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SUBSTITUTING THE CIVIL POWER

Civil Affairs and Military Government in World War II

History is rife with examples of soldiers acting as governors. Soldiers have exercised what was in essence civil power from the days of the Roman proconsuls to military commanders of the modern imperialist powers. The former combined military and civil powers in one person while ruling the provinces of the Roman Empire while the latter were often called upon to temporarily administered the rapidly expanding colonies in the nineteenth century. The prevailing image, however, of a modern and benevolent type of military rule over other people is the Allied occupation of conquered territories in Europe and Asia during and after the Second World War. For the purpose of this study, one of whose goals is to analyse military forces while assuming various degrees of civil authority during peace operations in the 1990s, this chapter focuses on the European theatre. During and after the war in Europe the issues involved in military rule relevant to this book were more pronounced than in for instance Japan, where the American occupation followed quite suddenly as a result of the use of the atomic bomb in August 1945 to end the war in the Pacific. As the Allied military advance between 1942 and 1945 progressed from North Africa to Italy and from the beaches of Normandy towards Berlin, many of the central dilemmas involved in military occupation in relation to the primary military mission emerged.

First of all, there was the fundamental debate over civilian or military rule in liberated and occupied territories. Continued and historic reluctance in the United States about soldiers entering the civilian domain is one of the reasons for highlighting the American experience in military government. American reluctance to allow military forces to govern foreshadowed the more general tendency in the other Western democracies to regard temporary military substitution of civil governments, and increasingly also military support to civil authorities, as an abnormality and even as highly undesirable. With the emergence of a specialised military branch for addressing governance came a second choice, either to integrate this "Civil Affairs" organisation into the regular tactical chain of command, or separate it from the combat units as they swept across Europe. Related to the issue of integrated versus segregated Civil Affairs was the dilemma over direct rule, with a high degree of interference by Civil Affairs personnel in the details of administration of a foreign country, or indirect rule through the local officialdom in the conquered territories. A third question—one that is central to this book—arose after the defeat of Germany. Did soldiers exercise control over civilian populations solely in support of their military mission, as was originally envisioned, or was military governance to become a central aspect of the mission? Forth, the question will be raised as to how long and how deeply soldiers were actually
involved in the governance of occupied territories and what were the effects of military rule beyond the initial operational requirements.

The Operational Primacy of Civil Affairs

"Modern war", F.S.V. Donnison wrote in 1966 in the official British history of military government in the Second World War, "consumes governments and administrations in its path, leaving anarchy and chaos behind. If authority and the necessary minimum order and administration are not at once re-established, disorder and subversion can all too quickly erode the victory that has been won in the field." It was this realisation that made the western Allies accept responsibility and prepare for the occupation of friendly and enemy territory. The legal obligation to do so, however, was also prominent in the minds of the responsible policymakers and military leaders. The Law Occupation as laid down in The Hague Convention of 1907 obliged occupying armies to restore law and order, and as far as possible provide basic relief and restore vital services. Obviously, these pragmatic considerations had in turn been an important consideration in the minds of the signatories of this Convention on the laws of armed conflict, with its annex on military occupation.

Although the Allies fully accepted the responsibility for temporary governing occupied territory for both practical and legal reasons, it remained undetermined if its execution would fall to civilians or soldiers. The inevitability of a large military role was viewed differently on the two sides of the Atlantic. The British, with their vast colonial empire and recent experience in occupation duty in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, had no inhibitions about letting the military temporarily exercise civil power. They delegated the responsibility for policy to the War Office and made the Army the executive agency of military government. In the United States, however, there was a strong tradition against the military exercising civil power.

In American history, every war that involved the temporary seizure or conquest of territory had evoked bitter debate about the military role in government. Like most military occupation regimes, the U.S. Army's record at improvising was inconsistent in for instance Mexico in 1847-1848, in Confederate territory during and after the Civil War, in the Philippines and Cuba following the Spanish-American war of 1898 and in the German Rhineland after the First World War. In the eyes of President Franklin D. Roosevelt especially, the war against Germany and Japan, more than any armed conflict preceding it, was fought for ideals. It was waged to fulfil the promises of self-determination as laid down in the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Declaration. Replacing totalitarian rule with Allied military government was therefore by no means the obvious choice. The option of having the emerging United Nations execute the administration of Germany and Japan was nevertheless not seriously considered.

While civil administration was regarded as a task unsuited for military forces, soldiers themselves were not particularly eager to assume this role. Nevertheless, as early as 1942, the U.S. Army started to select and train specialized Civil Affairs personnel for de-
ployment in liberated and occupied territory in Europe and Asia. The initiator of this Civil Affairs training program in the United States was a soldier, General George C. Marshall, the Chairman of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). As a second lieutenant Marshall had served in the Philippines in 1902 where he received no instructions or training whatsoever for the civilian tasks he would face. Nevertheless, he was "practically governor in effect of a large territory, about half an island." By the end of the First World War Marshall witnessed how preparations for the U.S. Army's contribution to the Rhineland occupation had not much improved. Nevertheless, American forces performed relatively well, partly because they lacked the punitive motives displayed by their French, Belgium, and to a lesser extent their British allies. Before the war, but most of all after 1941, much thought was expended on the definitions of "Civil Affairs" and "Military Government." The former, sounding more friendly to civilian ears, was commonly used for what was in fact military government conducted on one's own or liberated territory. Civil Affairs was considered too bland for use in enemy territory, so military government was plainly used for occupation of enemy territory. For the recruitment of Civil Affairs personnel the British could initially fall back on a large body of colonial administrators in uniform, but the Americans had to start from scratch to build up an organisation. Civil affairs officers in both Britain and the United States were either regular career officers, or civilians in uniform. Part of the latter group was selected for their specific civilian skills in administration, public safety, finance, health and civil infrastructure, and referred to as functional specialists as opposed to the generalist Civil Affairs officers.

The idea of civil administration entirely in military hands continued to make the Americans, civilian and military alike, somewhat uneasy. Although civilian inspectors generally found the level of the course adequate, sceptics referred to the School for Military Government in the Provost Marshall General's School at the University of Virginia, as the Army's "School of Gauleiters." In the United States, President Roosevelt's lingering opposition to the military role in administration caused a plethora of governmental institutions, State Department, the Treasury, the Department of Agriculture and many others to engage in a turf battle with the War Department. Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Walter Bedell Smith was convinced that "the American people will never take kindly to the idea of government exercised by military officers" and was amongst many advocating the occupation of Germany under civilian control as late as early 1944.

