



# OVER THE WIRE

## ISSUE 14

### AMERICAN RESEARCH PROGRAMS

"This just came in over the wire..."

September 27th, 1946

Special Report on Post-Life Research  
Deployed in the European Theater.

Prepared for President MacArthur's Staff.

Gentlemen,

*At the President's request, I have taken the liberty of summarizing what is currently known about the supposed "zombies" being used by forces in the European theater. As you will see in the report much of the claims of the "walking dead" are baseless fiction. Our own novel research in this area was terminated in June 1945 after the excesses of Dr. Mandarin and Project Prometheus were leaked to the public. The creation of the Human Factors Control Board (HFCB) in July 1945 by Act of Congress was a direct response to the American public's concern that we were going to far in our occult weapons development programs. I share the public's concern in this matter. Recent experience with the undead show that they make poor soldiers and including them in force estimates leads to unexpected complications. Some of our Allies have mentioned that they still see potential for the technology in the event that we cannot meet troop requirements. However, I will echo the nature of the comments that Stalin made when this topic came up at the Yalta conference: "Why waste resources on the dead when the living can be sacrificed so easily?" I would add to that statement that the benefit of multiplying our forces in the European theater using these grotesque techniques are more than offset by the difficulties posed in reconciling with the locals afterwards. All current intelligence suggests that the programs described in this report have been abandoned.*

Sincerely,

Dr. David Ringald,  
Ph.D. Physics  
Ret. USMC  
Office of Applied Occult Research and Development  
OORD Test Labs, Savannah, Georgia

Enclosed  
Attached

The traditional methods of African Bokor and Hoodoo from the Southern United States show that properly prepared living flesh can be animated into a semblance of life after death. It was this evidence that led the OORD to seek funding for Project: Prometheus. The original problems with Prometheus resided in the nearly uncontrollable nature of the resulting animated composite creature. Project: Book of Life was initiated in parallel with Prometheus to build on the successes of the post-life research program without the disadvantages of needing to control raging hulks of undead flesh. The goal of Book of Life was to make sure that in critical operations behind enemy lines a detachment would be able to complete their objectives even after death. OORD research suggested that the moral character and situation that the subjects were in was just as important in the revivication process as the methods used to animate them. If both were carefully controlled, and the subject's nervous system was relatively intact, it was possible to raise up "zombies" that remembered their life well enough to complete tasks in an orderly fashion. In reality, the process more closely matched a period where cellular death was stalled and simple stimuli could be processed through a decaying nervous system.

Soldiers in a zombie detachment were inoculated with occult solutions and vitamins prior to dropping into combat to preserve their vital organs after death. The commanding officers were also given a series of charms to bind their spirit close to their flesh along with the preservatives and mystic poisons necessary to raise them in death. This meant the officers remained in a state much closer to true life. In the event that members of the detachment were killed in action, they would rise up and continue to help their fellows. The initial field test results were very promising but it became clear that after a period of 72 hours all of the re-animated soldiers would no longer respond to any commands. When provoked the zombie soldiers reflexes would send the moaning corpses after their attackers in a crude frenzy. To make matters worse, the poisons and preservatives which kept the soldiers in their animated state could be passed onto to other living beings through the transfer of minor amounts of bodily fluids. This complication led to adding a photosensitive feature to the process so that typical amounts of sunlight would destroy the preservative chemicals in the animated corpses. While this solution mitigated the fear of uncontrollable "zombie hordes" it limited the utility of the Book of Life research.

To date, three elite teams have ben put through the Book of Life program. Two of the "sleeper zombie" teams have been deployed in the European theater. Both teams were on missions to remove high priority Axis targets at any cost. All members of both teams are presumed killed in action. The Book of Life research program was closed when the main Project: Prometheus labs in Ohio were shut down in the laboratory fire that occurred in April of 1945. [Note: There are rumors of vaguely humanoid frog-like monsters being sighted in the area surrounding the former labs but we have no reason to believe they are directly related to Project: Prometheus]. The culture vats used for producing the newly refined homunucli with the intelligence and armor improvements are now

stationed in Colorado. See Report AM#1012 for more details on the extended APRA/OORD Promethean program (Code Name: Birds of Appetite). As of this date, neither ARPA nor the OORD are funding any new research in this area. Both Congress and the HFCB have vowed to prevent any federal funding of similarly oriented research for the foreseeable future.

