## **Nazis Attempted to Make Robots of Their Soldiers**

## The Nazi leadership had a lot of hopes about the use of D-IX wonder drug

New research shows that Nazis were going to turn their soldiers to robots with the help of a special chemical. Until recently, the chemical has been kept secret. So-called Experiment D-IX started in November of the year 1944 in Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Eighteen prisoners were marching on the semicircular square, which was used for daily call-overs. The prisoners were carrying backpacks that weighed 20 kilos each. They were circling the square non-stop, while Odd Nansen, Arctic explorer's son, was watching them from the window of his barracks. Years later, after the war was over, he said that those marching people on the square were called "pill patrol." They could march without a rest up to 90 kilometers a day. Everyone knew that they were like guinea-pigs that were used for testing the new method for preserving the energy of a human body.

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Hitler's chemists wanted to find out, how long those people could last. At first, those poor prisoners sang songs and whistled various melodies as they marched. Twenty-four hours later, the majority of them fell down on the ground dead. Nazi chemists tested their new wonder pills on those people. The pills were called D-IX. This was also the work code of the whole experiment. The pills contained cocaine together with other drugs. As the Third Reich leaders believed, the new pills were supposed to turn German soldiers into tireless and fearless warriors.

Hamburg-based criminologist Wolf Kemper believes that D-IX pills were Hitler's last secret development. The pills should have helped him to win the war, which was about to be lost for fascist Germany. Kemper deals with the studies of little-known events of the latest months of World War II. The description of those events will be included in his new book about the use of drugs during the Third Reich era. It is an open secret that the big-time Nazi propaganda held up any drug addiction to shame. Such propaganda was launched back in 1993: Nazis basically lambasted the "devilish" cocaine – the major drug of the demoralized European Bohemia of the 1920s. However, the Nazi regime did not hesitate to let its soldiers use those drugs, trying to turn them into thoughtless robots.

The use of an amphetamine called pervitine was a usual thing at the Western front in the very beginning of the war. Nazi leaders believed that the use of that stimulant would inspire their troops to noble and heroic deeds for the sake of the victory. A factory of the Berlin company Temmel, which manufactured pervitine, supplied the Nazi Army and the Luftwaffe with 29 million of pervitine pills during the period of April-December of 1939. The Ground troops high command ordered to keep that a secret. Official documents mentioned the drug under the code name obm. Yet, Nazis underestimated pervitine's side effects. The "consumers" could not do without the drug really soon. In 1939, German doctors determined during their inspections at the Western front that the soldiers used pervitine without any control at all. The period to recover from the drug effect was getting longer and longer, while attention concentration ability was getting weaker and weaker. This eventually resulted in messages of lethal outcome in several Nazi divisions in France and Poland. Doctors' warnings were left with no attention. All orderly bags were filled with that dangerous drug during the last years of the war. They prescribed pervitine pills to anyone, who had any ailing complaints.

Nazis conducted more and more of their tests with the new wonder chemical, although the war was coming to its end. It occurred to the Third Reich leaders to launch the series production of the new D-IX substance on March 16, 1944. Vice Admiral Helmut Heye stated at a session with pharmacologists and small military units commanders that there should be a new medicine invented to help German soldiers stand the tense situation longer and to make them feel more uplifting than usual in any situation. After the war, the admiral became a Bundestag deputy for defense issues, by the way. Heye's suggestion was completely supported by such an influential figure as Otto Skortseni (after the successful operation to release Mussolini in September of 1943, the commander of the Fridental special unit was awarded with the German National Hero title). Skortseni was searching for a new drug for his division for long. After he had a very detailed conversation with the leadership of Hitler's headquarters in Berlin, there was a group of researchers set up in the city of Kiel. The group was presided over by pharmacology professor Gerhard Orchehovsky. The group was given a task to develop and launch the production of the needed drug. Criminologist Kemper believes that the plan was approved by Adolf Hitler himself: none of such projects could be implemented without his approval.

Orchehovsky came to conclusion after several months of hard work at Kiel University labs that he finally created the needed substance. One pill contained five milligrams of cocaine, three milligrams of pervitine, five milligrams of eucodal (morphine-based painkiller), as well as synthetic cocaine that was produced by the company Merk. The latter drug was used by German fighter pilots during World War I as a stimulant for their large-distance sorties. The invented cocktail of drugs was supposed to be tested by mini-submarine crewmen

first. The results were supposed to be checked during their navigation in the Kiel Bay. Skortseni ordered to send him a thousand of those pills. He wanted to test their action on the members of the Forelle diversionary unit of submariners, which was a part of Danube destructive unit of the German death squad.

Researcher Kemper came to conclusion that the results of the tests were very inspiring. That made Nazi leaders continue the experiments, testing the new drug on the people, who walked in circles 24 hours a day, carrying 20 kilos backpacks. Those people were Sachsenhausen concentration camp prisoners. They became like laboratory guinea-pigs in November of 1944. The goal of the experiment was to determine the new stamina limit for D-IX exposed humans. Medical records of that time show that several participants of the experiment felt fine with only two or three short stops a day: "The considerable reduction of the need in sleep is very impressive. This drug disables man's action ability and will." In other words, D-IX made a human being a robot. The results of all those tests inspired their initiators to supply D-IX drug to the entire Nazi Army. However, they failed to launch the mass production of the substance. Allies' victories at both fronts in winter and spring in 1945 resulted in the collapse of the Nazi regime. The absurd dream of the wonder drug was crushed.

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