Lingering doubts amongst military commanders about the crucial role of Civil Affairs were settled in the North African Campaign. In late November 1942, a few weeks after the British and American landings in Morocco and Algeria, Eisenhower wrote to Marshall he was desperate to rid himself of "all problems other than purely military." Absorbed in political and economic matters and unable to coordinate the American civilian agencies or to control the headstrong French, it was at that point that the theatre commander wrote to General Marshall his momentous complaint about his desire to "get rid of all these questions
that are outside the military scope.” Eisenhower even told Marshall that he was having “as much trouble with civilian forces behind aiding us as I am with the enemy in front of us.” According to Marshall, Eisenhower’s complaints finally persuaded the President to temporarily invest the theatre commander with civil power. As far as the execution of administrative power was concerned, the initial inter-departmental struggle in 1942-1943 was won by the War Department at the expense of State and the other departments. In March the Civil Affairs Division (CAD) was established at the Pentagon under Major General John Hilldring created to plan the execution of interim rule in the Mediterranean, North-Western European and Pacific theatres. The Division would eventually number approximately ten thousand Civil Affairs personnel who were trained in Charlottesville and various other schools for lower ranks. Nonetheless, responsibility for occupation policy continued to rest with the State Department.

The main object of having specialised Civil Affairs units was to facilitate military operations by preventing chaos and disease in conquered territory. Military commanders as well as policymakers were eager to emphasize this operational primacy of Civil Affairs and the limited scope and duration of military rule: “The Army is not a welfare organisation”, Hilldring wrote to Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson in November 1943. “It is a military machine whose mission is to defeat the enemy in battle. Its interest and activities in military government and Civil Affairs administration are incidental to the accomplishment of the mission. Nevertheless, these activities are of paramount importance, as any lack of a condition of social stability in an occupied area would be prejudicial to the success of the military effort.” Four weeks before the Allies hit the Normandy beaches Hilldring described the two main objectives of Civil Affairs to a U.S. Congress committee. The first objective was “to secure the civilian populations to the maximum extent possible, which is an obligation under international law.” The primary task of Civil Affairs was therefore to maintain law and order. The second objective was to prevent civilian populations from interfering with military operations and “that they are so treated that they will be able to assist the forward movement of our troops to the greatest extent possible.” Hilldring continued by emphasizing:

That is the beginning and the end of our involvement in this business. When neither of those two objectives any longer obtains, in other words, when the battle has gotten far enough ahead so that we can lay down our obligations under international law and so that the populations can no longer interfere with the military purposes of the operation, we intend to turn this work over to such civilian agencies as are designed to take it.

In practice, the handover of responsibility from soldiers to civilians turned out to be a mixed success during and after the Second World War.
Integrating or Segregating Civil Affairs

The "ideal type" of Civil Affairs officer trained at the School for Military Government was considered "one who integrated the local laws, institutions, customs, psychology and economics of the occupied area and a superimposed military control with a minimum of change in the former and a maximum of control by the latter."\textsuperscript{15} Whenever possible, control over the population was to be indirect, which is to say that a Civil Affairs officer's relations were to be with the head of local administration and not with the public. The strong preference of indirect control over direct control over foreign populations was in line with the requirements of international law that prescribed the minimum of change to indigenous government systems, and worked reasonably well in liberated territory. In occupied territory, however, indirect rule and operational primacy appeared to be in conflict with the policy of rooting out Fascism and Nazism, a policy to which the Allies had committed themselves. This goal was higher on President Franklin D. Roosevelt's agenda than that of Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill and the Americans leaned more towards direct control, reaching into lower levels of a defeated government.\textsuperscript{16} The British may have been driven by a general personnel shortage, but most of all they had a long tradition in indirect rule in their colonies. This administrative system, similar to that used by the Dutch in the Netherlands East-Indies, leaned heavily on indigenous administrative elites and had allowed them to control a vast empire with relatively little administrative and military personnel.

The Allied invasion of Italy was planned as an occupation of enemy territory. However, it felt like liberation to most Italians and officially became one after the Italian surrender and declaration of war on Germany following the invasion of Sicily in the summer of 1943. The occupation of Sicily brought home to the American public the earliest and most popular image of Civil Affairs and benevolent occupation in the form of the just and humane Italian-American Major Victor Joppolo in John Hersey's Pulitzer Prize winning novel 	extit{A Bell for Adano}. Written in 1944 and later adapted as a movie, the story depicted how in the wake of the Allied invasion Joppolo, based on a true character, assumed the reigns of government in the town Adano. Hersey's graphic descriptions of Joppolo's first day in office are exemplary for the clarity of the military government mandate and powers that went with it. Joppolo walked straight into the town hall of the town of Adano and positioned himself behind the desk of the former Fascist mayor. The former civil servant from The Bronx then took an American flag from his briefcase and hung it from the flagpole on the balcony overlooking the town square. Assigned to exercise military authority in occupied territory, he held absolute judicial, executive and legislative powers over the village and its surroundings. In the meantime the author also portrayed the problems of preparing soldiers for this unpredictable task in a foreign land in the wake of major warfare. In Hersey's book Joppolo subsequently sat down and looked at the immense pile of Allied Government in Occupied Territories (AMGOT) instructions for the first day. After reading just a fraction of them he started tearing up the pile in neat quarters and crumbled them up to throw them in the waste-basket.
He stirred and reached into his brief case again and took out a small black loose leaf notebook. The pages were filled with notes in Amgot school lectures: notes on civilian supply, on public safety, on public health, on finance, on agriculture, industry, utilities, transportation, and all the businesses of an invading authority. But he passed all these pages by, and turned to the page marked: Notes to Joppolo from Joppolo. And he read: ‘Don’t make yourself cheap. Always be accessible to the public. Don’t play favourites. Speak Italian whenever possible. Don’t lose your temper. When plans fall down, improvise...’ That was the one he wanted. When plans fall down, improvise.” Plans for the first day were in the wastebasket. They were absurd. Enough was set forth in those plans to keep a regiment busy for a week.  

Flexibility and improvisation were the key virtues of the Civil Affairs officer, arguably more than regular combat personnel whose mission, however difficult, was relatively straightforward—the defeat of the enemy. It is important to realise when reading the following chapters that during the 1990s, when international troops entered Somalia and Kosovo under a United Nations mandate, regular combat units were faced with a similar civil administrative power vacuum, but mostly left to fill the gap with no specialised personnel, no instructions or specific training and worst of all, hardly any or no mandate or orders describing the civil powers a military commander was allowed to exercise to create some rudimentary order amidst chaos.

