

**“STRIKING AT THE ROOTS OF GERMAN MILITARISM”:  
EFFORTS TO DEMILITARIZE GERMAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN  
AMERICAN-OCCUPIED WÜRTTEMBERG-BADEN, 1945-1949**

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### **ABSTRACT**

KATHLEEN J. NAWYN: "Striking at the Roots of German Militarism": Efforts to Demilitarize German Society and Culture in American-Occupied Württemberg-Baden, 1945-1949  
(Under the direction of Konrad H. Jarausch)

Most scholars interested in cultural change in western Germany after World War II have focused on the issue of "democratization." This dissertation looks instead at social and cultural "demilitarization," examining efforts initiated by the Americans during their postwar occupation aimed at eliminating the sources and symptoms of militarism from German society and culture in hopes of preventing another war. Ultimately, it argues that, by late 1949, life in the state of Württemberg-Baden was characterized far less by militarism than by "civilianism" and maintains that this transformation was neither solely a spontaneous German reaction to the horrors of war, nor an unchallenged development. Rather, despite troublesome flaws in their thinking and sometimes inconsistently applied regulations, the Americans perceptibly influenced the character and parameters of tangible change. In addition to making concrete demands, such as requiring the removal of militaristic books from libraries, they monitored personnel appointments and policed German educational and youth programs, thereby preserving the public sphere for sympathetic native voices and enabling and nurturing a discourse condemning war and militarism. At the same time, American efforts were facilitated and strengthened by the many Germans who also wished to see "German militarism" eradicated, even when they did not always agree with their occupiers regarding methods or exact objectives. Although social and cultural demilitarization as a basic goal was widely supported by the Germans, its nature and extent remained contested throughout the occupation, with individual views determined in part by concerns regarding the time and costs involved in making substantive changes and in part by personal beliefs regarding Germany's past and the causes of the country's recent descent into war.

In memory of William E. Nawyn

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACA	Allied Control Authority
ACC	Allied Control Council
<i>ASkS</i>	<i>Amtsblatt für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart</i>
<i>AU</i>	<i>Amtsblatt der Stadt Ulm und des Landkreises Ulm</i>
BICO	Bipartite Control Office
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
CORC	ACA Coordinating Committee
<i>BNN</i>	<i>Badische Neueste Nachrichten</i>
DIAC	ACA Internal Affairs and Communications Directorate
<i>DJW</i>	<i>Das junge Wort</i>
DMIL	ACA Military Directorate
DOCS	ACA Combined Services Directorate
DPOL	ACA Political Directorate
DTA	Deutsches Tagebucharchiv
EAC	European Advisory Commission
E&CR	Education and Cultural Relations
FDRL	Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
GLA	Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe
HStA	Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart
IAC	Internal Affairs and Communications
ICG	Interdivisional Committee on Germany
ICD	Information Control Division
IPCOG	Informal Policy Committee on Germany
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
LDAK	Landesdenkmalamt, Aussenstelle Karlsruhe
LoC-MD	Library of Congress Manuscript Division

MG	Military Government
NA	U.S. National Archives
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>NYTM</i>	<i>New York Times Magazine</i>
OMGUS	Office of Military Government (U.S.)
OMGWB	Office of Military Government Württemberg-Baden
RG	Record Group
<i>RNZ</i>	<i>Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung</i>
<i>SDZ</i>	<i>Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung</i>
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force
StAH	Stadtarchiv Heidelberg
StAK	Stadtarchiv Karlsruhe
StAL	Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg
StAS	Stadtarchiv Stuttgart
StAU	Stadtarchiv Ulm
<i>SZ</i>	<i>Stuttgarter Zeitung</i>
USGCC	U.S. Group Control Council
WSC	Working Security Committee

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Bracing themselves against the sides of the trucks, the men looked out blankly as the convoy grumbled, hissed, and wheezed its way through the narrow streets of yet another south German village. Ahead, a black automobile led the noisy procession, its uniformed occupants sitting silent and unmoving, their hands folded, chins up, shoulders back, boots polished, and pistols holstered. Defeat in Italy at Allied hands was now far behind; prisoner-of-war cages awaited further to the west. In the meantime, Wehrmacht military discipline prevailed. Rounding the corner, the vehicles paused briefly as an MP cleared the way, motioning the women and children in front of the shops away from the edge of the road. The men in trucks strained to see the cause of the delay, then adjusted frayed collars, smoothed stained shirtsleeves, and began to wave. On both sides of the street, those assembled waved back, accompanying the flurry of handkerchiefs with a shower of rose, daisy, and iris bouquets.

Watching this scene and others like it in late May 1945, *New York Times* correspondent Raymond Daniell was less than impressed. He later recounted his observations of Germany's "bedraggled" enlisted men and their "neatly pressed" officers who "stare[d] arrogantly" and complained, "It is quite clear from the attitude of the people, that, whatever they think of Hitler and nazism, the German Army is still the idol of the countryside." Frustrated that Allied regulations permitted scenes like these, Daniell also recalled the previous evening when men in a large convey had been singing as they moved slowly through a city at dusk. "Several hundred voices were raised, incongruously but defiantly, in singing "*Wir Fahren Gegen Engelland*" [We Go Against England]. To a casual visitor unacquainted with recent events," he added, "it would be hard to tell from outward appearances who had won the war."<sup>1</sup>

For Daniell, it seemed self-explanatory that Germans would idolize soldiers, disheveled and dirty though they might be. He intimated, too, that the stereotypically haughty German officers were not only still

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Daniell, "Germans Hail Own Army," *New York Times* [NYT], 28 May 45.

impeccably dressed, but also somehow refusing to take responsibility for the defeat of the dirty and disheveled men who accompanied them. Critical of persistent German military trappings and protocol, Daniell nevertheless seemed to concede that the German soldiers were proceeding in an orderly and obedient, if defiant, fashion. Wehrmacht discipline might be dangerous, but it was also effective. If all of this was true, moreover, it was vitally important that the Germans be reminded exactly who had just defeated whom. The handkerchiefs must be stilled, the officers humbled, and the Germans made subject to the victors. If the Germans could be soundly defeated and still hold their noses high and worship the uniform, there were presumably more serious problems to correct as well.

### **The Problem**

Clearly, fluttering handkerchiefs and daisy nosegays are not incontrovertible proof of unhealthy hero-worship and may simply have reflected German affection for long-absent fathers, sons, and husbands. And suspect American policies undoubtedly had less to do with inadequate military attention to residual German delusions of victory than with the sudden and overwhelming need to transport and control several million German soldiers.<sup>2</sup> Yet Daniell's observations are instructive, for they reveal certain basic assumptions about the German people and an interpretation of what he was seeing that was rooted in beliefs shared by many Americans.

For the second time in less than 30 years, the United States had helped to achieve a decisive victory in Europe after being drawn into a military conflagration that was not of its own choosing, nor of its own making. Blaming Germany for foolishly and arrogantly instigating both world wars, many Americans sought the origins of this bellicosity in a past that stretched beyond Adolf Hitler. For some, this search led to the German Empire or to Frederick the Great's Prussia; for other less historically grounded observers, the wellspring of German militarism lay in the murky reaches of early Germanic history. Regardless of its starting point, the history of German militarism had culminated in the Third Reich. America's enemies were inveterate militarists,

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<sup>2</sup> In the weeks immediately following Germany's surrender on May 8, 1945, American forces had in their custody more than 3 million German prisoners of war and disarmed troops. Between the surrender and mid July 1945, U.S. troops handled some 7.7 million German military personnel "including *Volkssturm* and other paramilitary groups, camp followers, and prisoners returned from Norway, Italy, and camps in the United States and England." Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944-1946* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1975), 291n60, 291.

congenitally or culturally prone to regimentation, obedience, and war. Born to goose-step, they were excessively deferential to soldiers, too proud of their army machine, and overly influenced by their military.<sup>3</sup>

Expressed with varying degrees of firmness, virulence, and condemnation, these ideas held widespread currency. More importantly for Germany, most influential American policymakers shared them, either in part or in full, and worried about what they meant for the world's future. How to prevent Germany from launching a third world war became a fundamental concern of American postwar planning. And the role that German militarism played in the thinking of the United States and its Allies was no secret. "When Hitler and the Nazis go out," President Franklin D. Roosevelt told the U. S. Congress in September 1943, "the Prussian military clique must go with them. The war-breeding gangs of militarists must be rooted out of Germany—and out of Japan—if we are to have any real assurance of future peace. . . ."<sup>4</sup> Eighteen months later, just two months before the war's end, he reported to Congress on Allied discussions at Yalta, emphasizing the Allies' commitment to Germany's unconditional surrender. Unconditional surrender, he stressed, meant "the termination of all militaristic influence in the public, private, and cultural life of Germany." It meant total disarmament, the end of weapons production, the dissolution of the armed forces, and "the permanent disbandment of the German General Staff which has so often shattered the peace of the world."<sup>5</sup>

The preservation of world peace thus required not only demobilizing Germany's Wehrmacht and dismantling its munitions factories, but also destroying the militarism pervading all of German life. And eliminating the military's revered position in German society and excising militarism from German culture became key objectives of U.S occupation policy. Regulations accordingly deprived officers of their pensions, banned unauthorized parades, prohibited the flying of German flags, and outlawed the wearing of Wehrmacht gray uniforms, while mandating the removal of war-glorifying monuments, the confiscation of militaristic books, and the disbanding of sports clubs. American officials left no symptom or potential source of militarism untouched.

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<sup>3</sup> For typical expressions of these attitudes, see Lawson G. Lowrey, "To Make the Germans Men of Peace," *New York Times Magazine* [NYTM], 17 Jun 45, and Letters to the Editor, *NYT*, 25 Aug 46. Raymond Daniell was a particularly loud critic of the Germans in this regard. See, for example, "'At Our Knees—Or at Our Throats,'" *NYTM*, 27 May 45, and "Speed of Demobilization Adds to German Problem," *NYTM*, 21 Oct 45.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Occupation of Germany: Policy and Progress, 1945-1946* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1947), 2.

<sup>5</sup> Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, Vol. 13, *Victory and the Threshold of Peace* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 575.

The breadth of American concerns meant that demilitarization measures interfered in some way with myriad aspects of German everyday life. Teachers, mayors, librarians, journalists, policemen, coaches, veterans, and housewives faced military government rules that influenced what they taught, what they wrote, what they wore, and what they did. German local and *Land* (state) officials almost immediately received responsibility for publicizing, implementing, and enforcing military government instructions, while also providing feedback and, on occasion, voicing demands of their own. At the same time, German voices, often calling from the left of the political spectrum, proffered their own critique of Germany's militaristic past and pleaded for and planned initiatives to address problems they identified.

Significantly, already by the early 1950s the Germans seemed to have evolved from dangerously aggressive targets of American demilitarization policies into stubbornly resistant opponents of West German rearmament. In fact, the striking aspect of the rearmament debate was not that the Germans could not rearm because their generals were selling stationery and their machine tools were humming in the Urals, but rather that when the question of rearmament arose, most Germans did not *want* to rearm. More importantly, it is now apparent that there was a permanent shift in German attitudes toward war and the military during the middle of the twentieth century. Looking at the Federal Republic of Germany's postwar defense and security policies, as well as at the political culture that birthed, nurtured, and shaped them, political scientist Thomas Berger has gone so far as to assert that West Germany developed a "culture of antimilitarism."<sup>6</sup>

Yet even scholars who have taken note of this change have asked very few questions about the influence of American social and cultural demilitarization measures.<sup>7</sup> In truth, they have asked very few questions about social and cultural demilitarization as a whole, neglecting not only the American program's scope and significance, but the sometimes strongly expressed opinions of the Germans as well.

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), x.

<sup>7</sup> Berger, for instance, points to the "strong antimilitarist sentiments"—"strictly at odds with" Germany's "martial traditions"—that appeared in Germany after its World War II defeat and notes that not only did they "fundamentally reshap[e]" German military and security policies immediately after the war but they were "institutionalized." Despite changes over time in the Federal Republic's "culture of antimilitarism," he argues, the "core principles remained much the same as they were in the 1950s and 1960s." However, he offers only a superficial historical analysis of the years when these principles were presumably solidified. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*, x, 22-37.

## Historiography

This is not to say scholars have entirely ignored social and cultural demilitarization efforts in occupied Germany. Political and general policy histories of the American occupation always point to the eradication of German militarism as an essential goal and sometimes describe one or more initiatives undertaken to demilitarize “the German mind.” But this is not their primary concern, nor even a major secondary concern. Studies of this genre that do address demilitarization at length usually concentrate on its economic aspects, including decartelization, reparations policies, and the dismantling of munitions-related industries, partly because disagreements over Germany’s economic future drove important debates in the U.S. between “hard” and “soft” peace advocates and also strained Allied relationships.<sup>8</sup>

A related group of works examines demilitarization in connection with the western Allies’ decision to rearm West Germany in the early 1950s. In this context, social and cultural measures are treated in greater detail, if still briefly and superficially. Gerhard Wettig, for example, suggests that the Allies sought to transfer the Germans to a new spiritual world where war had no place, treating the German people as a dangerous predator which not only should be kept from hunting, but also must forget that it had ever hunted before.<sup>9</sup> David Clay Large summarizes Allied policies and underscores some of the difficulties they confronted. Where, for instance, might one “draw the line between militarism and the propagation of widely cherished martial

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<sup>8</sup> Studies in this genre include Lucius D. Clay’s early personal account, *Decision in Germany* (Melbourne: William Heinemann Ltd., 1950), John Gimbel’s classic study, *The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945-1949* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), and Earl F. Ziemke’s examination of U.S. Army occupation policy and operations, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*. More recently, see, for example, Carolyn Woods Eisenberg, *Drawing the line: The American decision to divide Germany, 1944-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Klaus-Dietmar Henke, *Die amerikanische Besetzung Deutschlands* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1995); Wolfgang Krieger, *General Lucius D. Clay und die amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik, 1945-1949* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987). On deindustrialization and decartelization see, for example, S. Jonathan Wiesen, *West German Industry and the Challenge of the Nazi Past, 1945-1955* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Wilfried Mausbach, *Zwischen Morgenthau und Marshall: Das wirtschaftspolitische Deutschlandskonzept der USA, 1944-47* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1996); Raymond G. Stokes, *Divide and Prosper: The Heirs of I.G. Farben under Allied Authority, 1945-1951* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Volker R. Berghahn, *The Americanization of West German Industry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

<sup>9</sup> Gerhard Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung in Deutschland, 1943-1955* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1967), 105-106.



values such as obedience, discipline, comradeship, and self-sacrifice?”<sup>10</sup> The principal focus of these works, however, also lies elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

A third set of studies deals with the position of former soldiers in western Germany after the war. In this context, Bert-Oliver Manig, James Diehl, and Jay Lockenour directly address Allied attempts to wipe out militarism. Manig and Diehl evaluate the political activities of veterans during the late 1940s and early 1950s as they reacted to Allied regulations that not only stripped them of their decorations but also of their pensions, social standing, and right to organize.<sup>12</sup> Lockenour considers former officers’ integration into and gradual acceptance of the new democratic West Germany, despite what they considered to be ill treatment—and unwarranted accusations of militarism—by both Allied occupation authorities and their own countrymen.<sup>13</sup> In a complementary approach, Jörg Echternkamp examines public perceptions of the Wehrmacht during the occupation by analyzing the content of contemporary, American-licensed newspapers that show the conscious attempt of editors to reeducate the German people away from Nazism and militarism and offer evidence of popular engagement with the legacy of the Wehrmacht.<sup>14</sup>

Interestingly, Lockenour briefly alludes to the effect measures aimed at veterans had on the German people as a whole, noting, too, that Germans regularly wrote to newspaper editors attacking former officers who complained about their own situation, in part reacting to the formerly privileged status of these men and in part blaming them for defeat and hardship. But opinion polls also continued to report a high regard for the military, a development he suggests resulted from the fact that most Germans had family members who had

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<sup>10</sup> David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 18.

<sup>11</sup> Other works examining various facets of demilitarization and rearmament include Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003); David Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross: The Search for Tradition in the West German Armed Forces* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); Alexander Fischer, *Entmilitarisierung und Aufrüstung in Mitteleuropa 1945-1956* (Herford: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1983); Roland Foerster, ed., *Von der Kapitulation bis zum Plevan Plan*, vol. I of *Anfänge westdeutscher Sicherheitspolitik, 1945-1956*, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1982).

<sup>12</sup> Bert-Oliver Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre: Die Rehabilitierung der Berufssoldaten in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Hamburg: Wallstein Verlag, 2004); James M. Diehl, *The Thanks of the Fatherland: German Veterans after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

<sup>13</sup> Jay Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945-1955* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> Jörg Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht? Vom Bild der deutschen Soldaten in der unmittelbaren Nachkriegszeit,” in *Die Wehrmacht: Mythos oder Realität*, ed. Klaus-Jürgen Müller and Hans-Erich Volkmann (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999), 1059-1060.

served in the Wehrmacht.<sup>15</sup> Echternkamp, on the other hand, deliberately moves beyond an examination of former soldiers themselves to look at the little-studied relationship between the armed forces and the German postwar public. He contends that reports concerning war crimes trials put military involvement in some of the most egregious crimes of the Third Reich at center stage, while other articles, editorials, and letters complained about Wehrmacht culpability for both prolonging a lost war and increasing its casualties and illuminated the degree to which the German public condemned Wehrmacht leaders for their cowardly capitulation to Hitler and the Nazi ideological program. Yet competing arguments were emerging, too, including those that absolved many soldiers of the taint of Nazism and focused on ideas of honor that transcended military defeat and conceptions of apolitical duty that excused inaction.<sup>16</sup> Taken together, Manig, Diehl, Lockenour, Echternkamp, and others illuminate certain facets of the postwar demilitarization program and raise issues that warrant deeper exploration.<sup>17</sup> However, not only is militarism not their central concern, but former military men constituted just one segment of a society that was accused, en bloc, of militarism.

A fourth category of studies is much less interested in soldiers specifically than in the breadth of German society and culture, analyzing American efforts to “reorient” German attitudes and political behavior by eliminating Nazism and militarism and instilling tolerance, individual initiative, and democratic values.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 24-27.

<sup>16</sup> Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht.”

<sup>17</sup> Recently Frank Biess has also explored the relationship between the German people and the Wehrmacht in the immediate postwar years, examining communal narratives regarding returning soldiers. He does not consider the issue of militarism, however, and much of his focus is on the British Zone. *Homecomings: Returning POWs and the Legacies of Defeat in Postwar Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). On the fate of soldiers in postwar western Germany, see also Traugott Wulfhorst, “Der ‘Dank des Vaterlandes’ – Sozialpolitik und –verwaltung zur Integration ehemaliger Wehrmachtsoldaten und ihrer Hinterbliebenen” in Müller and Volkmann, *Die Wehrmacht*, 1037-1057; Wolfram Wette, “Die deutsche militärische Führungsschicht in den Nachkriegszeiten,” in *Lernen aus dem Krieg? Deutsche Nachkriegszeiten 1918 und 1945*, ed. Gottfried Niedhart and Dieter Riesenberger (Munich: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1992), 39-66; Arthur L. Smith, *Heimkehr aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg: Die Entlassung der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1985); Georg Meyer, “Soldaten ohne Armee,” in *Von Stalingrad zur Währungsreform: Zur Sozialgeschichte des Umbruchs in Deutschland*, ed. Martin Broszat, Klaus-Dietmar Henke, and Hans Woller (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1988), 683-750; Georg Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht im Vorfeld des westdeutschen Verteidigungsbeitrages, 1945-1950/51,” in Förster, *Von der Kapitulation bis zum Plevan Plan*, 577-735.

<sup>18</sup> An important early study of this type is James F. Tent’s *Mission on the Rhine: Reeducation in American-Occupied Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). Among other more recent examples, see David Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Birgit Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn in Heidelberg und Mannheim 1945-1949* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 2000); Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999); Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Karl-Heinz Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen: Jugend und Schule unter den Siegermächten des Zweiten*

Margaret F. Stieg and Jennifer Fay, for instance, offer details concerning programs in which notable social and cultural demilitarization initiatives were imbedded. Stieg describes Allied efforts to remove public library books infected with Nazism and militarism and notes that German officials often struggled with understanding what should be viewed as “militaristic.”<sup>19</sup> Fay draws attention to the gap between, on one hand, American intentions and expectations and, on the other, German reactions to the various films distributed by U.S. officials for German consumption. American authorities, for example, assumed that Germans would identify with the defeated German troops in American war movies; instead, the films were particularly popular with “militaristic German youth.”<sup>20</sup>

While highlighting the value of additional inquiry into American activities in occupied Germany, these works are ultimately concerned with the “democratization” aspects of the American reorientation program, i.e., how occupation officials fostered political democracy and new civic attitudes, and provide only limited analysis of American concerns about militarism. Certainly, those components of the social and cultural demilitarization program which condemned excessive military influence on the state and tried to reduce automatic obedience to uniformed officers helped encourage democratic thinking, but these and other measures, such as the removal of militaristic street signs, also sought to promote peace more directly. Similarly, although regulations designed to purge National Socialist ideology from German life and remove Nazis from positions of authority typically included “militarism” and “militarists” in their official scopes, most studies of these initiatives discuss only the denazification aspects of the regulations, or blur the two categories into one group.<sup>21</sup> Even if Nazi civilian authorities encouraged or embodied German militarism and, especially after 1938, had effectively negated the independence of the Wehrmacht, Allied officials plainly did not see one category entirely subsumed within the

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*Weltkriegs, 1945-1955* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1994); Hermann-Josef Rupieper, *Die Wurzeln der westdeutschen Nachkriegsdemokratie: Der amerikanische Beitrag 1945-1952* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> Margaret F. Stieg, “The Postwar Purge of German Public Libraries, Democracy, and the American Reaction,” *Libraries and Culture* 28, No. 2 (Spring 1993): 143-164. Stieg covers all four occupation zones in her short study. Her footnotes suggest, further, that her research regarding the American zone concentrated almost exclusively on Bavaria.