## **GERMAN RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

The best available intelligence we have from a variety of sources states that the occultists in the Reich did not intentionally pursue any program related to unlife. The high ranking members of the Nazi party seem to place a great deal of emphasis on physical perfection. The concept of rotting flesh encased in a Wehrmacht or SS uniform must have seemed the antithesis of the Aryan Ideal. As the war progressed the Nazi's were faced with a different problem: the critical shortage of able bodied troops that were mentally and physically prepared for the rigors of war. Our sources alerted us to the SD efforts to solve this problem in "Projekt: Elisa" in 1944.

The goal of Elisa seems to have been the subliminal conditioning of German youth so that they could be activated at a moment's notice. The methods employed by the SD included high frequency radio signals to sensitize the aggression centers of the brain and chronic low level exposure to a gasified version of V-STOFF combined with subversive NSDAP propaganda. The subjects were to awaken when key messages were broadcast using specific radio frequencies. By all accounts, the program was a complete and horrifying failure. When applied to pre-pubescent children, the programming failed utterly and the chronic V-STOFF exposure led to a physically weakened individual with a damaged lymphatic system. When applied to adolescents, the combination of the aggressive stimulation with the naturally occurring hormones created feral beings that were uncontrollable. Upon activation the young people would lose the ability to communicate or understand orders. They would also become extremely aggressive and exhibit cannibalistic tendencies.

Reports obtained from Black Front field operatives suggest that drastic physical changes occur in the activated subjects which are only apparent when one is close to an individual. The pupils are constricted, their skin has a grayish appearance and their facial muscles no longer respond in a fashion one would expect from a social human being. An activated subject is capable of moving very quickly and sustaining significant damage before dying. The reports were corroborated in after action de-briefs in January 1945 and August 1946. Apparently these creatures were kept at bay by throwing meat and corpses at them which they will devour. This gives a squad enough time to gain a safe distance for machine guns to become effective. The German name for these ruined adolescents is "das verlorenjung," literally "the lost children." While the efforts behind this program have been stopped, it is very likely that the results of the conditioning program influenced the development of the "ghouls" that Allied forces faced in Sicily.

It is important for us to alert anyone performing operations in or around the German countryside that groups of the verlorenjung could be encountered at any time. Groups of such children must be approached with caution. If we ever reach the end of this terrible war, these lost souls will make re-integration of the German

people into European society very difficult. I also want to note that the effect of chronic exposure to V-STOFF and high frequency ultrasonic transmissions on other creatures is likely to be similar. Reports have come in from operatives in France and Austria of northern thick billed crows (common European *Corvus Corax*) acting strangely and forming aggressive flocks that attack humans without provocation. It is likely that the VSTOFF gas is denser than air and when released to the atmosphere gathers in low lying areas. It would tend to concentrate in puddles of water and organic materials. Therefore, it is no surprise that large, intelligent carrion birds such as crows, would be exposed to its effects.

## **SOVIET RESEARCH PROGRAMS**

There is little information available on the Soviet programs in this area. It is possible that the Soviets themselves do not even know to what extent different departments in the NKVD are working on this subject. What we have learned is that early on in the weaponizing phase of the psi-phenomena the NKVD discovered that specially manufactured crystals could act as batteries for psychic energy. Reports indicate that an early application of these crystals included inserting them into the joints and appendages of corpses. Once inserted, the crystals could channel psychic energy into the body so that the dead limbs would move according to the will of the psi agent. Our sources tell us that most psychic NKVD agents cannot easily channel their talents in this fashion. However, a small portion of the NKVD psi agents excel at channeling their psychic energies through crystals.

Prior to the development of the infamous psi-tanks these individuals were shown demonstrating their skills in manipulating more than two hundred crystals at once when inserted into many corpses. Although it cannot be seen in the pictures attached to this report, when a corpse is animated in this fashion any opening in the body emits an eerie green glow. These NKVD agents also have the reported ability to cause the crystals to explode, presumably from the concentration of too much psychic energy. The ARPA technicians refer to these psi agents as "Human Antenna" or "Broadcast Agents."

It is likely that Soviet research in this area stopped in mid to late 1943 for the simple reason that focusing too much money and time on the dead is not cost effective when large numbers of peasants can perform much the same function. It is possible that these Broadcast Agents are responsible for two new psi-related phenomena we are tracking. OORD field agents have reported encountering doll-like creatures used as spies and assassins by the NKVD in recent years. OSS Agents in the European theater have also lost several key Soviet informants due to sudden organ failure. It is possible that these individuals ingested the crystals in some fashion, perhaps as fine powder in their food, and that the sudden internal hemorrhage was brought on by a Broadcast Agent causing the crystals in the body to explode. See Report AO#1092 on NKVD Operations Directive "Vasilisa" for more details on what is known about this program. The limits of this psi crystal technology are unknown to us. We should endeavor to learn more about the Soviet NKVD psi programs related to this technology.