Many of the extremely detailed directives and manuals proved of little value in the wake of battle in Sicily where chaos reigned. “And what a lot of headaches I found”, an American Civil Affairs officer entering a Sicilian town reported. “Water supply shortage, no power, no food, no fuel, and corpses all over town.” AMGOT headquarters was established under Major General Lord Rennell of Rodd, who remarked that “I am frank to think we shall get away with things here more by luck than good management.” It had indeed been far from certain if the majority of the population would greet the Allies as liberators. Moreover, although military government officers tended to take on too many administrative tasks themselves in the early stages and thereby overstretched the organisation, AMGOT was generally able to rely on local officials such as the Carabinieri and regular police for most public security tasks. Although the large majority of higher-ranking Fascist officials fled and some were purged by the Allies, an estimated ninety-eight percent of the local administration and services in Palermo continued to be manned by nominal Fascists. On mainland Italy the Civil Affairs organisation initially had a tendency to engage in direct control. Mostly shorthanded, AMGOT in the end refrained from direct control as much as possible, instead leaving the Italians to administer under Allied control those parts liberated without battle.

Italy became the test ground for various methods of military government after September 1943. From the protracted organisational chaos emerged two preferred models: a separate Civil Affairs structure versus an integrated Civil Affairs organisation. The main argument by those favouring a single Civil Affairs organisation segregated from the tactical commanders was that as Allied forces moved forward, Civil Affairs personnel would con-
stantly have to be changed as a new commanding officer took over an area. The plea for a single military government organisation to be established as soon possible after combat operations ceased in a particular area resulted in “an organism standing on its own feet and divorced from military command except at the highest level.” In the early planning phase for the invasion of Western Europe this model prevailed and large combined Anglo-American “country houses”, were set up in England to prepare for the administration of France, The Low Countries and Norway. They tended to prepare for direct control of indigenous administrations. It was often referred to as the AMGOT theory of Civil Affairs or the “Mediterranean system.”

The primary disadvantage of the separate chain of command was that it endangered “unity of command” since commanders below Supreme Commander could not control the Civil Affairs units that were roaming through his area of operations. According to U.S. Army historian Earl Ziemke, AMGOT “rapidly began to look like a prize example for the fallacy of permitting two independent commands in the same theatre.” The second disadvantage was that as a separate entity Civil Affairs had a hard time gaining access to essential Army resources and had to beg “like a stranger” for relief goods, transportation and engineer support. Ziemke’s British counterpart Donnison argued that the disadvantages of the integrated model, were largely off-set by the fact that Civil Affairs was not represented in tactical units below army corps level in the British Army and below divisional level in the U.S. Army. In early 1944 Eisenhower decided to integrate the Allied Civil Affairs Division as a General Staff Division into SHEAF, and as a staff section, called “G-5”, on Army Group, Army, Corps and with the Americans on Divisional level. However, the controversy over the two systems lingered throughout the war:

Especially during the advance into Germany, mostly in the American area of operations, there were constant complaints about [...] the changing CA staffs coming in with new ideas and priorities and duplicating work. They argued that only through a separate command, uniformity of administrative policy could be created. Americans emphasised the need to replace administrators to a relatively low level and—partly based on the North-African experience talked of the need to supplying administrative personnel, ‘not by the dozens, but by the thousands.’

Although the difference of opinion about the two models cannot be drawn strictly along national lines, it is safe to say that the British leaned towards an integrated model while the Americans favoured a separate Civil Affairs organisation in theatre. Of this period of controversy, a British general said that “there were plenty of affairs but the difficulty was to keep them civil.” This is not to say that Civil Affairs was more easily accepted within the British Army’s hierarchy. It was often still treated “like a quasi-civil poor relation” and it was accepted as a full general staff function only after the authoritative Major-General Gerald Templer, a former combat commander, was appointed Director of Civil Affairs for Germany in March 1945. The integrated model and the related emphasis on indirect rule
prevailed first and foremost because the alternative was not feasible. The Allied European
governments in exile whose countries lived under Nazi occupation were not particularly
enthused by the idea of direct military control. On top of this political motivation, to which
the British were more sensitive than the Americans, there were more pragmatic considera-
tions related to the shortage of Civil Affairs personnel. Finally, the American tendencies
towards a separate organisation was overruled at SHEAF and in the War Department by
those favouring minimal interference in local administrations in order to assure the most
rapid transfer of responsibility.27

In liberated territory, the rapid transfer of overall responsibility for government
proved attainable, albeit not as fast and smoothly as envisaged. Dutch historian Peter Romijn
asked the question as to whether Allied soldiers had truly become governors in the Nether-
lands in 1944-1946. Focussing on the first major city to be liberated in the south, Maastricht,
he concluded that this had been the case, but only shortly and in limited ways. Given the
immense gratitude of the Dutch population and the overall cooperativeness of the Dutch
authorities, The Netherlands was clearly not the most difficult place in which Civil Affairs
officers could work. They could delegate much of their local administrative powers to their
Dutch counterparts in the Netherlands Military Authority (NMA) under SHEAF, who in turn
oversaw the reconstruction of a local civilian administration. As a rule, Allied Civil Affairs
officers only supervised this process and refrained from interfering as long as matters of
public safety and order was guaranteed and general Allied interests were not in danger.28
This hands-off policy proved somewhat more difficult in for instance Belgium and France,
where political strife and more rebellious resistance movements posed a larger threat to
overall stability and public security. Most problems in the Netherlands were caused by the
country’s gradual liberation in 1944-1945, which resulted in an exceptionally long interreg-
num of the NMA under Major General Hendrik Kruis—much to the dislike of Dutch minis-
ters in the former government in exile. The stalemate after the Battle of Arnhem in
September 1944 disrupted the whole country that, according to Weinberg and Coles “runs
like a delicate machine” with each part forming an indispensable element of the national
economy.29 This caused a humanitarian crisis the following winter that placed great demands
on Allied civilian relief supplies. Despite some significant hurdles, military governmental
control as exercised in The Netherlands could be considered the model for the sort of short-
lived and skin-deep indirect military rule the Allied Civil Affairs Division had envisaged in
support of military operations.

Military Government Moves Centre Stage in Occupied Germany

After having successfully maintained order in France and the Low Countries, the true test for
Civil Affairs came in Germany. American military government and what was later often
described as “nation-building” in post-war Germany has often been portrayed as an example
of political vision, clarity and American generosity—an image repeated by George W. Bush
prior to and during the occupation of Iraq in 2003. Professional historians of this era know,
however, that the years between 1943 and 1946 were awash with political confusion and ambiguity on the punitive or lenient character of the occupation regime, on the distribution of responsibility for administering Germany between soldiers and civilians and the duration of the occupation. The United States came to dominate policy in the western zones of Germany since its military might eclipsed that of the British by 1945 and since it was footing much of the bill for the occupation.

