

Black Troops and Blond Brutes

An Answer to the German Charges Against the French Colonial Troops, and a Reminder of Another Occupation.

By
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ENCOURAGED by Representative Britten's resolution in the House, calling on the President of the United States to protest to France against the presence of black troops in the occupied German territory, the German-Americans in New York and other American cities have let loose a wave of poison gas against the Negro race in general and the French Colonial troops in particular. This attack is actuated more by political considerations than by any genuine race-feeling (though such no doubt exists) on the part of the German people. The same political considerations that led to the formulation of these stories by Germans in the Fatherland are behind the present agitation by their kindred in the United States. On both sides of the ocean, the extreme exaggeration of the charges are well-known, but like the infamous story of the nationalization of Russian women by the Soviets this story of the raping of German women by African troops is too good to be relinquished. Fair-minded Germans in the occupied territory, as well as the French and American military authorities have given the story of wide-spread bestial attacks the lie, but still it is persisted in—for political purposes. France is the enemy. The Negro only the means through which Germany today strikes at her traditional enemy in her attempt to arouse against France the hypocritical "horror" of the entire white world, which, itself a fruitful breeder of "hybrids," is so easily shocked at the thought of sexual intercourse between white women and black men.

The facts in the matter are too well-known to necessitate repetition here. However, to clear the air of the recent gas attacks we will quote from a concise report in the Nation (New York) for March 9, 1921, on "The Black Troops on the Rhine":

"Major General Henry T. Allen, commander of the American troops in the occupied Rhineland, and an officer who does honor to his country, has made a very interesting report upon the use of French colored troops in the Rhineland. From January, 1919, to June, 1920, the average number of black troops in the French Army of the Rhine was 5,200 and of colored races, ranging from Moroccans to Malgaches, 20,000. In June, 1920, the black regiments were withdrawn; there remain the North Africans, the Malgaches and a few black individuals in other regiments. General Allen finds that the Germans have used the presence of these colored troops as the basis for a violent and exaggerated anti-French propaganda, and that some German newspapers have honorably admitted such exaggeration. Up to June 1, 1920, 66 cases of alleged sexual crime were officially reported to the French military authorities against their colored Colonial troops in the Rhineland; in 28 cases the offenders had been punished, the sentences running from thirty days in prison to ten years at hard labor. General Allen believes that there have been other cases not reported "These are," he says, "in my opinion cases

such as generally occur in any land when soldiery is for a long time quartered upon the population."

From the above report The Nation rightly deduces that the African troops are "no such brute barbarians as they are pictured in the exaggerated propaganda here and abroad."

Moreover, in the same report, the mayor of one of the occupied German towns admits that German women have voluntarily had (and sought!) sexual intercourse with the African warriors.

And now that we have separated facts from propagandist exaggerations and brought out the point, through a white American officer (the last person in the world to lie in defense of the Negro) that these cases are only "such as generally occur in any land when soldiery is for a long time quartered upon the population"—now let us turn to another occupation: the German occupation of Northern France and Belgium! Even were the exaggerated reports concerning the African troops true, which they are not, how would these alleged acts compare in horror and savagery with the facts—the undeniable facts—of the German occupation of France and Belgium. Let us see.

Modern courts are satisfied with two forms of testimony, but the atrocities committed by the Germans during their occupation of Belgian and French territories are evidenced by five kinds of indubitable proof. "There is the testimony of men and women telling what their own eyes have seen and their own ears heard. There is the testimony of little children, children too innocent to invent what they are old enough to describe. Third, there is the testimony of the photograph—photographs taken often before the massacred bodies had grown cold, and immediately after the German retreat from the town they had pillaged. Another form of proof is found in the journals and diaries of the German soldiers. There is also the testimony of the mutilated bodies that have been preserved in certain morgues against the day of judgment when arbitrators will behold the proof, hear the witnesses and weigh the guilt of the Germans.

The affidavits, photographs and mutilated bodies are witnesses that destroy forever the last shred of doubt and incredulity. For men who are open to testimony, the German atrocities are more surely established than any of the hideous cruelties recorded in history. Now, for the first time, wildest savagery has been reduced to a science, and damned into existence under the name of German efficiency.

And here—and the least sickening—are a few of over a thousand documented atrocities, which, with the original photographs and affidavits, today rest in the archives of France: (D. 4, 5.) A Belgian babe, skewered upon the bayonet, driven through his stomach, with his little dead head and hands and legs dangling as the German proudly carried it through the streets of a village.

(D. 100-8.) Passing through Haecht, in ad-

dition to the young women they violated and killed, a child three years old was found nailed by its hands and feet to a door.

(Affidavits in Alcove, 867.) The dead body of a young girl nailed by her hands to the outside door of a cottage. She was about fourteen or sixteen years of age.

(D. 92-93. Also D. 100-8.) Photographs of an aged priest, staked down to the ground, and used as a lavatory until he was dead; photographs and affidavits of young girls with one breast cut off.

At Capelle-au-Bois the Belgian troops found two girls hanging naked from a tree with their

breasts cut off. In the same town German soldiers held a mother down by force while other soldiers in turn violated her daughter in an adjoining room.

And these are but a few—and the least revolting—of the German atrocities. And yet these atrocities are hardly equal to those committed by Representative Britten's white fellow-countrymen in the southern sections of the United States, or by French and Belgians themselves (British, Portuguese, Spanish, et al.) in the partitioned Fatherland of these Africans against whom the majority of the white world at present inveighs.