examination were immediately segregated from the rest of the camp population before being shipped by rail to Fort Hunt. During the early phases of

¹⁴⁸*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 102.

¹⁴⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 20.

¹⁵⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 20-21.

MIS-Y, a significant effort was invested in pursuing POWs with intelligence potential from this source; however, while a reasonable number of valuable POWs were secured in this fashion, the process ultimately proved unsatisfactory. Experience over time demonstrated that these sources were rarely of significant value. In addition to possessing information that had become far more dated than those shipped directly to Fort Hunt from overseas, many of the POWs had been warned by their comrades about the interrogation effort and were both better prepared and more inclined to resist exploitation.¹⁵¹ In addition, the POW camps were scattered throughout the U.S., which made for long absences from Fort Hunt for valuable interrogation personnel. At the same time, space on trains was of limited availability and often delayed the shipment of POWs to Fort Hunt for up to several months.¹⁵²

Another difficulty with this program was the fact that support from the POW camps was not always forthcoming. On a number of occasions, the teams of interrogators from Fort Hunt encountered considerable resistance from the camp officials during their visits. This was reflected in the 21 September 1943 report to the Fort Hunt commander filed by Captain Paul A. Neuland. During his visit to the Camp Ellis, IL, PW Internment Camp, Captain Neuland found a number of POWs that he recommended for transfer back to Fort Hunt for extended interrogation. The reception he received from the camp staff, however, was described as "not too enthusiastic." He was ultimately successful in obtaining the support he required

¹⁵¹*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 102.

¹⁵²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 21-22.

through the employment of "applied psychology [that] resulted in securing many of the things...requested as essential to the success of [the] mission."¹⁵³

One of the greatest challenges to the teams visiting POW internment camps was in gaining the cooperation of the camp staff in segregating the prospective sources from the general POW population. As noted above, the interaction among POWs can undermine the potential source's value. This is a critical element of effective POW handling from an interrogation perspective. As Captain Neuland observed in his report, "It seems a shame...that so much time has to be wasted at the beginning of every such visit to a PW camp in coaxing our own authorities to arrange for such segregation."¹⁵⁴

After the Normandy invasion, the most effective means of identifying potential sources for MIS-Y came from screening efforts conducted at three key ports of debarkation: Newport News, Brooklyn, and Boston. Experienced screening officers were able to individually examine POWs, selecting some for additional screening and releasing the rest for processing into POW camps.¹⁵⁵

Every prisoner transiting through the ports carried documentation that provided the bearer's name, rank, internment serial number, birthplace, place of residence, and civilian occupation. They were also provided with forms that requested additional

¹⁵³Paul A. Neuland, Captain, USA, *Memorandum to Colonel Walker*, 21 September 1943; Record Group 319, Records of the Army Staff; Records of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, NARA, 1. Cited hereafter as *Memorandum to Colonel Walker*, NARA.

¹⁵⁴*Memorandum to Colonel Walker*, NARA, 1-2.

¹⁵⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 22.

background information.¹⁵⁶ The vast majority of the POWs completed these forms without question, believing it to simply be one step in the overall debarkation process.¹⁵⁷

The screening officers were often able to make a reasonable assessment of the POW's potential as a source for interrogation based a careful review of this documentation alone. As a result, a small cadre of officers was able to rapidly screen large numbers of POWs. Since many of the POWs had undergone a preliminary interrogation while still in Europe, most never considered that additional interrogation could be a possibility at this point in their detention experience. Some of those marked for further assessment were interrogated again to ascertain potential areas of knowledge. From this group, those selected for extended interrogation were sent through standard sanitary treatment, including delousing, before being placed on a train for transport to Fort Hunt.¹⁵⁸

SELECTION CRITERIA

The screening process was a critical step in the overall interrogation process. It was logistically impossible to thoroughly interrogate the thousands of POWs coming

¹⁵⁶In *Hitler's Spies*, Kahn describes a similar procedure routinely employed by *Luftwaffe* interrogators. Allied POWs were asked to complete what was presented to be official Red Cross form (it was not). That form asked numerous questions beyond the name, rank, serial number and date of birth allied military personnel were authorized to disclose upon capture. As with the MIS-Y experience described above, a large number of allied POWs readily completed the form, thereby providing their captors with extensive information that would aid in further exploitation.

¹⁵⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 22-23.

¹⁵⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 22-23.

out of Europe. At the same time, the intelligence possessed by any knowledgeable POW that slipped past the screening teams would be lost forever. As described above, once the prisoners made it to the POW camps, the chances were greatly reduced that MIS-Y would subsequently identify them as possible sources of intelligence.

The selection of prisoners for extended interrogation at Fort Hunt was based on regional qualifications, technical qualifications, and civilian or military experience. As the process was refined, and the prisoners moved through the screening and interrogation process, a more in-depth set of parameters were used. At this point, POWs were assessed as to their potential knowledge regarding one or more areas of intelligence interest as well as for their military or civilian experience as follows:¹⁵⁹

1. Targeting data regarding industrial centers, bombing damage assessment information. A POW coming from a specific area of interest could be expected to address these information requirements.
2. Signals (i.e., communications) personnel, members of tank crews, machine gunners, ordnance personnel, and artillery officers and NCOs were immediately included in a tentative list without requiring additional detailed screening.
3. Prisoners known to have been previously employed by munitions plants, armament or airplane manufacturers, or chemical works were assumed to be capable of providing valuable details with respect to these particular industries.
4. Members of the *SS*, the *Abwehr*¹⁶⁰, and the *SD* were almost always selected immediately upon recognition of their status. The abundance of such individuals found during screening in the later period of the war made them less attractive as intelligence sources. Only those of sufficient rank or with uncommon access to areas of intelligence interest were thus selected.
5. Selections were also often made in response to particular requests from various interested agencies, on the basis of past affiliation with organizations of interest,

¹⁵⁹*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 103.

¹⁶⁰*Abwehr*, from the German "to ward off" was Germany's military intelligence organization during World War II.

alleged criminal record, or due to the fact that a particular record of service would have endowed the POW with information of value to a specialized agency or office (e.g., Psychological Warfare, OSS,¹⁶¹ FBI, the State Department, the Treasury Department, etc.). As an example of the latter, toward the end of the war in Europe all prisoners who had been involved in the German financial administration were considered of special intelligence value.¹⁶²

TRANSPORT OF POWS

Fort George G. Meade, MD, played a prominent role in the secret POW operations being conducted at Fort Hunt. The agreement between the Pine Grove Furnace Internment Camp and Fort Hunt described in Chapter 2 stipulated that the exchange of prisoners being moved between the two facilities would take place at Fort Meade. Located approximately 40 miles north of Fort Hunt, Fort Meade provided the operational cover for MIS-Y activities. To provide this support, all prisoners of wars destined for Fort Hunt, along with their individual records, were processed through Fort Meade. The one exception was in instances where high-level POWs were flown in directly from Europe; even then, Fort Meade was notified of the prisoner's arrival and status in the handling process.¹⁶³

The movement of prisoners between Fort Meade and Fort Hunt was conducted under rigorous operational security measures. The windows of the buses were blackened both to prevent the prisoners from observing the surrounding area as well as to shield the prisoners from the view of unauthorized personnel. All convoys

¹⁶¹Office of Strategic Services, the World War II strategic intelligence organization and forerunner to the Central Intelligence Agency.

¹⁶²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 23.

¹⁶³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 28.

were escorted by U.S. Army Military Police Detachments under the command of a commissioned officer. Inside the buses, compartments were constructed that separated various groups of prisoners--Nazis from anti-Nazis and officers from enlisted personnel—to prevent one group from having an influence upon, or threatening, another. Management of the movement of all prisoners between the Interrogation Center, Fort Meade, and the Pine Grove Furnace Internment Camp was under the authority of the Post Adjutant at Fort Hunt.¹⁶⁴

RECEPTION OF POWS

Upon the arrival of a POW at Fort Hunt, a formal "Intake" was conducted to process them into the facility. Prisoners were seated side-by-side on long benches in the reception room. Each would eventually be called out by name and led to a processing room where they would be subjected to a preliminary interrogation, a full security search, and a declaration of and receipt for any personal property. Search, seizure, and documentation of all money carried by the prisoners were supervised by the Enclosure Administrative Officer. These funds would be securely forwarded to Fort Meade to be deposited in a trust fund in the prisoner's name.¹⁶⁵

A Military Intelligence Processing Officer would supervise the completion of all forms during intake as well as collect all available information about the prisoner.

¹⁶⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 28.

¹⁶⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 28-30.

This individual consolidated all information previously gathered at the time of capture and during initial interrogation, in the course the screening process, and during subsequent processing and handling of the POW. This information would later be forwarded to the interrogation cadre. All papers accompanying the prisoner, and all papers or other articles found on their person during the search, were carefully examined for any intelligence or military value.¹⁶⁶

The prisoner was next moved to a dressing room where all clothing would be confiscated and stored in a canvass barracks bag carefully tagged with the owner's identification. After a shower, the prisoner was examined by the post Medical Examiner. Finally, the Supply Room would issue clothing, toiletries, and other personal items before a guard would escort the POW to the designated detention room.¹⁶⁷

Security mandated that the prisoners would be fed in their rooms rather than en masse at a common dining facility. Trucks would deliver thermos containers with food that would be served on trays to each POW and would be collected immediately after the meal. A Camp Medical Officer provided adequate medical care for all POWs during their stay at Fort Hunt. Such care was provided based on needs assessed during the initial processing into the center or by request from the POW at a later time.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 30.