<sup>20</sup> Jennifer Fay, “Constructing America for German Reconstruction: American Films and Re-education in Occupied Germany, 1945-1947,” *Southern Quarterly* 39, No. 4 (2000): 87-100.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Lutz Niethammer’s classic *Entnazifizierung in Bayern: Säuberung und Rehabilitierung unter amerikanischer Besatzung* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1972) and two more recent studies: Angela Borgstedt, *Entnazifizierung in Karlsruhe 1946 bis 1951* (Constance: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 2001) and Steven P. Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth: The Nazification and Denazification of a German University* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

other. Nor, it might be added, did German officers, who were often quick to distinguish themselves from the Nazis, both before and after the war. For all of these reasons the “militarism” component of these efforts deserves more careful study.

Finally, scholars studying women’s experiences and changes in gender relations during the 1940s and 1950s have noted that in postwar Germany the influence of the military on the formation of German gender roles and identities was greatly reduced. During World War II, German women necessarily took on new responsibilities in and outside of the home when German men left for the Wehrmacht and, sometimes, failed to return. After Germany’s surrender, they mastered challenges such as feeding and clothing their families in the midst of chaos and shortages. Even the return of male relatives did not always change this situation, research has shown, as the returnees were often physically, psychologically, or practically ill-equipped to deal with the disorganized economic system and changed social landscape of postwar Germany. With women also noticeably outnumbering men because of wartime casualties and postwar captivity, occupied Germany was, in the words of one observer, a “country of women.”<sup>22</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, some historians have also pointed to a corollary of these developments. The demonstrated survival capabilities of German women tended to make German men appear that much weaker, particularly when they might also be physically or psychologically broken after years of fighting, sometimes did little to help support their families, and suffered from the perception that they had not lived up to their masculine duties when they failed to protect and provide for their wives and children. During the immediate postwar years, Heide Fehrenbach has suggested, there was a “crisis of masculinity.”<sup>23</sup>

In light of these circumstances, scholars have asked how the Germans coped with the muddling of the traditional gender order and how they reconstructed—or reconfigured—gender roles and relationships during the early years of the Federal Republic. Especially significant, they stress, was the emphasis most Germans placed on reestablishing the German family as a foundational element of society, an emphasis that had broad repercussions. Robert Moeller, for instance, has observed that although German women received equal political

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar West Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 2. There are a great number of studies addressing the history of women in both Germanies during the postwar era. For an introduction to the experiences of women in occupied Germany, see Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*, 8-37; Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 75-136.

<sup>23</sup> Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany*, 92-117; Robert G. Moeller, “The ‘Remasculinization’ of Germany in the 1950s: Introduction,” *Signs* 24, No. 1 (1998): 102.

rights in recognition of their wartime and postwar accomplishments, they were also prodded or pushed back into the bosom of their families.<sup>24</sup> Historians have likewise cited the importance of the postwar exaltation of the family for understanding Germany's transition from a "total war" to a "postwar" society. Families, and the women who sustained them, were expected to assist in Germany's recovery from the war by helping to integrate returning soldiers into a new, still evolving civil society.<sup>25</sup> More recently, scholars have also begun examining the position of men in early postwar Germany, considering new conceptions of masculinity that arose in the wake of war and occupation and under the influence of American popular culture.<sup>26</sup> Both Moeller and Frank Biess, for example, have analyzed German responses in the 1950s to the survivors of years of captivity in the Soviet Union and argue that, by this time, the dominant militarized masculinities of the first half of the twentieth century and the damaged masculinities of the immediate postwar period had both been replaced in part by new prescriptive ideals of manhood that presented German men as morally strong, devoted family men. They also identify these ideas as consistent with the rearming Federal Republic's new benign military ideals. "Unlike the militarized and overtly aggressive masculinities of the Nazi years, the emphasis on returning POWs as fathers and husbands highlighted their identity as civilians," writes Biess. "West German responses to returning POWs thus signaled a significant break with a thirty-year process of militarization during which male identities had primarily rested on their functions as soldiers. . . . These tamed masculinities then corresponded precisely to the tamed militarism of the new West German army and its ideal soldier as the 'citizen in uniform.'"<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*.

<sup>25</sup> Karen Hagemann, "Home/Front: The Military, Violence and Gender Relations in the Age of the World Wars," in *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 29.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Frank Biess, "Survivors of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Reconstruction of Masculine Citizenship in West Germany, 1945-1955," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*, ed. Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 63-72; Biess, *Homecomings*; Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Uta G. Poiger, "A New, 'Western' Hero? Reconstructing German Masculinity in the 1950s," *Signs* 24, No. 1 (1998): 147-162; Robert G. Moeller, "'The Last Soldiers of the Great War' and Tales of Family Reunion in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Signs* 24, No. 1 (1998): 129-145; Heide Fehrenbach, "Rehabilitating the Fatherland: Race and German Remasculinization," *Signs* 24, No. 1 (1998): 107-127; Kasper Maase, *Bravo Amerika: Erkundungen zur Jugendkultur der Bundesrepublik in den fünfziger Jahren* (Hamburg: Junius, 1992).

<sup>27</sup> Biess, "Survivors of Totalitarianism," 72; Frank Biess, "Men of Reconstruction – The Reconstruction of Men: Returning POWs in East and West Germany, 1945-1955," in Hagemann and Schüler-Springorum, *Home/Front*, 335-358; Moeller, "'The Last Soldiers of the Great War.'"

Scholars interested in these questions have not yet turned their attention to the ways in which the Allies *intentionally* attempted to alter German attitudes toward soldiers and military service, however. While the Americans did not consciously set out to change German ideals of masculinity, the dominant conception of masculinity during the interwar war period—a uniformed, militarized masculinity—was sure to be undermined by a program that explicitly banned the wearing of uniforms, the glorifying of war, and the idolization of the soldier hero. If German wartime and postwar experiences ultimately led to a redefinition of what it meant to be a German man, the deliberate intervention of the Americans during the occupation years may have assisted in creating an environment that would be receptive to this development, might well have encouraged it, and perhaps even made it necessary. What implications did it have for German society, for example, if military government regulations stipulated that youth programs for teenage boys might no longer involve military style uniforms, shooting practice, and drill?

Overall, the lack of scholarly attention to Allied demilitarization initiatives may be explained in part by the fact that Germany appeared to change relatively quickly and painlessly after the war. Scholars often implicitly or explicitly attribute this development to the sheer horror and destructiveness of World War II itself: millions killed, injured, or maimed; hundreds of thousands of people having lived for months in fear of Allied bombs and eventually invasion; entire cities gutted and left in ruins; and streams of refugees overwhelming welfare agencies and housing capacity. “In the face of the resulting hatred of war, [military government] laws were inconsequential,” writes one historian.<sup>28</sup> “During the immediate postwar years, the war experience and, in particular, the shock of the extreme violence of 1944 and 1945 led to a radical shift in German mentalities. A fundamental tenet of Nazism—the belief in the virtue of war, of the military and military values—had been dealt a severe blow,” writes another.<sup>29</sup> Evaluating the occupation as a military operation, another historian criticizes the objective the Americans set for the occupation, that of preventing Germany from again threatening world peace. This goal, he notes, was “admirably suited to preventing a repetition of the 1920s and 1930s but

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<sup>28</sup> Edward N. Peterson, *The American Occupation of Germany: Retreat to Victory* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 138.

<sup>29</sup> Richard Bessel, *Nazism and War* (New York: Modern Library, 2004), 200.

inadequate to meet the situation of the late 1940s. . . . The Germans did not have to be shown the consequences of defeat, and after 1945, Germany was not likely again to rank as a major threat to world peace.”<sup>30</sup>

Based on this reading of the past, the American program to eradicate German militarism was unnecessary. If the war demilitarized the Germans, then there was little reason for the United States—or anyone else—to undertake this task, and the many military government regulations were superfluous, excessive, and likely without impact. At the very least, the American measures probably generated little controversy. As one of these scholars puts it, “Demilitarization was welcomed by most, resisted by none.”<sup>31</sup> And a presumed lack of controversy may well have led to a corresponding lack of scholarly interest.

But did the war alone demilitarize Germany and the Germans? Or were there ways American initiatives contributed to this process? If so, how and to what extent? Similarly, was there, in fact, little resistance to American demilitarization measures? In reality, many contemporary American policymakers assumed the Germans would have little taste for another war in the immediate aftermath of World War II, but they were also committed to solving the German problem in the long term. And in the mid 1940s a radical change in German attitudes and beliefs was not yet obvious, nor was this assumed to be inevitable. To many Americans, the 1920s and 1930s had proven such a supposition to be foolhardy. While it may be difficult to determine what influences most shaped postwar changes, the clear shift in German culture during the mid twentieth century, with its possible implications for other militarized societies, begs for closer scrutiny.

### **Conceptual Approach**

Fashioning a history of postwar social and cultural demilitarization in American-occupied Germany requires consideration of a series of interrelated questions. As a starting point we must ask about the motives and assumptions of American policymakers and how these shaped concrete policies. How, for example, did they distinguish between “militarism” and “patriotism” or between the function of a military in a democracy and its role in an autocratic state? Exploring the relationship between American officials and their German counterparts and determining how they together implemented U.S. policies in Germany is also key. Were German officials cooperative or obstructionist? Did any opinions they expressed result in changes in U.S.

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<sup>30</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 445.

<sup>31</sup> Peterson, *Retreat to Victory*, 138.

policy? And how did American occupation authorities posted in German communities interact with German administrators? German perceptions of American efforts are of interest as well. Did they experience these actions as an attack on an integral component of their own identity, for instance, or as an annoyance that effectively put the finishing touches on a process that was already largely complete? To what extent did the German people themselves engage in a conversation regarding militarism? To what extent did they act independently to demilitarize their physical surroundings and social structures? And, finally, can we see evidence of a new or nascent “culture of antimilitarism” already in 1949?

American demilitarization goals and policies clearly form the springboard for this study and in many respects frame its organization. But in this instance investigating American policy formulation and implementation does not lead into diplomatic arenas or national political forums but rather into German society and culture, to the activities and attitudes of local officials and the German reading and writing public and to changes in the landscape of German education, material culture, and associational life. It thus illuminates the intersection of geopolitical policy and grassroots experience—and the sometimes porous boundaries between political, military, social, and cultural history. As a whole, this study therefore falls within a growing body of literature that has expanded our understanding of the occupation period to include actors and influences with no role in the high level diplomacy and policy deliberations that remained the focal point of German and American historical scholarship into the 1980s. In particular, it follows the lead of Hermann-Josef Rupieper, Richard Merritt, and others who have analyzed the occupation from the perspective of ordinary Germans, scrutinized the relationship between local American and German authorities, and asked how—and how successfully—cultural values were transmitted from victor to vanquished.<sup>32</sup> Adding texture to our understanding of the ruptures and continuities of 1945 and the relative influence of America on Germany’s postwar transformation, it also offers insights into the dynamics at work when outsiders deliberately attempt to reconstruct and reshape the culture of other nations following periods of war and societal collapse.

By cutting across national borders to look at both American and German attitudes and activities—and at those which were shared—an examination of social and cultural demilitarization contributes to the rapidly

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Rupieper, *Die Wurzeln der westdeutschen Nachkriegsdemokratie*; Richard L. Merritt, *Democracy Imposed: U.S. Occupation Policy and the German Public, 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Josef Foshepoth, “German Reaction to Defeat and Occupation,” in *West Germany under Construction: Politics, Society, and Culture in the Adenauer Era*, ed. Robert G. Moeller (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); and Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible*.



fermenting field of transnational history as well.<sup>33</sup> Rather than regarding German demilitarization solely as an American national project, or considering it only as an occupation policy imposed on the Germans from above by hostile occupiers, this study explicitly approaches demilitarization as an interactive enterprise. The American effort was built on national ideals; American policymakers possessed a well-defined sense of national self and intentionally sought to eradicate negative characteristics they associated specifically with the German nation. Yet not only did American occupation authorities need to rely on Germans to implement their directives, there were Germans who themselves had long criticized “Prussian militarism.” The Americans’ power and authority gave them greater influence in the relationship, but the demilitarization program cannot be understood without recognizing it as a project shaped by dialogue and often strengthened by mutual goals.

Acknowledging this also underscores the importance of rejecting ideas of American “cultural imperialism” in favor of an understanding of the international role of the United States that recognizes the ways other societies adopt, reject, or manipulate elements of American culture they encounter.<sup>34</sup> On the whole, however, concepts such as “Americanization” or “westernization” are less applicable in a situation where the cultural change involved did not have as its primary objective the recreation of Germany in the image of America or existing western liberal democracies. In 1945, the Americans did hold a distinctive notion of what an army’s role in society should be. Where Germany’s military historically had dominated state and society in many ways, the United States had resisted military intrusions into civilian affairs and, as U.S. Military Governor Lieutenant General Lucius Clay once observed with reference to military training at West Point, had sought to instill in its soldiers both a “high standard of military conduct” and a “deep faith in democratic ideals.”<sup>35</sup> But

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<sup>33</sup>For an introduction to recent discussions regarding transnational history, see “AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,” *American Historical Review* 111, No. 5 (2006): 1440-1464; Akira Iriye, “Transnational History,” *Contemporary European History* 13, No. 2 (2004): 211-222; Helmut Walser Smith, “For a Differently Centered Central European History: Reflections on Jürgen Osterhammel, *Geschichtswissenschaft Jenseits des Nationalstaats*,” *Central European History* 37, No. 1 (2004): 115-136; Thomas Bender, *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Jürgen Osterhammel, “Transnationale Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Erweiterung oder Alternative,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27, No. 3 (2001): 464-479; David Thelen, “The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History,” *Journal of American History* 86, No. 3 (December 1999): 965-975; and the online journal *history.transnational*.

<sup>34</sup> On the subject of cultural transmission, see Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, “Shame on US? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War—A Critical Review,” *Diplomatic History* 24, No. 3 (2000), 465-494; Heide Fehrenbach and Uta G. Poiger, *Transactions, Transgressions, Transformations: American Culture in Western Europe and Japan* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), xii-xxxvii.

<sup>35</sup> To Colonel Allen, 15 Dec 45, U.S. National Archives [NA], Record Group [RG] 260, Office of Military Government-U.S. [OMGUS], Education and Cultural Relations Division [E&CR Division], Box 225, F: Flags. For a helpful overview of the history of civil-military relations in the United States, see Russell F. Weigley, “The American Civil-Military Cultural Gap:

American diagnoses of German character led U.S. officials to demand a degree of demilitarization in Germany much greater than that found in the United States itself. Rather than merely restraining the German military's influence on society and politics, the Americans chose to abolish the military altogether. Martial anthems, war-oriented museum exhibits, and other fixtures of daily life in America were likewise deemed unacceptable in Germany. In short, the Americans attempted to create something entirely different, a society that resembled neither that of the United States nor its European allies.

### *Dealing with "Militarism"*

Recognizing that historically the role of the military in Germany was very different than in the United States serves as an appropriate point of departure for examining the larger problem of "militarism" as a concept. A firm definition of "militarism" is difficult to isolate, as one of the concept's distinguishing characteristics is its malleability. Volker Berghahn also rightly observes that defining the term is complicated by the fact that "militarism is and always has been a word of political propaganda and polemic."<sup>36</sup> During the last half century, militarism has attracted the attention of scholars in a range of disciplines who have explored the meaning and influence of the "military-industrial complex," demarcated the features of militarism in the developing world, and questioned the relationship between militarism and patriarchal structures.<sup>37</sup> But if early conceptions of militarism and claims regarding its influence were not as varied as these, wartime critics of German militarism were hardly wielding a term that held a fixed meaning.

In his study *Militarism: The History of an International Debate*, Berghahn provides a helpful introduction to significant developments in the evolution of thinking concerning militarism. First used by Pierre Proudhon in the 1860s, the term bore a wealth of associations from the very start. But within the space of several decades, Berghahn suggests, two key lines of reasoning were evident among the multiple assessments of "military organization and its effect upon civilian society." On one hand were "those analysts who saw it in a

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A Historical Perspective, Colonial Times to the Present," in *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*, ed. Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 215-246.

<sup>36</sup> Volker Berghahn, *Militarism: The History of an International Debate, 1861-1979* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 2.

<sup>37</sup> Ulrich Albrecht, "Der preussisch-deutsch Militarismus als Prototyp—Aspekte der internationalen wissenschaftlichen Diskussion," in *Militarismus in Deutschland 1871 bis 1945: Zeitgenössische Analysen und Kritik*, ed. Wolfram Wette (Münster: Lit, 1999), 41-46.

political and constitutional framework,” criticizing, in particular, excessive military influence on civilian governing institutions which they believed impeded the growth of representative governance; on the other were “those who examined it as a socio-economic problem,” disapproving, for example, of what they perceived as an increasingly militarized civil society in imperial Germany resulting from the introduction of universal conscription.<sup>38</sup>

By the start of World War I, Marxists had come to agree that militarism was a natural outgrowth of a capitalist system, with militaries employed as instruments of working class oppression at home and imperialistic expansion abroad, perpetuating the increasing accumulation of capitalist wealth.<sup>39</sup> Among those of other political persuasions, however, interpretations of militarism continued to vary. Where the British, French, and Americans characterized their war effort as a fight to protect parliamentary government against German militarism, which they saw as a negative product of lesser, backward social and political systems, many Germans conceived of the war as a great battle between inferior, materialistic, democratic western “civilization” and highly developed, spiritually engaged German *Kultur*, with German military prowess increasingly viewed as a vital element of this *Kultur*. Militarism in this context carried distinctly positive overtones.<sup>40</sup>

Following the war, pacifist voices grew louder among both the victors and the defeated. But if the western critique changed little, the situation in beaten and resentful Germany was altered markedly by the proliferation of paramilitary groups who adopted military patterns of organization, conduct, terminology, and dress and made their presence felt in society and, increasingly, in politics. Within this paramilitary milieu, perspectives could vary. Some looked to the past, reverencing Wilhelmine military culture; others took World War I as their reference point, elevating romanticized ideals of camaraderie, a posited equality based on shared experience rather than on social standing, and manly heroics and soldierly virtues. Paramilitarism permeated German political life during the Weimar Republic—a reality Berghahn views as responsible for the fact that contemporary observers “found the psychological and psychopathological dimensions of interwar militarism most noteworthy,” often discounting the relevance of a nation’s army and stressing, instead, the dominance of

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<sup>38</sup> Berghahn, *Militarism*, 9-18.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-26, 31.

<sup>40</sup> Berghahn, *Militarism*, 31. See also Michael Howard, *The Lessons of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 49-61.

military values and objectives in civilian life.<sup>41</sup> The primary problem, wrote German journalist Franz Carl Endres, was “the spirit of the uniform.”<sup>42</sup> Others in Germany pointed to sociological aspects of militarism. Historian Eckardt Kehr, for instance, linked the idea of militarism “to the existence of an officer corps upholding the ethos of a warrior caste and to the acceptance of this ethos as a higher form of human order by the civilian bourgeoisie,” suggesting, further, that this acceptance was in some fashion related to the appearance of capitalism in Prussia. His countryman Heinz Fick highlighted the relationship between militarism and feudalism—East Elbian social and political structures providing the economic fuel for militarism—and noted how the self-interest of entrepreneurs led them to militarism.<sup>43</sup>

In 1937, German émigré historian Alfred Vagts wove together many of these ideas in his influential *History of Militarism*. Focusing on the history of the military profession, Vagts argued that an army that operated “in a military way” was “marked by a primary concentration of men and materials on winning specific objectives of power with the utmost efficiency; that is, with the least expenditure of blood and treasure.” It was “limited in scope, confined to one function and scientific in its essential qualities.” This he contrasted with an army operated in a “militaristic way.” Militarism, he contended, “presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions and thought associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes.” Its influence was not restrained, but rather could “permeate all society and become dominant over all industry and arts.” Not scientific, it exhibited “the qualities of caste and cult, authority and belief.”<sup>44</sup>

Vagts argued, moreover, that militarism was “not the opposite of pacifism” but rather of “civilianism.” Love of war was the “counterpart of the love of peace, pacifism.” Militarism, however, was “more, and sometimes less than the love of war” and included “every system of thinking and valuing and every complex of feelings which rank military institutions and ways above the ways of civilian life, carrying military mentality and modes of action and decision into the civilian sphere.” This “militarism of moods and opinions” he

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 32-37. Quote is on page 37. On paramilitary groups during the Weimar Republic, see James M. Diehl, *Paramilitary Politics in Weimar Germany* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977); Volker R. Berghahn, *Der Stahlhelm. Bund der Frontsoldaten, 1918-1935* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1966); Karl Rohe, *Das Reichsbanner Schwarz Rot Gold. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Struktur der politischen Kampfverbände zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1966).