By the time the first Allied troops entered Germany in mid-September 1944, there was no clear strategy on how the country would be governed apart from the overall goal of preventing it from ever again embarking on another wave of conquest. When the newly appointed German mayor of Aachen asked the Americans in early 1945 if the occupation intended to bring democracy to Germany, Civil Affairs officers were unable to give him a clear answer. Neither the policy nor the plans provided for an active democratization program. Ziemke wrote: "Democratization was nevertheless a compellingly logical objective to the Americans who tended to regard themselves the apostles of democracy, but as long as the war was on military government's first responsibility was to the combat commanders." Hence, local military government personnel selected the seemingly apolitical, if not malleable, efficient German administrators who were most likely to help in establishing order.

When compared to Japan especially, where the Americans would be in complete control of the occupation of Japan, tripartite and later quadripartite control over Germany in separate zones as agreed upon at the Yalta Conference seriously complicated policy planning. However, much of the policy vacuum was the result of continued interdepartmental and jurisdictional rivalries within the U.S. Government. The delegation of responsibility between soldiers and civilians also was not settled. Although the War Department and the Army consistently argued that post-surrender occupation was a job for the State Department they advocated a short, but exclusive military period to U.S. control, but they were still meeting serious opposition in October 1944. As Civil Affairs once again became military government just across the Belgium-German border in Monschau, calls in Washington for the appointment of a civilian high commissioner once again become stronger.

Two years separated the acceptance of the Morgenthau Plan, singularly focussed on preventing Germany from starting another war, from the launch of the Marshall Plan in 1947. The latter, aimed at economically reviving Western Europe, clearly came to prevail in the image of post-war American foreign policy towards Germany. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau's initial proposal in 1944 to deindustrialise and "pastoralise" Germany was diluted after Roosevelt, its most important proponent, died in April. By the time the new President Harry S. Truman finally approved it less than a month prior to the capitulation the policy as formulated in Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1067 (JCS 1067) was a vague compromise between harsh and more lenient views. It was nevertheless still an austere document. Relief to the Germans was strictly limited to a means of preventing disease and unrest and the population was to be kept at subsistence level. The "let-them-stew-in-their-own-juices approach to economic affairs" was also given in by Roosevelt's determination to
punish the Germans whom he held collectively responsible for Nazi aggression. The policy further emphasized the need to root out Nazism. An Army orientation pamphlet for soldiers entering Germany after May stated: "You are going to be fighting with ideas instead of guns, laws instead of tanks, control measures and policing instead of bombs. But the ultimate goals are the same—the complete stamping out of Nazism and fascist ideas, and the re-education of the Germans to the advantages of a decent, responsible self-government." After pictures of GI's socializing with locals, more than often of the opposite sex, appeared in American newspapers in late 1944, U.S. soldiers became subject to a strict "non-fraternization" regime prohibiting all social interaction with German officials and citizens. It proved rather foolish and unenforceable, but the restrictions would only be gradually lifted in late 1945.

The lack of political guidance was largely off-set by two factors. In the course of 1944 interim directives were provided by the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff, giving Eisenhower responsibility as the military governor and therefore "supreme executive, legislative, and judicial authority" in seized territories. Meanwhile tactical regulations were spelled out in two pocket-sized handbooks on military government prior to and after the German surrender. Both were less harsh on the German population than President Roosevelt had envisaged, calling for military government to be "firm", but "at the same time just and humane with regard to the civilian population as far as consistent with strict military requirements." Moreover, the Civil Affairs organisation had gained a lot of experience from the occupation of Italy, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. There was nevertheless a lack of detailed planning beyond the "purely military requirements" such as establishing governance, public order, relief, handling displaced persons, and basic services in its initial stages. Lack of policy complicated planning for more thorny issues such as economic reform, political reform and re-education. These matters were nevertheless briefly addressed in the handbooks. Hence, despite a lack of policy, the instruments and tactics to avoid anarchy in the direct aftermath Germany's capitulation were well developed. In a plan called *Operation Eclipse* every available unit was ordered to contribute to a rapid takeover of every town and institution once Germany surrendered.

At the local level, American, British and Canadian Civil Affairs detachments performed almost all military government functions in the towns and villages of northwestern Europe between 1944 and 1946. These mobile teams, composed on average of four generalist Civil Affairs officers and six enlisted men in jeeps or small trucks were the backbone of Allied military government. Upon entering a German town or village in the wake of the Allied advance these spearhead detachment would first post proclamations and ordinances, telling the Germans what their obligations to the Allied troops were, informing them about curfews and where they had to turn in weapons. A detachment, mostly consisting of two generalist Civil Administrative officers and two Police or Public Safety officers, would appoint a new local German mayor and select a police chief often in cooperation with Military Police. Momentarily, they held absolute power to dismiss or arrest anyone. East of the Rhine and Osnabrück the Germans withdrew almost all public administrators and police
officials and took all public records, which seriously complicated the task ahead. One of the
tasks of Civil Affairs was to salvage such archives whenever possible.

Once the Allies crossed the Rhine early 1945, most German public officials were
found at their post. Many of them would continue their work of interfacing with the German
population, but under Allied control and later supervision. The rapid advance through
Germany was different from that through liberated territory.

Military Government staffs and detachments were faced once again with the kind of task
they had been called upon to undertake during the swift advance across the Seine and into
Belgium. But it was now no longer possible to thrust a bundle of notices into the hands of the
local Maire and wish him good luck. Proclamations and orders had to be issued and someone
had to stay and see that they were obeyed.38

By late March 1945, 150 U.S. detachments were deployed in Germany, almost two-thirds of
U.S. capacity for local-level military government. As U.S. forces occupied far more territory
in May than planned, stretching from the Ruhr to the Elbe and including Leipzig, and reaching
into western Czechoslovakia and Austria, the U.S. Army swiftly ran out of Civil Affairs
detachments. In April it had started to organise provisional detachments made up of artillery
units and signallers.39 By the end of the war 250 detachments and 200 provisional detach-
ments laid a carpet behind the military advance in Germany.40 Tactical forces occupied most
of Germany after the surrender and Major General Lucius Clay, Eisenhower’s Deputy for
Military Government, remembered how these combat units did not want to give up, “because
as long as they were in charge they could commandeer houses, and whatever they
wanted, and they liked that sense of power.” The regular forces and detachments “had
picked somebody here or somebody there to be a local Bürgemeister, a local official, without
much screening and without much time to screen.”41 German police were disarmed and
operated under Allied control and twenty-seven lower courts were reopened and functioning
parallel to U.S. military courts in late May. Larger detachments varying in size from 27 to 43
officers and enlisted personnel also entered Germany to govern on the Regional and State
(Land) level and in the major cities. Such Civil Affairs units, which included more special-
ists in areas such as economy, transport, public health, welfare and legal matters, had also
been used in major liberated cities in the previous year.