¹⁶⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 30.

¹⁶⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 30.

THE INTERROGATION PROCESS

After the new prisoners were escorted to their detention rooms, a careful analysis of all personal effects (e.g., personal letters, photographs, diaries/journals, etc.) would be conducted by a team led by the appropriately titled Evaluation of Documents Officer. An assessment of these articles would be forwarded to the interrogators for possible use in the examination of the prisoner.¹⁶⁹

A meeting of Interrogating Officers would be convened at which time a thorough examination of all relevant material was conducted. After a careful review of this data, the POW would be assigned to the most appropriate interrogation section (e.g., Air Section, Geographic Section, Army Section, Naval Section, etc.) based on such considerations as branch of service, area of expertise, civilian and/or military experience, and technical knowledge.¹⁷⁰ The prisoner would next be tentatively assigned to the most appropriate section for interrogation. The chief of each section would, in turn, assign the prisoner to a specific I/O. Where possible, an effort would be made to match up the prisoner with an I/O who possessed the right combination of qualities such as personality, temperament, experience, area of expertise, and service.¹⁷¹

Upon being assigned a POW, the I/O would systematically study the information available to him before drawing a preliminary assessment of the POW's

¹⁶⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 37.

¹⁷⁰*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 103.

¹⁷¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 37.

background and areas of probable knowledgeability.¹⁷² Preparation was a demanding and time-consuming effort: three to six hours might be spent reviewing a particular case before conducting an interrogation lasting but one hour.¹⁷³ The I/O would study the document evaluation report and, where helpful, the original documents as well. While the military related documents were almost always of some intelligence value, the personal effects were of significant value to the I/O in the effort to gain the source's compliance. The I/O was authorized to return these personal articles in a piecemeal fashion as a means of building rapport with the POW and rewarding cooperative behavior in the interrogation room.¹⁷⁴

Before beginning the interrogation, the I/O would ensure the I Room was properly arranged and all necessary materials were available to support his objectives. After thorough preparation, the I/O would have the POW escorted into the interrogation room (I Room). Once accomplished, the I/O would contact the guard force and summon the POW through the "inter-office teletalk." Monitors would already be in place and fully briefed on the particular POW's background; in addition, they would have already been monitoring the POW's room to capture any potentially useful information from the conversations between the occupants. The prisoner's arrival outside the I Room was announced with a knock on the door from the escorting guard.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷²*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 103.

¹⁷³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 38.

¹⁷⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 38.

¹⁷⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 39.

After ordering the prisoner to enter, the I/O would usually ask a few preliminary questions. Depending on the I/O's plan for the conduct of the interrogation, the POW might be ordered to stand at attention or allowed to take a seat. From this point, the actual interrogation methods used varied widely with the skill, experience, and personality of the I/O. Each had "his own method of handling the various situations which may confront him, and each prisoner, being a different individual, requires different treatment."¹⁷⁶

The instructions the I/O would give to the monitors were highly dependent on the particular POW being examined and the nature of the interrogation. The I/O might request that the monitors take detailed written notes of the interrogation or have the entire session recorded. The impact of note-taking in the presence of the POW had to be taken into consideration. While many POWs were unaffected by it, others would be less inclined to speak freely upon seeing their words captured in print. In such instances, having the option of a monitor taking notes or recording the session enabled the I/O to create an atmosphere that would best encourage the POW to respond to questioning.¹⁷⁷

MONITORING

Through both the British experience at the CSDIC in London and the MIS-Y program at Fort Hunt, the use of listening devices to capture the conversations

¹⁷⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 39.

¹⁷⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 40.

among prisoners became an irreplaceable element of the overall interrogation process during World War II. The unbridled success of using hidden microphones quickly outweighed any moral reservations that arose when their use was initially discussed. This is reflected in the observations included in the MIS-Y after action report written in 1946:

Whatever moral scruples may have served to impede development of this activity in the past have disappeared in the face of a war waged by an enemy, both brutal and unscrupulous. Failure to make use of 'listening-in' devices would be to allow the Nazis a decided advantage. Like the bombing of cities or the use of submarines against merchant shipping, 'eavesdropping,' however repulsive it may be to standards of civilized conduct, is a potential 'new weapon' in modern warfare. Even the most obstinate Nazi, who arrogantly refuses to reply to the questions of an interrogator, may reveal, during conversations with his prisoner roommate, the most valuable intelligence. Accordingly, the systematic 'monitoring' or of 'listening-in' on the conversations of knowledgeable prisoners of war is an accepted feature of the work of a Detailed Interrogation Center.¹⁷⁸

"Listening-in" on a prisoner's reaction after an interrogation provided a fertile source of valuable intelligence. The MIS-Y interrogators found, just as had their British counterparts, that most POWs were apparently eager to discuss the just concluded experience in the interrogation room with their roommates. MIS-Y interrogators quickly learned, as had their British counterparts, that the POW was likely to talk at length with his cellmate after he had been interrogated, often bragging about how well he had outsmarted his interrogator.¹⁷⁹ This conversation often included a POW's recitation of the questions asked and—in the best of circumstances—reveal the correct information he had withheld from the I/O. This

¹⁷⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 66.

¹⁷⁹*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 104.

process worked most effectively when the I/O kept the monitors fully apprised of the areas of intelligence interest.¹⁸⁰

The monitoring effort at Fort Hunt was also a valuable technology for supporting actual interrogations in several important ways. With monitors taking notes for the I/O or using recording equipment to capture the exchange, I/Os had a great deal more flexibility in questioning the POW free of the difficulties and undesirable delays note-taking can create. I/Os also quickly learned that many POWs were far less inclined to answer questions when the interrogator took notes in their presence. In addition, the opportunity to play back any portion of the interrogation verbatim enabled the I/O to prepare more detailed and factually correct interrogation reports. Finally, the recording of an interrogation created the opportunity for the I/O to review his own performance and thereby improve his skills for the next round of questioning.¹⁸¹

The monitoring system installed at Fort Hunt enabled the interrogation staff to monitor the prisoner essentially at all times. As noted in the previous chapter, the staff of monitors was routinely available during the hours of 0700 and 2200; monitors would also be made available as needed during other periods as well. Any conversation the POW had with his interrogator, a guard, member of the Fort Hunt staff, or other prisoners were meticulously monitored for even the slightest bit of information. Before a POW was moved to an interrogation room, a check would be made to ensure no conversations of potential interest were taking place. If such a

¹⁸⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 67.

¹⁸¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 67.

conversation was in progress, the interrogation would be delayed as necessary to maximize the possible exploitation of this opportunity. Monitors either made detailed notes of what they heard, or recording equipment was used to capture the conversation for later review. This information could enable the interrogator to more effectively exploit the POW's areas of knowledge. Often, the information gathered through monitoring¹⁸² was of sufficient substance to forward up MIS channels on its own.¹⁸³

Chapter 2 detailed the construction of the facilities at Fort Hunt, which included the installation of listening devices throughout the interrogation and holding areas. The devices were commonly secreted in the ceiling of the prisoner's cell. Monitoring was conducted, at a minimum, on a definite schedule designed to cover the times when conversation of intelligence value was most likely to occur, especially after the conclusion of every interrogation.

Personnel staffing the monitoring section spent a considerable period of time developing their tradecraft. In addition to improving the technical aspects of their collection efforts, they systematically developed an impressive level of expertise in establishing ideal circumstances for encouraging conversations among POWs that were of operational value—"how to stimulate it, and how to direct it into useful channels."¹⁸⁴ After learning as much as possible about a given POW, the monitoring staff would then try to orchestrate the proper environment these conversations.

¹⁸²An example of a report generated through the monitoring of a conversation between two German general officers is provided at Appendix E.

¹⁸³*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 104.

¹⁸⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 68.

Certain books, technical manuals, or articles from newspapers might be left in an area where the POW might have access to them. With support from the Welfare Subsection, certain creature comforts might be made available (selected, in part, based on desires the POW was overheard expressing). This action often served to "soften [the POW] and to make him more pliable for interrogation while, at the same time, prompting him to more copious conversation."¹⁸⁵

Human factors played a major role in managing the monitoring effort. The process of listening-in every day over a period of months can be difficult and demanding. Monitoring regularly requires a level of concentration and ability to identify information of intelligence value that rivals the conduct of an interrogation.

The challenges for the monitor were summed as follows:

The monitor must be a linguist of exceptional skill, understanding many dialects. The ordinary prisoner of war is rarely a cultivated man, employing pure language. He may speak the language of a Bavarian peasant, of a woodsman from Thuringia, or a semi-Slavic patois. This factor, together with the extraordinary sensitiveness of the microphone to extraneous noises, the song of a bird or the hum of a passing airplane motor, the patter of rain upon the roof, imposed upon the monitor a difficult task of listening. The best linguists often fail on this assignment for the want of a perfectly trained ear or for the lack of concentration.¹⁸⁶

This view of the demands of monitoring was mirrored by the British in their use of the microphone—known in the vernacular as "M"—in support of interrogations at the CSDIC. They found that a unique combination of skills and temperament were critical to selecting the right personnel for this duty. In addition to strong language

¹⁸⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 68.