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Berghahn, *Militarism*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>44</sup> Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism: Romance and Realities of a Profession* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1937), 11.

added, “has been more clearly in evidence in Germany than elsewhere, except in Japan, because there the soldier has been admired in peace time, and not, as in other lands, mostly in war. Even in peace, the German is inclined to acknowledge the primacy of the military and accept its absolute good regardless of its use in war, its victories, or defeats.”<sup>45</sup> Vagts, Berghahn observes, regarded militarism as a “phenomenon of modern mass society.” Overall, befitting his émigré status, he attempted to “blend the Central European preoccupation with militarism as a state of mind with Anglo-Saxon concerns of civilian control.”<sup>46</sup>

Shortly thereafter, American Harold Lasswell inserted a new element into the contemporary militarism debate, emphasizing in a 1941 article the critical role in modern militarism of technology and bureaucratic organization. With an eye on fascism, he saw a future in which “specialists on violence” would achieve the upper hand in modern states, leading to what he termed “garrison states.” Unlike traditional military officers, he noted, modern “specialists on violence” devoted much of their attention to “the skills and attitudes judged characteristic of non-violence” and would be likely to function like civilian managers. Centralized, bureaucratic, and hierarchical, the “garrison state” would prevent those who resented oppressive bureaucratic dominance from rebelling through the use of appeasement, coercion, manipulation, and violence.<sup>47</sup>

Understandably, World War II, the collapse of the Third Reich, and Allied accusations elicited additional scrutiny of militarism by intellectuals both in Germany and abroad. German historian Friedrich Meinecke, for example, addressed the problem of German militarism already in 1946. In his *The German Catastrophe*, Meinecke traced a line from Frederick William I of Prussia to the Third Reich in discerning a distinctive, all-embracing German militarism birthed by the Prussian army. Viewing militarism as “an outgrowth of the age of science and rational planning,” he saw the German General Staff created in the nineteenth century as the purest embodiment of German militarism. But he also identified a second manifestation of militarism, “an irrational one which came to bear after the First World War: the intoxication of the *younger* generation with nationalistic and militaristic ‘ideals.’” The National Socialist dictatorship, Meinecke contended, was the product of both. The same year, historian Hans Herzfeld also emphasized

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>46</sup> Berghahn, *Militarism*, 41-42.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 43-44. See also Harold D. Lasswell, “The Garrison State,” *American Journal of Sociology* 46, No. 4 (1941): 455-68.

modern militarism's technological character, though he stressed that this was a recent development, with rationalization and automation bringing uniquely destructive results. "Militarism was therefore 'the increased perfection of all the possibilities of military organization.'" But he also defined militarism as the incursion of military thinking into politics and thus distinguished between "militarism" and "soldierdom." Both men ultimately presented militarism in Germany within the context of broader European developments, an approach considerably different than that of their colleagues abroad such as A.J.P. Taylor and John Wheeler-Bennett, who, much like Allied occupation officials, identified a uniquely German historical phenomenon.<sup>48</sup>

In the latter regard, Meinecke and Herzfeld shared a perspective with Gerhard Ritter, who became a key proponent of a new orthodoxy among German historians that portrayed the Third Reich as a "*Betriebsunfall*," an industrial accident, an aberration in German history caused by a plague of National Socialist criminals.<sup>49</sup> In keeping with this, Ritter posited a tightly circumscribed, but influential, definition of militarism that effectively exonerated Prussia's military tradition.<sup>50</sup> According to Ritter, militarism involved both the requirements of the military taking precedence over the total political interests of the state and "'the one-sided predominance of militant and martial traits in a statesman's or nation's basic political outlook' to the extent that the most important task of a state is neglected, which is 'to create a durable order of law and peace among men, to promote general welfare and mediate continuously in the eternal struggle among divergent interests and claims in domestic affairs and between nations.'" <sup>51</sup> With this definition, he could exclude the kings of Prussia and Otto von Bismarck from the ranks of the militarists. Instead, in his view, the situation began to deteriorate only when Bismarck's successors succumbed to military pressures and the German people became a chauvinistic hoard. For Ritter, Berghahn notes, "the dominance of [military] technical factors and martial popular passions conspired to produce the militaristic policy of the late Wilhelmine period. It was during the First World War . . . that the fatal preponderance of the soldier over the politician became irreversible." The end of the Weimar Republic, meanwhile, was "caused 'by the militarism of the National

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<sup>48</sup> Berghahn, *Militarism*, 49-52.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 54-55. On Germany's historians, see Winfried Schulze, *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach 1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1989); Bernd Faulenbach, "Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach den beiden Weltkriegen," in Niedhart and Riesenberger, *Lernen aus dem Krieg*, 207-240.

<sup>50</sup> Ritter would eventually flesh out his views in a four-volume history. Gerhard Ritter, *The Sword and the Scepter: The Problem of Militarism in Germany*, trans. Heinz Norden (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1969-1973).

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Berghahn, *Militarism*, 55-56.

Socialist people's movement,'" although in Ritter's view most of Hitler's enthusiastic followers had not anticipated another war, but rather sought unity and a restoration of Germany's status.<sup>52</sup>

The specific ideas of American policymakers during this period are discussed at length elsewhere in this study.<sup>53</sup> But a few introductory words will help to situate their thinking, which serves as the frame to this study, within the broader developments outlined above. On the whole, American officials tended to survey Nazi Germany from across the Atlantic and announce that what they saw there was militarism, rather than defining "militarism" as an abstract formulation and then concluding that Germany met certain theoretical criteria. Their demilitarization plans nevertheless point toward an interpretation of militarism similar to Vagts' broad assessment, which merged political and psychological conceptions of militarism in citing the "domination of the military man over the civilian, an undue preponderance of military demands, [and] an emphasis on military considerations, spirit, ideals, and scales of value, in the life of states."<sup>54</sup> Military historian Wolfram Wette offers additional insight into the American perspective in stressing that militarism refers to a *system*. "Influence of the military on politics, science and the economy, social militarism, glorification of violence, war ideologies, friend-foe thinking, nationalistic and racist ideologies, militaristic education, the interests of the arms industry, and other phenomenon are to be understood as parts of the greater whole," he explains. In this context, "militarization" refers to the process by which different facets of state and society are shaped by the military or by military models and thinking. In short, militarism as a system is the result of the militarization of multiple aspects of state and society.<sup>55</sup> While U.S. officials did not explicitly discuss German militarism as a system, and their employment of the terms "militarism" and "militaristic" was varied and inconsistent, their plans for eradicating the problem were all-encompassing.<sup>56</sup> At the same time, the limitation of Wette's description for our purposes is its focus on the outcome, rather than the mechanism of militarization. For the Americans, the means were integrally tied up with the results. Critical to their appraisal of militaristic Germany was the notion that Germans were congenitally militaristic or, much more often, that Germans were culturally

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>53</sup> See especially Chapter 2.

<sup>54</sup> Vagts, *A History of Militarism*, 12.

<sup>55</sup> Wolfram Wette, "Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung," in Wette, *Militarismus in Deutschland*, 14.

<sup>56</sup> Wette himself suggests that the Allies viewed "Prussian-German militarism" as a system along the lines he describes, although he does not go into detail on this point. Wette, "Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung," 15.

conditioned to be militaristic—in effect, the creation of a militaristic system was a circular, self-perpetuating process.

Considering demilitarization from a systemic perspective, without losing sight of the presumed means of militarization, helps to explain the nature and parameters of American efforts. “Demilitarization” involved undoing the damage caused by the militarizing process. German militarism was seen in twisted national political goals, misguided industries, and military-oriented museums and schools. Destroying militarism meant ensuring non-militaristic civilian leadership in politics and administration, restoring civil society to civilians, and wiping out ways of thinking that glorified war and the military. If military officers—in particular, the general staff—furthered the militarizing process, their influence had to be curtailed. Abolishing the Wehrmacht and shutting down factories would eliminate an army guilty of aggression and industries wrongly directed toward war production. Ultimately, both the institutional structures and the individuals contaminated by and promoting militarism had to be demilitarized. And only by attacking both ends of the problem could it finally be eradicated.

With this understanding of militarism as a backdrop, my own approach in this study also becomes clearer. Specifically, I am concentrating on a subset of this more expansive demilitarization program,<sup>57</sup> intentionally disregarding matters of industry and economy, political developments, and measures related to the formal dissolution of the Wehrmacht, which have long interested other scholars, not least because they were central to early Cold War confrontations between the western Allies and the Soviet Union.<sup>58</sup> In focusing instead on “social and cultural” demilitarization, I am drawing on a definition of “culture” articulated by historian Akira Iriye, that of “culture as a ‘structure of meaning,’ including ‘memory, ideology, emotions, lifestyles, scholarly and artistic works, and other symbols.’”<sup>59</sup> The “social” dimension here refers principally to relationships

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<sup>57</sup> This expansive view of demilitarization was, as noted above, not necessarily articulated as such by American policymakers. In fact, the term “demilitarization” was used both broadly and narrowly. For example, “demilitarization” was periodically grouped with denazification and decartelization as a stated Allied objective, when, in actuality, elements of the denazification and decartelization programs were also essentially aimed at demilitarizing Germany in the sense of eradicating militarism.

<sup>58</sup> The sources cited in note 2 all deal with these issues to a greater or lesser degree. See also Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung*; Large, *Germans to the Front*; Fischer, *Entmilitarisierung und Aufrüstung*; Förster, *Von der Kapitulation bis zum Plevan Plan*; and works on the political foundations of Germany such as Christoph Klessmann, *Die doppelte Staatsgründung: deutsche Geschichte, 1945-1955* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1991).

<sup>59</sup> Akira Iriye, *Cultural Imperialism and World Order* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 3; Akira Iriye, “Culture and International History,” in *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. Michael Hogan and Thomas G. Paderson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 215.



between individuals and within groups, rather than to the social structures German Bielefeld school historians have subjected to careful scrutiny in analyzing the problem of militarism in modern German history.<sup>60</sup> In particular, I am looking at measures that expressly targeted symbols (uniforms, military decorations, flags), material culture (street signs, monuments), rituals (parades, salutes), group activities (sports clubs, youth groups), and informal and formal education (literature, schoolbooks, curricula). While this scope is broad, it does not encompass every aspect of the occupation that could be considered part of the social and cultural demilitarization project. It leaves out, for example, film, theater, and the writings of Germany's intellectual elites. Due to the breadth of American efforts, aspiring to comprehensiveness would have resulted in a study of unmanageable proportions. I have therefore centered my attention on measures which fall into one or more of the following categories: 1) those most significant in terms of coverage or effect; 2) those that illuminate or exemplify key attributes of the demilitarization program; and/or 3) those which are particularly distinctive or have been little studied elsewhere to date.<sup>61</sup>

### *Militarism and the Third Reich*

Any effort to “demilitarize” assumes, of course, that a state and society are militarized in the first place. Interestingly, however, few historical studies have looked beyond the archetypal militarism of the Wilhelmine era to pose questions regarding German militarism in the Third Reich. As noted, German historians in the immediate postwar period briefly considered the role militarism had played in their nation's recent past, but this discussion died quickly. During the decades following, only a handful of scholars exhumed the

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<sup>60</sup> See Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918* (Leamington Spa: Berg Publishers, 1985).

<sup>61</sup> As noted above, many studies dealing with democratization touch on demilitarization measures without examining them in detail. These works do, however, provide a general introduction to U.S. demilitarization efforts in other areas of German social and cultural life. Some of the more helpful works dealing with film, media sources, and the arts include Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn in Heidelberg und Mannheim*; Ulrich M. Bausch, *Die Kulturpolitik der US-Amerikanische Information Control Division in Württemberg-Baden von 1945 bis 1949: Zwischen militärischem Funktionalismus und schwäbischem Obrigkeitendenken* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992); Larry Hartenian, *Controlling Information in U.S. Occupied Germany, 1945-1949: Media Manipulation and Propaganda* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003); Fay, “Constructing America for German Reconstruction”; Brigitte J. Hahn, *Umerziehung durch Dokumentarfilm? Ein Instrument amerikanischer Kulturpolitik im Nachkriegsdeutschland (1945-1953)* (Münster: Lit, 1997); Wigand Lange, *Theater in Deutschland nach 1945. Zur Theaterpolitik der amerikanischen Besatzungsbehörden* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1980). For a useful introduction to opinions on their nation's past expressed by Germany's religious, political, and intellectual elites immediately after the war, see Jeffrey K. Olick, *In the House of the Hangman: The Agonies of German Defeat, 1943-1949* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

question.<sup>62</sup> Wette, for instance, called attention to facets of this relationship in centering an analysis of militarism in the Third Reich on the “ideologies of those who advocated a policy in which military force was to play a decisive role and military methods of organization were to be applied to society in general.” Ultimately, he argued, all levels of society—not just elites—became part of a “militarized *Volksgemeinschaft*.”<sup>63</sup> Wilfried von Bredow offered a similar view, suggesting that the German people responded wholeheartedly to the Nazi call for total war, fighting until the bitter end on foreign soil and on the home front even when all hope was lost, due to the success with which the Nazis had pushed the “collective inner militarization of the people.”<sup>64</sup>

In a 1999 literature review, political scientist Ulrich Albrecht observed that most works dealing in some fashion with the Nazi state and militarism had tended to concentrate on certain subgroups, particularly high-ranking officers and high-level Nazi officials. He also concluded—admittedly with some exaggeration—that most studies addressing militarism fell into one of two camps, describing either a militarism grounded in the Wehrmacht and divorced from the National Socialists or a Nazi militarism that had little connection with the Wehrmacht.<sup>65</sup> Wette has made a similar point, citing the many works on the Nazi dictatorship and the many works on the Wehrmacht, but the virtual absence of any books in which “the National Socialist state, the Wehrmacht, and the militarization of society and economy are combined with one another.”<sup>66</sup> Calling for studies connecting National Socialism and the Wehrmacht during the war in ways that went beyond examining the militarism of professional officers or institutional entanglements in Nazism, Albrecht laid out a possible

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<sup>62</sup> Albrecht, “Der preussisch-deutsche Militarismus als Prototyp,” 38-39, 47-49. Among these were Manfred Messerschmidt, *Die Wehrmacht im NS-Staat: Zeit der Indoktrination* (Hamburg: R.v.Decker, 1969); Klaus-Jürgen Müller, *Das Heer und Hitler: Armee und Nationalsozialistisches Regime, 1933-1940* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1969); Wolfgang Sauer, “Die Politische Geschichte der deutschen Armee und das Problem des Militarismus,” *Politische Vierteljahrshefte* 6 (1965); Karl Rohe, “Militarismus, soldatische Haltung, und Führerideologie,” in *Militarismus*, ed. Volker R. Berghahn (Köln: Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1975); Stig Förster, “Der deutsche Militarismus im Zeitalter des totalen Krieges,” in *Neue Politische Literatur* 27, No. 2 (1982).

<sup>63</sup> Albrecht, “Der preussisch-deutsche Militarismus als Prototyp,” 50; Wolfram Wette, “Ideology, Propaganda, and Internal Politics as Preconditions of the War Policy of the Third Reich,” in *The Build-up of German Aggression*, ed. Wilhelm Deist et al., vol. 1 of *Germany and the Second World War*, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 15, 147-155. The German version of this volume appeared in 1979.

<sup>64</sup> Quoted in Albrecht, “Der preussisch-deutsche Militarismus als Prototyp,” 51. See also Wilfried von Bredow, *Moderner Militarismus: Analyse und Kritik* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1983).

<sup>65</sup> Albrecht, “Der preussisch-deutsche Militarismus als Prototyp,” 51-52, 59-60.

<sup>66</sup> Wette, “Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung,” 17. The interpretive model “militarism,” Wette suggests, would be an appropriate tool to use to integrate the two lines of inquiry. See also Wolfram Wette, “Der Militarismus und die deutschen Kriege,” in *Schule der Gewalt: Militarismus in Deutschland, 1871-1945*, ed. Wolfram Wette (Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, 2005), 14.

analytical agenda for better understanding National Socialist militarism. Specifically, he suggested three potentially fruitful “dimensions” of investigation: the “munitions technological”; the “ideological,” namely, the affinities between National Socialism and Wehrmacht “ideology”; and the “*militärische* [military],” “culminating in the idea of total war,” with its absolute enemies, total mobilization of all of society for war, and elimination of distinctions between soldiers and non-combatants, resulting in the destruction of entire groups of people.<sup>67</sup>

Recently, several historians have moved in this direction, if generally not choosing to employ the concept of militarism as a heuristic tool. In a recent study drawing heavily on the many scholarly works from recent decades that analyze the Wehrmacht’s wartime conduct, Wette himself has stressed the overlap between Nazi ideology and beliefs characteristic of Germany’s armed forces even prior to Hitler’s seizure of power. In addition to sharing an anti-semitic outlook, Wette notes, the Nazi Party and the Wehrmacht agreed “on the question of whether ‘great matters’ could be solved by other means than warfare.” In short, they could not. German military tradition likewise put forward the idea that “in case of doubt the so-called ‘necessities of war’ overrode any limits imposed on the conduct of warfare by international law.”<sup>68</sup> As scholars have long observed, both the Nazis and Germany’s military elites were also committed to freeing Germany from the shackles of Versailles and believed that success in this endeavor demanded the total (peacetime) mobilization of all Germans.<sup>69</sup>

Focusing more specifically on National Socialism, Richard Bessel has offered an analysis of the Third Reich that places “racist war” at its heart. Nazism, Bessel stresses,

was inseparable from war. As a political movement German National Socialism grew and triumphed in a country deeply scarred by the experience of, and defeat in, the First World War. . . . The ideology of Nazism was an ideology of war, which posited an eternal struggle between supposed races, and which was realized in wars launched in order to redraw the racial map of the European continent. The political practice of Nazism was aggressive and bellicose, bringing violence to Germany’s streets and glorying in uniformed, military-style formations of political soldiers. The language of war was rarely absent from the propaganda of the Nazi movement and the Nazi regime. Once its leadership had captured state power, they steered a remarkably consistent, if irrational and ultimately self-destructive course to war. The Nazi leadership sought to militarize the German economy and society and to

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<sup>67</sup> Albrecht, “Der preussisch-deutsche Militarismus als Prototyp,” 52-60.

<sup>68</sup> Wolfram Wette, *The Wehrmacht: History, Myth, Reality*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 139, 292-294.

<sup>69</sup> On this point, see Volker Berghahn’s recent study which sets developments within Germany during the first half of the twentieth century within a broader European framework. *Europe in the Era of Two World Wars: From Militarism and Genocide to Civil Society, 1900-1950* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 82-99.

indoctrinate the German population into the willing acceptance and even enthusiastic approval of war. It launched a second world war that proved even more destructive than the first. . . .<sup>70</sup>

In deliberately seeking to delineate the “new face of German militarism” during the Third Reich, military historian Manfred Messerschmidt has reminded that it is not sufficient to think of militarism in terms of the relative influence of the military on politics. Rather, military organization and civil society, and military and political leadership, were no longer separate. Nazi militarism tended to dissolve the boundaries between the two. In the end, he suggests, National Socialism bundled, absorbed, and radicalized to the point of criminality all older forms of militarism, pulling all Germans into preparations for war and establishing the authority of the Nazi state on two armed pillars: the Party with its armed forces and the Wehrmacht which was completely subordinate to Hitler and responsive only to his destructive, hate-filled, racist will.<sup>71</sup>

Surveying the relative barrenness of the historiographical landscape pertaining to German militarism during the Third Reich, Wette has emphasized the importance of recognizing in “Prussian-German militarism” another line of continuity in the history of the German national state stretching from the nineteenth century to 1945. Such a view, he makes clear, does not presume that German militarism was homogenous and unchanging.<sup>72</sup> In fact, Wette, Albrecht, and Messerschmidt all imply that the militarism of the Third Reich can best be understood not only in relationship to other “militarisms” of the twentieth century, but also in comparison with German militarisms of the Wilhelmine and Weimar eras.<sup>73</sup> In this regard, Wette’s position is unequivocal. It “cannot be overlooked,” he has argued, “that the militarized *Volksgemeinschaft* of the Nazi period effectively represented the . . . most radical form of state and social militarism.” Particularly during the war’s latter half, he notes, Germany’s conduct of the war “came increasingly closer to the idea of total war. The militarization of society, science, propaganda, thinking, and everyday life assumed an extent that history had not known to that point.” Contending that applying a conception of militarism such as Vagts’ classical version to the Third Reich is inadequate, Albrecht suggests that the idea must instead be broadened or reconceived and

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<sup>70</sup> Bessel, *Nazism and War*, xi-xii.

<sup>71</sup> Manfred Messerschmidt, “Das neue Gesicht des Militarismus in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus,” in Wette, *Militarismus in Deutschland*, 82-93; Wette, “Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung,” 22.

<sup>72</sup> Wette, “Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung,” 16.

<sup>73</sup> Military historian Detlef Bald makes a similar point in stressing the potential value of studying the Wehrmacht using the lens of militarism. See “Einführende Bemerkungen,” in Müller and Volkmann, *Die Wehrmacht*, 352-353.

describes the militarism of the Third Reich as “hypermilitarism,” meaning, Wette adds, “that the militarization of Germany under the rule of National Socialism reached its absolute high point.”<sup>74</sup>

An underlying assumption of this study, then, is that Nazi Germany was highly militaristic. By the late 1930s, the German officer corps had lost most of its influence in government policy formation, but had become an important instrument of the Nazi state, with its traditions and values co-opted as exemplary. Army, industry, science, and bureaucracy were preparing for war—a war of annihilation, scholars now stress, though this was not obvious to the Germans’ Allied contemporaries. The Nazi *Gleichschaltung* had transformed the missions of cultural institutions, sporting clubs, and other groups to assist in this task, while schools and Nazi youth organizations trained and motivated young men to fight and sought to guarantee that their sisters and wives would support them. In doing so, they preached an ideology that sanctified military vengeance and glorified soldierly values and achievements. Military aesthetics and methods of organization permeated public spaces and private lives in the form of martial songs, military titles, hierarchical structures, and parades of marching uniforms and fluttering flags. Some Germans resisted regimentation and opposed the reorientation of German life. Many more continued to cling tightly to a desire for peace. But even those who had no longing for another war welcomed Germany’s renewed geopolitical strength and the jobs and restored financial well-being that a mobilizing economy brought with it.<sup>75</sup>

Assessing the scale and character of militarism in Nazi Germany is critical if one of our tasks is to begin to evaluate the efficacy and impact of American and German demilitarization efforts during the occupation years. But to fully understand American policies, German actions, and contemporary rhetoric, it is equally important to appreciate what contemporaries *thought* was the character of Nazi Germany and the relationship between German militarism and World War II.

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<sup>74</sup> Wette, “Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung,” 15-16.

