

The third one may have some truth in it; but its inevitable conclusion that the best help is no help and that the way to save Greece is to abandon her, is difficult of acceptance.

I think that the best explanation is one which does not altogether contradict the third argument. I think that the Turks are desperately short of all sorts of war material and that they are playing for time in the belief that Britain will send via Busrah-Bagdad, or through an Italian-free Mediterranean, a generous share of American supplies and help. The Bulgarian-Turkish treaty is the best means through which to freeze the *status quo* here until Turkey is ready. This theory would also account for the persistent rumor that Turkey recently refused an offer from Yugoslavia to make a joint statement that any occupation of Bulgaria would be considered an act of war.

It is also possible that the Turks would look on a German occupation of Bulgaria as releasing them from the commitments under this new treaty. There are an endless array of possible explanations; but unless the British are very good actors, they are not disturbed much by this move. For this reason I am inclined to think that the best explanation is that Turkey is playing for time to accumulate mechanized equipment and to acquire some aerial defense for defenseless Istanbul, which is built mostly of wood and so is peculiarly vulnerable to incendiary attack.

One thing is certain, no treaty can make Turks love Bulgars or Bulgars trust Turks.

Putsch in Java

BY GEORGE PEPPER

FEW people realize that Java, in the remote Dutch East Indies, was the scene of a coordinated Nazi plot to seize power in those islands as early as last spring. Not many more even knew where the islands were until Cordell Hull's sharp notes to Japan catapulted them into the limelight. The world's suicidal struggle has done more for geographic knowledge, if for nothing else, than all the atlases printed since the first world war, and today we know that this group, aside from seductive Bali, contains vast natural resources. Borneo's rich oil fields; Sumatra's rubber; 97 per cent of the world's quinine; tea, coffee, tobacco, sugar, tin, copper, gold, and iron—all these make the East Indies a prey of aggressor nations.

When Hitler stunned the world by invading Holland last May all eyes turned to that tragic scene. Few stopped at the moment to wonder about its island colonies out in the remote southeastern Pacific, colonies that felt safeguarded by the British navy and American diplomacy. Counting on this false sense of security and the confusion

their latest offensive had created, the Nazis naturally prepared to seize them; yet a few hours after Holland was invaded every German and every Nazi sympathizer in the Dutch East Indies was under arrest. The story behind the plot's failure must be recorded as an odd twist of fate.

For an understanding of why the German coup nearly came off, it is well to realize that there have always been a good many German residents in the Indies. They were splendid colonists, assiduous workers, keen business men, and, having lived in the Indies for several decades, they held many key positions in the colonial government. Last year saw many new arrivals at the German colony there. Some carried Dutch passports; others wished to settle permanently for business reasons; and still others claimed to be "refugees" from Nazi terror. The Dutch Colonial Government, always tolerant once the head-tax fees have been collected, pocketed the new revenue and continued to dream of fresh profits from coffee, rubber, and tobacco. The newcomers wasted no time dreaming, but set to work undermining the entire governmental structure. Dutch Nazis were contacted and employed; Germans in high offices were ready at a moment's notice to sabotage any coordinated effort to resist; the long suppressed nationalist movement in Java was geared to rebellion, and munitions appeared from nowhere to be placed in secret caches or stored in private homes. As usual, the web had its spider in the form of German consular offices. There a certain Baron von Plesson grasped diplomatic respectability with his right hand, and with his left managed a tangle of underground activity. A suave handsome man, long known in the Indies as a sportsman, hunter, and ethnologist, he managed to steer an even course to the very last.

Time in the tropics usually has little significance. However, one must remember that Java time is a full day ahead of European time on the calendar, and May 10 in Germany was May 11 throughout the Indies. Action synchronizing with the German invasion of Holland had been planned, and when May 11 dawned over Java all strategic spots were covered by hidden machine-gun emplacements; well-known hotels were the sites of secret barricades, and all short-wave sending sets were in readiness to flash an instant order for the uprising. The cream of Dutch society had received cunning invitations for a party at the home of Baron von Plesson. There, according to the Nazi scheme, they were to be confronted by a *fait accompli*. The one remaining question was: at what moment will the order to strike come from Berlin? Advance information led the plotters to believe that Hitler would choose May 12 (Java time). Perhaps it was a miscalculation that caused him to move one full day sooner.