¹⁸⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 68-69.

skills, that included knowledge of military related slang and technical terminology, the best candidates for the work were "mentally alert and adaptable."¹⁸⁷

To create the best possible working environment for these dedicated and talented individuals, it was important to plan a work schedule that did not needlessly overextend them. At the same time, it was incumbent upon the MIS-Y leadership to encourage a strong sense of esprit de corps that included the monitoring staff as full members of the interrogation team.¹⁸⁸ Toward this end, an exhaustive professional development program for the monitoring staff was established at Fort Hunt under the supervision of the Chief Monitoring Officer. Under his direction, monitors were tasked with the following objectives:

1. Review and continuously study all subjects relating to the special experiences of POWs to be monitored. Seek to understand what information a particular POW is likely to possess and how he could be induced to discuss what he knows.
2. Become familiar with the monitoring and recording machines.
3. Develop the ability to concentrate when listening-in for long periods at a time.
4. Perfect linguistic and dialectical knowledge from the point of view of listening.
5. Be familiar with order of battle, enemy tactics, materiel, munitions, equipment, and related subject areas. The monitor must understand these areas in sufficient depth to recognize valuable intelligence being discussed. The ability to immediately recognize such opportunities is essential.
6. Keep fully briefed on matters of intelligence of interest to the Army, Navy, and Air sections.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷Feborowich, 170.

¹⁸⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 69.

¹⁸⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 71-72.

THE USE OF "STOOL PIGEONS"

To maximize the potential of the listening devices, "Stool Pigeons" were employed in an effort to elicit further information from the POWs. This ploy soon became an essential aid in gathering military intelligence from POWs. This proved especially true when encountering security-conscious prisoners.¹⁹⁰

Great care was taken in selecting prisoners for service as informers. As with many other forms of HUMINT collection, the fact that the informer was willing to betray his own country and countrymen was an area of concern that had to be carefully assessed before proceeding with the operation. The best candidates for service as Stool Pigeons were intelligent and, preferably, possessing a particular specialty or area of expertise. *Luftwaffe* pilots, for example, were of immense help to the Air Section I/Os. Further, the most effective Stool Pigeons were excellent natural actors who were able to play the role in a believable fashion. Deft interpersonal skills and a good memory for details were also important qualities of successful operatives.¹⁹¹

MIS-Y interrogators experienced little trouble in finding a number of suitable candidates willing to perform this role. Motivated by the "knowledge of cruelties visited upon their families at home, punishment or humiliation suffered by themselves during the rise of Hitler...[many] felt that cooperation with the Allied

¹⁹⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 41.

¹⁹¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 41-42.

Powers in the crushing of the Nazis was, in actuality, a noble service."¹⁹² Given the political conditions within Germany during the period, it was not unexpected to find that a large number of the prisoners who volunteered to serve as informers were anti-Nazis. The informers selected from this group proved to be a valuable source of useful intelligence.¹⁹³

As greater experience was gained in the employment of Stool Pigeons, the methods involved became more sophisticated. The Stool Pigeon needed to be fully briefed on the exact nature of the information they would be tasked to collect. They would then be placed, for example, in a detention room prior to the arrival of a new POW and live closely with the targeted POW over an extended period. Having a stool pigeon in the room of another POW who had just been interrogated was very effective in obtaining specific information that the I/O was unable to secure in the course of the interrogation. A Stool Pigeon could also be introduced into the exercise yard in an effort to "become 'friendly' with obstinate prisoners."¹⁹⁴

The appointment of a single officer to serve as the handler for a given POW serving as a Stool Pigeon proved to be the most effective arrangement. Once the I/O demonstrated his reliability, greater leeway was given in the methods the Stool Pigeon was allowed to use. This was only possible when an I/O spent sufficient time with a particular Stool Pigeon to understand the individual's "capacities, temperament and his methods of work." A single handler also made it easier to

¹⁹²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 41.

¹⁹³*History of the Military Intelligence Division*, 104.

¹⁹⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 42.

manage the Stool Pigeon's activities in a manner that would keep his service on behalf of the detaining power protected from unauthorized disclosure.¹⁹⁵

Aside from political motivations, most Stool Pigeons were paid a small stipend for the service as well as being allowed certain privileges denied other POWs. One means an I/O had in maintaining discipline with regard to the Stool Pigeon's behavior and compliance with direction was the ever-present threat of a curtailment of privileges and a reduction in rations.¹⁹⁶

The success achieved through the employment of Stool Pigeons, however, created at least one major problem. Some I/Os began to use Stool Pigeons in the place of well-executed methods of interrogation. As a result, their much-needed skills as interrogators would atrophy over time. This occurred frequently enough for some commanders of interrogation centers to consider "the presence of stool pigeons in their unit [as] much more a liability than an asset."¹⁹⁷

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

A key element of an effective interrogation effort is the ready availability of critical reference material and area experts. As noted earlier, no single I/O can become a master of the broad array of subject areas he may encounter. The ability to expeditiously compare information obtained from a POW with current intelligence

¹⁹⁵*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 42-43.

¹⁹⁶*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 42-43.

¹⁹⁷*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 43.

holdings is indispensable. At the Fort Hunt Detailed Interrogation Center, this vital function was performed by the *Research and Background Center*.

Working closely with the *Evaluating and Editing Subsection*, the Research and Background Center was established with the overarching objective of gathering and maintaining all materials that would support the actual interrogation effort. The Center was divided into three functional sections: the map section, the filing and record section, and the library.

The *Map Section* maintained approximately 5,000 maps that provided comprehensive coverage of Germany and German-occupied territories, along with an additional 250 maps of various European cities. The section also maintained a research target file. This file provided extensive information on industrial centers and other critical bombing targets that included aerial photos, Allied bombing reports, and previously published interrogation reports on the target.¹⁹⁸

The *Filing and Record Section* was comprised of two divisions. The filing division maintained a personality file that was obtained from various Allied interrogation programs. As many as 500 names were added to this file on a weekly basis. Files were also maintained on a variety of geographic and functional topics that provided a quickly accessible guide to subjects addressed in previous reports issued by different intelligence agencies. The records division maintained records pertaining to the POWs interrogated at Fort Hunt along with all related documents.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 59.

¹⁹⁹This file was known as the "P/W 201 file."

Holdings in the *Library Section* included a complete set of field manuals, tactical manuals, and strategic surveys of European countries. A variety of atlases, dictionaries, and other basic reference materials were also available.²⁰⁰

Another source of important operational support, The *Document Subsection* was established at Fort Hunt in May 1943. Beginning with a senior officer and two enlisted linguists, the subsection was later expanded with the assignment of a junior officer, an additional enlisted man, and four German POWs who had served reliably as Stool Pigeons. This office was responsible for systematically examining the large volume of POW-related documents. These included all documents confiscated during initial screening, at the Ports of Debarkation in the U.S., and those found on the POW during the search at intake into Fort Hunt. The materials flowing into the Document Subsection for review included pay books, personnel letters and diaries, newspapers, orders and military bulletins, ration coupons, and railway tickets. In addition, a considerable amount of captured documents and other materials, unrelated to a specific POW, were shipped in bulk to Fort Hunt for assessment and exploitation as well. These shipments included such materials as training manuals, unit reports, maps, published orders, and weapons manuals.²⁰¹

A system was put into place to ensure the transfer of documents to Fort Hunt was done as expeditiously as possible. MIS-Y established an arrangement with an intelligence command at one the principal ports of debarkation for POWs being

²⁰⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 60.

²⁰¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 63-64.

shipped to the U.S. that ensured all documents taken from the prisoners would be transported immediately by truck to Fort Hunt.²⁰²

The documents taken from the POW often proved extremely useful to the interrogator as they could provide important insights into the prisoner's background, including level of education, professional training, and civilian and military experience. The specialists in the Document Subsection would conduct an in-depth examination of these documents and prepare a concise briefing report for the I/Os before the first interrogation was conducted. Covering such areas as order of battle, weapons, propaganda, morale, economic and political conditions, bomb damage, and the location of key industrial centers,²⁰³ these reports became an important weapon for the I/O in his effort to extract critical intelligence for the POW. As described in the MIS post-war report, *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*:

With this report in mind, the interrogating officer had a considerable advantage over the prisoner to begin with, knowing a great deal in advance about the prisoner's background and, in some cases, where the prisoner's pay book was available, a great deal about his training and movements in the army. Such a display of knowledge on an interrogator's part never failed to impress a prisoner.²⁰⁴

REPORTS

When preparing reports, the I/O relied on information from several sources. The reports were most commonly written when the results of the interrogation were

²⁰²*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 64.

²⁰³*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 64.

²⁰⁴*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 63.

fresh in mind. In addition, the I/O could refer to personal notes as well as the notes and recordings prepared by the monitors. The I/O would also incorporate findings from the thorough examination of the documents and other items found on or accompanying the POW. In some instances, the reports received from Stool Pigeons were also used. Upon completion, the report would be submitted directly to the Evaluation Section for review and editing before being submitted up through approved dissemination channels.²⁰⁵

The primary mission of any Detailed Interrogation Center is to provide intelligence derived from the interrogation of selected POWs.²⁰⁶ The vehicle for disseminating this data is the interrogation report (although not every interrogation will generate reportable data). Often, the reports of interrogation consolidated information on a particular topic obtained from more than one source and/or from a single source gathered over the course of multiple interrogation sessions. At the same time, through the monitoring of POW conversations outside the interrogation room, information may be obtained that merits dissemination on its own. In all instances, the information deemed reportable by the Evaluation Section is disseminated as an interrogation report.