<sup>75</sup> Examining the tumultuous end to World War I and contemporary discussions of a possible “popular insurrection” to stave off national humiliation in a punitive peace, Michael Geyer suggests that Germans yearning for peace could later support Hitler, with his belligerent nationalistic speeches, due to “a shared national myth of liberation that was preconfigured in a politics of national memory.” Specifically, he maintains that in “trac[ing] back the German language of national liberation, we discover in due course not just a romantic imagination of death and sacrifice but also of self-fashioning as destruction and annihilation” (515). The nature of the World War I’s end, and the refusal of Germany’s leaders to call for a “popular insurrection,” he argues, led to “the articulation of historically and mythically charged fantasies of renewal through self-destruction” (526). The character and course of World War II were direct results. “Insurrectionary Warfare: The German Debate about a *Levee en Masse* in October 1918,” *Journal of Modern History* 73, No. 3 (2001): 459-527.

Despite our ability today to draw broad conclusions regarding the overall approach of “the Americans” or “the Germans” to the problem of militarism, it is clear that contemporary policymakers, occupation authorities, journalists, bureaucrats, and the general public could not always agree on exactly what militarism was. Instead, “militarism” and “militarist” were plastic terms that could be molded into various and sundry shapes, even when retaining certain essential qualities. Sometimes ideology determined their contours, sometimes differing conceptions of history did. Sometimes the terms served as useful shorthand for undesirable traits; sometimes they were synonymous with soldiers, particularly officers. And differing ideas concerning the nature of militarism might result from, or lead to, differing ideas as to its cause and preferred method of eradication. Most observers associated militarism in some sense with fundamental beliefs regarding the purpose of war, the desirability of war, the nature of a nation’s military, and/or how societies, their leaders, and their militaries view and conduct war. But under this umbrella—as cause, symptom, or effect—they might point especially to spit-and-polish “Prussianism,” marching school children, the excessive influence of a “military caste,” overbearing non-commissioned officers, or some combination of these and other elements.

This study presumes a widespread militarization of German society and culture during the Third Reich, but recognizes, too, that the “militarism” invoked during the occupation period was a flexible, multi-faceted idea. How Germans and Americans understood, interpreted, evaluated, or identified it becomes itself an object of consideration.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, it is essential to distinguish between several related, but not automatically identical, things: militarism, war, and specific practices. If opposing “militarism” did not always mean opposing the same set of problems, criticizing militarism might, but did not always, mean opposing war. Nor did criticizing militarism or opposing war necessarily mean approving of or championing official measures conceived to stamp out militarism, whether introduced by the Americans or Germans.

In the following pages, I have tried to rely on contemporary definitions and descriptions of militarism, while at times problematizing them. If an individual labeled a practice or person militaristic, I accept their definition as evidence of their engagement with the issue of militarism. But I also broaden the scope of my own exploration of demilitarization to include an appraisal of German attitudes toward war more generally. There are three primary reasons for doing so. First, because the definition of militarism *is* so nebulous, casting a broad

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<sup>76</sup> This study therefore also serves as a contribution to the history of debates regarding militarism, particularly to the degree that it explicates official American views of militarism in the 1940s and illuminates the perspectives of Germans who were not prominent intellectuals.

net can capture relevant details and reveal attitudes that a narrower focus might not. Second, as noted above, some observers have suggested that World War II itself was responsible for demilitarizing the Germans. Considering German views of war provides a tool for evaluating the validity of these assertions. Finally, in the end, this was what the American program was about: the United States wanted to change German attitudes toward war. Munitions industries, the Wehrmacht, ubiquitous uniforms, military models of education, and other similar elements of German life were important. Yet they would not by themselves lead to war. Compressed to its essence, the ultimate goal of American policymakers in calling for the eradication of German militarism was to destroy any German desire to start another war.

### **Geographic Focus and Sources**

In analyzing postwar social and cultural demilitarization in Germany, I have focused as a case study on the southwestern German Land of Württemberg-Baden, the portion of present-day Baden-Württemberg that fell within the American occupation zone. In particular, I have concentrated on four cities varying in personality and size: Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, and Ulm. While Heidelberg and Karlsruhe were located in the former Grand Duchy of Baden, Stuttgart and Ulm were situated in what had been the Kingdom of Württemberg. Capital cities of their respective Lands until 1945 and thus home to numerous civil servants, Karlsruhe and Stuttgart were also host to vital war industries (both Bosch and Daimler-Benz had large facilities in Stuttgart, for example) and were consequently heavily damaged by Allied bombs. Both cities, along with surrounding areas, were first occupied by the French, before being turned over to the Americans in July 1945 after Allied officials finalized zonal boundaries. Ulm historically had been a garrison city. Due to the presence of a large number of factories, its wartime fate was similar to that of its neighbors to the northwest, with the city's center boasting little more than a magnificent minster and a labyrinth of ruins by the time its inhabitants surrendered to the Americans. In contrast, the scenic university city of Heidelberg survived the hostilities nearly untouched. Because of this, however, the war's end brought a deluge of refugees and expellees and eventually the command headquarters of U.S. ground forces and its relentless requisitioning of houses and public buildings.

Wartime labor migration, evacuations, refugee arrivals, and other factors make it difficult to determine the exact composition of the four cities during the occupation. But official population figures document the number of inhabitants at selected times and offer a sense of the physical size of each city, even as they shed

light on the magnitude of population fluctuations and the resulting emptiness and congestion that shaped the cities' postwar experiences. German federal sources show that in 1939 Heidelberg had a population of 86,467; Karlsruhe 190,081; Stuttgart 496,490; and Ulm 74,387.<sup>77</sup> By the end of the war, these figures had changed substantially. Local sources indicate, for instance, that Karlsruhe had only 60,000 inhabitants in December 1944, while Stuttgart had just 265,000 and Ulm approximately 28,000 when they capitulated.<sup>78</sup> According to an American study (which did not include Ulm in its tabulations), these numbers changed rapidly after Germany's surrender. By late 1946, the population of Heidelberg had increased to 113,079, with that of Karlsruhe standing at 176,301 and that of Stuttgart at 411,333.<sup>79</sup>

Analyzing American and German attitudes and decision-making processes, as well as the give-and-take between American and German authorities that shaped demilitarization efforts in Württemberg-Baden, necessarily required the review of sources on both sides of the Atlantic. At the U.S. National Archives, relevant collections included those containing records generated by the various federal agencies involved in postwar planning and by the assorted entities responsible for governing Germany. The latter responsibility lay with the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) until July 1945 when the American Zone came under the supervision of U.S. military government officials, with further policy guidance provided by the quadripartite Allied Control Authority beginning in August 1945. Files of the U.S. Departments of State, Treasury, and War, and a number of related interdepartmental committees, thus contributed valuable information regarding American policymaking, as did the records of SHAEF, which also provided useful details concerning operations in Germany during the pre-surrender and early post-surrender periods. Most important were the records of zonal, Land, and local offices of the U.S. Office of Military Government for Germany, together with records produced by the Allied Control Authority. To supplement these materials, I also consulted the archived and published papers of several key American policymakers.

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<sup>77</sup> Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1952* (Stuttgart-Cologne: W. Kohlhammer, 1952), 21-22.

<sup>78</sup> Josef Werner, *Karlsruhe 1945: Unter Hakenkreuz, Trikolore und Sternenbanner* (Karlsruhe: G. Braun, 1985), 11; Hermann Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart, 1945-1948* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1972), 14; Hans Eugen Specker, ed. *Tradition und Wagnis. Ulm 1945-1972* (Stuttgart: Kommissionsverlag W. Kohlhammer, 1974), 9.

<sup>79</sup> U.S. Military Government of Germany, *The Population of Germany, Special Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 15 Mar 47, Appendix J.



Research in Germany involved the review of a broad assortment of official sources as well. Much to the chagrin of the Badenese and the Swabians of Württemberg, Allied decisions at the end of the war divided both Baden and Württemberg between the French and the Americans, with the Americans governing the northern portion of each.<sup>80</sup> In late September 1945, moreover, the Americans fused their two partial states into one Land, to be administered as a single unit under the leadership of a newly appointed German minister-president, Dr. Reinhold Maier.<sup>81</sup> Although Württemberg and Baden were both known for their liberal traditions—leading at least one Allied handbook to assert, hopefully, that this history, combined with the area’s “social composition” and abundance of “cultural centres,” “should make the work of reconstruction easier here than in other more regimented and Prussianized regions” of Germany<sup>82</sup>—each had its own traditions, customs, and administrative system. Therefore, in addition to aggravating regional antagonisms, the creation of a unified state presented Land officials with very real obstacles to efficient administration. To reduce friction and combat management problems, the Americans very quickly introduced a hybrid government. All Land ministries were located in Stuttgart, but “*Landesbezirk Baden*” had its own cabinet-level president, Heinrich Köhler. Separate administrative departments retained responsibility for governing North Baden according to instructions received from the Land ministries; these ministries, in turn, received orders from American occupation officials and governed North Württemberg directly.

For research purposes, this organizational structure presented both challenges and benefits. On one hand, because the two formerly independent states maintained separate records, obtaining a full picture of events in Württemberg-Baden required the review of two sets of Land-level files. On the other, correspondence between officials in Stuttgart and Karlsruhe often served to clarify the views of German officials and their American occupiers, with civil servants describing new directives, plans, or meetings with the Americans and recording information and opinions they might otherwise have left undocumented. Moreover, the two sets of records were at times complementary in terms of content; where one group was weak, the other might be strong.

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<sup>80</sup> The French desired an occupation zone close to France and, in particular, wanted control of all of Baden. The Americans, however, were concerned about supplying their zone in south Germany when their only seaport was at Bremen in British-occupied north Germany. As a result, they insisted on controlling both Mannheim’s Rhine River port and the autobahn and railroad line running from Karlsruhe through Stuttgart to Ulm. Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 307.

<sup>81</sup> On the creation of the new state and its government, see Paul Sauer, *Demokratischer Neubeginn in Not und Elend. Das Land Württemberg-Baden von 1945 bis 1952* (Ulm: Vaas Verlag, 1978), Chapter 4.

<sup>82</sup> Untitled excerpt, “Chapter V, Local Characteristics,” Aug 44, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Office of Military Government Württemberg-Baden [OMGWB], Box 523.

Providing a perspective even closer to the everyday experience of most Germans, records reviewed at the municipal archives of the four cities of interest were in some respects also complementary. The city archives of Heidelberg and Stuttgart, for example, held detailed sets of weekly reports submitted by municipal officials to local military government offices. While few reports of this type were extant in Karlsruhe, holdings there included meaty city council minutes and extensive correspondence between the central city government and its 16 administrative districts. Similarly, where one set of city records yielded only the most fragmentary snippets of information on a topic, another included sufficient detail to serve as an informative case study.

Although focusing on four major cities permits close examination of a range of occupation experiences, it necessarily privileges the experiences of cities. To offset this bias, I also screened a sampling *Landkreis* (administrative district) files, which provided insight into the experiences of Württemberg-Baden's many small towns and villages.

Along with government records, the Land and city archives in Baden-Württemberg maintained other materials that proved critical to my research. These included case files from denazification proceedings, interview notes and transcriptions, autobiographies and manuscript histories, press clippings, and assorted collections of papers from individuals and extra-governmental groups. Using many of these sources to gain a better sense of the views and experiences of Germans other than Land and local officials, I also supplemented them with materials culled from two archives that hold collections of diaries and autobiographies and with information from several personal paper collections located at Germany's *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv*. Additionally, I consulted four newspapers: Heidelberg's *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, Karlsruhe's *Badische Neueste Nachrichten*, Stuttgart's *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, and Ulm's *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung*.

### **Organization and Overview**

In reviewing these records, one thing quickly became clear: the pervasiveness of the problem of militarism. Generating much less paper than critically pressing matters such as food supplies and housing shortages, the tentacles of demilitarization were nevertheless striking in their reach. From American military planners considering how to send German troops home from POW camps to municipal police administrators questioning how subordinates should greet their superiors, from newspaper editors calling for street name changes to Land education officials developing new school curricula, countless Germans and Americans

pondered how they could best prevent a resurgence of German militarism. At the same time, although demilitarization concerns touched multiple aspects of public and private life, most official initiatives were well underway or already completed by mid 1947. In other words, American policies did not typically build on one another over time, but were implemented concurrently in diverse arenas during a period lasting less than three years.

These factors helped to establish the organization of this study. In its general progression, it is chronological. However, much of the body of the text is organized into thematic chapters centering on particular aspects of the demilitarization program that were unfolding simultaneously. Thus, the first two substantive chapters discuss, respectively, the conceptions of German militarism evident in American policymaking circles during World War II and the formulation of specific regulations intended to address the social and cultural manifestations of German militarism. The following two chapters focus on “militarists,” looking, first, at the problem of determining who was a militarist and how the Germans dealt with such individuals and, second, at the evolution of Allied policies relating to Germany’s elite officers and their treatment during the occupation. Chapters Six and Seven consider how the Americans and Germans handled the problem of German culture, examining the implementation of prohibitions on uniform wearing, marching, flags, and saluting, as well as efforts to eliminate militaristic museum exhibits, street signs, monuments, and books. Chapter Eight then explores a range of issues pertaining to Germany’s youth, concentrating, in particular, on textbook vetting, history teaching, youth groups, and the ban on certain sporting activities. The final chapter outlines the status of the demilitarization project at the end of the formal occupation period in 1949 and draws conclusions concerning its overall evolution and results.

In the end, this study shows that changes in German culture and society that would prove to be both genuine and lasting were evident already by the end of the occupation, but that this transformation was neither entirely spontaneous nor unchallenged. Rather, despite troublesome flaws in their thinking and sometimes inconsistently applied regulations, the Americans perceptibly influenced the character and parameters of tangible change in Württemberg-Baden. Not only did they make concrete demands, such as requiring the removal of militaristic books from libraries and forbidding paramilitary youth activities, but by watching over personnel appointments and policing the content of media sources and education, they protected the public sphere for sympathetic native voices, thereby facilitating and fostering a discourse condemning war and

militarism. At the same time, these efforts were aided and strengthened by the many Germans who also wished to see “German militarism” eradicated, even when they did not always agree with their occupiers on methods or exact objectives. Although social and cultural demilitarization as a basic goal was widely supported, its nature and extent remained contested throughout the occupation, with individual views determined in part by concerns about the time and costs involved in making substantive changes and in part by personal beliefs regarding Germany’s past and the causes of the country’s recent descent into war.

## Chapter 2

### **“BEETHOVEN IN THE TRENCHES”: AMERICAN CONCEPTIONS OF GERMAN MILITARISM**

“The militarists of Berlin and Tokyo started this war,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced to the United States Congress on January 6, 1942. “The enemy,” he explained, “has trained his people to believe that their highest perfection is achieved by waging war” and for years “has prepared for this very conflict—planning, and plotting, and training, arming, and fighting. . . .” But this would not continue. The war would end, he asserted, “just as soon as we make it end, by our combined efforts, our combined strength, our combined determination to fight through and work through until the end—the end of militarism in Germany and Italy and Japan. Most certainly we shall not settle for less.”<sup>1</sup>

Giving his first State of the Union address since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and subsequent German declaration of war, Roosevelt described an intimidating, evil trinity—three nations melded into one powerful, ruthless enemy—and identified as the objective of the war to be fought not merely the defeat of the warmongers, but the eradication of militarism itself. During the years that followed, he would return to these themes repeatedly. In January 1943, he advised Congress that the United States had “learned that if we do not pull the fangs of the predatory animals of this world, they will multiply and grow in strength—and they will be at our throats again once more in a short generation.” Germany, Italy, and Japan therefore must be permanently disarmed and must “abandon the philosophy, and the teaching of that philosophy, which has brought so much suffering to the world.”<sup>2</sup> Chatting with a radio audience in late 1943, the president specifically addressed the issue of Germany, a nation he viewed as a repeat offender:

After the Armistice in 1918, we thought and hoped that the militaristic philosophy of Germany had been crushed; and being full of the milk of human kindness we spent the next twenty years disarming, while the Germans whined so pathetically that the other Nations permitted them—and even helped them—to rearm.

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<sup>1</sup> Address to the Congress on the State of the Union, 6 Jan 42, in *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed. Samuel I. Rosenman, Vol. 11, *Humanity on the Defensive* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 35, 38, 40.

<sup>2</sup> Address to the Congress on the State of the Union, 7 Jan 43, in *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, ed. Samuel I. Rosenman, Vol. 12, *The Tide Turns* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 32-33.

For too many years we lived on pious hopes that aggressor and warlike Nations would learn and understand and carry out the doctrine of purely voluntary peace.

The well-intentioned but ill-fated experiments of former years did not work. It is my hope that we will not try them again. No—that is putting it too weakly—it is my intention to do all that I humanly can as President and Commander in Chief to see to it that these tragic mistakes shall not be made again.<sup>3</sup>

In his determination to ensure a lasting peace, Roosevelt was not alone. Nor was he alone in accusing Germany of repeated transgressions. In the smoky government conference rooms of wartime Washington, one question dominated discussions of the future of Europe: how to ensure that the Germans could not and would not start another war. And like Roosevelt, American policymakers returned again and again to what they saw as the heart of the problem: German militarism.

Yet if the heart of the problem seemed clear, the nature of that heart was less so. Did Germany, in fact, have a “militaristic philosophy” that dated back to the days prior to World War I? Were the Germans an “aggressive and warlike Nation”? Or had German “war lords” “imposed” militarism “upon their enslaved peoples,” as Roosevelt suggested to Congress in 1942?<sup>4</sup> What exactly was “militarism” and who were the “militarists”? And, most importantly, how did one get rid of them?

Fashioning a policy for dealing with militaristic Germany was not a simple matter, but rather involved multiple federal agencies, layers of bureaucracy, a plethora of committees, Allied consultations, and careful consideration of Roosevelt’s wishes. Diplomats, soldiers, corporate officers, professors, German émigrés, and lifelong civil servants combined forces in these efforts, relying on scholarly treatises, government position papers, conversations with experts, stated military requirements, and their own experiences to inform their deliberations. Although few documents or discussions tackled German militarism’s origins and character directly, clear lines of agreement concerning the nature of German militarism did emerge. And these assumptions regarding the influence of Prussia, Germany’s officer corps, and the multitude of militarizing agents in German society and culture would ultimately serve as the guiding principles of the American demilitarization program.

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<sup>3</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt Radio Address, 24 Dec 43, in *Dokumente Zur Deutschlandpolitik* [hereafter *DDP*], Series I, Vol. 4, *I. Januar bis 31. Dezember 1943 Amerikanische Deutschlandpolitik*, ed. Marie-Luise Goldbach, (Frankfurt am Main: Alfred Metzner Verlag 1991), 740.

<sup>4</sup> Address to the Congress on the State of the Union, 6 Jan 42, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 11:35.

### **Making Policy: The Apparatus and the Efforts**

American opinions regarding German militarism took shape and were revealed in the many discussions and reports of a complex network of policymaking offices and groups. To better appreciate the role, disposition, and influence of the various parties involved and, ultimately, the origins and significance of an assortment of ideas pertaining to German militarism, it is first necessary to understand the character and evolution of American postwar planning activities as a whole.

Preliminary German policy discussions began in earnest in the office of Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles some two months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor when a new Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy met for the first time. Created at Roosevelt's behest to consider the breadth of American foreign policy concerns, the committee included high-ranking government officials and State Department staff members, as well as individuals drawn from the private sector, among them a number affiliated with the Council on Foreign Relations.<sup>5</sup> Subcommittees supplemented with additional experts almost immediately began handling the bulk of the body's work, scrutinizing a set of global problems and developing recommendations concerning them with the help of both outside materials and research and policy papers prepared by the department's Division of Special Research. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and other committee members kept Roosevelt apprised, informally, of the substance of ongoing talks. The subcommittee deliberations, moreover, not only influenced the thinking of State Department policymakers, but Hull and Welles also drew on them in crafting policy addresses and offering advice to the president.<sup>6</sup>

In July 1943, the department suspended most of this committee work, determining that the evolving international situation now required more definitive policy discussions and recommendations, rather than the

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<sup>5</sup> Harley A. Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939-1945* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1949), 78; Eisenberg, *Drawing the line*, 15-16. Private sector members included banker Norman H. Davis; Anne O'Hare McCormick, an editor at the *New York Times*; Hamilton Fish Armstrong, head of the Council on Foreign Relations and editor of *Foreign Affairs*; and Dr. Isaiah Bowman, a renowned geographer and president of Johns Hopkins University. The committee's membership grew over time.

<sup>6</sup> Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy*, 80-83, 104-107, 117-123, 149-157. The Advisory Committee's subcommittees included several economic subcommittees, a number of special subcommittees, and subcommittees on political problems, territorial problems, and security problems. The subcommittees not only had overlapping memberships, they also frequently discussed the same or related issues while considering the same or revised draft papers. The subcommittees met regularly and often. The Territorial Problems Subcommittee, for example, met 59 times between March 7, 1942, and December 17, 1943. Overall, the Political Problems Subcommittee held a somewhat superior position to the others. In January 1943, the Division of Special Research was reorganized into a Division of Political Studies and a Division of Economic Studies under the direction of a Committee on Special Studies.

open-ended debate and evaluation of alternatives that had characterized the committee's labors.<sup>7</sup> The research staff, meanwhile, intensified an ongoing effort to distill the results of the many discussions into a set of analytical policy summaries. Later, these either became the basis for final recommendations and for the preparation of materials used in negotiations with foreign powers or were used by State Department officials in departmental operations.<sup>8</sup>

Stimulated in part by the need to have documents ready for possible use by Hull during an October 1943 conference with the British and Soviet foreign ministers in Moscow, the State Department also began setting up "country committees" comprised of research staff members and desk officers responsible for particular geographic areas, with the Interdivisional Committee on Germany (ICG) officially established in September under the chairmanship of Dr. David Harris, a former (and future) history professor at Stanford University and head of the Division of Political Studies' central European unit. Past deliberations of the Advisory Committee's subcommittees and the policy papers resulting from these served as the starting point for discussions within the country committees, while the committees themselves became the primary forum for interdivisional policy consultation and consensus building.<sup>9</sup>

In early 1944, Hull created yet another committee, the Postwar Programs Committee, whose membership officially included Under Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.; Assistant Secretaries Adolph Berle, Breckenridge Long, and Dean Acheson; various special assistants to the secretary; assorted division chiefs; and several outside experts. Charged with assisting Hull in developing postwar policies, the group frequently received briefings from research staff experts such as Harris and signed off on many policy papers initially considered and revised by the ICG.<sup>10</sup> Significant among these was a "Treatment of Germany" paper that Hull had originally presented informally at Moscow. Revised by the ICG during the spring of 1944, the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 160-164.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 173. According to Notter, himself a member of the research staff, "the general objective was to have a 'handbook' for each field, arranged to present in a single series the policy summaries on the problems in that field. . . . Each problem was the subject of a separate policy summary, or 'H document,' which incorporated views upon the problem and its possible alternative solutions as developed by committee discussions and research studies to date."

