

that U.S. smokers were less likely to smoke down to the very end. Americans smoked 1,285 cigarettes per person in 1930, producing some 19 lung cancers per 100,000 males in 1950. In Holland, by contrast, 470 cigarettes per person had yielded a whopping 24 lung cancers per 100,000 males.²²¹ Assuming a twenty-year time lag between exposure and cancer, that cigarettes were the only cause of lung cancer, that only males smoked, and that the statistics capture real phenomena (all of which are rough approximations), this would mean that a cigarette smoked in America was less than half as likely to give you cancer as a cigarette smoked in Holland. The numbers suggest that it took about seven million cigarettes to make a lung cancer in America, and only about two million in Holland. The figures for Germany are about the same as those for Holland.²²²

The second factor that should be mentioned is that many Germans grew their own tobacco for home use or trade. The Reich Institute for Tobacco Research in Forchheim—Germany's foremost pro-tobacco industry research organization before and after the war—actually promoted backyard tobacco cultivation in the 1940s: a 1944 book published by the institute's director provided detailed instruction for how to grow and cure your own.²²³ Home cultivation continued after the war, and popular memory records many a soldier returning home from the East to transform gardens being used to grow vegetables into tobacco plots. It is difficult to say how much home cultivation, the black-market trade, and the gathering and smoking of discarded butts added to overall cigarette consumption; we may be talking about a 10 or even a 20 percent increase over official figures.

It is unlikely, however, that even all of these factors combined made up for the shortages imposed by the collapse of the German tobacco trade. Recall again that German domestic tobacco production in the immediate postwar period was only a tiny fraction of prewar production. Recall also that much of the home-grown variety was eventually sold to tobacco companies (and therefore counted in official statistics), that postwar rations were only about a fifth of the early wartime rations, and that women, even after the war, continued to receive half rations.²²⁴ Recall finally that, at

one hundred marks or more per pack and in a time of extreme poverty, American brands were more often traded than smoked. Taking such things into account, we have to conclude that the decline in tobacco consumption was real. We also have to conclude, as we shall see in a moment, that the decline must have had cancer consequences.