During the period of May 1943 through August 1945, the Detailed Interrogation Center at Fort Hunt produced a total of 4,762 reports that had been prepared exclusively from interrogations. An additional 568 reports were produced

²⁰⁵ *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 40-41.

²⁰⁶ An example of an Extract of Report of Interrogation is provided at Appendix F.

during that same period that contained the transcripts of conversations among POWs recorded by the monitors at Fort Hunt.²⁰⁷

EVALUATION AND EDITING

Upon completion, all reports prepared by interrogation and monitoring personnel were forwarded to the Evaluation and Editing Subsection mentioned earlier. The mission of this unit was to comb through the vast amount of information presented in these reports to extract the most useful and relevant intelligence data they contained. The importance of this subsection cannot be overlooked; it fell to the officers and enlisted personnel of the Evaluation and Editing Subsection to determine which reports would be disseminated to the general intelligence community or agencies with special interests.²⁰⁸

The subsection was led by a Chief Evaluating and Editing Officer, an assistant Evaluating and Editing Officer, an Order of Battle Analyst, a Morale Analyst, an administrative clerk and two secretaries. In addition to directing the activities of the subsection, the Chief and his assistant were also responsible for regular briefings of I/Os, maintaining close liaison with the Captured Personnel and Material Branch and other interested offices.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 54-55.

²⁰⁸ *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 58.

²⁰⁹ *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 58-59.

The role of this subsection was essential to the performance of MIS-Y. Its broad portfolio of responsibilities included the following:

1. Preparing all reports for final dissemination.
2. Maintaining an ongoing card index file of pertinent data to support future interrogation efforts.
3. Reviewing all reports to delete repetitious and/or obsolete material.
4. Collecting and maintaining information from external sources that could be used to verify/disprove information obtained from POWs or to supplement material contained in interrogation reports.
5. Check all sketches, charts and other illustrations and supporting materials that were to be included with outgoing reports.²¹⁰

PRISONER FLOW

The total number of prisoners interrogated at Fort Hunt represented only a small fraction of the total numbers of prisoners captured during the war, and even of those held in internment camps throughout the U.S. It must be remembered, however, that the prisoners targeted by MIS-Y were those who possessed the highest value strategic and technical information. As described in previous chapters, before being selected for extended interrogation at Fort Hunt, the POWs often passed through several layers of screening that were designed to identify the one individual out of a thousand with such specialized knowledge.

From the inception of operations in August 1942 through the end of July 1945, 3,451 POWs were received at Fort Hunt. The chart in Figure 1 reflects the number

²¹⁰*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 58-59.

of POWs processed at Fort Hunt per quarter during this period, along with the average number of days they were retained.²¹¹

Prisoners transiting through Fort Hunt were routinely categorized based on a variety of relevant parameters. Both from an intelligence and security perspective, the most important of these was whether the POW was affiliated with the Nazi party. Throughout the screening, handling, and interrogation process, a conscientious effort was made to separate the Nazis from the POWs termed “anti-Nazis.”²¹² This was accomplished in large measure to prevent the influence and intimidation of the former from undermining the potential cooperation that could be obtained from the latter. During the period 1 January 1944 through 31 July 1945, the percentage of Officers interrogated at Fort Hunt identified as Nazis was 12.9%, while the number of anti-Nazi officers was 7.9%. Figures for enlisted personnel interrogated during this same period were 35.9% and 44.1%, respectively.²¹³

²¹¹*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 53.

²¹²Anti-Nazis were those individuals who had taken a strong stand against the Nazi party and its policy. In some instances, there were those among this group who were or had been members of the Nazi party but had lost faith in Hitler and/or the direction the party was taking Germany.

²¹³The majority of POWs could not be formally classified due to insufficient information.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Number of POWs</u> ²¹⁴	<u>Days</u>
1 August to 31 October 1942	94	29
1 November to 31 January 1943	87	18
1 February to 30 April 1943	69	17
1 May to 31 July 1943	141	18
1 August to 31 October 1943	159	13
1 November to 31 January 1944	153	12
1 February to 30 April 1944	225	10
1 May to 31 July 1944	512	7.9
1 August to 31 October 1944	594	7.7
1 November to 31 January 1945	460	10.7
1 February to 30 April 1945	458	10.7
1 May to 31 July 1945	397	8.7

Figure 1. Flow of Prisoners-of-War at Fort Hunt August 1942 – July 1945
Source: *Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 53.

²¹⁴The total in this column is 3,349. This figure total number of POWs processed at Fort Hunt noted above, 3,451, was extracted from the opening paragraph of the same archived report in which this chart appears. No explanation regarding this inconsistency was available.

CHAPTER 7

THE LEGACY OF MIS-Y: LESSONS FROM HISTORY

Knowledge of new battle methods of the enemy and the use of new types of airplanes and weapons is won almost exclusively through the questioning of prisoners. Knowledge of this kind is immediately taken into consideration in German battle conduct and air defense. It increases our defense success and saves troops and material.

German Foreign Air Forces West
1943²¹⁵

The history of interrogations in support of the warfighter runs from antiquity to the present through the operations at Fort Hunt. Conducted in the shadows of World War II, described by some as "the defining event of the 20th century,"²¹⁶ MIS-Y can be reasonably characterized as a defining moment in the evolution of interrogation as an intelligence discipline. The study of this program provides a unique and useful insight into the challenges—and capabilities—of conducting strategic interrogation operations in support of U.S. military operations during an armed conflict. This thesis documents the possibilities inherent in the collection of intelligence from selected POWs when such an effort has the continuing support and interest of senior

²¹⁵Kahn, 141.

²¹⁶Peter Kross, *The Encyclopedia of World War II Spies* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Books, 2001), 7.

intelligence officials and commanders. Despite the problems relating to joint operational and administrative issues and the ongoing battles over service prerogatives, the operations conducted at Fort Hunt were nonetheless well orchestrated and reflect the potential that could be achieved by future programs.

There are a number of enduring lessons that can be reasonably drawn from the examination of this program more than half a century after its closure that remain applicable to intelligence in modern conflict. Some of these echo the suggestions and recommendation generated by the formal assessment of MIS-Y conducted shortly after the end of World War II and included in the official after action report prepared in 1946. This portion of the report is provided at Appendix G.

LINES OF AUTHORITY

Control over the operations and administration of a strategic interrogation program should be direct and unambiguous. This authority should be exercised exclusively by a single office designated as the Department of Defense Executive Agent (EA) for strategic interrogation operations. As in World War II, the current war against terrorism cuts across areas of responsibility (AOR) for combatant commands. The establishment of an EA for strategic interrogation would help resolve operational disputes and potential fault lines such as those experienced in the interrogation of al-Qaida and Taliban prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The location of this site in the Caribbean places it under the controlling authority of the Southern Command while the primary focus of the collection effort

is in support of current and planned operations in the Central Command and Pacific Command AORs. A single office of responsibility for the conduct of strategic interrogation assigned a mission directive that was independent of geographic considerations would significantly enhance the effectiveness of the collection effort and its ability to support the intelligence requirements of the warfighter.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

As noted earlier, no single interrogator can become an expert in the widely diverse range of issues and subjects of interest to intelligence and operational consumers. With a full complement of interrogators permanently assigned to a Detailed Interrogation Center, individuals would have the opportunity to develop a reasonable expertise in certain areas of acute interest. However, the threats to national security in the post-Cold War era are characterized by constant change presented by unfolding technology and rapidly shifting geopolitical divisions.

The MIS-Y approach—creating functional divisions of interrogators supported by specialized subsections—proved very effective in dealing with broad array of subject areas and developing sufficient resident expertise in new weapon systems and the enemy's employment of unfolding technology on the battlefield. In addition, the "constant liaison" with intelligence centers and operational commands enabled interrogators to have an up-to-date understanding of current intelligence that enabled them to more thoroughly exploit the available POWs.

DOCUMENT EXPLOITATION

During recent deployments such as Operations DESERT STORM and JUST CAUSE, both a major interrogation operation and a document exploitation effort were conducted. Unfortunately, in each instance these operations were executed at geographically separate locations. Even with modern communication systems, interaction between the two efforts was sporadic and the often self-initiated by individual intelligence officers and NCOs. The study of MIS-Y illustrates the considerable value added of having a robust document exploitation effort collocated with the interrogation program.²¹⁷

OPERATIONAL SECURITY

The public—and the enemy—were completely unaware of the major intelligence program underway at Fort Hunt during its period of active service and for decades after the war's conclusion. Further, many of the official records pertaining to MIS-Y and the interrogation operations at Fort Hunt remained classified until 1992. This provided an outstanding level of security and operational flexibility that stands in stark contrast to today's effort.

There has been extensive media coverage of the interrogation program at Guantanamo Bay. Photographs and videos that depict the movement of prisoners

²¹⁷This observation is based on the author's personal experience as an interrogator during both of these major military operations and was recorded in after-action reports submitted upon his return at the conclusion of these conflicts.

within the holding compound have been ubiquitous. In a major breach of security that would have been unimaginable at Fort Hunt, even summaries of the information allegedly provided by prisoners at Guantanamo Bay have been reported in the media seemingly within hours of the reports being prepared by U.S. interrogators.