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 158-159, 176-179.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 208-210. This committee eventually assumed the role for the department of clearing instructions and recommendations for the American delegate on the European Advisory Commission and also finalized policy instructions for U.S. representatives at international conferences and for State Department members of interdepartmental committees (212).



paper argued against dismembering Germany and for demilitarization, control of German education, punishing war criminals, and decentralizing the German government. Approved by the Postwar Programs Committee in May, it served as a statement of basic policy.<sup>11</sup>

Already by the end of 1943, planning activities had expanded beyond the Advisory Committee and the department's research staff and, in the words of the chronicler of State Department postwar planning, had "become an effort involving many operating units of the Department, interdepartmental collaboration, consultations with the Congress and the President, increased public discussion, negotiations among the major powers, and exchanges of view with other United Nations looking toward the establishment of international agencies of both a transitional and permanent character in various specialized fields."<sup>12</sup> In January 1944, joint Anglo-American-Soviet planning began formally when the European Advisory Commission (EAC), a deliberative body conceived at the Moscow Conference, set up shop in London to coordinate Allied policy for Germany. Aware that U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain John G. Winant, the American representative on the EAC, would need clear instructions from Washington, Hull formed a Working Security Committee (WSC) composed of high level administrators from the Departments of State, War, and Navy to facilitate the process of securing clearance from multiple government agencies for State Department policy papers prepared for Winant's guidance.<sup>13</sup>

If by the fall of 1943 State Department officials had recognized the importance of starting to firm up their recommendations, American military leaders were beginning to ask for concrete policy guidance as well. Their work involved not only dealing with issues of strategy, tactics, and supply, but also administering liberated and occupied territories. The initial reluctance of civilian leaders to cede them too much authority for civil affairs and military government functions eventually had given way to grudging recognition of the logic and necessity of granting the armed forces responsibilities in this arena, if only temporarily—a concession encouraged by problems that arose following Anglo-American victories in North Africa during the winter of 1942-1943 and the realization that insufficient civilian personnel were available to do the job. The

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Y. Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation of Germany: Washington Controversy," in *American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies*, ed. Harold Stein (Birmingham: University of Alabama Press, 1963), 343. For a copy of the policy paper, see U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*], *Conference at Quebec, 1944* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1972), 48-53.

<sup>12</sup> Notter, *Postwar Foreign Policy*, 207-208.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 225-226, 228-229.

developments in North Africa also had alerted War Department officials to the vast scope and complexity of the activities they would be handling in the present war and, in March 1943, led them to establish a Civil Affairs Division to oversee these operations.<sup>14</sup>

Guidance as to policy, however, came largely from elsewhere. During the spring of 1943, Britain and the U.S. formed an organization in England to prepare for the invasion of the European mainland the following spring. Along with plotting potential military operations, this group began considering future civil affairs tasks. In July, the Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) set up a Combined Civil Affairs Committee (CCAC) chaired by Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy “to recommend civil affairs policies for occupied and liberated areas, and to coordinate military and civilian agency interests.”<sup>15</sup> By the end of April 1944, several months after Major General Dwight D. Eisenhower assumed control of invasion planning as head of the new Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), the SHAEF staff was preparing some 72 studies on Germany, including a number dealing with civil affairs problems. Eisenhower’s chief of staff nevertheless soon asked the CCS for political and economic guidelines regarding military government, seeking to ensure that SHAEF’s plans were in line with higher-level policies being formulated for the post-surrender period. Technically, the European Advisory Commission was developing a program for Germany, but delays on this front and the urgent need for immediate orders spurred the CCAC to oversee the framing of an appropriate directive. Issued to Eisenhower in late April 1944, the new directive, CCS 551, contained military government guidelines for the period preceding German surrender, with the furtherance of successful military operations, the elimination of Nazism and German war-making capabilities, and the restoration of normal conditions as primary concerns.<sup>16</sup>

By July 1944, Allied troops had landed in Normandy and had started their drive through France, while in London the EAC was considering proposals regarding the future control machinery for Germany. At this

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<sup>14</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 12-17, 20-22. See also the primarily documentary history, Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1964), 3-113.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation of Germany,” 322-323. General John H. Hilldring, head of the army’s Civil Affairs Division, and James C. Dunn, director of the State Department’s Office of European Affairs, were also members of the CCAC. The CCAC’s functions were limited in that it “was not designed to prepare policies for areas where the Russians would join in the occupation, or for the period after dissolution of a combined command.”

<sup>16</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 58-61. A copy of CCS 551 is included in Hajo Holborn, *American Military Government: Its Organization and Policies* (Washington, DC: Infantry Journal Press, 1947), 135-143.

juncture, Eisenhower, in his role as commander of all U.S. forces in Europe, grew increasingly concerned that he would have no team to turn to if a joint administration of Germany was soon required. He therefore pushed for creating the kernel of an American element of a future control administration. In August 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) acceded to his wishes and a new U.S. Group Control Council for Germany (USGCC), headed by Brigadier General Cornelius W. Wickersham, began planning for American participation in the post-surrender occupation of Germany both within an American zone and as part of an Allied Control Council which would govern the entire country. Upon arrival in Germany, the USGCC would form the nucleus of the U.S. component of the Allied control authority.<sup>17</sup> The JCS informed the new USGCC that in drafting operational plans it should “be guided by such directives as may be issued as a result of recommendations made by the European Advisory Commission.” If such directives did not appear, the USGCC was to bear in mind “such U.S. views as may be pending before the Commission.”<sup>18</sup>

In point of fact, the tripartite EAC was accomplishing very little.<sup>19</sup> Theoretically, State Department officials in Washington were to send Winant instructions to use in EAC negotiations on long-term policies for Germany, but interdepartmental disputes, military wariness regarding the EAC’s scope of action, and delays in clearing the proposed policies within the messy federal bureaucracy had left him with little guidance during the spring and summer of 1944. Frustration with Washington’s policymaking logjams finally led Winant to attempt to expedite the process by having his advisors prepare draft directives for the occupation armies which he then submitted to Washington for approval. However, these also quickly became ensnared in bureaucratic tangles.<sup>20</sup>

Near the end of the summer, new challenges to unified decision-making suddenly arose when Secretary of the Treasury Henry J. Morgenthau, Jr., jumped into the policymaking fray. In mid August, Morgenthau learned of the State Department’s general approach to postwar planning which, in its commitment to preventing a third world war, endorsed firm punitive and preventative measures in handling Nazis and German war-making capabilities, but maintained as its end objective the relatively rapid reconstruction of

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<sup>17</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 91-94.

<sup>18</sup> “History. Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.) (U.S. Group Control Council) to May 1945,” n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 283, F: V60/2 USGCC HQS, History (USGCC) II Parts May ’45.

<sup>19</sup> When it was dissolved in 1945, the EAC had negotiated agreements concerning a surrender instrument for Germany, Allied control machinery, and the establishment of occupation zones. Beyond this, its substantive achievements were few. See Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 109-132.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation of Germany,” 330-334, 338-340, 387.

Germany and its reintegration into the economies of Europe and the world. Over time, the department's planners had also begun to assume that the German economy would require immediate assistance at the close of hostilities to prevent economic collapse and excessive hardship for the German people.<sup>21</sup> Appalled at Germany's behavior over the past years and decades, and convinced that Allied control measures could not prevent Germany from launching another war, Morgenthau believed the Germans deserved much harsher treatment and advocated the destruction or removal of German heavy industry, even to the point of turning Germany into a primarily agrarian nation. Only in this way could the Allies be certain of its future inability to wage war. This meant, further, that no efforts should be made to alleviate German suffering; the Germans would have to deal with circumstances they themselves had created.<sup>22</sup>

Given a draft copy of a "Handbook of Military Government for Germany" being prepared by SHAEF for military government officers who would enter Germany with the tactical units now nearing its borders, Morgenthau was distressed to find it, too, embodied what he believed was an attitude toward the German people which was far too benevolent, with plans to immediately take action to assist the German people and restore the nation's economy. Morgenthau delivered the handbook to Roosevelt, who shared the secretary's opinion and quickly sent a letter to the War Department bluntly expressing his dissatisfaction and demanding the handbook's revision. Chiefly by means of a flyleaf insert expressing basic principles to be followed by military government officers, the handbook's mild provisions were eventually made more severe.<sup>23</sup>

Roosevelt had thus far largely shied away from making definitive commitments regarding postwar Germany. As late as October 1944 he wrote to Hull that he "dislike[d] making detailed plans for a country which we do not yet occupy."<sup>24</sup> Yet his general beliefs regarding the character of the Germans, German history, and what this meant for postwar planning were much closer to those of Morgenthau than to those of the State

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<sup>21</sup> Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line*, 16-21, 26-33; Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation of Germany," 324-325, 342-346.

<sup>22</sup> Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 350-351; Michaela Hönicke, "'Prevent World War III': An Historiographical Appraisal of Morgenthau's Programme for Germany," in *The Roosevelt Years: New Perspectives in American History, 1933-1945*, ed. Robert A. Garson and Stuart S. Kidd (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 160-161; Memorandum, "American Policy for Treatment of Germany After Surrender," 1 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 86-90; Memorandum for the Files, 22 Aug 44, NA, RG 56, Entry 360P, Box 11, F: (Chronological #62) August 1944.

<sup>23</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 83-90. For a complete copy of the Roosevelt letter, see Memorandum for the Secretary of War, 26 Aug 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 30, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Working File.

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum for the Secretary of State, 29 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1955), 158-159.

Department.<sup>25</sup> Shortly after Morgenthau raised a red flag concerning the direction of current planning, Roosevelt acted on Secretary of War Henry Stimson's recommendation and asked Morgenthau, Hull, and Stimson to meet as a Cabinet Committee to discuss long-term policy for Germany.<sup>26</sup>

Morgenthau had already instructed his staff to prepare a proposal for the treatment of Germany that encapsulated his thoughts—a document that served as the first written iteration of ideas that eventually came to be referred to as the “Morgenthau Plan.”<sup>27</sup> State Department officials likewise prepared a memorandum outlining their views.<sup>28</sup> Officials from all three departments then discussed both documents during several early September gatherings to lay the groundwork for the first Cabinet Committee meeting. Because Allied troops were at the time steadily advancing in France, McCloy also took the opportunity to point out that an interim post-defeat directive for Eisenhower was urgently needed, pending formulation of a long-range policy for Germany. As a result, Treasury officials now joined their State and War Department colleagues in reworking an appropriate document already being prepared under the auspices of the Working Security Committee.<sup>29</sup> Several days later, the three secretaries met and discussed a State Department memo summarizing the views expressed at the preliminary meetings, which indicated agreement on the need for demilitarization (here limited to dissolution of the Wehrmacht and paramilitary groups, as well as destruction of armaments and prohibition of munitions manufacturing); punitive and prohibitive measures against Nazis and other “objectionable elements;” and extensive controls over the German press, communications, and education. Differences remained regarding

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<sup>25</sup> Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 472-473; Michaela Hönicke, “‘Know Your Enemy’: American Wartime Images of Germany, 1942-1943,” in *Enemy Images in American History*, ed. Ragnhild Fiebig-von Hase and Ursula Lehmkuhl (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1997), 244-248 [hereafter “American Wartime Images”]. Roosevelt's views on Germany and demilitarization are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

<sup>26</sup> Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation,” 353-356.

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum, “Suggested Post-Surrender Program for Germany,” 1 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 86-90. No single “Morgenthau Plan” was ever written. The most comprehensive embodiment of Morgenthau's views is the September 1944 briefing book prepared by the Treasury Department for the president. See *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 128-143. A later formulation of his ideas can be found in Henry J. Morgenthau, Jr., *Germany Is Our Problem* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945).

<sup>28</sup> “American Policy for Treatment of Germany After Surrender,” 81-85.

<sup>29</sup> Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation,” 361-363. At this time, CCS 551 was still in place, but Eisenhower and War Department officials believed it was based on assumptions concerning conditions likely to be encountered in Germany that were no longer accurate (352-353).

the questions of dismemberment and economic affairs.<sup>30</sup> The latter issue proved especially divisive, with Morgenthau at one end of the spectrum and Stimson at the other. Holding opinions close to those of the State Department, the Secretary of War repeatedly and vehemently expressed his view that the Germans should be treated humanely and their industries not recklessly destroyed, both to ensure the economic well-being of Western Europe and to avoid laying the seeds of a future war in the form of deprivation and resentment.<sup>31</sup> Conflict regarding financial and economic matters dominated subsequent discussions of long-term American policies towards Germany, heightening tensions between the departments and raising the stakes for presidential approval in the process. These disagreements, moreover, would persist into the post-surrender period.<sup>32</sup>

Even as the secretaries were clashing over long-term policies for Germany, their subordinates were dealing with the more pressing problem of an interim directive for Eisenhower. Treasury Department revisions made to the State and War Department draft document produced a stricter directive with less discretion for the supreme commander of Allied forces, who would head the occupation immediately after hostilities ended. Here, too, the most serious wrangling centered on economic issues. Nevertheless, after five meetings over the course of three weeks, a group of officials from the three departments on September 22 approved an interim directive applicable following German defeat but prior to the introduction of tripartite policies. Subsequently shunted through the proper channels of Washington bureaucracy, the document received Roosevelt's approval, acquired the file designation JCS 1067, and, by the end of the month, had been forwarded to Europe for Eisenhower's guidance.<sup>33</sup> American officials intended for JCS 1067 to follow the path of CCS 551: first obtaining CCS

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<sup>30</sup> Memorandum, "Suggested Recommendations on Treatment of Germany From the Cabinet Committee for the President," 4 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 95-97.

<sup>31</sup> Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 366-368. See also Henry L. Stimson to the President, 5 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 98-100; Henry L. Stimson to the Secretary of State, 9 Sep 44, *ibid.*, 123-126.

<sup>32</sup> Much has been written on the controversy surrounding the "Morgenthau Plan" and the debate concerning American economic plans for Germany. No history discussing postwar planning can ignore these developments, but several of the more substantial treatments include Mausbach, *Zwischen Morgenthau und Marshall*; Bernd Greiner, *Die Morgenthau-Legende: Zur Geschichte eines umstritten Plans* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1995), Warren F. Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943-46* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1976). See also Hönicke, "'Prevent World War III,'" for a helpful discussion of varying interpretations of the Morgenthau Plan and the Treasury Secretary's intentions. Accounts of the principal protagonists include Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947), 568-583, and Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, Vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 1602-1622. For key documents concerning the Morgenthau Plan controversy as well as transcripts of Treasury Department discussions on postwar issues and relations with the State and War Departments, see Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Security Laws, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: GPO, 1967).

<sup>33</sup> Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 372-377. For a copy of the September 22, 1944, version of JCS 1067, see *FRUS, Conferences at Malta and Yalta*, 143-154.

endorsement, then governing all territory under SHAEF control. The British, however, rejected the document as too stringent.<sup>34</sup> In his role as supreme commander of Allied forces, Eisenhower therefore had no post-surrender directive. In addition, he continued to be subject only to the outdated pre-surrender CCS 551 until November 1944 when SHAEF issued a new pre-surrender directive comprised essentially of the main provisions of CCS 551 augmented by the guiding principles attached to the revised handbook.<sup>35</sup>

During the fall of 1944, SHAEF officials were themselves busy formulating an operational plan to succeed Operation OVERLORD. Code-named “ECLIPSE,” the plan was to take effect upon German surrender, or when most German troops had capitulated, and had as key objectives preventing further hostilities, ensuring adherence to the terms of surrender, establishing law and order, initiating disarmament and demobilization, and deploying Allied troops to their assigned occupation zones. In the absence of a CCS post-surrender directive, “ECLIPSE” also incorporated basic military government functions spelled out in the November 1944 pre-surrender directive, including the “care, control, and repatriation of displaced persons; apprehension of war criminals; establishment of property and financial controls; elimination of nazism and militarism; and preservation of suitable civil administration to accomplish all the objectives.”<sup>36</sup>

Meanwhile, as the only general statement of U.S. policy for Germany approved by all relevant government departments and by the president, JCS 1067 began to serve other purposes. In late October, Wickersham informed his USGCC personnel that draft directives prepared by Winant’s advisors could be used for planning purposes even when not yet officially approved by Washington, but should first be checked against JCS 1067 to determine whether they required modifications.<sup>37</sup> A month later the USGCC—which had already been consulting with Winant’s advisors and effectively assisting in the preparation of draft directives for EAC consideration—received instructions from the War Department to use the interim directive in preparing directives for military government. Telling his men that JCS 1067 was now to be the USGCC “Bible,”

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<sup>34</sup> Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation,” 376-377; Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line*, 49-50.

<sup>35</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 106-108.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 163-164; “History, Office of Military Government for Germany.” See also Kenneth O. McCreedy, “Planning the Peace: Operation Eclipse and the Occupation of Germany,” *Journal of Military History* 65, No. 3 (2001): 713-739. No post-surrender directive covering the SHAEF period was ever issued.

<sup>37</sup> Planning Directive No. 3, 19 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the United States Group Control Council (Germany) [USGCC], Box 4, F: AG 014.1 Military Government Prior to Defeat or Surrender, Directives for [2].

Wickersham noted that the War Department was no longer interested in approving the detailed directives written by Winant's staff.<sup>38</sup> In fact, officials in Washington had decided to transform JCS 1067 into a long-range policy paper for submission to the EAC, hoping to secure its approval as a statement of general principles for all occupation zones, with the military or Control Council to work out specifics later.<sup>39</sup>

In January 1945, the State Department sent Winant a revised JCS 1067 for EAC consideration, but some six weeks later asked him to hold off on submitting the document. Decisions made by Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Josef Stalin at the February 1945 Yalta Conference now needed to be integrated into American policy. The department's attempt to prepare a new general policy statement touched off yet another round of interdepartmental quarreling, as War Department officials protested the degree of authority granted to the Control Council at the expense of American zonal commanders and Treasury Department personnel tried again to beat back attempts to soften economic plans for Germany. Finally, on March 23, 1945, Roosevelt initialed a short document which all three departments had approved titled "Summary of U.S. Initial Post-Defeat Policy Relating to Germany."<sup>40</sup>

In the end, neither the revised JCS 1067 nor the new post-defeat policy summary ever received EAC consideration. However, the policy summary served as a guide for the deliberations of still another committee. Established as an affiliate of the recently created State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (a high profile successor to the Working Security Committee), the new Informal Policy Committee on Germany (IPCOG) included McCloy, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Harry Dexter White, and representatives of the Navy

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<sup>38</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 132; Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 387.

<sup>39</sup> Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 393. The dual-track planning of SHAEF and the USGCC reflected not only the Anglo-American composition of SHAEF versus the strictly American composition of USGCC, but also their differing functions—although for much of the period from fall 1944 through spring 1945, the exact role of the USGCC remained uncertain and in flux. SHAEF, and the civil affairs staff of the U.S. Army forces under its command, were concerned with developing policies for Allied combat troops and the military government detachments which would enter Germany with them to handle civil affairs and initial military government operations. The USGCC, which would eventually make up the American component of the Allied Control Authority, was initially charged with developing longer-term policies for the occupation of Germany based primarily on tripartite decisions of the EAC. As directed by SHAEF in December 1944, the USGCC was to coordinate its work closely with its British counterpart, as well as with officials of SHAEF, which would have earliest responsibility for military government in Germany. In late spring of 1945, U.S. policy specified that the USGCC would assist in making policy for the American zone and serve as the U.S. element of the Allied Control Authority that would establish joint military government policy for Germany; the civil affairs staff of the U.S. forces in the American Zone would be responsible for executing and supervising American and Control Council policies. With the appointment of General Lucius D. Clay as Deputy Military Governor in April 1945, the first step toward the consolidation of the two functions was taken. On the sometimes uncertain and changing situation of the USGCC, see Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 175-177, 221-224, 402-403.

<sup>40</sup> Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 403, 415-420. For the policy statement, see Joseph C. Grew to the President, 23 Mar 45, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 29, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Control.



Department and Foreign Economic Administration, with Assistant Secretary of State William Clayton as chair. In April, the new committee produced yet another draft of JCS 1067, and, with the approval of the new president, Harry Truman, the JCS finally forwarded it to Eisenhower on April 28, 1945. Issued to the general as commander of all American forces in Europe, the directive applied to the post-SHAEF phase and was to guide him both in administering the American occupation zone and in negotiating joint policies for Germany within the sphere of the future Allied Control Council.<sup>41</sup> Though intended as a temporary directive for the immediate post-defeat period, JCS 1067 remained the governing document of American occupation policy for more than two years.