Unlike in Japan, there was no central governing structure after Hitler’s regime col-
lapsed. Since the western Allies and the Soviets failed to agree on a central German author-
ity, military government in Germany was exercised on the State level and below. In contrast,
General Douglas MacArthur ruled Japan primarily through the existing central governmental
institutions, while making little use of the Civil Affairs apparatus at his disposal. He did not
give his military government officers the authority to command Japanese officials, leaving
the understaffed local military government teams to do little more than supervise and report
on the progress—or lack thereof—of the reforms decreed by his own headquarters and
executed by the wartime local administrators. Thus, while MacArthur ruled and adopted a
"top down" approach, Germany became an exercise in "bottom up" state building. This was not, and could not have been, foreseen during the planning phase, but emerged from a very different military and political situation at the time of capitulation brought about by the atomic bomb instead of prolonged struggle and a final stand. Detachments in Germany had more power and influence, but the primary driving force for the military commanders—to get out of government as soon as possible—was similar. Although personnel reform through purges of civilian officials was initially attempted with more vigour by Clay in Germany than by MacArthur in Japan, the effort lost out in both countries to the overall urge to create stability and efficient rule.

Other than in Japan, where American forces expected protracted guerrilla warfare, the Allies had not anticipated large scale revolts in post-war Germany, only smaller acts of terror by die-hard Nazis. None of this materialised in either country. Internal security operations in Germany were limited to a breakdown of public order. In the direct aftermath of battle looting was a serious problem, but "since U.S. troops, German civilians and [displaced persons] all looted, there was soon debate over whose behaviour was the most reprehensible." Three quarters of the town centre of Hanover was destroyed and there was still fighting when the first British military government detachment moved in. "There was no electricity, water, sewers. Some half million people inhabited the ruins. It was a town of looting, drunkenness, rape, and murder as forced labour broke out from restraint. Shots whistled by from drunken 'slaves' or left-behind snipers. German police were mobbed and their bodies strung from lamp posts. A new force was improvised and stopped the worst looting. It could do nothing yet about murders and rapes." In this phase the contribution of the Public Security officers especially, was critical. They were mostly drawn from police forces back home and their experience, training and commonsense was invaluable in handling the public as well as other administrative problems. The military government detachment entering Osnabrück encountered civilians and DPs involved in looting clothing and food. "Being unable to obtain military assistance two officers of the Detachment tackled the crowd with their revolvers, and gained control after inflicting casualties. The commander of the [Regierungsbezirk] Detachment then reinstated 24 hours house arrest for the entire population, and gained control which he has not again lost..." Donnison observed how "[w]hen seeking to revive social existence in such anarchy the essentials of civil administration once more stand revealed. In easier times they disappear under the proliferation of amenities which comes to be looked for as the proper function of administration. But without order and the enforcement of law the provision of other services is vain or impossible." After Germany’s capitulation the overall docility and servility of the German population and administrators was certainly enhanced by every available regular Allied unit contributing to a speedy and synchronised take-over of every town and institution of Germany in a matter of days. The number of American, British and Canadian troops in Germany was well over two million at the time. In backing up the Civil Affairs detachments during the execution of Operation Eclipse, local conquering officers held absolute powers to dismiss or
arrest anyone and impose pre-established proclamations and ordinances. They were initially not always aware of their powers, but soon informed by trained military government officers that they were "Caesar" in their towns and also allowed to use deadly force to quash any resistance. After the shortlived anarchy in some cities and towns the military government's major concerns in 1945 were the rapid rise of a massive black market, criminal behaviour of displaced persons and local teenage youth. Germany was hungry, but not starving and although the rates of violent crime in 1945-1946 amongst Germans were obviously higher than in pre-war Germany, "[p]ost-war Western Germany was not by historical comparison a particularly violent place in which to live, contrary to the impression usually given." The major law and order problem amongst Germans was property crime. Marauding and looting Displaced Persons (DPs) were responsible for a large proportion of the violence and the prime reason for rapidly rearming the German police after September 1945. Military Police and regular Allied forces were often called upon to restore order in DP camps. One million Displaced Persons, almost all from Eastern Europe, were still in Germany in 1947.

Like everywhere in the wake of the Allied advance, rapidly fielding a local police force answerable to the occupation forces proved crucial to quickly stabilizing the country. While the police immediately proved surprisingly loyal to their new military masters, "stolidly obeying orders and arresting their previous bosses just as happily as they had political victims a few days earlier", deprivation clearly added to their unreliability when dealing with the black marketeers. As in Italy, German police officers were suffering from material hardship and often could not resist the bribes from the criminals that thrived on black market activity and that have best become known in the figure of Harry Lime in the film "The Third Man." Meanwhile, denazification clearly lowered the efficiency of the police force and added to the demoralisation of its personnel. Like the Americans, the British soon found out that there would hardly be a police force left if this policy was to be carried to extremes. While the denazification of the legal profession completely failed, the German police force was "half denazified." Through a combination of increased rations and better cooperation with the occupation troops police efficiency went up by early 1946 and by 1948 its reliability had been restored despite the fact that the black market was still thriving. In Japan as well, the relatively efficient indigenous police forces were maintained and proved to be the key to public security and order.

Whereas the crime rate amongst Germans was relatively low considering the post-war chaos, that of American troops was far higher than is commonly thought. "Most of my trouble came form the American soldier", U.S. Major General Ernest Harmon wrote in his memoirs about the first post-war winter, "almost none at all come form the German population." John Willoughby, in his study of the American occupation army entitled _Remaking the Conquering Heroes_, gives a distressing account of an undisciplined and marauding mob that was eventually tamed in the early Cold War years. Only then did it become the garrisoned and disciplined Army so crucial to projecting U.S. power across the globe. The number of "serious incidents" such as murder, rape, and armed robbery between 1945 and 1947 was
beyond anything contemporary armies would accept from their troops during foreign interventions. GI’s were heavily involved in black marketeering, theft of American military assets as well as uncontrolled “requisitioning” or theft from the German population. Crime rates amongst troops actually went up as those who had never fought the Germans replaced the war veterans.\(^5\) Although there are no comparable accounts of overall British behaviour, there is no reason to believe that their record was structurally better. However, it has to be remembered that military behaviour in the American and British zones was exemplary by most historical comparisons of military occupations and certainly when compared to the systematic rape and plunder that occurred in the Soviet occupied territories to the east.\(^5\)

Lack of discipline amidst the general confusion of the demobilisation period was, however, one of the key motives for creating a specialized force for internal security operations in the U.S. zone. A new constabulary force composed of regular Army personnel was conceived in October 1945 and became operational in July the next year. It consisted of 38,000 personnel and augmented the military government organisation while backed up in case of emergency by the regular occupation Army, which by then had shrunk from sixty-one divisions to just five and had disintegrated as an effective combat organisation.\(^5\) In order to uphold law and order the Constabulary had jurisdiction over all civilian and all Allied personnel in the U.S. zone. Although they were launched as a “super military police organisation”, the main difference was that while the Constabulary were primarily tasked with policing the German people, the Military Police (MP) was chiefly concerned with policing the Army and only did public security on the side.\(^5\) Constabulary squads, equipped with jeeps and light armoured vehicles wore distinctive formal jackets and yellow brimmed helmets. They conducted patrols, community support and spent much of their time performing check point operations to stem the tide of black-market goods and illegal immigrants throughout their sector.