The potential problems associated with such a casual approach to operational security in support of strategic interrogations are manifold. First, one means of leverage an interrogator has in convincing a POW to reveal sensitive information is the promise—and ability—to keep the prisoner's complicity in total confidence. Second, revealing to an adversary what the U.S. knows about a particular situation immediately undermines the value of that intelligence. Finally, widespread knowledge of the location and the nature of the activities being conducted at an interrogation center renders that facility a primary target for assault by adversarial forces, placing U.S. personnel—and the POWs international law compels the U.S. to protect—in grave peril.

INTERROGATION TRAINING

While basic interrogation training was provided at locations such as Camp Ritchie and Camp Bullis, the nature of this training was fundamental, more tactical in orientation, and designed primarily for training young personnel with limited life and military experience. The nature of the strategic interrogation challenge at Fort Hunt required a much more sophisticated understanding of human behavior,

intelligence requirements, and interpersonal dynamics. That void was credibly filled with the lectures and insights provided by Sanford Griffith.

The basic interrogation programs conducted today by the U.S. Army at Fort Huachuca, AZ, and the U.S. Marine Corps at Damneck Naval Station, VA, teach a curriculum not unlike that taught during World War II at Camp Ritchie and Camp Bullis. Similarly, the tactical orientation—with its focus on obtaining time-perishable information for the field commander—continues to prevail. This clearly fulfills an indisputable need for intelligence support to combat operations.

Such training does not, however, prepare its graduates to effectively assume the role of a strategic interrogator able to address the types of challenges encountered at Fort Hunt. The screening process systematically selected a source pool that was largely well-educated and possessed considerable military experience and expertise. In addition, many of these POWs were committed in their allegiance to the Nazi Party (not unlike that observed among members of al-Qaida). The ability to effectively exploit such sources requires training and practical experience that simply does not currently exist within the DoD. This is a major shortfall that should be expeditiously addressed.

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the course of conducting research at the National Archives and Records Administration facility in College Park, MD, the author uncovered an extensive volume of detailed information pertaining to MIS-Y that far exceeds what could be

reasonably addressed in a single graduate thesis. This material offers myriad opportunities for original research that should be explored with vigor.

One compelling area would be a study that compares and contrasts the interrogation of German POWs at Fort Hunt with the interrogation of Japanese POWs at the MIS-Y facility at Byron Springs, CA. Such a study could examine the level of cooperation obtained from each group of prisoners as well as both the nature and volume of the intelligence collected. This examination could reveal new cultural and sociological factors that influence interrogation operations.

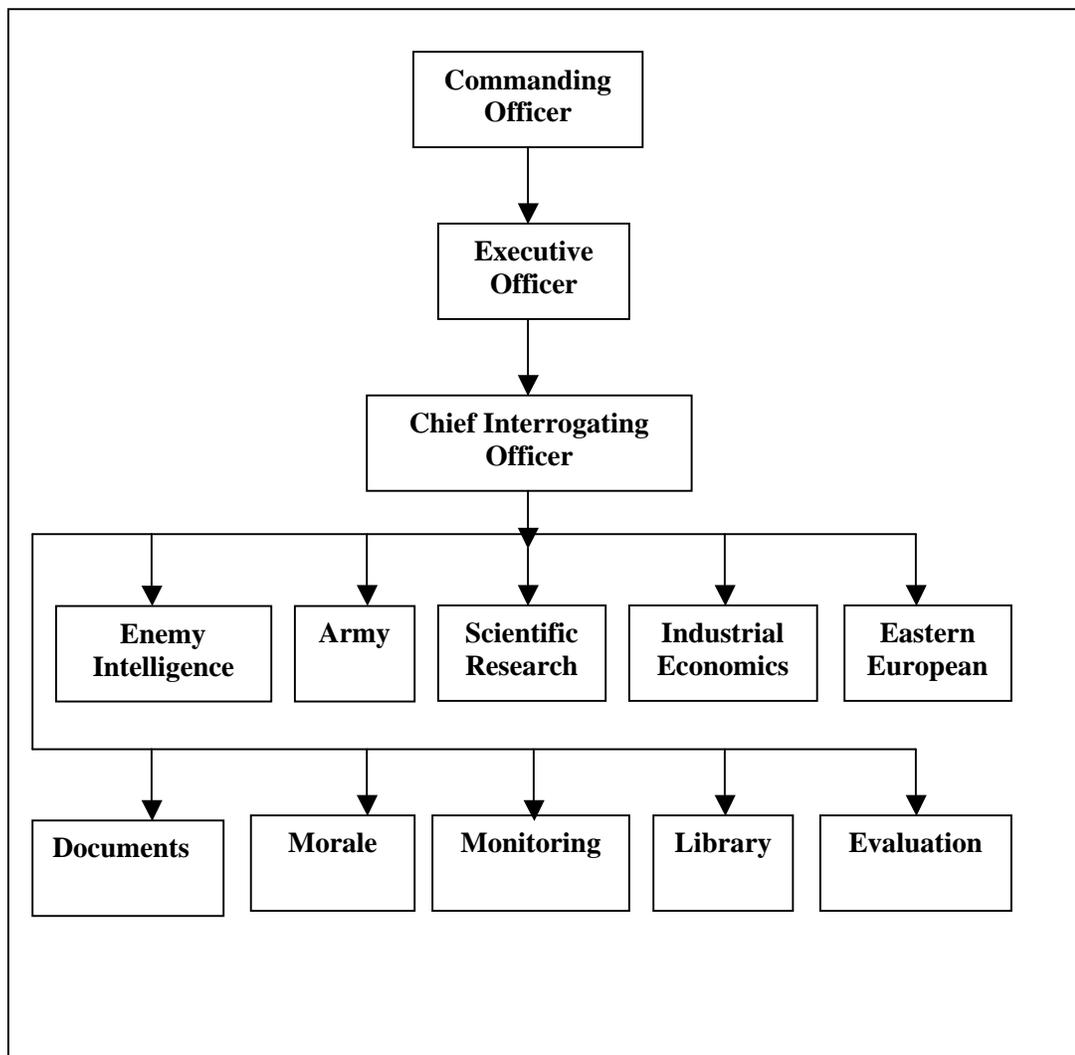
There would be considerable historic value to be obtained from an exploration of the relationship between MIS-Y and World War II combat commands. This could include an examination of the correspondence between MIS-Y and these commands, the nature of the intelligence requirements tasked to MIS-Y, the scope of intelligence derived from the interrogation of POWs that specifically responded to these requirements, and the impact of that intelligence on the planning and conduct of combat operations.

Yet another area of research would involve an examination of the extent to which MIS-Y exploited effectively the information available from the high level German POWs detained at Fort Hunt. For example, archived files provide the identities of the generals interrogated at Fort Hunt, along with the full unit designations of their military organizations they commanded at the time of capture, and a brief overview of their military resume. The files also contain copies of reports that contain the information these officers provided in the course of interrogation or revealed during conversations with their comrades and captured by

the monitoring staff. Research from other sources could provide a reasonable assessment of the extent of the information these general officers should have possessed. This data could be compared against the information contained in MIS-Y reports.

A final area of recommended research would be a comparison of the MIS-Y interrogation program and the large-scale interrogation operations conducted during the Vietnam War. There are two key aspects of these programs that merit further research to assess their impact on interrogation operations. First, while MIS-Y was largely a unilateral (i.e., U.S. only), joint service program, the Combined Interrogation Centers in Vietnam were primarily a single service (U.S. Army) program run in conjunction with the South Vietnamese Army. Second, the MIS-Y experience took place within the context of a global conflict involving numerous theaters of war while the Vietnam War was far more limited in scope, having been conducted almost exclusively within the boundaries of a single country.

APPENDIX A
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - FORT HUNT INTERROGATION
CENTER²¹⁸



²¹⁸Origin of the Interrogation Center, 52.

APPENDIX B

COMMANDING OFFICERS OF MIS-Y AT FORT HUNT²¹⁹

Colonel Daniel W. Kent	1 July 1942 – 21 October 1942
Colonel Russell H. Sweet	21 October 1942 – 1 February 1943
Colonel John L. Walker	1 February 1943 – 18 July 1945
Colonel Zenas R. Bliss	18 July 1945 – September 1945

²¹⁹*Origin of the Interrogation Center*, 51.

APPENDIX C
INTERROGATION QUESTIONING GUIDE²²⁰

PAPER NO. V.14

IV CORPS SCHOOL FOR
INTERROGATION OF P.W. – GERMAN

EXAMINATION OF P/W

PARACHUTE AND AIR-BORNE TROOPS

GENERAL

1. Name, Unit, age class, length of service, civilian trade, home. Employment in unit (specialist?)
2. What division does your Regt. belong to? Has it been in this division since you joined? Are all units in the division parachute/air-borne troops?
3. From where has your unit just come?
4. Have you any idea how many men have been trained as parachutists?
5. How many flieger Divisionen exist and do they contain both parachutists and air landing troops (Luftlandetruppen).

ORGANIZATION

6. What is the organization of your platoon. coy., bn., regt.?
7. What is the strength of your Section, pl., coy.?
8. Are all your comrades volunteers? How are they recruited? What ages?

²²⁰Paper No. V. 14, Training Syllabi, IPW, IV Army Corps, NARA. This guide is recreated here exactly as it appeared in the archives; no corrections or changes have been made from the original.