## USING ZOMBIE SOLDIERS IN AE-WWII

The Zombie units described in this issue of OTW all have the following abilities. A *zombie* model:

1. Is treated as *Unliving* even if it is still, technically, alive.
2. Cannot be inspired by living models.
3. Cannot inspire living models.
4. Cannot receive the benefits of command.
5. Cannot command living models.
6. Cannot be suppressed.
7. Does not count towards attrition for scenario objectives.
8. Does not count as a casualty if removed from the game.
9. Is *unstoppable*.
10. Cannot capture models for the purposes of scenario objectives.
11. Cannot hold objectives other than those related to terrain objectives (e.g., controlling a section of the table).

Feel free to use these rules as ways to play interesting and gruesome scenarios set in WWII. The combination of the familiar and the alien in a zombie that used to be a person is a great opportunity to tell stories that speak to what is sacrificed to achieve victory in the world of AE-WWII.

## NEW OORD HERO TYPE: AGENT ZERO

A commanding officer in a zombie detachment was given special charms and preparations to enable their survival after being killed in action. Key technicians and other personnel in a detachment would also be preserved in this way. These agents were given special gear to protect them from daylight so that they could remain with the detachment as long as possible. An individual that selects this hero type gains the following: -1 M, +1 RC, -1 CC, +3 A, *Zombie*.



Agent Zero models *Corrupt* any living models that they kill in combat. A corrupted model comes back as a zombie controlled by the Agent Zero player during its next activation. A corrupted model that returns to the game as a zombie gains the following adjustments to their profile: -1 M, +1 RC, -1 CC, *Zombie*. Weird units and unliving models cannot be affected by *Corrupt*. All zombies created in this way must form a unit with the Agent Zero model.

## NEW OORD UNIT: ZOMBIE SOLDIERS

Suicide soldiers drawn from the US Airborne prepared with mystic hoodoo poisons return in death to continue their mission. The zombie soldiers maintain some of their living personality and traits for up to 72 hours after death. They are highly sensitive to light and will experience a final death if exposed to sunlight.

### Regular Occultist

**Composition:** 2 Zombie Soldiers

M 2 RC 5 CC 2 S 3 A 5 W 2 Dr 4

**Equipment:** M1 Garand, Grenades  
Steady Hands, *Zombie*

**Light Sensitive:** The soldiers prepared with the potions from the Book of Life program suffer greatly if exposed to direct sunlight. These models will suffer one (1) wound during any activation that takes place in daylight conditions. Scenarios do not have to begin in night time conditions when these models are used.

**Options:** This unit may be upgraded to veteran. For every three (3) *Zombie Soldier* selections one (1) *Zombie Soldier* selection may upgrade their weapons to a BAR.

**US Army Themed Detachment Option:** American zombie units, either Agent Zero or *Zombie soldiers* may begin the scenario as living models and activate once they have been removed as casualties. If both players agree, the entire detachment can be selected normally and made into a zombie detachment. All formerly living US Army models gain the *Zombie* and *Light Sensitive* traits, along with -1 M, +1 RC, and -1 CC modifiers. Unliving models cannot be selected in a zombie detachment.

## NEW GENERIC GERMAN UNIT: VERLORENJUNG

The *verlorenjung* are youth twisted by exposure to noxious SD chemicals and Nazi propaganda. They are the ultimate example of what can happen when science is pursued without conscience.

### Regular Infantry

**Composition:** 4 Zombified German Youth

M 4 RC - CC 2 S 3 A 3 W 1 Dr 2

**Equipment:** None.  
*Berserk*, *Zombie*

**Feral Pack:** Roll 1D6 each time a model in this unit kills a living model in close combat. On a 1 the unit must spend at least 1 AP tearing into the dead body to sate their blood lust. If no models in the unit have any more AP this activation, the first AP of their next activation must be spent in this way. A unit with *Feral Pack* only has to test once per close combat.