Batavia, the chief city of Java, has a large, modern post office. On the morning of May 11, the postmaster was away and an obscure subordinate was in charge. A lengthy cable from Berlin addressed to the German

Consul-General passed across the acting postmaster's desk. Well aware of the cable's diplomatic immunity, he hesitated to have it decoded, but nevertheless felt uneasy, and he decided to withhold delivery until the postmaster returned—although the Nazi consular offices twice sent anxious inquiries by messenger asking for mail. When the door closed on a third messenger, this alert Dutch clerk called the military in order to have the cable decoded. Once decoded, the entire conspiracy lay before the authorities. They read orders for an immediate uprising throughout the Indies, orders calling for the cooperation of some twenty-three German ships lying in the neutral waters of Java, and finally, an order calling for the utmost speed and precision in attaining all "planned objectives." The last order was further elucidated by the statement: "Germany will invade Holland in three hours. Der Fuehrer expects news of your success before that time."

The authorities immediately informed the Governor-General. He issued an order for the instant arrest of every German, regardless of age or position, and further cautioned those who knew not to divulge the fact that an invasion of Holland was imminent. Within two hours all arrests had been made, all German ships seized, and Dutch citizens with known Nazi sympathies were being arrested. By this time the first news of Germany's move on Holland began reaching the outside world—news withheld by the Governor until every arrest had been made. It was late afternoon before he made a radio address telling of Holland's great tragedy. He also described the last-minute rescue of the Indies and praised the obscure clerk whose intelligence had made this possible.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

German Oil Supplies

IN THE last war it was once said, "the Allies floated to victory on a wave of oil" and there can be no doubt that in the present conflict oil will prove one of the decisive factors. Operations by land, air, and sea are all absolutely dependent on a constant supply of oil products, while for the industries which lie behind the fronts it is also a vital necessity, particularly in the form of lubricants. But Europe's own resources in oil are very limited and, excluding Russia, Rumania is the only producer of importance. Rumania in 1938, however, was able to furnish only about one-ninth of Europe's import requirements or about 4 million tons out of 36 millions. The balance had to be brought by sea either from this hemisphere or from east of Suez, and from these sources Germany and the countries it dominates are now, of course, entirely cut off.

Britain, on the other hand, can obtain all it is able to con-

voy through the German counter-blockade, for in both America and Asia there is a surplus rather than a shortage of oil. Nor, in spite of Hitler's submarines and bombers, is there any lack, at present, of tankers to carry it. Britain and its Allies control at least 50 per cent of the tanker tonnage of the world, or considerably more than was employed in pre-war days to fill British needs. Another British advantage is the proximity of oilfields it controls to the Near Eastern war area. Its forces in North Africa and Greece can draw on the refineries at Haifa, the terminus of the pipeline from the Irak fields, and additional supplies can be shipped from southern Iran. Haifa, of course, is somewhat exposed to air attack and has been bombed several times, but the Irak and Iran oil districts are beyond the range of effective raiding.

Consider, in contrast, Italy's problem in fueling its North African army. It has practically no domestic supplies, and its Albanian oilfield, always a very minor affair, has probably been closed down by British and Greek bombings. Aside from reserves, its only resource is import from Rumania, which involves a long overland haul to Italian ports. There it must be loaded on tankers to run the gantlet of the British navy to Tripoli. There is good reason to believe that not the least of the causes of Graziani's collapse in the Libyan campaign was insufficient supplies of oil.

Germany is far better off than its partner in the matter of oil supplies, yet this question must be among the constant worries of the Nazi war-lords. Before the war the annual oil consumption of Greater Germany and the occupied countries of Western Europe is estimated to have been around 17 million tons, of which German military and industrial requirements amounted to 6 million tons. From the very beginning of the war civilian consumption of gasoline was severely restricted in Germany, as in all other belligerent countries, and the conquered areas are of course even more tightly rationed. But the internal-combustion engine has become so integrated with modern economic life that its use cannot be banned altogether without industrial consequences that Germany cannot face. It needs the factories of the defeated countries and so must supply them with some means of transport as well as with lubricants for their machinery. Taking such factors into account, it has been estimated that the strictly civil requirements of the territory Germany controls amount to 5 million tons of oil annually. Thus, since the army can hardly be using less than it used in peacetime, it must find by one means or another a minimum total of around 11 million tons annually.

Germany has long been working frantically to increase production of synthetic oils. We have no exact figures of the supplies available from this source, but in 1939 output is believed to have been about one and one-half million tons, and new plants coming into operation last year may have added another half million. There are also a few small oilfields yielding some 750,000 tons, while benzol and fuel alcohol production might supply the equivalent of an additional one million tons. In all, then, domestic sources, according to these figures, which I owe to Maurice Seldman, would supply something under 4 million tons. Another estimate, this one by E. M. Friedwald, the French petroleum authority, quoted in the *New York Times* of December 22 last, places the total at 4,280,000 tons.