

In deciding what line to take up in regard to the German statement issued to the press last night we must bear in mind that there are certain unknown factors. The chief of these is the part played in the affair by the Gestapo. It is possible - though unlikely - that the latter were behind the advances of the "German Generals" from the start. Our representatives on the spot, who had long conferences with these Germans, were convinced that they were genuine, and our representatives were men of great experience with a profound knowledge of Germany and the Germans. The Chief of the S.I.S. also thought that they were genuine; and there are certain things to go on which were not in the possession of our people on the spot. We must therefore conclude that the balance of evidence shows that the "feelers" we received were not, originally at any rate, part of a plot organised by Herr Himmler. On the other hand, if we assume that it was - and perhaps is - still genuine, then it is clear that the Gestapo must have had wind of it before they framed the incident of November 9; and it is also clear that they must by this time have been able to extract by torture everything that one or both of our representatives knew. They have also possibly been able to obtain confessions from the two representatives of the German Generals. It is, therefore, legitimate to regard any communications from "the Generals" subsequent to November 9th as potentially bogus. On the other hand, the mention by the Germans last night of the fact that we had handed a wireless transmitter to "the Generals" may be based on a confession, and may not mean that they are either ...