The War Department had estimated that constabulary duty demanded the use of “higher type of individuals.” Their mission asked more from their resourcefulness since, other than regular combat units, they were required to operate in small groups at extended distances from headquarters. In addition to being capable of performing the strictly military duties of a squad, crew or team, its personnel were trained for enforcement of law and order. Tasks included riot duty, conducting searches and raids and operating checkpoints. In order to perform them they had to learn elementary German words and phrases.\(^5\) However, the Constabulary was forced to accept regular troops and reinforcements. The Constabulary’s commander Major General Ernest Harmon put a strong emphasis on discipline, and eventually his force played a substantial role in improving relations with the local population by substituting an “Army type-occupation” for a “police-type occupation.” The British left internal security operations to tactical troops and Military Police.

Truman had repeated in May 1945 that “the military should not have governmental responsibilities beyond the requirements of military operations.”\(^5\) However, once Germany was defeated and the mobile phase turned into the static phase of occupation, military
government was propelled onto centre stage. Apart from German demobilisation, which was largely accomplished in three months time, there was no real “purely military” operational purpose for the army other than constabulary-type duty in support of the government, which the Allied commanders had in fact become. Civil affairs had thereby lost its operational primacy, and in effect, tactical troops were used in support of the Allied military government. Eisenhower formally assumed the dual function as Military Governor with Clay as his deputy in charge of the Office of Military Government U.S. (OMGUS), established on 1 October 1945. In the early months of 1946 military government and the tactical American and British chain of command were once again fully divorced. The army of occupation thus continued its support role enabling military government to carry out its objectives, but the new relationship was now formalised—not always to the liking of the tactical commanders who had previously been in command.56

The Effects of Military Pragmatism

Military government not only assumed the central position for which it had not been envisioned, it also lasted much longer than anticipated and assumed an increasing number of functions. Expectations of a military occupation phase lasting no more than a few months after the capitulation thus proved unrealistic in both Germany and Japan. The State Department—originally attempting to maximise its role—had to admit it simply could not field the organisation capable of supplanting the Army with its abundance of resources and in personnel. The refugee and food crisis was simple too massive. Reconstructing the thoroughly disrupted railway system became the first priority of the Americans and British. The distribution of food became increasingly problematic with the economy in ruins and Germany’s breadbasket, the eastern part of the country, under Soviet control. Millions of Germans were being expelled from the eastern parts of Germany now under Polish, Czech and Russian control in what would in late twentieth century jargon be called a massive “ethnic cleansing” campaign. At one point the number of Displaced Persons from France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Russia and Yugoslavia in the western zones was over five million.57 The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) had been created to take care of Displaced Persons, but it lacked the capabilities to assume this awesome task. Military forces continued to take the lead in feeding, clothing, housing and supervising this “mass of confused human beings cut adrift in a collapsing society.”58 Other than the Red Cross, that played an important role alongside the military, there were no other international humanitarian organisations. In the decades to come the family of United Nations aid organisations, national governmental relief organisations, and non-governmental organisations would become the key players in relief during war and crisis.

While the Army accepted responsibility for public order and handling the refugee crisis—its motives shifting from operational to humanitarian—it initially balked at assuming politico-economic functions. Eisenhower recommended in October 1945 that all non-security-related aspects of German occupation be transferred to American civilian institu-
tions. However, the influential Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy insisted by June 1945 that the Army would have to move far beyond the envisaged role of policing the Germans as an occupation force. Although the State Department was supposedly left in charge of policy matters, by late July Truman formally assigned to the War Department and the Army the political and economic responsibility for Germany.59

Partly as a result of the prolonged and broadened military control over government, the two central American occupation aims, denazification and economic retardation, rapidly dissolved. Winston Churchill’s refusal to adopt the harsh American occupation policy as laid down in JCS 1067 had already barred it from becoming Allied policy. The British were as eager as the American military to keep the military phase of the occupation as short as possible and viewed that economic recovery and order went hand in hand. They had always been more pragmatic in their approach to Germany, putting less emphasis on the punitive element of occupation and more on the expected stand-off with the Soviets. British policy therefore did not undergo the same shift in emphasis from moralism to geopolitical concerns. These had always been prominent in Churchill’s mind, but only recently started to take hold in some circles in Washington. American Civil Affairs officer Harold Zink found that on the ground the British “certainly had a more professional attitude gained from their long experience with colonial peoples, but displayed less sentimental concern for German suffering.”60

Helped by the British position on German recovery, General Clay admitted in retrospect that he all but ignored the policy guidance as laid down in JCS 1067. “We were creating a situation that was hopeless”, he recalled. “We were preventing, not helping, the recovery of a country we had defeated, but at the same time paying for its deficits to keep it alive.”61 Clay illustrated that those who administer a policy often have more impact than those who conceive it.

After hostilities ended, the military were eager to transfer governmental responsibility and there was a broad consensus about the need for civilian takeover. On 21 June 1945, Clay told the Army commanders in Germany that the War Department considered military government “not a job for soldiers” and should be “turned over to the political as soon a practicable.”62 He vigorously pursued a policy to reduce his own staff and replace them with civilians from the State Department and other departments. The other means of speeding up the transfer was promoting German self-government on the local level. Clay told McCloy in September 1945 that the Army could “hardly withdraw the local [military government] detachments until officials appointed by us have been replaced by others elected by the Germans.” Elections were first held in German municipalities in January 1946 and followed later that year by ballots in the counties (Landkreise) and cities (Stadtkreise).63 The high voter turnout was reassuring to the Allies, but generally seen as evidence of German obedience to the victors than as proof of newly found democratic zeal.

