

There is another interesting difference between the two cases: whereas health officials in Germany defeated the tobacco industry's plans (the *Tabacologia medicinalis* never got off the ground), in the United States and in England it was tobacco authorities who emerged victorious (the Council for Tobacco Research has funded hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of medical research since the 1950s).²¹¹ Could American tobacco companies have learned a lesson or two from their German counterparts about how to survive in the face of hostile political forces?*

TOBACCO'S COLLAPSE

German tobacco consumption did not begin to decline until 1942, the turning point also in Germany's fortunes of war. (Consumption peaked that year at eighty billion cigarettes, which included cigarettes purchased not just in the "Old Reich" but also in Germany's newly acquired territories in Austria and Czechoslovakia.)²¹² Wartime priorities brought tobacco rationing and emergency restrictions—on tobacco sales to pregnant women, for example—and bombing raids began to cut into finished supplies (e.g., in Cologne). Hitler's 1941 cap on the acreage devoted to tobacco stymied the industry's efforts to make up for these losses. By February 1944, German tobacco farmers were growing three thousand hectares less than in 1941, and raw tobacco imports had measurably declined.²¹³ The quality of the tobacco suffered, giving

* After the war, Helmuth Aschenbrenner continued on as secretary general of the International Association for Scientific Tobacco Research. In the March 1964 issue of the London journal *World Tobacco*, the Bremen tobacco apologist is cited suggesting that "before reports on smoking and health are taken seriously [the reference is to the 1964 U.S. surgeon general's report], those making the reports should have psychiatric certification that they are not suffering from pyrophobia (fear of fire)." Aschenbrenner is taken to have proven that "tobacco antagonism often springs from a morbid (and often unconscious) pyrophobia—a phenomenon whose many manifestations include suppressed fear of the 'big fire' or atom bomb." See "International Perspective on Smoking and Health," *World Tobacco*, March 1964, pp. 19–20. We need a good history of Germany's postwar tobacco science, tracing both the apologetics and the amnesia.

rise to at least one smoker's likening of the available pipe tobacco to "a poor grade of mattress filling." After Rommel's occupation of Cyrenaica in northern Libya, a rumor circulated that the main ingredient of the once-popular brand "Johnnies" was now camel dung, brought home as booty from the African campaign.²¹⁴

Availability was one reason tobacco use fell, but direct efforts were also undertaken to lower tobacco use among soldiers. On June 20, 1940, Hitler ordered tobacco rations to be distributed to the military "in a manner that would dissuade" soldiers from smoking.²¹⁵ Cigarette rations were limited to six per man per day, with special nontobacco rations available for nonsmokers (chocolates or extra food, for example). Extra cigarettes were sometimes available for purchase (up to fifty per man per month), but these were often unavailable—as during times of rapid advance or retreat. Tobacco rations were entirely denied to women accompanying the Wehrmacht. New wartime taxes made the habit somewhat less affordable: a November 3, 1941, ordinance increased the cigarette tax to 80–95 percent of the base retail value—nearly twice what Germans would pay in the first two decades after the war.²¹⁶

The net effect of these and other events—the primary one, of course, being the increasing shortages caused by the war—was to lower military tobacco consumption during the final years of the Reich. A 1944 survey of 1,000 servicemen found that while the proportion of soldiers smoking had increased since the start of the war, the total consumption of tobacco had actually decreased—by just over 14 percent. More men were smoking (101 of those surveyed had taken up the habit, while only 7 had given it up), but the average soldier was now smoking about a quarter less tobacco than in the immediate prewar period (23.42 percent less, according to the overly precise survey). The number of very heavy smokers (30+ cigarettes per day) was down dramatically—from 4.4 percent to only 0.3 percent—and similar declines were recorded for moderately heavy smokers. This same survey maintained that smoking among Russian prisoners of war had increased by 24 percent²¹⁷—a rather bizarre statistic, given that most were in the process of being shot or starved to death.