### **Defining Militarism**

#### *The Need to Pull the Fangs of Germany*

American postwar policymaking efforts clearly involved dozens, even hundreds, of officials, administrators, and consultants on both sides of the Atlantic. Yet despite their numbers, and despite sometimes strongly expressed diverging opinions, most could agree on certain basic ideas. In particular, they believed that once defeated Germany would again grow strong and need to be, at the very least, controlled and restrained, and, at best, as Roosevelt had suggested, defanged. In addition, they blamed Germany's bellicose willfulness on its "militarism"—a term Americans had associated with the Germans for many decades.

"The problem arises because it may be anticipated that after defeat and initial disarmament Germany will rearm unless prevented by international action from doing so," a 1943 State Department policy paper on the prevention of German rearmament explained.<sup>42</sup> "Mr. Kohn is convinced we cannot trust the Germans," reported a 1944 Treasury Department memorandum describing a recent meeting that Secretary Morgenthau's key advisors had arranged with two émigré scholars, one of whom was Czech-born Smith College professor of modern European history Hans Kohn. "Unless we adopt stern measures," Professor Kohn had argued, "they will try again; the overwhelming majority of the officers, government officials, university professors, ministers,

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<sup>41</sup> "Hammond, "Directives for the Occupation," 421-425; Holborn *American Military Government*, 47, 157. JCS 1067 was formally revised again in early May, with changes made to its economic provisions (JCS 1067/8). A copy of the April 28, 1945, document is included in Holborn, *American Military Government*, 157-172.

<sup>42</sup> H-3018, 4 Jun 43, *DDP*, I/4:327.

etc, will be determined to make another attempt at world domination as soon as it is at all possible.”<sup>43</sup> “History provides abundant examples of the manner in which the German Armed forces, reduced by peace treaty to apparent impotence, blossom forth in an astonishingly brief period into an even deadlier and more efficient organization,” concluded a 1944 SHAEF planning study on the German officer corps. “History will without doubt repeat itself,” it continued, “but the process may be considerably delayed if the action taken by us at the end of this war is sufficiently drastic.”<sup>44</sup>

Given these views, policymaking for Germany essentially entailed considering which drastic actions would most effectively prevent, or at least delay, the seemingly inevitable German resurgence. Would partition help preserve peace by breaking up a centralized political and economic power? Or would partition plant the seeds of revanchism? Would flooding the mines of the Ruhr permanently disable German war-making capabilities? Or would it fatally disable the German economy and stoke smoldering resentment against the Allies?

Lacing the countless discussions, memoranda, policy studies, and draft directives addressing these concerns, moreover, were references to the problem of German militarism. If Germany had destroyed world peace in the past and was destined to rise again, its militarism was to blame, ran the refrain. Interesting is the fact that few questioned this assessment; it seemed to be, rather, an a priori assumption of all planning discussions. Such thinking clearly started at the top. Roosevelt himself made this argument before Congress, and Hull, Morgenthau, Stimson, and McCloy likewise denounced German militarism and sought its eradication.<sup>45</sup> But almost without exception, their views were shared by policymakers at all levels of

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<sup>43</sup> Memorandum, Meeting on the German Problem, 31 Aug 44, NA, RG 56, Entry 360P, Box 21, F: Conferences – Mr. White’s Office 1944; Memorandum, “Biographies,” 4 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diaries, World War II and Postwar, 1943-1945* [hereafter *Morgenthau Diaries*], Roll 47, Vol. 768. Hans Kohn was born in Prague, served in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I, earned a law degree from Prague’s German University, and worked for several Zionist organizations during the 1920s before eventually emigrating to the United States. Catherine Epstein, *A Past Renewed: A Catalog of German-Speaking Refugee Historians in the United States after 1933* (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 157.

<sup>44</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Commander Owen, et al, 16 Sep 44, NA, RG 331, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force [SHAEF], Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff.

<sup>45</sup> Address to the Congress, 6 Jan 42, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 11:35, 38, 40; Protokoll der Sitzung des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 30 Jan 43, *DDP I/4:160*; Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 161-162; Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, 83-90, 582-583; Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy The Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 205; Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line*, 70n222.

government—a uniformity of thinking that almost certainly reflected both American historical experience and more recent developments.

Concerns about German militarism had a long history in the United States. When liberal democracy and industrial modernization had begun rapidly transforming Europe during the nineteenth century, Prussia's Hohenzollern monarchs had staunchly resisted the power of these forces. Instead, Prussia had remained a bastion of conservatism grounded in a tradition of aristocratic military service to the state and had transferred these values to the new Germany after 1871. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the provocative rhetoric of influential German writers like Heinrich von Treitschke and Friedrich von Bernhardi, which glorified war as a means of progress and the elevation of the German people, had intensified the anxiety of Germany's neighbors, who were already wary of the dominance of privileged Prussian Junker military elites in German society.<sup>46</sup> Many Americans—particularly educated elites who had personal experience in Germany—had likewise criticized Germany for its militarism, a flaw they frequently saw embodied in its uniform-wearing, sometimes belligerently blustery *Kaiser* and its overly influential military.<sup>47</sup> By 1914, overall American attitudes toward Germans were nevertheless ambivalent: disapproving of German militarism and autocracy, but generally appreciative of perceived qualities of orderliness and industry (ideas formed in no small part by exposure to German immigrants.)<sup>48</sup>

With the outbreak of World War I, however, negative German images gained ascendancy.<sup>49</sup> Erupting less than two years after Bernhardi called for “*Weltmacht oder Niedergang* [world power or downfall],” the new war appeared to confirm the danger German militarism posed to the rest of the world.<sup>50</sup> Stimson himself had not been immune to these intellectual and political currents. “From the very beginning, Stimson's sympathies were strongly on the side of the French and the British,” recounts McGeorge Bundy, who assisted Stimson in

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<sup>46</sup> Howard, *The Lessons of History*, 49-61.

<sup>47</sup> Jörg Nagler, “From Culture to Kultur: Changing American Perceptions of Imperial Germany, 1870-1914,” in *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776*, ed. David E. Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 146-147; Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines: Democracy, Nationalism, and the Committee on Public Information* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 65-67.

<sup>48</sup> Nagler, “From Culture to Kultur,” 148-154.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>50</sup> Howard, *Lessons of History*, 60.

writing his memoirs. He attributes this in part to the influence of Stimson's father, who had studied medicine in Paris when the secretary was a child. "Dr. Stimson had begun his studies in Berlin," Bundy explains, "and had quickly departed, disgusted by the martial swagger of the youthful German Empire. Stimson had thus learned from his father to mistrust the Prussians and admire the French. . . . And the German invasion of Belgium was so evidently cynical and brutal that it at once hardened his sympathies against the Central Powers."<sup>51</sup> Overt wartime propaganda characterizing the Germans as militaristic and blood-thirsty barbarians bolstered negative opinions of Germany.<sup>52</sup> Usually unfair in their vehemence and hyperbole, these depictions were nevertheless hardly counteracted by Germany's overrunning of neutral Belgium and its unrestricted submarine warfare, by the virtual military dictatorship installed in Berlin during the war, or by the tendency of German intellectuals to categorize militarism among Germany's admirable cultural achievements. The Treaty of Versailles further solidified some critical views in assigning Germany blame for starting the war.

During the 1920s, American revisionists removed much of the burden of German war guilt,<sup>53</sup> and polemics concerning German atrocities shifted from accusations of barbarity to condemnations of British propaganda lies. Sympathy for the new Weimar Republic and its economic troubles also led some observers to more positive opinions of Germany.<sup>54</sup> But Adolf Hitler and his Third Reich again silenced many supportive voices. Unabashedly defying the Versailles settlement, Hitler reintroduced conscription, rearmed openly, and remilitarized the German Rhineland. Newsreels and newsmagazine photos now showed a new leader in uniform, this time surrounded not by bemedaled and mustachioed Prussians, but by masses of uniformed marching men and boys.

Grappling with the international crises in Asia and Europe in the late 1930s, Americans tended to focus on the new post-World War I dictatorships in trying to explain the world situation. When questioning the

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<sup>51</sup> Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, 83-84.

<sup>52</sup> Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines*, chap. 4; Jörg Nagler, "Pandora's Box: Propaganda and War Hysteria in the United States During World War I," in *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918*, ed. Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 489-499.

<sup>53</sup> Selig Adler, "The War-Guilt Question and American Disillusionment, 1918-1928," *Journal of Modern History* 23, No. 1 (1951): 1-28; Warren I. Cohen, *The American Revisionists: The Lessons of Intervention in World War I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), Chapter 2.

<sup>54</sup> Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, "Between Hope and Skepticism: American Views of Germany, 1918-1933," in Barclay and Glaser-Schmidt, *Transatlantic Images and Perspectives*, 191-192.

differences between these dictatorships and American democracy, they pointed especially to the influential role the military played in each of the states. Each dictatorship, notes Benjamin Alpers, “seemed committed to the aggressive use of military power to resolve international disputes and expand the nation’s power.” Moreover, “in Germany, Italy, Russia, and Japan, the military had begun to serve as a model for the larger organization of social life.” Worried that the United States itself might be susceptible to dictatorship, with the Great Depression and war requirements potentially spurring America’s transformation into a fascist state, some Americans tried to prevent this by way of citizen education programs that deliberately contrasted the peaceful, voluntary nature of democratic American life with regimented militaristic dictatorships like Nazi Germany.<sup>55</sup>

Government policymakers who took a moment to examine current scholarly literature would also have encountered a Germany characterized as a shining example of modern militarism. German émigré Alfred Vagts,<sup>56</sup> for instance, awarded the Germans special mention in his 1937 classic, *A History of Militarism*. In describing a “militarism of moods and opinions” that privileged military institutions and methods in society and showed excessive military influence on civilian thinking and behavior, Vagts held up Japan and Germany as the preeminent examples. In Germany, he noted, soldiers were admired in peacetime as well as during war, while the German people were “inclined to acknowledge the primacy of the military and accept its absolute good regardless of its use in war, its victories, or defeats.”<sup>57</sup> His comments regarding fascist Germany’s “devotion to

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<sup>55</sup> Benjamin L. Alpers, “This is the Army: Imagining a Democratic Military in World War II,” *Journal of American History* 85, No. 1 (June 1998): 131-134. Alpers writes that there were two ways Americans believed the military was important to a dictatorship—its expansionist use of military power and its use of the military as a model for the organization of social life. He thus stresses that Americans viewed dictatorships as characterized by “militarism” and “regimentation.” In this sense, his perspective differs from the assumptions of many American demilitarization policies in which social organization models drawn from the military were considered a manifestation of militarism, rather than something apart from it. In discussing “regimentation,” Alpers refers not only to the Nazis’ uniformed street fighters, but to Hitler’s goal of *Gleichschaltung*. In this respect, “regimentation” could be seen as both broader than “militarism” and a characteristic of it, although a key objective of Hitler’s efforts to bring all of German life under Nazi Party influence was to more effectively prepare the German people for a long, successful war. On the latter point, see Bessel, *Nazism and War*, 65-68.

<sup>56</sup> Married to the daughter of American historian Charles Beard, Alfred Vagts had served as a company commander in Germany’s armed forces during World War I, earning the Iron Cross first and second classes along the way. But he was also an active Social Democrat who left Germany in 1932 due to the rise of the Nazis. Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz in English: The Reception of Clausewitz in Britain and America, 1815-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), <http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/Bassford/Chapter19.htm>.

<sup>57</sup> Vagts, *A History of Militarism*, 15. For other contemporary views of German militarism—all written by central European émigrés—see F.W. Foerster, *Europe and the German Question* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1940); Hans Ernst Fried, “German Militarism: Substitute for Revolution,” *Political Science Quarterly* 58, No. 4 (1943): 481-513; Hans Ernst Fried, *The Guilt of the German Army* (New York: Macmillan, 1942); Herbert Rosinski, *The German Army* (Washington, DC: Infantry Journal, 1944); and Albert T. Lauterbach, “Militarism in the Western World: A Comparative Study,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 5, No. 4 (1944), 446-478.

the uniform,” the influence of the military on German education, and the new legality of dueling in the Third Reich as ““a manly settlement of an offense to honor”” only served to underscore his assertions.<sup>58</sup>

American government sources abroad also emphasized the worrisome character of the new Germany. Reporting on a recent trip through Germany, U.S. Ambassador William Dodd wrote Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore in late 1934 that “in almost every city or town there was marching, either of Hitler Jugend or of SS and SA men in uniform.” In Bayreuth, he continued, “marching and singing kept me awake nearly all the night.” Descriptions of billowing smokestacks supported Dodd’s further observation that “from everything I could learn there is great preparation for war”—a contention further supported by a *Deutsches Luftsportverband* recruiting poster he enclosed which bore the slogan “The German People Must Become a Nation of Flyers” and a graphic of Germany that included Alsace-Lorraine and its lost eastern territories. Dodd explained that he had obtained the poster in a hotel, adding,

While we were eating, at least 2,000 Hitler Jugend marched past the hotel door. They were singing the usual songs, one of which starts “Siegreich wollen wir Frankreich schlagen.” This song was formerly forbidden. It is now heard everywhere, at least I have reports that it is sung in Berlin when the troops are marching. When the hotel man handed me the picture, I said: “Are all of you learning to fly, as Göring suggests?” He replied: “A very great many. We have twenty expert flyers in this town (9,000 population), and they have registered 2,000 flyers in Stuttgart (capital, as you know, of Württemberg).” I said to him: “Well, that would make a good many flyers for the whole of Germany.” He replied: “Yes, all the big business men want war, and the little men are opposed. I don’t know what will happen.” This man did not know who I was, as nobody else knew during the whole trip, but he showed his natural reactions and was not a little concerned. I merely mention this as illustrative of the feeling that is frequently reflected in conversations but is never indicated in any public manner. It is fairly certain that nearly all the population is being held under the strictest control, and as I said above, the object is to put France out of business.<sup>59</sup>

Finally, while it is hard to gauge the extent to which U.S. policymakers read the profusion of wartime books and articles analyzing Germany and the Germans, certain voices did make themselves heard. Treasury Department officials, for instance, were not alone in seeking out or receiving unsought advice from German émigrés.<sup>60</sup> The State Department also circulated materials obtained from other experts. Already in 1942, for instance, the members of one of its Advisory Committee’s subcommittees received copies of a piece titled “What Shall We Do with Germany?” written by Bernadotte Schmitt, a University of Chicago historian

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<sup>58</sup> Vagts, *A History of Militarism*, 474-482.

<sup>59</sup> William E. Dodd to Judge Moore, 5 Nov 34, Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library [FDRL], President’s Secretary’s File [PSF], Safe File, Diplomatic Correspondence, Box 32, F: Germany: Dodd, William E., 1933-1935. Although this document was forwarded to the White House, it is not clear if Roosevelt saw it.

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, H.L.H. Memorandum for Miss Grace Tully, 23 Mar 43, FDRL, President’s Personal File [PPF] 3884; J.H. Hilldring Memorandum for Mr. McCloy, 23 Mar 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 38, F: ASW 387.

unrepentantly critical of Germany whose scholarly work insisted on the Germans' guilt for World War I.<sup>61</sup> Blending together details from German history and literature, Schmitt painted a picture of an aggressive, haughty, self-centered nation and at one point declared, "In truth, Hitler's 'New Order' is nothing more than Prussian militarism brought up to date."<sup>62</sup> Similarly, in 1944, Dr. Richard M. Bricker sent a White House official a report on a recent conference of psychiatrists who had adopted a "psycho-cultural" approach to the German problem. A covering abstract explained that, among other things, the conference members had concluded that "the image the German has of his world is never that of equals with whom he can cooperate; and the image he has of peace is never that of a stable condition. Peace, for him, has always in it the tension of waiting and preparing for war."<sup>63</sup>

### *The Nature of German Militarism*

If this cultural milieu makes the widespread condemnation of "German militarism" understandable, the varied assumptions regarding German flaws and failings were only rarely analyzed systematically by government policymakers. What was militarism? How did it work? And who exactly should be considered dangerous? Amidst the mounds of paper cluttering the tables, inboxes, and file drawers of American postwar planners, documents addressing the issue of militarism directly were few and far between. This might suggest an unstated, shared understanding of its origins and character, and to a certain extent this was true. But it was also true that when pressed to articulate their views, officials often unintentionally illuminated the inconsistencies, uncertainties, and diverging emphases that characterized American beliefs concerning German militarism.

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<sup>61</sup> Milton M. Klein, "Prominent Alumni, Part I," University of Tennessee, <http://web.utk.edu/~mklein/alum1.html>. Published in 1930, Schmitt's feisty *The Coming of the War: 1914* contributed to a lively historiographical debate on the origins of World War I. It also won a Pulitzer Prize. Schmitt had visited Germany early in the century and, particularly critical of its militaristic quality, later commented that he had "never trusted Germany since," though he "liked individual Germans."

<sup>62</sup> P Document 44, 26 Aug 42, NA, RG 59, Records of Harley A. Notter [Notter File], Entry 498, Box 56, F: P-Documents 44-65.

<sup>63</sup> Richard M. Brickner to Judge Samuel I. Rosenman, 5 Dec 44, attached to Rosenman to Brickner, 11 Dec 44, FDRL, Official File, 198a, F: Miscellaneous 1944. It is not clear whether the president ever saw this report. The State Department, however, did take notice of the conference, preparing a paper in June 1944 that described key findings relevant to the department's work. The paper indicated that the conference, which convened four times during the spring, "was sponsored by the Joint Committee on Post War Planning which represents the American Psychiatric Association, the American Orthopsychiatric Association, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, and various other national psychiatric groups." T-495, 14 Jun 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 67, F: T Documents 491-500.

At their most imprecise, American policymakers effectively equated militarism with aggression, or with the Germans' "tendency to be always engaged in war or preparing for war," as Secretary of State Cordell Hull once put it when discussing the Germans' "militaristic ways."<sup>64</sup> However, the stacks of planning materials also suggest several narrower, more considered trends in American thinking, trends that not surprisingly often mirrored current scholarly and popular conceptions of German militarism. In particular, American officials associated German militarism with Prussia and with the German officer corps—above all, with the German General Staff. Typically deemed the core or quintessence of German militarism, Prussia and German military officers were also frequently labeled insidious influences on the rest of Germany. In this way, they could be viewed as particularly culpable for a state of affairs that American policymakers in the end decided was the primary problem: the Germans as a people were historically inclined and culturally conditioned toward a militarism that encompassed not only a belief in the use of force in international relations but also the strong influence of martial ideals and the military itself on state and society.

*The Problem of Prussia.* For American officials, German militarism was inextricably bound up with Prussia. Perhaps not always consciously linking contemporary German actions with the decisions of the eighteenth-century Prussian ruler Frederick the Great or even with Bismarck's "blood and iron" unification strategy of the nineteenth century, many U.S. officials nevertheless saw Prussia as the "center of German militarism."<sup>65</sup> In particular, concerns about Prussia arose repeatedly during discussions regarding the advisability of dismembering Germany. In 1942, for instance, disagreements within the State Department Advisory Committee's Political Problems Subcommittee centered on whether partition would provoke German resentment and eventual aggression or would instead "tend to decentralize German energies and free them from the old military compulsions of the Prussian-dominated Reich."<sup>66</sup> Later summarizing some 16 months of deliberations, the subcommittee reported its conviction that it was "essential that the political and military power of Germany be reduced and that the domination of Prussia over the rest of Germany be broken."<sup>67</sup> In

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<sup>64</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 30 Jan 43, *DDP*, I/4:160.

<sup>65</sup> H-3016, 17 Sep 43, *DDP*, I/4:545.

<sup>66</sup> Minutes P-9, 2 May 42, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 54, F: P-Documents.

<sup>67</sup> P-236, 2 Jul 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 57, F: P-Documents 226-240.



supporting partition, Treasury Department officials in 1945 likewise wrote of the need to end Prussian ascendancy, citing “Prussia’s vicious role in the history of Germany and Europe.”<sup>68</sup> Certain policymakers thus assumed that Prussia, as a physical component of Germany, had continued to exert a predominant, and predominately negative, influence over the rest of the state.

Others were not so sure. In May 1944, the State Department’s Committee on Postwar Programs considered how future German decentralization or federalization might affect Prussia’s power. While some committee members worried that a return to the type of federalism characteristic of imperial or Weimar Germany would “tend to restore Prussian predominance” simply because Prussia controlled the majority of Germany’s territory, others suggested that Prussian hegemony had since 1918 “been a factor of declining importance” and that “Prussianism” had now “become a state of mind rather than an attribute of any particular part of Germany.”<sup>69</sup> Though not defined, this “state of mind” was clearly militaristic.<sup>70</sup> In fact, department officials occasionally substituted the word “Prussianism” for “militarism.”<sup>71</sup> In discussing “Prussianism” as an idea, rather than a geographic descriptor, official dialogue reflected a trend one student of American views of the German military has identified in published works from the 1940s. The terms “Prussia” and “Prussianism,” he notes, were assigned “an almost mythical quality, on which all the incomprehensibilities and differences of these apparently war-obsessed Germans could be projected.” A geographical location designation essentially evolved into a “spiritual [*geistiges*] concept.”<sup>72</sup>

Despite Prussianism’s nearly “mythical quality,” American policymakers believed it had some very concrete earthly representatives, most notably a group of men who were Prussian in the geographical as well as spiritual sense. Long viewed with suspicion in the liberal democracies as both anachronistic and unhealthy

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<sup>68</sup> Mr. Nathan to Mr. Coe, 21 Apr 45, NA, RG 56, Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs [OASIA], Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 77, F: Germany: Directives Vol. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Minutes of Department of State Committee on Post-War Programs, 18 May 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 499, Box 140, PWC Committee Minutes 1 to 66.

<sup>70</sup> See also David Harris to Mr. Notter, 13 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 489, Box 79, F: S-Germany (Swope) & Welles.

<sup>71</sup> H-136, 14 Feb 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Summaries 126-149.