Although Clay’s expressed hope in September 1945 that the transition from military to civilian control would be completed by July the next year proved unrealistic, on the lower levels of government the burden of actual administration was rapidly shifting to German
civilians under American civilian supervision in 1946. The same happened in the British zone. The number of American civilian staff working under military control in Germany would grow from a negligible size at the close of the war to 2,500 in September 1946. In that same period the amount of U.S. personnel involved in military government dropped from twelve thousand to less than three thousand and steadily shrunk to 155 by the end of 1948. When full responsibility was handed to the State Department in 1949 Clay had only twenty-six soldiers on his staff. By that time the Federal Republic of Germany had emerged from the joint British-American Bizone created in 1947 and the smaller French zone. The Germans had also agreed upon a new constitution and elected their first parliament.

After 1945, the U.S. Army ran Germany in name and in law, but not in fact in local communities. In the first half of 1946 military government detachments were gradually replaced by two-officer liaison and security teams observing the work of local German officials and assuring the quickest possible transfer of responsibilities. By late 1946 they had mostly left. Clay continued to have absolute judicial, executive and legislative powers after 1945, but hardly exercised them as selected and elected German officials were allowed to run most of their own institutions in 1946. The Germans even ran much of the denazification program. However, this program already seemed to grind to a halt in all zones while under Allied military control. Nevertheless, the Americans had up to then purged and detained in greater numbers than the other occupying powers.
The effects of the rapid pragmatic selection of local administrators made by military government officers in the first year of the occupation would resonate throughout early post-war years. Despite the wave of purges in the American zone late 1945 following indignation and public pressure in the United States over the failure to remove Nazis from positions of power and influence, the Army again resorted to its pragmatic approach to reshaping post-war Germany. In order to withdraw from administrative jobs as soon as possible, the Army continued to grant priority to order and security, and therefore emphasised material reconstruction rather than political and social democratisation. To serve this purpose, it mostly turned to the old business and administrative elite, ignoring more progressive forces in German society. After September 1946 the State Department, after some qualms over JCS 1067, swung its full weight behind the War Department in prioritizing economic reconstruction. By that time, occupation priorities fundamentally shifted to creating a bulwark against Communism and denazification finally went on the back-burner. In Japan also, the emphasis of the occupation policy changed from sweeping democratic and social reform to economic recovery. Most of over 43,000 purged Japanese civilians, mostly politicians and administrators, were “depurged” and restored to their previous positions of power and influence within five years. Nevertheless, the ideals of peace and democracy did take root in Japan, just as they did in West Germany—albeit in very different forms.

In his superb history of post-war Japan and its relationship with the United States, John Dower called the root-and-branch agenda of demilitarisation and democratisation imposed on Japan by the Americans “a remarkable display of arrogant idealism—both self-righteous and genuinely visionary. Then, well before their departure, they began rearming their erstwhile enemy as a subordinate Cold War partner in cooperation with the less liberal elements in society. Yet despite the ultimate emergence of a conservative post-war state, the ideals of peace and democracy took root in Japan—not as a borrowed ideology or imposed vision, but as a lived experience and a seized opportunity.” Dower then makes an important comparison with the occupation of Germany, that because of it shared responsibility between the four powers “lacked the focussed intensity that came with America’s unilateral controls over Japan. Germany also escaped the messianistic fervor of General Douglas MacArthur, the post surrender potentate in Tokyo.” The different approaches to rebuilding Germany and Japan were also determined by what Dower calls an ethnocentric missionary zeal in Japan that he describes as, “the last immodest exercise in the colonial conceit known as ‘the white man’s burden.’” Dower explains that whereas “Nazism was perceived as a cancer in a fundamentally mature ‘Western’ society, Japanese militarism and ultranationalism was construed as reflecting the essence of a feudalistic, Oriental culture that was cancerous in and of itself.”

As Rebecca Boehling argued in her study on the effects of U.S. military interregnum in Germany, the occupier’s changed priorities preceded America’s Cold War preoccupations in Germany. On the one hand, the Army’s pragmatism in the first year of the occupation hurt denazification and socioeconomic reforms by reinstating a large part of the old bureaucratic
and economic elite. On the other hand, most Germans longed for stability and efficient rule and in the end, economic recovery ensured the acceptance of the new political system. The emphasis on economic reconstruction also helped to instill German confidence in democracy by sharpening the contrast with the Soviet zone, where their countrymen were living under considerably more dire conditions. Like quite a few of his more progressive colleagues in Civil Affairs, Harold Zink was seriously disappointed with America’s failure to create a clean break with the Nazi-past when he wrote his first book on American military government in Germany in 1947. In his second book on the subject, written ten years later, Zink was milder, concluding that “despite the well-remembered SNAFUs of the occupation, the end result was oddly not that bad.”

Lasting success, the “economic miracle” (Wirtschaftswunder) and the firm establishment of democracy in Germany was facilitated by the Cold War fears of communism, the “malignant parasite” that in George F. Kennan’s words “only feeds on diseased tissue.”

Conclusion

Most of the choices made in Civil Affairs and military government were driven by pragmatism rather than principle. This is the likely reason why there was no controversy in the United Kingdom over occupation as there was in United States, where as a result far more scholarly debate has raged over the blessings and failures of military government in Germany. Soldiers rather than civilians governed in the wake of the Allied advance because this served the war effort best. Integrating Civil Affairs into the military chain of command rather than segregating their administrative organisation assured their primary allegiance was to the tactical commanders and not to the people over whom they ruled. This also prevented Civil Affairs and military government from creeping towards direct rule, for which even the massive Allied war machine lacked personnel and resources. The operational primacy of Civil Affairs prevailed during the mobile phase, but once the German armed forced were defeated and the occupation moved into its static phase, the role of military government shifted from support to centre as the occupation became the primary goal of the Allied military presence. Military government became a purpose in its own right and the role of the regular tactical army units shifted towards a supporting role. As will be further explored in the next chapter, military support to the government was more or less the normal situation once a military force becomes involved in internal security operations.
1 F.S.V. Donnison, *Civil Affairs and Military Government: Central Organisation and Planning* (London 1966). Donnison added: “It is said that the British habitually lose all the battles except the last. It will profit them nothing to win even the last, if they then throw away the peace.”

2 The obligation of the occupying army to restore and to insure—as far as possible—public order and safety was stated in the rules annexed to the Hague Convention of 1907 (The Hague Convention IV Concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land, 18 October 1907, Article 43). In practise, this responsibility fell the military commander on the ground. The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 confirmed the responsibilities toward the people of a vanquished nation to be the maintenance of law and order, the care of displaced civilians, the provision of food, shelter, health care, and the reestablishment of public education.


6 Janssens, *What Future for Japan?*, 153


8 Thirty percent of the U.S. Civil Affairs officer corps consisted of commissioned civilians. The others were from other branches of the armed forces of the National Guard. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army*, 64.