## NEW GENERIC GERMAN UNIT: CORRUPTED CROWS



### Regular Specialist

**Composition:** 1 - 50 mm Base of Zombie Crows

M 5 RC – CC 4 S 2 A 5 W 3 Dr 2

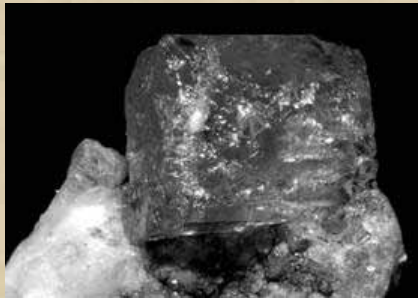
**Equipment:** Beak and Claws

Berserk, Zombie, Flight

**Feral Pack:** Roll 1D6 each time a model in this unit kills a living model in close combat. On a 1 the unit must spend at least 1 AP tearing into the dead body to sate their blood lust. If no models in the unit have any more AP this activation, the first AP of their next activation must be spent in this way. A unit with *Feral Pack* only has to test once per close combat.

## NEW NKVD HERO TYPE: BROADCAST AGENT

The NKVD Broadcast agents are psychic agents that can channel amazing amounts of energy through psychically active crystals over great distances. A Broadcast agent may sacrifice all of their AP in order to **double the number of**



**AP** available to transfer to a unit with a psychic crystal within 24 inches. For example, a veteran NKVD agent normally has 3 AP but a Veteran NKVD Broadcast Agent Hero may choose sacrifice all of their AP this turn to transfer up to 6 AP to psychic crystals.

Line of sight to the unit is not necessary to transfer AP. No more than 2 AP may be transferred to a single psychic crystal during any activation. Multiple crystals in different units may receive AP during a single activation. The NKVD Broadcast Agent can select one of the following effects for each AP transferred:

- A Crystal Puppet may take 1 action normally allowed, other than charging or sprinting.
- A Crystal Puppet may attempt to charge into combat.
- A Crystal may be detonated. A detonated crystal does 4+1D6 damage in a ½ inch AOE.

## NEW NKVD UNIT: CRYSTAL PUPPETS

NKVD Crystal Puppets are inanimate corpses that have psychic crystals inserted within their bodies. They are stitched together with reinforcing twine at their joints to preserve their limbs. They are often positioned among the recent dead, or in enemy morgues, so that when they are activated by the Broadcast Agents they have the element of surprise. The Crystal puppets were an interesting experiment by the NKVD in using raw materials that were easily available to them and playing on cultural taboos regarding the dead. No one is sure if this line of research is officially closed.

### Zero Level Infantry

**Composition:** 3 Crystal Puppets

M 3 RC – CC 3 S 3 A 3 W 2 Dr –

**Equipment:** None.

*Zombie*

**Zero Level:** This unit has 0 AP unless transferred by a Broadcast Agent. There are no limits on the number of zero level troops that may be fielded in a detachment.

**Sympathetic Resonance:** If 2 AP are spent moving any model in this unit, the entire unit may move a distance of 1 M without any more AP needing to be transferred.

**Mindless:** Models in this unit do not have any AP. They may receive AP from a friendly NKVD psi agent. Any friendly NKVD psi agent can transfer up to 2 AP to a single model. These models may never be used to hold an objective.



# APRIL FOOLS!

Zombies?!?! You didn't seriously think that we were going to give you rules for Zombies did you?

Well...why not?

The topic has come up again and again in conversations on the Darkson forum. Zombies are everywhere in movies and in fiction related to WWII. So why doesn't AE-WWII have zombies in it?

The honest answer is that the typical context which zombies exist in changes too many of the underlying constraints of WWII. The driving concept we hold ourselves to in brainstorming sessions about where the game is going is: "If you take away the weird, do you still have WWII?" There are few cases where that is possible with zombies which result from population decimating events like plagues. Does that mean that zombies will never be official in the Darkson vision of weird WWII? Not necessarily. The concepts in this issue of OTW represent some of the ideas that we decided not to develop in the current set of expansions for AE-WWII. But you never know where the ideas that resulted from those discussions will show up.

You can rest assured that if zombies do come into the war in AE-WWII, it will be in a unique way that is true to the story we have told so far. In the meantime, feel free to bring out your dead and play with these trial rules in your games. These rules have not been play tested and will not be supported in any tournaments in 2010. But let us know what you think about the rules and background in this issue on the forums. We are very interested to learn what you think about some of the non-typical zombie ideas presented here.

Best Regards and Brains!

The Darkson Designs Crew