9. What drafts have you received? Where did they come from?
10. What is the name, rank of your pl., coy., bn., cmder.? Who is your regtl. and div. comder.?
11. Are there cyclist or M/C²²¹ sub-units in your bn.? If so, how are these machines transported.
12. Have you a signal section? What is its composition?
13. In the case of parachute troops what means of signaling do sub-units employ for communication between themselves and higher formations or A/C?²²² Is wireless carried? If so, give particulars.

ARMAMENT AND EQUIPMENT

14. Are you armed with rifles or machine pistols? What types are they?
15. What machine guns are used? How many? What types (i.e., 2 cm., 37 mm., 47 mm., 75 mm., etc.)?
16. How much ammunition and food does each man carry?
17. How are extra ammunition, grenades, weapons, food, etc., carried? Are any of these dropped by parachute? In containers?
18. Do you know anything about W/T²²³ sets or signal equipment used in your bn.?
19. Do you carry explosive for demolition purposes? What kind? How much?

TRAINING

20. How long have you been trained as a parachute/airborne troops?
21. Where did the training take place? Of what did it consist (No. of jumps, height, frequency: or how many times did you emplane, were long flights made)?
22. Was ground smoke used as a preliminary to land operations in your training?

²²¹Motorcycles.

²²²Aircraft.

²²³Wireless transmitters.

23. Did autogire (Fieseler-Storch) A/C cooperate in the carrying of armament, equipment, food, or fuel, or assist in directing of rations?
24. Have you had any training with Flammenwerfer?²²⁴
25. Was instruction given in demolition work?
26. Was instruction given in motor driving?
27. Parachutists. Did you receive any special instruction in map reading? Did you train on maps of England? If so, which areas were used?

MISCELLANEOUS

28. Where has your unit been in action previously? Details of casualties and losses.
29. What is discipline like? Morale? Are you glad you are a parachute-airborne soldier?
30. Are you a party member?
31. How did you expect to get reinforcements, ammunition, supplies?
32. Parachutists. Is your uniform comfortable? Do you always continue to wear your overall-suit after you have landed? Have you or your comrades ever landed disguised? As what? Have you any orders about disguising yourself in civilian clothes taken from private individuals?
33. What are the general instructions given you regarding your action on landing?

²²⁴Flamethrower.

APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPTS OF INTERROGATION²²⁵

Abbreviated Interrogation of: February 26, 1943
ETO-536-MI
No. 116 KOEHNLECHNER, Walter, Obergefreiter
Interr. by: Capt. Kubala

- Q. Were you ever in contact with the 19th Division?
A. No, practically speaking, I hardly got out of my division.
Q. I would like to know what the composition of your division was? I know what regiments they had.
A. I only know one or two regiments which were in Russia with them.
Q. We must write to our English comrades to find out.
A. In Africa, the entire division came over.
Q. We didn't know that.
A. It is possible that parts of it remained in France.
Q. Yes, that is possible, too. Was your tank regiment equipped with Mark VI tanks?
A. Mark VI? I'm not familiar with that expression. Those are the tanks with the 88's aren't they?
Q. What do you call your tanks?
A. There is the I, II, III and IV.
Q. Do you know the VI?
A. It is in Africa.
Q. Is it just like the IV?
A. It has a larger cannon and is naturally more heavily armored.
Q. I thought that the cannon was larger.
A. The caliber is larger.
Q. Do you believe that this VI is just as strong as the Russian tank?
A. Yes, definitely. It is heavily armored. There is nothing that can beat the 88 mm. cannon.
Q. Great Scott, that is a heavy gun. Does it diminish the speed of the tank to some extent?
A. No.
Q. The 88 has a terribly long barrel.
A. The barrel is at least four meters long.

²²⁵Abbreviated Interrogation Report No. 116, Source ETO-536-MI, 26 February 1943, Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA. This report is an English language translation of an interrogation conducted in German and appears as it did in the archived report. No corrections or format changes from the original have been made.

- Q. That means weight.
- A. In my opinion, the gun is on a better carriage and the tracks are better.
- Q. What are they? Rubber tracks or iron tracks?
- A. They are iron tracks.
- Q. At first you had rubber tracks, didn't you?
- A. We used to have rubber tracks for the small tanks.
- Q. Have you seen the American tanks with rubber tracks?
- A. Yes, I have seen them.
- Q. Don't you believe they are better?
- A. No.
- Q. Why not?
- A. When it is in mud, it slides. On the street, perhaps, it travels a little smoother, but after all, what does it matter if you are shaken around a bit. The tracks used to slip in Russia when the Russian tanks attacked. They traveled at a speed of 30 km. per hour on the front. We couldn't get their tails when we slipped.
- Q. How is that the Russians could go ahead while you slipped?
- A. The tracks they had were much better. They had such wide caterpillar track links. And then, the Russians have something on their tanks which I have seen before or seen since, either in our Army or yours. From the front, one could not find a flat surface. Everything was angled. Naturally, this was a great advantage for them, as far as we were concerned.
- Q. Each weapon has a great advantage and also has disadvantages. It is funny than advantage lasts only until a counterweapon is developed.
- A. That is the way it was for us. When were in the worst spot, the Russians had a tank which ran our 5 cm. anti-tank guns into the ground. We fired until the tanks were within 5 meters and it didn't make any difference. We were just run over. Finally we brought up guns which were capable of fighting off these tanks.
- Q. I can hardly conceive how heavy these tanks are. About how much does a Mark VI weigh? The weight must really amount to something considering the heavy cannons it carries.
- A. I have only seen this tank. I am not familiar with the details.
- Q. It ought to weigh approximately 60 tons.
- A. All I can say is that they are far better than the others. Besides, their armor is much thicker.
- Q. Would you say the armor plate was 4 or 5 cm. thick?
- A. I have seen the shell of a 75 mm. gun being hurled at one of those tanks and not succeeding in penetrating it. It merely pierced the armor plate.
- Q. This ought to confirm my guess that the armor plate is at least 5 or 6 cm. thick.
- A. More than that. The minimum thickness ought to be 12 cm. You had a couple of nice tanks up there around Dieppe. There were made from layers of steel separated by layers of concrete. They also withstood penetration extremely well.
- Q. Yes, it takes quite a projectile to pierce them. Several direct hits are needed to crack up the concrete.
- A. It all depends. First you try it with a small gun and then you resort to a different type of ammunition and succeed in destroying your objective.
- Q. Yes, it all depends on the composition of the projectile.

- A. In my opinion, your tanks suffer a disadvantage, because the turrets are made of cast metal. You can go crazy if you sit in one of them.
- Q. What do your turrets look like? Aren't they cast out of one piece?
- A. No, they are not.
- Q. I happen to see pictures of tanks now and then. I thought that each country would attempt to hold the silhouette of their tanks and armored cars down to a minimum. It ought to be most desirable to have these vehicles as low on the ground as possible. But if you got to the motion picture theater and look at the news reel pictures of tanks, they look like towers coming up at you. They are constantly built larger and higher.
- A. That's all right. Everyone has a definite position in a tank. The turret is used by the commander alone, and he can see everything. The disadvantage that the Russians faced in comparison with us was the fact that they did not have tank commanders. It happened at times that they passed us, without seeing us, even though we were just meters distant from them. However, a commander in a turret within a tank can orient himself within a circle of 360 degrees and can thus look backward, forward, or any other direction. The Russians saw only what was in their line of vision.
- Q. What a monster of a tank that Mark VI must be. I wonder if they can be used to afford air raid protection?
- A. No, unless it has some kind of mount, where a machine gun can be set up.
- Q. But it can't employ its 88 against aircraft?
- A. No, however, the Russians had a tank which could use its rotating firing port as anti-aircraft protection. It could compel the aircraft to fly higher. At one time, some of our Stuka dive bombers had rather unpleasant experiences. They dived vertically upon their targets, and even though they did not get any direct hits, they were practically stopped dead in mid air and chased to higher altitudes.
- Q. How long were you in Russia?
- A. No quite a year.
- Q. What is your opinion about the Russian war? I mean, even though I'm most reluctant to tell you any stories or swamp you with propaganda.
- A. Here is my opinion. If the Americans or the British had been our opponents, the war in Russia would have been decided long ago.
- Q. What do you mean by that?
- A. When we can fight against the Americans or British, we consider it a stroke of good luck. In the worst case, fighting against them would not be half as bad as fighting against the Russians.
- Q. I suppose you don't know how the situation in Russia looks nowadays? You must have read the most recent newspapers.
- A. I know that Rostov and Kharkov are supposed to have been occupied.
- Q. Yes, that is true. The present front line runs approximately like this. Here is Stalingrad, here is Leningrad. Moscow is approximately here. Your line ran approximately like this, touching Stalingrad and then went down here. Here the Russians breached the lines, approximately like this. Then they accomplished another breakthrough right here. Up here, the line is still intact. Right here is the sector where all the penetrations in force were accomplished. And here in the