9 The School of Military Government in Virginia was training lieutenant colonels and full colonels. More junior officers were educated at the Civil Affairs Training School at Fort Custer, Michigan, after which they were sent to universities to specialize through language and area studies. In the summer of 1945 some 1,750 officers had completed this course. The Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) prepared approximately thirty percent of the other ranks with nine months of language and area studies. The Navy, that would govern occupied territories in the Pacific other than Japan, had its own Naval School of Military Government and Administration at Columbia University. Janssens, *What Future for Japan?*, 155-157; Ziemke, *The U.S. Army*, 74.


14 Ibid., 154.

15 Ibid., 10.

16 According to Donnison the Americans emphasised the need to replace administrators to a relatively low level and—partly based on the North-African experience—talked of the need to supply administrative personnel in vast numbers. F.S.V. Donnison, *Civil-Affairs and Military Government in North-Western Europe 1944 – 1946* (London 1961) 24.


19 Ibid., 189.
20 The Provost Marshal General’s Military Government Department, Civil Affairs Studies, Illustrative Cases from Military Occupations (Training Packet No. 8, 1944) 6. This document is available at the U.S. Army Historical Institute website http://www.carlisle.army.mil/cgi-bin/usamhi/
21 Donnison, Civil-Affairs and Military Government in North-Western Europe, 18.
22 Ibid., 19; Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 44-46.
23 Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 29-30. Other than the static, regional approach which provided just a substitute for native governments in the wake of an offensive, the mobile Civil Affairs organisation would move with the combat troops and thereby “Civil Affairs would find a place in the war itself.”
24 Donnison, Civil-Affairs and Military Government in North-Western Europe, 21-22.
25 Ibid., 11.
26 Ibid., 24.
27 Ibid., 21-24.
29 Coles and Weinberg, Soldiers Become Governors, 821.
30 Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 183.
31 The Allied front had reached the German border before copies of the U.S. Army handbook on military government arrived at headquarters First Army. Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 128.
34 Donnison, Civil Affairs and Military Government, 197; Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 59. The citation used here is taken from a political guideline sent with the directive. In the absence of an overall policy document, existing documents on the overall approach to military government in occupied territory were: SHEAF, Handbook for Military Government in Germany Prior to Defeat or Surrender (December 1944); SHEAF, Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany (December 1944); Field Manual 27-5, Civil Affairs and Military Government; Combined Chiefs of Staff, Standard Policy and Procedures for Combined Civil Affairs Operations in NW-Europe; CCS 551, Directive for Military Government in Germany Prior to Defeat or Surrender, 28 April 1944.
36 Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 186.
38 Ibid., 216.
40 The improvised detachments performed well and often even better than the specialised detachments, that either had grown tired or were suffering from serious moral problems after being over-trained, over-organised, but under-deployed after waiting for more than a year for actual deployment in the United States and England. Ziemke, U.S. Army, 311.
45 Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 243.


The comment was from a staff historian visiting Leipzig in late April 1945. Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 245.


In his extremely critical account of the U.S. military presence in Germany in the early postwar years, Willoughby frequently refers to standard works by historians such as Zink, Ziemke and Gimbel. He also quotes General Harmon to make his case. Willoughby, Remaking the Conquering Heroes, 16-28, 100.

Harold Zink, American Military Government in Germany (New York 1947) 241. Comparing the various occupation policies of the four occupying powers Zink added: “The Russians and French followed a distinctly hard course as far as the Germans in general were concerned. They lived off the country in contrast to the American and British police of feeding their forces from imported stocks. They did not hesitate to liquidate Germans whom they regarded inimical. But [...] they saw fit to extend a high degree of cordiality and favor to those Germans whom they regarded as important to future interest.” Harold Zink, American Military Government in Germany (New York 1947) 241.

Ziemke, The U.S. Army, 341.

U.S. Constabulary, Historical Subsection, G-3, Major James M. Snyder, The Establishment and Operations of the United States Constabulary, Germany, 1945-1947 (HQ United States Constabulary 1947) 11, 40. The Constabulary did not operate in Berlin, Bremen and Frankfurt, where “regular static security forces” operated. This document is available at the U.S. Army Historical Institute Website: http://www.carlisle.army.mil/cgi-bin/usamhi/ Establishment of Constabulary, 64, 70. The skills of a policeman the constables had to learned comprised of making arrests, searching of prisoners obtaining evidence, recording statements and “scene of a crime.”

Ziemke, “Improvising in Postwar Germany”, 59.

Clay, “Proconsul of a People, by Another People”, 107.


Clay, “Proconsul of a People, by Another People, for Both Peoples”, 107.

Ziemke, “Improvising in Postwar Germany”, 59.

Gimbel, “Governing the American Zone of Germany”, 94.


Donnison called denazification “the least satisfactory, probably, of Military Government undertakings.” Donnison, Civil-Affairs and Military Government, 461. See also Ziemke, “Improvising in Postwar Germany”, 62. Headquarters U.S. Forces European Theatre reported it had dismissed
100,000 Germans from public employment and Clay announced that towards the end of 1945 the American authorities had interned 100,000 Nazis. The British, Soviets and French reported 64,000, 67,000 and 19,000 internments of German officials respectively. In 1949 the four zones held 16.7 million (U.S.), 22.7 million (U.K.), 17.8 million (Soviet) and 5.8 million (French) people each, while another 3.2 Germans lived in Berlin. Boehling, A Question of Priorities (Map and figures on page following title page).

Public pressure after indignation in the United States over leaving Nazi party members in control resulted in a new unenforceable law, called Law No. 8. This law barred all former Nazi party members from holding public office or positions of influence in trade and industry. Ziemke, Improvising in Postwar Germany, 63.

Pressure from U.S. Congress and American business to “bring the boys back home” and “stop slowing down German economic recovery with denazification” also helped convince the Truman administration. Boehling, A Question of Priorities, 270.

While many former Japanese officials were reinstalled in their former function, around 21,000 people lost their jobs between 1949 and 1951 during a second “red” purge, aimed at clearing government and business of Communist influences. Janssens, What Future for Japan?, 408-409.


“SNAFU” in the U.S. military stood for “Situation Normal All Fucked Up” and was used by soldiers to portray the inherent chaos in, and futility of many aspects of military life. Many scholars who participated in the occupation were seriously disillusioned with Army’s failure to implement the political reforms and the failure of denazification. Some wrote books and dissertations on the topic in the immediate post-war years. A summary of their negative views is provided in Edward N. Peterson, “The Occupation as Perceived by the Public, Scholars, and Policy Makers”, in: Wolfe, Americans as Proconsuls, 418-419; Harold Zink, American Military Government in Germany (New York 1947); Harold Zink, The United States in Germany, 1944-1955 (Princeton 1957).

The same is true for Japan, were despite successful social, economic and political change, it was eventually the Korean War that kick-started the revival of Japan.