<sup>72</sup> Uwe Heuer, *Reichswehr—Wehrmacht—Bundeswehr: Zum Image deutscher Streitkräfte in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika; Kontinuität und Wandel im Urteil amerikanischer Experten* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990), 174.

influential, the aristocratic Prussian Junkers, large landholders residing east of Germany's Elbe River, aroused special concern among State Department planners as socially and economically powerful "carriers of German militarism."<sup>73</sup> Officials also frequently pointed to their dominance of the German armed forces. In 1944, one Treasury Department official reminded Morgenthau advisor Harry Dexter White that this small group had historically supplied Germany's exceptional military leaders and that Germany's military successes had been due primarily to their efforts.<sup>74</sup> Morgenthau himself would later argue that the Junkers had been the "backbone of the German General Staff, the most ardent warmongers in Europe and the core of German aggression." Their estates, moreover, had given them "the political power which did so much to keep alive the harsh militarism of Germany."<sup>75</sup>

In October 1943, the Research and Analysis Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) produced a rare study on militarism in order to provide guidance for psychological warfare activities relating to Allied war aims, specifically the goal of eradicating "Prussian militarism." Drafted by two German émigrés, historian Felix Gilbert and social theorist Herbert Marcuse<sup>76</sup>—a fact that explains an analysis that clearly echoed certain contemporary scholarly interpretations of German history—the study defined "Prussian militarism" as "a definite social and political complex in German society" involving the "semi-feudal authoritarianism" of Junker owners of large East Elbian agrarian estates, a privileged class that had "exercised its political influence either directly . . . or, through its sons in the high officer corps of the German army and the higher ranks of the Civil Service."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> WS-217, 20 Jul 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 499, Box 150, F: WS Documents 211-232; PWC-141b, 5 Aug 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 59.

<sup>74</sup> Mr. Ostrow to Mr. White, 30 Aug 44, NA, RG 56, OASIA, Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 76, F: Germany: Denazification. General Information.

<sup>75</sup> Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 57.

<sup>76</sup> Petra Marquardt-Bigman, *Amerikanische Geheimdienstanalysen über Deutschland, 1942-1949* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1995), 89n100. Marquardt-Bigman provides a helpful examination of the research and analysis work of the Office of Strategic Services. On the influence of German émigrés in the Central European Section of the Research and Analysis Branch, see especially pp. 67-73.

<sup>77</sup> Office of Strategic Services, R.&A. No. 1281, "The Significance of Prussian Militarism for Nazi Imperialism: Potential Tensions in United Nations Psychological Warfare," iii-iv. In presenting this definition, the study explicitly cited Max Weber's 1924 publication *Entwicklungstendenzen in der Lage der ostelbischen Landarbeiter, gesammelte Aufsätze zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*.

First describing the substantial political and military influence of the Junkers from the late eighteenth century through the founding of the German Empire, the OSS analysts contended that although the Junkers' economic strength "did not keep step with their political power" in the face of nineteenth-century industrialization, "their political influence was strong enough to prevent the bourgeoisie from ushering in a new form of social life." The higher bourgeoisie had instead adhered to conservative standards in order to be admitted to "the ruling group," while "through the institution of the Reserveoffizier, the way of life of large parts of the German bourgeoisie came to be patterned on the ideals, code of honors, the behavior of the Prussian Junker." Gradually the Junkers' declining economic position had undermined their political position, and their political influence had declined still further during the Weimar Republic, due in part to the introduction of universal suffrage. No longer controlling the government, the Prussian elites nevertheless had retained influence in the civil service, saw one of their own elected president in 1925, tightened an alliance with industry first initiated in the nineteenth century, and "remained firmly entrenched in the Officer Corps of the Republican Reichswehr." More than 27 percent of all German officers were nobles in 1932, the report's authors maintained, pointing out that this was "vastly more than the percentage of nobles among the Reich population would warrant," though the nobles tended to be less influential in the "newer technical arms which became increasingly important."<sup>78</sup>

According to Gilbert and Marcuse, however, after seizing power in 1933 the Nazis had "completed the process of eliminating the Prussian Junkers as a decisive political power." Transforming Germany into a "centralized totalitarian state," they had dissolved Prussia as a political entity. To effectively prosecute the war, the Nazis had reorganized Germany's economy "in the interests of the industrial sector," which meant "the political power (direct and indirect) of big industry increased steadily." The Nazi state had "adopted a new ideology oriented to the standards of technocratic efficiency regardless of traditional status and privileges," while "the initial petty bourgeois and equalitarian character of Nazi popular support demanded a type of social and governmental regime hostile to the Junker tradition." All of this, they noted, "resulted in the practical disappearance of the Prussian Junkers from the policy making level."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> OSS, "The Significance of Prussian Militarism for Nazi Imperialism," 1-4.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

The German army presented a somewhat different picture. The proportion of “nobility” within the upper ranks of the officer corps was still “rather large,” although this nobility included more than just Prussians, had no representative in the High Command, and comprised a much smaller percentage of the lower ranks of the corps. In branches such as the Air Corps and Waffen SS, founded more recently and requiring “technical knowledge or abilities not typical of the Prussian Junker,” the presence of nobles was much more rare. “The requirements of modern warfare,” Gilbert and Marcuse continued, “undoubtedly led to a democratization of the army, to new relations between officers and men, and to a decline of the Prussian ‘spirit.’”<sup>80</sup>

In terms of the broader reach of German government, only a few noble names appeared on the lists of administrative and political officials. Alone in the German diplomatic corps was the influence of Prussian elites still strongly felt—a deliberate Nazi negotiating tactic, the report’s authors suggested.<sup>81</sup>

The Junkers had lost their political predominance, the OSS analysts ultimately concluded, even though they had retained certain social and economic advantages in the Third Reich. Moreover, other groups currently represented the most influential sources of German aggression. In making this argument, Gilbert and Marcuse essentially treated “Prussian militarism” as a unique sociological phenomenon which they divorced from German reactionary impulses and imperialistic aggression more generally. The term “Prussian militarism,” they argued,

no longer denotes a real political, governmental or social factor in present-day Germany. Prussia is no longer the core of Germany, nor are the Prussian Junkers the decisive driving force behind German aggressiveness. German aggressiveness is rooted in the expansionist tendencies of the armed command [elsewhere referred to as “the militarists”] and many of the big industrialists, and finds its popular support among the nationalistic middle classes. In addition, the government has frequently used chauvinism as a means of overcoming the sharp social and economic conflicts within the country. As far as the Junkers still play a role, they are only subservient instruments of these forces.<sup>82</sup>

Perceptive, insightful, and, in retrospect, remarkably accurate, the OSS study did not necessarily shape American policymaking. In fact, it is unclear exactly how widely the document circulated within the

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., i. These conclusions led the OSS to suggest that for psychological warfare purposes “the exclusive emphasis on Prussian militarism as the chief enemy may suggest an avenue of escape for the truly imperialistic forces behind the Army High Command. We should make it clear that we are not fighting Prussia, but rather the reactionary forces all over Germany which have time and again prevented the democratic reconstruction of German society.”

government.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, its authors were not alone in questioning the continuing influence of Prussian Junkers. Others with access to the highest levels of government also made this point, though they backed their contentions with less thoroughgoing analyses of the present situation in Nazi Germany. Perhaps more directly influential, for example, was a March 1944 memo concerning a range of postwar German policy issues that War Department Civil Affairs Division head Major General John H. Hilldring gave to McCloy and the USGCC's Wickersham.<sup>84</sup> In it, a Captain Oppenheimer, who had served with the German army during World War I,<sup>85</sup> asserted that "many persons outside Germany have a wrong conception of the position and influence of the junkers." He was not arguing that they should be permitted to retain their lands after the war, he explained, but wanted "to make it clear that the German militaristic and aggressive spirit will not be killed as a result of a liquidation of the junkers and their estates." Painting a dismal picture of the Junkers' economic management skills and what this meant for disposing of their estates after the war, Oppenheimer added that the influential days of the Junker were over. "Since the Kaiser abdicated," he maintained, "one does no longer hear of persons with high sounding names occupying key positions in the government, in the Army, in the industry or anywhere else. In fact, they have neither the ambition nor the mental ability to take active part in the shaping of political events in Germany."<sup>86</sup> McCloy later reported to Hilldring that he found Oppenheimer's extended remarks to be "intelligent" and "sound," though he also admitted that there were "some things I know nothing about, such as the problem of the liquidation of the Junker estates. . . ."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> The author's copy was located at the Library of Congress. State Department files at the U.S. National Archives also include a copy, so it cannot be ruled out that the study was in fact widely circulated, or at least came to the attention of key policymakers. However, the State, War, Treasury, and SHAEF materials reviewed for this study contained no specific references to it.

<sup>84</sup> J.H. Hilldring Memorandum for Mr. McCloy, 23 Mar 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 38, F: ASW 387; J.H. Hilldring Memorandum for Mr. McCloy, 28 Mar 44, *ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> In their correspondence regarding this memo, McCloy and Hilldring simply refer to the writer as "Captain Oppenheimer." However, it seems likely that a short letter written by McCloy during the fall of 1945 is referring to the same man. In it, McCloy referred to "Fritz Oppenheimer, who is on the staff of the ETO now stationed in Frankfurt" and who was "the German who fought in the last war for Germany, played a spectacular role in the Battle of Verdun at Fort Doumont and, after many vicissitudes, came over here and enlisted in our Army as a Private and is now a Major." See McCloy to Mrs. Reid, 11 Sep 45, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 29, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Control.

<sup>86</sup> Memorandum prepared by Captain Oppenheimer, n.d., attached to J.H. Hilldring Memorandum for Mr. McCloy, 23 Mar 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 38, F: ASW 387.

<sup>87</sup> John J. McCloy Memorandum for General Hilldring, 27 Mar 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 183, Box 55, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – 1944.

*The German Officer Corps.* While there may have been some doubt as to the current political and economic influence of Prussian Junkers, their unique relationship to Germany's military remained largely unquestioned. Furthermore, there was little disagreement among American policymakers that the German officer corps as a whole was a critical font and welcoming home of German militarism.

For a recent study concerning images of the German armed forces in the United States, German political scientist Uwe Heuer reviewed a wide range of (primarily journalistic and scholarly) literature from the years 1942 to 1952 and concluded that Americans saw "Prussianism" in its purest form embodied in the person of the German officer and often still regarded the officer corps as a formal social group with unique characteristics. Indicative of this perspective was the frequent use of the term "caste" to describe a closed, privileged, isolated, and yet powerful corps defined by a shared educational background, conservative outlook, and aristocratic roots. "The expression 'caste,'" notes Heuer, underscores "the—in the eyes of the beholder—anachronistic and feudalistic organizational principle of the officer corps, pertaining to both its social composition and the resulting political and moral values and goals."<sup>88</sup>

Not surprisingly, American officials frequently echoed arguments presented in the literature found in their local libraries and bookstores, with the sinister language of caste materializing periodically in policy discussions. An early example, which also illustrates the fuzziness of American conceptions of the German officer corps, appeared in the first informal policy recommendations for Germany presented by Hull at the 1943 Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference. Here, the State Department suggested that "the military caste system in all its phases should be eliminated,"<sup>89</sup> as if some formal classification structure still existed, complete with organizational regulations and promotional rules. (Fortunately, this wording eventually disappeared in favor of more focused restrictions on military officers, a development that was perhaps due to improved understanding but may also have merely reflected the whims of a State Department editor.)

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<sup>88</sup> Heuer, *Reichswehr—Wehrmacht—Bundeswehr*, 175-177. By the time Hitler came to power, aristocrats made up less than 25 percent of the German officer corps. Furthermore, under Hitler Germany's armed forces increased exponentially in size, and exclusionary recruitment policies were set aside on the grounds of both ideology and expediency. Still, it is striking to note that in 1932, when the nobility comprised just .14 percent of Germany's total population, 23.8 percent of the country's officers were nobles and more than 50 percent of all German generals came from the nobility. Hitler's policies, moreover, did not have an immediate impact on the upper echelons of the officer corps. Thus to see the German officer corps as a bastion of conservative aristocrats was somewhat misguided, but not without an element of truth. Manfred Messerschmidt, "The Military Elites in Germany Since 1870: Comparisons and Contrasts with the French Officer Corps," in *The Military in Politics and Society in France and Germany in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Klaus-Jürgen Müller (Oxford: Berg, 1995), 63-66; Heuer, *Reichswehr—Wehrmacht—Bundeswehr*, 177n45.

<sup>89</sup> Memorandum, "U.S. Proposal with Regard to the Treatment of Germany," 23 Oct 43, *DDP I/4:602*.

Whether discussing the corps as a caste or a class, postwar planners normally brooded less over the nature of the group than over its potentially dangerous influence in postwar Germany. Regarding professional officers, particularly the general staff, as integral to German militarism, critiques of the officer corps reflected traditional American concerns about a military operating unfettered by civilian constraints and emphasized the role of Germany's officers as the proponents, theorists, strategists, and technicians of a militaristic philosophy devoted to German might and expansion.

"The German military class has proved itself to be a war-glorifying and peace-disturbing caste," argued one State Department working paper on disarmament.<sup>90</sup> Considering how to prevent German rearmament, another paper noted that the strongest argument for quarantining the class after the war was that the Allies "would be striking at the ideological roots of German militarism, thus cutting off at its source the German urge to rearm." It went on to discuss possible civilian control of a future German army, noting that "throughout recent German history control of the military budget has been . . . tightly held by the officer class." Putting civilians in charge would prevent the officer class from controlling the army, including, significantly, its personnel policies. Such a move, the paper suggested, would "strengthen the democratic elements in Germany" and "reduce correspondingly the strength of the autocratic, militaristic elements."<sup>91</sup>

Military planners examined the problem of German officers even more closely and systematically. How to handle the officer class was just one of many problems facing the State Department and was no more urgent than any other. By contrast, military planners realized that they would soon be forced to deal with literally thousands of officers who might be captured or fall into Allied hands when the Germans surrendered. Of necessity, therefore, they gave special consideration to the threat posed by the officer corps, no doubt also stimulated in part by the natural interest of military leaders in the future capabilities of their opponents.

During the fall of 1944, Colonel T. N. Grazebrook, head of the SHAEF operations staff's Post-Hostilities Planning Subsection, supervised the development of a strategy for handling German officers immediately following Germany's capitulation. Attendees at an early September meeting considered a preliminary staff study on the question and contributed to the production of a longer, more probing paper, circulated in late September, which served as the basis for still further discussions. Reviewed by assorted

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<sup>90</sup> Working paper on the "Extent and Duration of the Military Disarmament of Germany," 7 Dec 43, *DDP*, I/4:679.

<sup>91</sup> H-3018, 5 Jun 43, *DDP*, I/4:329.

SHAEF personnel, the study continued to evolve, though its fundamentals remained largely unchanged. Its recommendations eventually proved to be a point of some contention, but the basis on which they rested was apparently not widely disputed.<sup>92</sup>

Perhaps the fullest expression of SHAEF's ideas regarding German officers thus appeared in the late September draft of the study, titled "Disposal of the German Military Caste." The situation it described was grim. Noting that one of the principal objects of victory was to completely demilitarize Germany and eliminate German militarism, the study's authors argued that existing plans for total disarmament, the disbandment of Germany's armed forces, and the destruction of its "material war potential," "would go no further than the superficial demilitarization of Germany." Untouched would be not only "the militaristic spirit" they believed was "inherent in the German nature," but also "the military caste of professional and highly trained officers whose mental concept regards peace only as a period of preparation and training between wars." More frightening still, this caste not only possessed "the professional ability, knowledge and training to rebuild the Wehrmacht," but would "also possess a burning desire to do so." It was not an exaggeration, they added, "to suppose that plans are already being laid for the reconstruction of the Wehrmacht after the conclusion of the present war."<sup>93</sup>

From the perspective of the study's authors, the Nazis were a passing phenomenon and the German officer corps a permanent concern. "The Nazi party with all its ramifications is the obvious primary target of our security plans," they explained, but it should be remembered that "the Nazi party would not have attained its power and position without the connivance and backing of the military clique, who saw in it an opportunity to achieve their military ambitions." Like a parasite invading and assuming control of a host body, after the Nazis were destroyed the "military clique" would "attach themselves to whatever political grouping, be it Catholic, Social Democrat or Communist which seems to offer the best medium for their constant theme, the militaristic

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<sup>92</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Commander Owen, et al, 16 Sep 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff; T.N. Grazebrook to Colonel R.C. Brooks, et al, 24 Sep 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism (Dissolution of German Armed Forces & Paramilitary Organizations, etc.); T. N. Grazebrook to ANCXF, et al, 12 Nov 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff; Charles A.H. Thomason to Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Section, 23 Nov 44, *ibid.*; T.N. Grazebrook to Chief, Plans Section, 28 Nov 44, *ibid.* For more discussion of the study's specific policy recommendations, see Chapter 3.

<sup>93</sup> Grazebrook to Brooks, 24 Sep 44, NA, RG 260.



power of Germany.” This meant that the Nazi party was the Allies’ immediate security concern, but “the military clique” would remain “the primary long term target.”<sup>94</sup>

Following was a brief recitation of the means by which Germany’s General Hans von Seeckt had secretly reconstituted the general staff and in other ways preserved Germany’s war-making capabilities in the early 1920s despite the prohibitions of the Treaty of Versailles. Presuming that von Seeckt’s methods could not be repeated in the 1940s, the study’s authors were nevertheless certain that the Germans would conceive of some means to reestablish their general staff unless prevented from doing so. Although the writers argued that not all German officers were potentially dangerous to future peace, their judgment remained severe. “The General Staff Corps and the higher ranks of the officer corps of the three services, together form the hard centre of German militarism,” they concluded. “From their ranks will arise, if it is permitted, the planners and commanders of the Wehrmacht of the future.” Therefore, these officers could only be effectively “rendered impotent” by detaining them after surrender and eventually exiling them from Germany permanently.<sup>95</sup>

A reorganized, streamlined, and slightly altered version of the paper from early November clarified that the “military caste” could be divided into three categories: the generals, the general staff corps, and the professional officer corps. Now revising SHAEF’s original estimation of the officer corps by suggesting that “every professional German officer inherits the militarist tradition and to that extent is potentially dangerous,” the study’s authors also conceded that cleansing German society of the entire officer corps would be impossible and they would therefore need to concentrate on its most dangerous members.<sup>96</sup> More striking was their characterization of the general staff corps as the “high priesthood of the German cult of war,” which “like all hierarchies” was “exclusive, privileged, and immensely powerful” within the army and which would undoubtedly construct a new Wehrmacht if not thwarted. The new study admitted that it would be difficult to prevent a repetition of the 1920s and concluded that the only reliable strategy would be to exterminate the entire

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Ultimately, this was not SHAEF’s decision to make, but rather a tripartite planning responsibility—something the study’s authors freely admitted.

<sup>96</sup> Grazebrook to ANCXF, et al, 12 Nov 44, NA, RG 331. The study suggested that “the majority of regimental officers and their equivalent in the Navy and Air Force can be returned to civil life in the normal process of disbandment. Successful Commanders and a proportion of temporary staff officers on the other hand will be suspect, and the records of all senior officers should be scrutinized before they are discharged from the Wehrmacht.” The November version of the study also dropped its references to the military clique’s use of the Nazis for its own purposes, but the biting references to the general staff that remained suggest that this may have been a matter of editing rather than reflective of a substantial rethinking of the situation.

military caste. If this were unacceptable, it seemed essential to develop some type of enduring control of the German General Staff Corps and potentially dangerous professional officers.<sup>97</sup>

One reviewer of the revised report subsequently wondered whether the scientific bent of modern warfare made civilian and military scientific staffs more important than the general staff and suggested that the control of scientific personnel, records, and equipment might more successfully inhibit a German military revival than would purging the German General Staff. However, he did not question the basic advisability of acting against the general staff in some fashion.<sup>98</sup>

In fact, throughout American (and Allied) planning circles, both military and civilian, few doubted the dangers posed by Germany's general staff or seriously questioned the need for its abolition.<sup>99</sup> One of the more comprehensive and resounding indictments came from Sumner Welles, who, shortly after resigning his post as under secretary of state in late 1943, published a book discussing the foreign policy challenges facing the United States. In the German General Staff he identified a sly, scheming body of men plotting world domination—men whose influence spanned nearly a century and who would not be stopped by mere defeat. Deflecting anticipated criticism that his emphasis on the general staff's dominant position in German military and foreign policymaking over the past seventy-five years minimized other important forces, Welles readily acknowledged the role of additional factors, but insisted that “each of them has played its part only in so far as it was permitted to do so by the real master of the German race, namely, German militarism, personified in, and

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid. In August 1944, Civil Affairs Division chief General Hilldring and the Treasury Department's White expressed views similar to those in the draft SHAEF report, with Hilldring telling White “that he had been studying the German picture ever since the first world war” and that he believed “that unless we took counter measures at this time, we could rest assured that the German professional military people would immediately begin to lay the foundations for a third world war.” White, in turn, noted “that already certain leaders in the German military were calling upon the German Army and people to stop the war because it had already been lost through faulty political strategy indulged in by the Nazis. In these comments of German generals, there was no evidence that they considered the war itself to have been wrong; rather they considered that the current mixture of Nazi politics with militarism led to the present disaster.” White added “that the German military would immediately begin to study in detail the lessons of this war, with the object of avoiding the mistakes that had been made, in the planning of the next one.” Memorandum for the Files, 22 Aug 44, NA, RG 56, Entry 360P, Box 11, F: (Chronological #62) August 1944.

<sup>98</sup> C.R. Kutz to Chief, Plans Section, 14 Nov 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff.