- Caucases, the Russians laid a trap and all the Russian troops in the Caucases region have been encircled.
- A. Considering that this is winter, it does not mean a thing. They will be supplied by air and liberated in the spring. You probably recall that last winter, the Allied reported at least ten times that the German front had collapsed. Large sectors had been surrounded, according to these reports.
- Q. We know some of the Russian claims are exaggerated, but we also know that these breakthroughs are actually accomplished. We had our own observers there.
- A. But Stalingrad has not been reoccupied by the Russians and is bound to remain in our hands.
- Q. Do you mean to imply that Stalingrad is still in the hands of the Germans?
- A. Certainly.
- Q. This is not so. Even the German Army communiqué declared that Stalingrad was lost. You may have my assurance.
- A. It may be that the Germans are encircled. That is more credible.
- Q. No, Stalingrad has been completely given up the Germans. At Stalingrad, the first breakthrough was successful, and the Russians went into pursuit of the Germans. Of course, I can very well imagine that further to the rear, the Germans have established a winter line, behind which they can withdraw.
- A. In the winter, the Russians have a definite advantage over us. Our supply lines are rather extended.
- Q. Yesterday I read reports for the first time, that the German withdrawal had come to a halt. The content of the American and British reports was approximately the same. In addition, the Germans reported that the weather had undergone a change, with snowfalls still prevailing, but a gradual thaw setting in. Of course I had been inclined to believe that the Russian advance would come to an end.
- A. In winter we have a minimum of troops at the front.
- Q. Are many troops withdrawn?
- A. Yes. Units are withdrawn to rest positions, and reformed. They practically lead a life of leisure there.
- Q. I am not in a position to get a proper picture of the situation. I just read the papers and listen to the stories of the prisoners.
- A. I don't think the Russians will ever take many prisoners.
- Q. I have heard that, too, and then I have heard the other side to this story. One of our Red Cross representatives told me that he saw enormous numbers of German prisoners in Russia. On the other hand, the Germans always claim that the Russians do not take any prisoners. I have heard also that the German SS units do not take any prisoners, and that in turn the Russians never take SS prisoners.
- A. You can meet SS comrades, who were taken prisoner and released after two days. They were mutilated in the most terrible manner. I have seen that myself. Of course, it is understandable that they seek reprisal and take revenge on Russian prisoners. Last winter we took very many prisoners, almost every day. We had hardly anything to eat ourselves and consequently we could not feed the prisoners. One to two companies, amounting to approximately 1,000 prisoners, were on our hands, and we were not in a position to feed them. They were herded together into trains and they hardly received any food for three, four, or

five days. Those Russians ate each other. Any one, who has been at the Russian front can testify to that. We herded 50 men into a car, and when they were taken out, there were only 47 or 48 left. The Russians also don't give a damn about executions. You can shoot them or hang them, but whether they are men or women, the face the execution squad without batting an eye or giving vent to their feelings. When we cleaned up the guerilla bands last spring, we hanged many civilians who had shot on troops. In those cases we don't take prisoners. To make sure that the strangling proceeded in a speedy manner, they just turned around and jumped off. You would consider it an impossibility judging by your own standards. Around New Year's we saw with our own eyes that several wounded men, whom we could not hide in time and who subsequently fell into Russian hands, were killed by rifle butts, with which the Russians hit them over the heads. Therefore, you will readily understand that those of us who saw things happen at the front, would have done anything to avoid Russian capture.

Q. I suppose things were not that bad at the Africa front.

A. There at least you fight civilized soldiers. I am sure that the Americans and the British and also the Germans would not have defended Stalingrad the way the Russians did. The very same people, who defended themselves stubbornly against us, could, under certain circumstances, be employed on our side after a lapse of eight days. During the winter nearly half of the troops, who were with us, were Russians.

Q. You mean to imply that they fought with you against other Russians. That sounds rather absurd.

A. That may sound absurd, yet I can give you an example. For instance in SS units the machined gunner was an SS man, while the ammunition carriers were always Russians. All you have to do to a real Russian, is to give him a sound beating, follow it up with some good food, and then give him an assignment. Of course you cannot employ every one of them. The ones, who came over to our side, were primarily White Russians, etc.

Q. Those are the ones who are hostile to communism?

A. Yes. And also in the Caucasus liberty loving tribes are fighting on our side. Cossack tribes are fighting with us too.

Q. I don't understand that and I have never heard of it.

A. That is true, and we achieved very significant successes in the Caucasus with their help.

Q. Have you seen that yourself?

A. No, I only recall that from having been told about it. For instance I have seen pictures of Cossacks in the papers. They can mount a horse and ride it bareback, without using a saddle, or swing down below the horse and pick up their fur cap from the ground. I also heard that from a comrade of mine, who was a mountain infantry man, and saw action in the Caucasus. I met him during a furlough, and he told me much about that.

Q. That is certainly a novel story.

A. There are actually tribes down there with whom the Communists made no headway. A similar situation prevailed in Africa. The Arabs, who were on our side, stuck to us, while those on your side stuck to you.

- Q. What do you think about gas warfare? Do you think that gas will be employed by either side?
- A. Yes. However, I don't believe that our side will ever start it.
- Q. I don't believe that either. You are too civilized for that
- A. However, I believe that, when gas warfare is started and the Germans have to take countermeasures, then the war will be in the bag for us.
- Q. Why?
- A. Because German chemical industry has always been the largest in the world.
- Q. That is true. But what kind of gas would they use of all those terrible gases? Perhaps mustard gas?
- A. I believe that mustard gas is already antiquated.
- Q. I don't think so. If that were true, your own troops would have better protection against germ warfare. The Germans know only too well that when you develop new gases, the English and Americans have them too. The development of chemistry after the world war has spread over the entire world, because the Germans established branches everywhere. Therefore I think that if the Germans have a new gas, we have it too. If a new gas is developed, you have to equip your troops with new protective equipment so that they will not be hurt by the effects of their own gas. Of course you never know when gas warfare may start. But in that event every man would be equipped with anti-gas protective equipment, and so far you do not have any new equipment.
- A. Our gas mask has been improved several times.
- Q. Then you have your anti-gas protective cover-
- A. Yes.
- Q. -which is no novelty either. We have it too. Sometimes they are made from waxed paper, and sometimes they are made of rubber. It just depends on which article is available at the time.
- A. On our side we all believe that gas warfare will not be started by us. Of course, once it has been started, we shall have means at our disposal to retaliate.
- Q. Of course I can very well imagine that. Nowadays you have to figure on any eventuality.
- A. Yes.
- Q. You did not participate in any actions, which were supported by Mark IV tanks?
- A. Unfortunately I did not.
- Q. I read in the papers that they proved very successful for a short time when they were employed in Tunisia. I can hardly picture such a tank.
- A. If they had many there, their number did not amount to more than a dozen.
- Q. You don't think that there were more?
- A. No, I don't think so.
- Q. Where did most of them go? To Russia?
- A. No, I believe that they are shipped to Africa, but there were not very many. As far as I know there were 5 or 6.
- Q. Yes, one can very well imagine that.
- A. In the tank battle, in which we participated, we shot up nearly 40 English and American tanks. They were destroyed by our side. The 88 gun always hit its

- mark. There were men sitting in those tanks who had already participated in campaigns in France, Poland and Russia, and who consequently had had quite a bit of experience. They guarantee that over a given distance the second shot will hit.
- Q. I can imagine what it must be like for those fellow, who just cannot hit back sitting in one of those old crates, while you employ new implements of war.
- A. Take the British and their encounters with the 75 mm anti-tank gun. Employed by us the gun has the proper effect and the shell penetrates. When they employ it though, the shell does not penetrate.
- Q. Well, if you sit around here and view the entire war situation, you begin to wonder where this war is coming to. Nobody knows the answer to the question as to how long it is going to last.
- A. According to the circumstances another year. It will necessarily take another year, until Russia is destroyed.
- Q. Wasn't it a big mistake to attack the Russians prematurely?
- A. What good would have come out of it, if we launched this attack?
- Q. But didn't you have a pact with Russia? After all Russia supplied you with oil and other commodities.
- A. Russia's whole army had marched down and taken positions on their Western frontier. We foresaw the purpose of this action from the very beginning. Those were not harmless maneuvers from the north to the south of Poland. That is just the wonderful genius of our Fuehrer that he always pounces upon the enemy at the right moment. And in the case of Russia, it was high time.
- Q. But you did not make such rapid progress with the Russian campaign as in the last war.
- A. It would have gone faster, if the war had been started three months earlier. Then Moscow would have fallen too. More than the Russians themselves the frigid cold killed our attack. But I assure you that Moscow would have fallen.
- Q. Yes, if you had started three months earlier you might have succeeded.
- A. Then the decision would have been reached this year. If we had taken the initiative earlier, it would have been to our advantage, but as things were, the Russians had time to do things. Wherever circumstances permit, they have established positions at intervals of 10 kilometers, including tanks traps and so on. After you have exerted a tremendous effort to wipe out on position, you are facing another one. However, the main weapon of the Russians was their practically complete lack of roads. The automobile highway leading to Moscow was in such poor condition during the muddy period, that it became impassable for vehicles. We had to resort to heavy tractors. If we had had the highways of France at our disposal there, the war in Russia would have come to a speedy conclusion, last year. But as it was everything got stuck. Our light trucks were bogged down after a rainfall of 3 or 4 days. In other cases their speed was reduced from 50 kilometers to 35.
- Q. Have you ever been in Kuestrin?
- A. No.
- Q. It is a soldiers' city. I happen to know it quite well. Formerly it was a fortified town. Of course I am not familiar with its present status.

A. It is still a fortified city.

APPENDIX E

REPORT OF ROOM MONITORING AT FORT HUNT²²⁶

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE PRISONER OF WAR BRANCH

Date: 18 June 1943
P/W's Serial Nos., Rank & Name: General Gustav von Vaerst, 57633;
General-Major Willibald Borowietz, 57637;
Major Leutold von Meyer, 57651.
Unit: Afrika Corps

ROOM CONVERSATION – GENERALS BOROWIETZ AND VON VAERST, LATER MAJOR VON MEYER – 1900 O'CLOCK – AFTER HEARING NEWS BROADCAST

General von Vaerst – "We need everything, everything is needed. It is going very badly for us – very badly."

