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HANDBOOK OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY

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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

HANDBOOK OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY

This Handbook is published for the guidance of all concerned. It contains the objectives and policies to be pursued by Commanders and Staffs in planning for and in operating Military Government in Germany, whether in the mobile, transitional or static phases.

The Handbook indicates the principal tasks to be performed by Military Government Officers, but does not enter into the details of the tasks of Specialist Officers, which are elaborated in the Functional Manuals, issued separately.

The Handbook will be used as the basis of Training for all M G. Officers, whether US or BR, who are to be employed in the Military Government of Germany, whether operating independently, or in collaboration with Officers of other Allied Countries.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
SUPREME COMMANDER
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

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FOREWORD

I. Germany in Defeat

The Handbook of Military Government in Germany which follows is intended not for the Staff Officer or the specialist, but for the general administrator, the Military Government Officer in the Detachments placed at the key points of administration up and down the US/Br zones of Western and Southern Germany.

Very much will depend upon the conditions under which the Armies of the Western Allies enter Germany, whether they have to fight their way Eastward from the Rhine to a junction with the Russians in Central Germany, or whether they enter under the terms of a surrender resulting from battles fought outside Germany itself. This book is written in the main to fit the second of these two conditions, that of a German collapse. This is the more probable of the two contingencies; in addition, it is the one calling for such a book as this to explain to Military Government Officers the structure of administrative and economic controls through which Germany is governed.

Nevertheless, the alternative demands some consideration.

If the Germans pursue a policy of 'scorched earth' in fighting backwards across their own country, they will not do so half-heartedly, as their record in retreat in other countries has shown. When allied armies gain possession of a district, there will not be found in it any officials or police, doctors or nurses, priests or other potential leaders, only a handful of dazed civilians and refugees needing food and shelter; economic life will have ceased.

Under such circumstances the work of Military Government assumes simplicity; there is no administration to control, starvation and disease are the enemies, and Food, Public Health and Welfare, Supply and Displaced Persons present the critical problems to be solved. Control would therefore have to be direct but limited, as indirect control presupposes the existence of a German administrative machine to be controlled, and only the most elementary tasks of military government could be undertaken.

The conditions to which most of the planning for Germany has been directed are other than these.

A German military defeat followed by collapse, surrender, and the rapid entry of allied forces would still leave the German administration functioning to a variable extent, but functioning amidst chaos and confusion.

The elements going to make up that chaos and confusion, and their probable effect upon the different sections of the German machine are dealt with in detail in the functional chapters in Part II of this book. They require, however, to be considered here in their relation to one another and to the Germany that the MGO will find on his arrival.

✕ Undoubtedly the most important element will be the violent dissolution of the Nazi party. This party has had eleven years of unchallenged power, ruthlessly exercised within Germany, preceded by thirteen years of the successful and widespread propagation of its doctrines and ideology. This is a long time; the impress left upon the people will be deep, and the sudden removal of the pressure will cause numerous

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reactions. Nazi party members occupy, almost without exception, every key position in Germany; when they are removed, it is unquestionable that the whole machine will rock violently. Many Nazi ideas, as for instance their racial doctrines, will remain as a part of the unconscious thought processes of the German people and be accepted as axiomatic truths even by those who are quite sure that they have repudiated politically the fallen Nazis. Specifically, the problems here are likely to arise from the close and curious interweaving of State and Party organizations and activities in all fields and at all levels, and the sudden passing of the Nazis will, perforce, leave numerous rents in the administrative fabric which will need quick cobbling by Military Government.

Military defeat is frequently accompanied by social revolution, which at least in its earlier stages, is a notable creator of chaos. In Germany in 1918 there was no true social revolution, only a general collapse of the functions of government; what 1944 will hold is not yet clear.

The next most important element in the design of post-surrender Germany will almost certainly be represented by those unhappy beings referred to in official language as Displaced Persons. Some seven million enslaved foreign workers, and two million prisoners of war all eager to return home, plus four and a half million Germans evacuated from their places of abode, go to make up such a problem as the world has never seen. (For the US/E zones, approximate figures would be 2 3/4 million workers, 3/4 million prisoners of war and 1 1/2 million German evacuees).

