

Yank Army Defeats Nazi Fake Rape Plot

By Kenneth L. Dixon

WITH THE AEF IN GERMANY—(AP) — Early as it is in the occupation of Germany, the American Army already appears to have won one major battle against an evil which might have seriously undermined its authority.

It was the battle of the fake rape cases.

As yet, few level-headed high army officials are certain whether it was an organized campaign of subtle sex sabotage or merely a sort of individual feminine guerrilla campaign.

Whatever its origin—either individual or collective—it has pretty definitely failed.

To understand the seriousness of the original situation when American troops first swept into Germany it must be realized that, for both moral and disciplinary reasons, our army views rape as civilian courts view murder.

American soldiers have been hanged for rape in several European countries where this war has been fought.

Although there has been a strong official tendency to cloak such cases behind censorship or semi-secret courtmartial sessions, still there was an equally strong inclination to see that army men themselves learned the fate of rapists. Otherwise the planned disciplinary effect of capital punishment would have been lost.

Rape remains a hanging offense in the American army—but no doughboy is going to the gallows simply on the word of a clever German girl.

Thus, 'word of the American army's penalty for rape obviously filtered into Germany. That at least some Nazi-minded frau-leins heard of it and made their plans is now a matter of record. Others perhaps "innocently"—if that word is fitting—fell into the scheme.

It should be said that the army's overseas rape cases generally have been fewer than would occur among a similar number of similarly aged civilians in most countries.

But suddenly in Germany the military police began to be approached by numbers of women crying "rape!"

Arrests were made immediately, but investigations prior to courtmartial began to unearth many discrepancies, for instance:

Out of three such complaints to one division, medical investigation revealed that two of the girls were virginal and civilians testified that the third was a known prostitute.

All three finally admitted they had been prompted by the departing Germans to try the rape racket as a means of harassing American troops.