- - - Conversation about high number of bombers the United States is making.

- - - "War is war; it is very difficult."

- - - "Then they bombed Hamburg, Bremen, Luebeck, etc., and the numbers of bombers will naturally be greater. "Were you ever in contact with the 19th Division?"

(After the entrance of Meyer this conversation was discontinued and became general until Borowietz left.)

The impression is given that pessimism is not expressed when more than two are present.

CATESBY ap C. Jones,
Colonel, G.S.C.,
Chief, Prisoner of War Branch

²²⁶Military Intelligence Service, Prisoner of War Branch, *Room Conversation – Generals Borowietz and Von Vaerst*, 18 June 1943; Record Group 179, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA. This report is a recreation of the original archived report. No corrections or format changes from the original have been made.

APPENDIX F

MIS-Y EXTRACT OF REPORT OF INTERROGATION²²⁷

Extract of Report of Interrogation No. 279:
5WG-251

23 September 1943

No. 753/754

Estimate of Veracity: Believed to be reliable. P/W is a former Social Democrat, was jailed for anti-Nazi activities in 1935, claims to have done further illegal work since, and was in an anti-Nazi company at Camp Breckenridge before coming here. He is intelligent, seems well informed on the Essen industries. He has a brother working for Krupp in Essen.

Morale:

P/W is a native of Essen. He claims that morale there is very poor and has been further lowered by the presence of the volunteer Ukrainian Russians who were brought into the city shortly after the Germans overran the Ukraine and whose presence is very much resented by the German Workers.

There has been a revolt of youth in Essen. The young people have had enough of the Hitler Youth and refuse to allow themselves to be herded around by its

²²⁷Extract of Report of Interrogation No. 279, Source 5WG-251, 23 September 1943, Record Group 165, Records of the War Department General and Special Staffs; Office of the Director of Intelligence (G-2), Subordinate Office and Branches, Captured Personnel and Material Branch, NARA. This report provides a summary of a full interrogation of source 5WG-251. It appears as it did in the archived report; no corrections or format changes from the original have been made.

leaders. They now call themselves "Piraten" when they go out together on hikes without the supervision of the Hitler Youth leaders who are left to cool their heels at home.

Foreign Workers in Essen:

P/W claims that 200,000 of the total population of Essen, 670,000, are now foreign laborers. Poles, Russians and Italians constitute the majority. The Italians represented a considerable problem when they were first imported because of difficulties that developed from changes in diet. The problem was quickly settled when the provisioning was taken over by Italian representatives. The volunteer Ukrainians worked harder than the Germans themselves, which accounts for the bad feeling which has grown up against them. The Ukrainians who are doing force labor do not work well.

Alloy used in Construction of German Planes:

P/W claims that the Germans lost no time in analyzing the alloy which was used in the construction of the first Flying Fortresses which were brought down over Europe. They are changing over to this type of plane alloy as fast as possible.

British Churchill Tank:

The Churchill Tank proved very resistant to anti-tank fire. P/W, who was trained in the use of 50 mm. and 75 mm. anti-tank guns, saw a direct hit from a 75 on the turret of a Churchill at a range of 400 m. bounce off without doing any damage. He claims that the Germans are now casting tanks also.

German Anti-Tank Shell:

The anti-tank shell 40 or 42 (P/W was not sure of the number) has a soft lead nose which spreads on impact and clings to a metal surface before bursting. These shells will not ricochet from a tank even when they hit at an angle. P/W thinks these shells contain thermite, he calls it "Thermite A." While he was working in 1939 for the Goldschmidt Chemical Firm in Essen, tests were being conducted on such thermite shells for use against tank and fortification armor plating. The Russians have protected their tanks against such shells by covering them with a coat of concrete to which the soft nose of the projectile will not adhere.

Evacuation of Krupp Plant to Austria:

P/W state that part of the Krupp plant in Essen has been moved to the town of Berndorf, south of Vienna, where there is a famous, old Austrian metal plant the owner of which is related to Krupp. He says that crankshafts for U-boats, plane parts, etc., are now manufactured there.

Nazi Personalities in Essen:

Schroeder, formerly the Gestapo head in Essen, has resigned; his place has been taken by a renegade Social Democrat. Freitag is the Kreisleiter and Terboven the Gauleiter.

German Counter Intelligence:

P/W believes that Nazis in American P/W camps smuggle back its lists of anti-Nazis by those severely wounded Nazi Ps/W who are exchanged and repatriated.

Effect of Bomb on Essen Factory:

A daylight attack on Essen in September or October 1942 occurred before the alarm had been given. One bomb fell in that part of the Krupp plant where crankshafts were produced, killing a few Germans and about 200 Russians who were working there.

APPENDIX G

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (EXTRACTED FROM ORIGIN OF THE INTERROGATION CENTERS FOR THE INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR)²²⁸

It is obvious that in a Branch of MIS such as the Captured Personnel and Material Branch that many suggestions and recommendations for improvement may be made as a result of long operation. Without seeking to enumerate all of these, the following seem to be the most pertinent in relation to future planning.

A. The Interrogation Center – Channels of Control

The Interrogation Center should have been made immediately responsible to the Chief of MIS, without the unnecessary and cumbersome channeling through some intermediary such as the Supervisor of Source Control. Every experience in the Theaters of War as in the United States indicates that Interrogation of Prisoners of War is the most fruitful source of accurate Intelligence under war conditions. Its information should flow as speedily as possible to the appropriate agencies. The Chief of an Interrogation Center should be, more than anyone else, the competent judge of the quality of the Intelligence contained in the reports of his section. Only those officers who are in immediate and daily contact with interrogation are competent as pass judgment as to whether or not the information thus obtained is in

²²⁸*Origin of the Interrogation Centers*, NARA, 89-91. The presentation here is a verbatim, uncorrected reprint of Part V, Suggestions and Recommendation, of this report.

conformity with the briefing requirements of the agency or the command which has requested it. The major Intelligence duty of a Commanding Officer of a Detailed Interrogation Center is the supervision of reports issuing from his section. If he is incompetent to do this, then he should not be assigned this duty. Placing a Supervisor of Reports over him merely serves to complicate what should normally be a clear and direct function. The most expeditious flow of material is possible only under a simple and direct control.

B. Liaison of the Interrogation Center with Other Intelligence Agencies:

From the outset of the Interrogation Center of the CPM Branch should have been in closest possible liaison with all other Intelligence agencies such as the Technical Intelligence, Ordnance Intelligence, Order of Battle, Signal Intelligence, etc., etc. Its usefulness lies in its capacity to obtain Intelligence desired by such agencies. The major portions of its interrogations should be based upon carefully prepared briefings from these agencies and its interrogators should work in direct cooperation with experts supplied by them. Even the most experienced interrogator is not an expert in these special branches of Intelligence. The interrogation should be made only by a trained interrogator, but he should be guided at every step by the briefings of experts.

It should be the function of the Commanding Officer of an Interrogation Center to keep in touch with these other agencies – to find what they require and to procure from them specific briefings or questionnaires as to the exact intelligence desired. Under no circumstances must the Interrogation Center be permitted to operate in a

vacuum. This tendency is highly probable because of the security requirements under which an Interrogation Center must operate.

C. Coordination of Interrogation Center and Document Section.

The Interrogation Center and the Document Section should be closely coordinate. The captured documents must be placed at the disposal of the interrogators and should be made available to them as long as necessary. They should then be passed on to the Document Section for more leisurely study and ultimate disposal.

D. Unified Command:

The C.P.M. Branch should be a unified command with respect to its service and guard personnel and its Intelligence personnel. There should be no division of function as between the Service Command and the Intelligence Command. The guard personnel should be assigned to and trained exclusively for its duties with the Interrogation Center.

GLOSSARY

1142: Cover designation for Fort Hunt (drawn from Post Office Box Number used for official mail delivery)

CAMP 020: MI-5 center for the interrogation of suspected German spies (U.K.)

CSDIC: Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center (U.K.)

DMI: Director of Military Intelligence (U.K.)

EPW: Enemy Prisoner of War

G-2: Director of Intelligence on General Staff (U.S.)

HUMINT: Human Intelligence

IMINT: Imagery Intelligence

I/O: Interrogating Officer

IPW: Interrogation of Prisoners of War

M: British interrogator term for clandestine microphones used to record conversations among enemy prisoners

MI9: British intelligence program providing support to Allied POWs held in German POW camps (U.K.)

MI19: British intelligence program charged with the interrogation of enemy POWs (U.K.)

MID: Military Intelligence Department (U.S.)

MIS: Military Intelligence Service

MIS-X: Code-name for prisoner of war escape, evasion, and intelligence program
under the auspices of the Military Intelligence Service (U.S.)

MIS-Y: Code-name for strategic interrogation program under the auspices of the
Military Intelligence Service (U.S.)

M/O: Monitoring Officer

OB: Order of Battle

ONI: Office of Naval Intelligence (U.S.)

PMG: Provost Marshall General (U.S.)

POW: Prisoner of War

P/W: Prisoner of War

SIGINT: Signals Intelligence

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