Immediately next in importance, and arising from the former considerations, comes all that is comprised under the general heading 'relaxation of controls'. The patriotic impulse of wartime, the omnipresent terror of the Gestapo, the power of accustomed routine, have all combined to hold the German people to an ordered way of life - ordered that is by their Nazi masters. When all these bonds of restriction fall off simultaneously amid possible revolution, and the undoubted fear of inflation, the effects cannot but be noteworthy.

These effects will be widely felt. The rise of the black market, food hoarding, inflation, and the spread of crime will be four of the earliest phenomena. The MGO has to work through what may remain of the German bureaucratic machine, but he must not expect to find the old automatic response to rules and regulations from a public that knows it to be little better than an even chance whether the official who signed the original order is still alive, let alone in office. The only counter balance here may prove to be the widespread apathy among the population of which all recent reports from Germany speak.

Crime has been spoken of. It will assuredly be a major problem for many years in Germany. Life is cheap enough in Europe today and property becomes utterly insecure in disordered communities. Demobilized soldiers lacking employment, "wanted" Nazis gone underground, clashing political partisans, and plain bandit gangs will be the main feeders of crime. Against these can be set only the instrument of allied combat troops, ill adapted for dispersed action against guerrillas, and a demoralized police force undergoing reorganization at the hands of foreigners.

The passing of the system which has filled the foreground of German national life for the past twelve years; the consequent

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relaxation of all controls; migratory mass movements, and the prevalence of crime, these and their consequences will occupy almost every waking hour of the MGO. After these, Food, Disease, Employment and Housing will be competing for his attention. From the Military Government point of view, they are all somewhat technical, that is to say the measures to grapple with them must result from planning and organization above the Detachment level. But the MGO will have to put his back into supervising the administration of those measures before he can regard the state of his area with any satisfaction.

Two other points remain upon which the MGO may require some guidance beyond the functional confines of his duties. They are politics and the German mentality.

German politics as they may affect the MGO are of two kinds, national and regional, which are inclined to react upon each other.

This time things will be somewhat different from 1918. The allied occupation will cover the whole and not merely a portion of Germany; there will be no old Army element to support anyone, and the Nazis have seen to it that no formal Opposition exists as an alternative to them. The factors which will remain constant are that any central government remaining, or rather re-emerging, will be weak - it cannot very well be propped up by allied bayonets, or every German would be against it - and that the political complexion of the different regions of Germany will vary considerably.

This is a possible picture of national politics: regional politics have one additional aspect. Though the process of unification was completed by Hitler in 1934, the spirit of regionalism and local State patriotism has survived.

X It is quite likely that when centralized Nazi Germany goes down in defeat, there may be a strong reaction towards regionalism. The days when Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg and the rest... stood upon their own feet may appear as the 'good old days' of peace and prosperity. Berlin will suddenly seem to be very far away once again; communications will be bad in any case, and most administration at first will be on a regional basis.

..... Such an outbreak of regionalism would not be enduring; modern economics are against it for one thing, but it may be looked for. If it is to be encouraged, you will be so directed.

In relation to politics your duties as a MGO are perfectly simple and straightforward, the key being that not politics but administration is your concern.

In the first instance no purely political activity of any kind will be permitted, nor will you favour any particular party if such exists. Later on, this rule may be relaxed to allow the resurgence of normal democratic and anti-Nazi political forces, but in this matter you will merely follow your instructions from above.

You have in this book a picture of the normal German Administration. What you will find in certain areas may not be normal. In some Rhineland towns, and in Hamburg, for instance, instead of the Oberbürgermeister (or Chief Mayor) you may find a collection of citizens describing themselves as the local Soviet. Your course is clear, and your interest is administration. In the absence of the regular official you will work with and through any group which you are satisfied has effective

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administrative control of its area.

Thirdly, although you will take no part in politics, you must keep your ears open and know what is going on in your area. Officers from the Psychological Warfare Branch will be circulating continuously in the US/Br zones in search of Political intelligence. They will look largely to the MGOs in the Detachments for the basic information of what is actually happening, which their experience and training will enable them to evaluate correctly.

II. The German Mentality

What of the ordinary German population when the first state of dazedness has worn off? There will be a number of black looks and glum faces; that is only natural; no people welcomes defeat, particularly when it has been told for so long that it is a Herrenvolk.

It may prove more difficult to understand the opposite attitude which will also be found in the form of a wave of embarrassing, over effusive friendliness, great airing of a little bit of English, many eager enquiries as to the possibilities of emigration to the United States or to British Dominions, and the like. Several reasons will combine to produce this condition.

Minor reasons will be the remains of the Nazi theories of the close racial affinity of all Anglo-Saxons, and the remains of the Nazi propaganda which has for so long paraded the Russians as the especial sub-human bogey.

The main explanation is that the German is a great admirer of success. He worships it. He lifts it into power in his own country. After surrender he will be asking himself continually in a puzzled way why these Allies who appear to him less military, less well educated, less industrious, and less well endowed with every quality considered desirable by a German, have not only beaten him, but beaten him twice within thirty years. He will be filled with an insatiable desire to find out by getting to know us what it is we have got that they have not, what mystic talisman enables us to win wars, so that by copying us they can acquire themselves that same gift.

Mistrust the over-friendly German. Some ex-Nazis, perhaps many, will hasten to assume this attitude in an effort to cover their tracks. And there will be others --- members of the officer corps, business men, large landowners --- who will be as likeable as any German you meet, but who have sponsored two world wars and may be looking ahead to a third.

Be cautious of Germans who know Britain and the United States well, perhaps hold a degree from one of our universities and speak good English. Germans with these qualifications are not necessarily untrustworthy, but, when coupled with an effort to ingratiate themselves with you, they constitute a warning sign.

You will also find some Germans who at great sacrifice or risk have remained faithful to democratic principles and opposed to Nazism throughout, and others, a larger number, who have accepted Nazism to a degree but who are capable of genuinely sloughing this off. Beyond the fact that resistance to Nazism was proportionately more extensive and determined among the German workers than in any other class, it is impossible to predict

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the size or exact complexion of these groups, which will vary from one region to another. Moreover, as stated above, when political activity is permitted to revive, you must observe neutrality among the emerging parties, always excepting any which are openly or covertly Nazi in character. But remember that the regeneration of Germany depends upon those Germans who have remained faithful, or can be won, to democratic principles. As you learn who these are, you will find them valuable sources of advice upon your many problems.

Every officer who reads this book will have been told at some time during his training of the method by which Germans, and especially German officials must be handled.

The main rules for the conduct of allied administrators may be summarized as follows:

Show self-confidence and appear as if one had the right to dominate the German. Be firm, decisive and rather remote.

With officials this must be based upon an exact knowledge of the allied policies and actions to be carried out. Only thus can clear instructions be issued, the carrying out of which can be insisted upon in a just but absolutely firm manner. A German official may sometimes be consulted as to how a certain policy may best be put into effect in a given area, but he must never be asked what is to be done next or his respect will be forfeited.

Before giving a decision one should appear to consider very carefully the rights of the case. The German is a great stickler for his rights and believes in the power of the law. He will, as Hitler has shown, accept legal excuses for the most arbitrary and even illegal sorts of action.

One important smaller point of German mentality: The basic gullibility of many Germans permits of the creation by their leaders and the ready acceptance of a great variety of legends and the legendary treatment of events, even those which lie within the memory of all. These legends are generally nationalistic in their nature, and do much to prepare the ground for future wars.

After the last war, the Nazi party, from its very infancy in 1920, industriously cultivated the legend of the 'stab in the back'. This averred that the German Army had not been defeated in the field but had been stabbed in the back by 'Jews and criminals' on the home front. This is now believed by 95% of the German people. There will be similar legends to account for defeat in this war. The beginnings of one could be seen in certain aspects of the propaganda treatment of the attempt on Hitler's life in July 1944. These legends should be watched for and reported, so that they may as far as possible be counteracted by P.W. Branch and similar agencies.

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