<sup>99</sup> See also, for example, CAC-5, 23 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 1; JCS 623/2, 18 Jan 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received and Used by the USGCC [Records Received by USGCC], Box 7, F: Folder #13; William D. Leahy to the Secretary of State, 23 Jan 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 499, Box 148, F: WS Documents 1-45; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1949), 287; Morgenthau, *Germany Is Our Problem*, 56-57, 171-173.

channeled through, the German General Staff.” Welles, furthermore, believed that the general staff not only controlled German foreign policy, but also influenced many domestic decisions.<sup>100</sup> Wrote Welles:

Throughout the past one hundred years, whether the rallying point for German patriotism was the venerable figure of William I, Bismarck, the superficial and spectacular William II, the Marshal President Hindenburg, or, in most recent times, Hitler himself, public opinion in this country has always been prone to take the figurehead as the reality. It has overlooked the fact that German policy during the past eighty years has been inspired and directed, not by the Chief of State, but by the German General Staff. It is this living, continuing, destructive force that must be extirpated if the German people are ever to make a constructive contribution to the stability of Europe, and if any organized international society is to be able to safeguard the security of free peoples in the years to come.<sup>101</sup>

In reality, the situation in Germany in the 1930s and early 1940s was substantially different than many Americans assumed. Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg and General Kurt von Schleicher certainly played active roles in making Hitler chancellor, but they and the rest of Germany’s professional officers were just a few of the players performing in a complex drama that brought the Nazis to power and destroyed the Weimar Republic. And although the general staff and officer corps, like Hitler, desired a revision of the Treaty of Versailles and could rightfully be criticized for pushing German rearmament, advocating the complete militarization of German society, and supporting aggressive expansion,<sup>102</sup> they did not necessarily seek the breadth or nature of gains the Nazis ultimately pursued. More importantly, in early 1938 Hitler reduced the Wehrmacht to little more than a tool employed in the pursuit of National Socialist objectives.<sup>103</sup> In the Third Reich, the boundaries between civil society and civilian leadership on one hand and the German military on the other had essentially disintegrated, but not because the general staff dominated the government or national policymaking.<sup>104</sup>

The widespread, often vitriolic, condemnation of the German General Staff and, to a lesser extent, the German officer corps, can perhaps only be fully understood by recognizing that the German military represented the antithesis of what Americans believed to be appropriate and safe. Not only had the United

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<sup>100</sup> Sumner Welles, *The Time for Decision* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), 337-347.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

<sup>102</sup> Bessel, *Nazism and War*, 37-38, 55-59.

<sup>103</sup> Klaus-Jürgen Müller, “Military and Diplomacy in France and Germany in the Inter-war Period,” in Müller, *Military in Politics and Society*, 112-119; Ian Kershaw, *Hitler*, vol. 2, *1936-1945: Nemesis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 46-60.

<sup>104</sup> Uta Frevert, *A Nation in Barracks: Modern Germany, Military Conscription and Civil Society*, trans. Andrew Boreham and Daniel Brückenhaus (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 258; Messerschmidt, “Das neue Gesicht des Militarismus,” 87.

States twice faced the strategic intellect and tactical skill of the German General Staff in large-scale wars, but the idea of an experienced and driven general staff leading a military establishment that presumably dominated the German state contradicted basic American principles. Since its founding, America's democratic self-identity had included a deep distrust of standing armies and professional soldiers as potential threats to democratic governance and individual liberties. Fears of military power, moreover, resulted in constitutional provisions ensuring civilian control of the American armed forces, with primary authority lodged in the hands of the elected representatives of the American people and, in a separate branch of government, a civilian president serving as commander in chief.<sup>105</sup> Commitment to democratic government and the principle of civilian control extended even to American military leaders, who during World War II periodically subordinated their own professional preferences to political considerations and presidential decisions.<sup>106</sup> If SHAEF considered the German General Staff Corps to be the "high priesthood of the German cult of war," Hilldring would later recall that General George C. Marshall, chief of staff of the U.S. Army, had in 1943 reminded him that "we are both a member [*sic*] of a priesthood really, the sole purpose of which is to defend the republic."<sup>107</sup> Perceived German behavior thus violated the American ideal and could confirm long-standing fears of the consequences of insufficient civilian control of a nation's armed forces. During a period when their own society and economy were militarized to a degree never before realized, U.S. policymakers may have been especially inclined to stress the excessive influence of their enemy's armed forces.

Identifying a similar distrust of a powerful general staff in the journalistic and scholarly literature of the period, Heuer theorizes that American respect for its achievements already in the nineteenth century, combined with the overwhelming success of the Wehrmacht at the start of World War II, led many wartime analysts to overestimate the political and military influence exercised by Germany's military elites during the

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<sup>105</sup> Weigley, "The American Civil-Military Cultural Gap," 219-226; Richard H. Kohn, "The Constitution and National Security: The Intent of the Framers," in *The United States Military under the Constitution of the United States, 1789-1989*, ed. Richard H. Kohn (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 81-84.

<sup>106</sup> Forrest C. Pogue, "George C. Marshall on Civil-Military Relationships in the United States," in *The United States Military under the Constitution of the United States, 193-194*, 202-205; Russell F. Weigley, "The American Military and the Principle of Civilian Control from McClellan to Powell," *Journal of Military History* 57, No. 5 (1933): 39-56. Even though the influence of military leaders on foreign policy formulation increased markedly during World War II, particularly through the work of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the president retained his role as the deciding factor in all policymaking. Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), ix-x, 189-190.

<sup>107</sup> Quoted in Pogue, "George C. Marshall on Civil-Military Relationships," 220.

interwar years. The general staff had clearly substantially influenced German politics during World War I and apparently had successfully protected this position during peacetime as well. Ignorance may also have played a role in American judgments, he suggests. Aware of the general staff's existence, but equipped with little concrete information about it during the war, Americans may have been quick to jump to conclusions. If the Reichswehr had, in fact, retained a powerful position in the Weimar Republic, it was logical to assume that Hitler could not have assumed power without its consent.<sup>108</sup> In fairness to American observers, it should also be noted that, on a strictly military level, condemnation of secret maneuverings of the general staff during the interwar period was not unwarranted.

Interestingly, in his review of publications from the 1942-1952 period, Heuer also points to evidence of two schools of thought regarding the German military's role in the Third Reich from 1933 to 1939. The first emphasized the dominance of the armed forces, with Hitler as their instrument, and, in its most extreme form "denied any fundamental boundary between the officer corps and the NSDAP [Nazi Party]." According to this view, the military essentially adopted Nazism as a vehicle to perpetuate its traditional militarism. The armed forces were principally responsible for the end of the Weimar Republic and, because of their leading position in the Third Reich, bore full responsibility for the events up to 1945.<sup>109</sup> The second school acknowledged Hitler's political control and stressed Nazi supremacy over the Wehrmacht, even while allocating the armed forces both substantial responsibility for ending the Weimar Republic and a key position within the Third Reich. Here, the importance of Hitler's naming himself supreme commander of the Wehrmacht in 1938 was unmistakable. Taken as a group, these writers described a Wehrmacht which encompassed a minority of devoted Nazis, a very small group of resisters, and a set of skeptics who preferred to wait and see what might happen, but a majority of men who were either wowed by Hitler's early military successes or who remained indifferent to politics.<sup>110</sup>

Heuer's evidence for a second school stressing the Wehrmacht's acquiescence to Hitler's will dates mostly from the immediate postwar period, however. More significantly, wartime government reports and correspondence reveal few indications of second-school thinking within American policymaking circles,

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<sup>108</sup> Heuer, *Reichswehr—Wehrmacht—Bundeswehr*, 181-185. The Reichswehr's power was perceived both in its early involvement in suppressing civil unrest and in its later failure to adequately support the new government—a failure that helped doom the new republic (185-188).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 189-190. As representative of this view, Heuer cites Fried, *The Guilt of the German Army*.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 190-194. A key representative of this school was Telford Taylor, *Sword and Swastika: The Wehrmacht in the Third Reich* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1952).

whether of the civilian or military variety. Postwar planners remained fixated on a threatening general staff responsible for breaking the shackles of Versailles. They assumed that demobilized soldiers might be committed Nazis and recognized that some high-ranking officers endorsed Nazi ideas,<sup>111</sup> but they seem to have spent very little time analyzing the exact relationship between the Wehrmacht and the Nazis. The OSS's assessment of Prussian militarism, which described the Third Reich as a totalitarian state with the Nazis firmly in control and the influence of traditional elements within the Wehrmacht greatly reduced, was one of the few documents that challenged typical thinking. Occasionally, references suggest some confusion or uncertainty about the relationship, or hint at Nazi dominance and leadership, but these ideas were apparently seldom fleshed out systematically. The best indication that American officials sensed that the general staff and officer corps, and their militarism, was not singularly decisive in German foreign and military policy—at least at present—was the time they devoted to pondering how to handle Nazi personnel and organizations following the end of the war.<sup>112</sup> Given that American policymakers rarely acknowledged Nazi domination of the Wehrmacht, it is no surprise that they also failed to consider what exactly “civilian control” might mean in a dictatorship where the men in charge, though theoretically civilians, were, in fact, rabid militarists.

*The German People.* Writing in 1944, Austrian émigré Albert Lautenbach reminded his readers that “the term ‘militarism’ has today acquired a much more extended meaning than in the nineteenth century.” Where “originally it meant the claim of a limited military caste to exceptional privileges within state and society,” contemporary militarism “established on totalitarian patterns” involved the militarization of all of society.<sup>113</sup> During the war, American policymakers clearly were not ready to discard completely the traditional idea of militarism described by Lautenbach. But many recognized, too, that German militarism had progressed beyond this. They acknowledged that Hitler had enlisted and disciplined his entire people for a campaign of military aggression and viewed this as an intensification of trends begun even before Hitler took command of the German nation.

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<sup>111</sup> Joint Secretariat Memorandum for the Joint U.S. Advisors, 4 Aug 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 15, F: German Prisoners of War; C.W. Wickersham Memorandum for the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, 16 May 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 12, F: 134.17 Directive No. 15 Disposal German Forces.

<sup>112</sup> For more on U.S. views of the relationship between Nazism and militarism, see below and Chapter 3.

<sup>113</sup> Lautenbach, “Militarism in the Western World,” 447, 477.

While developing the initial version of JCS 1067 in September 1944, McCloy wrote to two high-level U.S. Army officials requesting their views on who of Germany's "military caste" should be arrested, with special attention to "the effect which the action might have breaking up the German military system."<sup>114</sup> In response, the army's intelligence section provided McCloy with a memorandum addressing the problem of German officers. Deciding how to handle German military personnel, its authors stated, involved two Allied objectives: protection against security threats and prevention of renewed German militarism and the concomitant threat of war. In calling for detaining all officers until their actual guilt or dangerousness could be determined and any Nazi opponents could pass on what useful knowledge they possessed, the writers of the paper also spelled out their own understanding of German militarism. The causes of the revival of German militarism in the 1930s were "much more deep-rooted than is popularly believed," they stressed. Neither Hitler's "spell-binding oratory" nor the plotting of the Nazi Party, German industrialists, or the general staff was to blame. In particular, history would not attribute repeated German military aggression to the influence and "inherent militarism" of the Junkers. Instead, it would show that "the militarist class has been able to retain and constantly reassert this power and influence only because the nation as a whole has maintained the warlike and aggressive mentality since the days of Frederick the Great." Consequently, it would "be folly to assume that the German militarist tradition could be eradicated by simply eliminating the four thousand members of the General Staff Corps, or all officers above a certain rank, or all Prussian families with a 'von,' or any other arbitrary category of individuals." They would quickly be replaced by other Germans "as long as the urge to conquest survives in the popular mind." This meant, further, that "the emphasis must be on the preventive, and above all educational, measures applied to the population as a whole rather than on any quarantining action affecting any given segment of it" and that "no sweeping measures of arrest, banishment, or dispersal should be taken against any single category of German officers."<sup>115</sup>

Significantly, their argument echoed ideas State Department officials had expressed roughly a year before. In early September 1943, Roosevelt had sent Hull a clipping from the *New York Times*, asking for

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<sup>114</sup> John J. McCloy Memorandum for the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, 21 Sep 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 26, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Sept. 15 thru Oct 1944; John J. McCloy Memorandum for the Assistant Chief of Staff, OPD, 21 Sep 44, *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Memorandum, "Classification of German Military Personnel with a View to Measures to be Taken for Post-War Security and to Destroy the German Military System," 22 Sep 44, attached to Thos. T. Handy Memorandum for the Assistant Secretary of War, 23 Sep 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 28, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Interim Directive File.

comment. In a letter to the editor, New York lawyer and former government advisor Gerard Swope had outlined his recommendations for a German policy. His analysis included a classic attack on the “Prussian professional military caste” as “the seat of trouble in Europe for the last two hundred years.” Describing a “small, tightly knit group of men” which included nearly all of Germany’s outstanding military leaders, Swope accused the clique of aspiring “to create a strong militant Germany and [to] make use of Prussian militarism, which would be their salvation.” His prescriptions for the future thus included disrupting the military caste, forcing its members to emigrate, barring all former officers from service in the military of any German state, and withholding pensions from healthy former officers.<sup>116</sup>

Hull passed on a copy of the letter to his staff and asked them to draft a response for the president. Although it is unclear whether a final version of their reply ever made its way to the White House, it went through several drafts and bore the imprint of key research staff personnel, as well as that of David Harris, head of the department’s Interdivisional Committee on Germany, who reworked an advanced draft. In essence, State Department officials took the opportunity to prepare a paper outlining their thinking on a number of aspects of the German problem and, in so doing, put into writing their thoughts on the eradication of German militarism, noting in a draft cover letter that Swope’s proposals “do not go far enough.”<sup>117</sup>

Disrupting the “Prussian caste,” they argued, would hurt the German military overall, but would not wipe out the officer class, as it was no longer predominately Prussian. Furthermore, “even if the entire officer class were broken up, German militarism would not be destroyed since the leaders have by no means been the sole custodians and disseminators of the militaristic spirit.” Rather, the problem was broader.

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<sup>116</sup> Swope Letter to the Editor, 1 Sep 43, *DDP*, I/4:507-508.

<sup>117</sup> David Harris to Mr. Notter, 13 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 79, F: S-Germany (Swope) & Welles; Memorandum, “Comment on the Proposals Advanced by the Hon. Gerard Swope on the Treatment of Germany,” n.d., and Memorandum to Mr. Dunn, 29 Sep 43, attached to F.D.R. Memorandum for Hon. Cordell Hull, 7 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1940-1944, Box 2941; *DDP*, I/4: 533n2. Government studies addressing German militarism directly were rare. In July 1943, the State Department had two draft documents on the subject ready for consideration by the Territorial Problems Subcommittee: “German Militarism: Its Roots, Foundations and Dynamics” and “German Militarism: Review of Current Proposals.” By August, the department’s staff also had produced a draft policy summary titled “Germany: Internal Problems: Militarism.” See TS-44, 8 Feb 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 71, F: TS Documents 1-60. Apparently none of these studies ever received higher-level consideration, however. Extensive searching in State, War, Treasury, and SHAEF files, discussions with State Department archivists at the U.S. National Archives, and targeted searching in the personal papers of several key policy advisors failed to unearth any copies of these three documents. On the other hand, ideas discussed at length in the subcommittees of the Advisory Committee and in State Department working papers and policy summaries concerning other topics (for example, partition) are captured in other sections of the Swope memorandum. It thus seems fair to assume that the thoughts on German militarism contained in the memorandum were also taken at least in part from these earlier studies.



German military achievements, associated in the German mind with the unity and greatness of the Reich, have been lauded from classroom, pulpit, and rostrum. Militarism has been supported by and made the instrument of aggressive nationalism by ultra-nationalistic groups such as the landed nobility, the great industrialists, other business interests, and various pan-German and colonial societies. Consequently the militaristic spirit has become deeply embedded in the psychology and social institutions of the whole people. It can be rooted out only by prolonged disarmament and by fundamental reforms in German economic and social relationships and in German education.<sup>118</sup>

State Department officials went on to clarify that long-term disarmament and the banning of a German army “would be a much more certain and fundamental method of destroying aggressive German militarism” than would Swope’s suggested measures against German officers. Exclusion from any German armed forces would not necessarily diminish the officers’ influence, pension restrictions could be evaded (and would mean little to men who were generally wealthy), and emigration plans for the officers would be impeded by “the improbability that other states will receive them.” Devoid of an army, however, Germany would have no “means of aggression,” and, if carefully enforced, these restrictions would “weaken ingrained military habits through disuse” and free Germany’s youth from the “powerful and undesirable educational influence of universal military service.” Also required were restraints on the power of German landowners and certain business groups who, often acting through nationalistic societies, supported the strengthening of Germany’s armed forces financially, politically, and through propaganda. Peaceful values should be deliberately encouraged in place of militarism, preferably introduced by a “peacefully inclined government” nurtured by the United States. “The fundamental way to destroy German militarism is to eliminate expansionist German nationalism,” they contended. And an international security system ensuring the hopelessness of dreams of conquest would help to kill aggressive nationalism. But Germany should not feel defenseless. A minimum of economic security would help stave off a revival of military values, while “assurance to the German people of eventual equality among nations, through participation in peaceful world economic and political collaboration, would substantially contribute to replacing German militarism with a constructive national spirit.”<sup>119</sup>

To State Department analysts, German militarism was unquestionably a widespread phenomenon. Not exclusively linked to a certain class or profession of Germans, it involved admiration for German military achievements, a desire for national aggrandizement through expansion, and a willingness and ability to use force to achieve that objective. Two other departmental officials later questioned whether cause and effect

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<sup>118</sup> “Comment on the Proposals Advanced by the Hon. Gerard Swope,” n.d., NA, RG 59.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

could be so definitively determined in terms of nationalism producing militarism—“It may very well be the other way around”—but they nevertheless agreed that “militarism and nationalism are indistinguishably intermingled.”<sup>120</sup> And both were philosophies permeating German society and institutions. Diverse groups within Germany had preached the gospel and the multitudes had converted.

American policy planning documents and discussions would return to the themes of the State Department’s paper again and again. Most importantly, for all their willingness to denounce German militarism, most American planners denied that this was a congenital German character flaw.<sup>121</sup> Contemporary observers sometimes criticized a line of reasoning that claimed that militarism was an inherited and racially unique characteristic of the Germans, associating this viewpoint in particular with the widely disseminated ideas of former British government official Sir Robert Vansittart. Yet Vansittart himself, while condemning the historical tendencies of the German people—“If Germans had had their way, there would have been a war every eight years for the last three-quarters of a century”—explicitly denied that they were militaristic by nature.<sup>122</sup> Instead, he offered a cultural explanation. “The German nation,” he argued in 1943, “has long been systematically educated in militarism.”<sup>123</sup> Like Vansittart, U.S. government policymakers saw German militarism as a learned attribute.

“The militaristic spirit which pervades the German people has been deliberately fostered by all educational institutions in Germany for many decades,” asserted the briefing book prepared by Treasury Department officials for Morgenthau and passed on to Roosevelt prior to 1944’s Quebec Conference.<sup>124</sup> This process was explained in more colloquial terms for America’s invading troops. “You may ask yourself how a guy who looks pretty much like one of us could believe and do all the things we know he believed and did,” the army’s *Pocket Guide to Germany* observed, then advised that, for his own protection, the American GI should not forget that the German soldier was “the victim of the greatest educational crime in the history of the world.”

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<sup>120</sup> Memorandum to Mr. Dunn, 29 Sep 43, NA, RG 59.

<sup>121</sup> See, for example, H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H Policy Summaries 126-149.

<sup>122</sup> Sir Robert Vansittart, *Black Record: Germans Past and Present* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941), iv-vii.

<sup>123</sup> Quoted in Michaela Hönicke, “‘Know Your Enemy’: American Interpretations of National Socialism, 1933-1945 (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998), 375 [hereafter “‘Know Your Enemy’”].

<sup>124</sup> Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 9 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 138.

More specifically, “from childhood, in all his schools, he has heard one teaching: that force, ruthlessness, and blind obedience to the Führer will carry him and the German people to a position of dominance over all other peoples of the world. By hearing this doctrine constantly repeated throughout his formative years, he has come firmly to believe in it.”<sup>125</sup> A State Department draft study put the problem in even broader terms: the German people had “long been indoctrinated with concepts prejudicial to international tranquility,” a process that had intensified significantly during the Third Reich.<sup>126</sup> Among the concepts department officials identified as central to Nazi indoctrination were “racial megalomania and intolerance,” “the Nazi concept of history as the manifestation of Germany’s unique mission in the world,” “excessive and irrational nationalism and worship of Volk and state,” “over-emphasis on the Führer principle and authoritarian government,” and “militarism and the cult of force.”<sup>127</sup>

Belief in a culturally and intellectually transmitted militarism rested on the perception that German militarism was not a new phenomenon. It also carried the implication that most Germans were thoroughly imbued. The Germans “through generations” had “been accustomed to militaristic ways,” observed Secretary of State Hull at a meeting in early 1943. When a colleague suggested that the current war could not be attributed to Hitler, but that Hitler, instead, “was a product of Germany and the disease was deep,” Hull agreed, noting “that the Germans had allowed themselves to be led into this role so that one shouting agitator was able to stand seventy-five million people on their heads over night and have them ready to march the next morning.”<sup>128</sup> According to the army’s *Pocket Guide*, it was “a matter of History that there is nothing new about German aggression or desire for conquest.” Bismarck had set an example of the kind of leadership the people admired; they followed Hitler as they had followed Kaiser Wilhelm II and Bismarck.<sup>129</sup> A more playful take on the situation came from SHAEF’s deputy chief of staff, British Lieutenant General Frederick Morgan. In a note to Eisenhower’s chief of staff commenting on a draft of pre-surrender directive CCS 551, which called for the supreme commander in Germany to “restore normal conditions among the civilian population as soon as

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<sup>125</sup> U.S. War Department, *Pocket Guide to Germany*, 9-10, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 26, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Sept. 15 thru Oct. 1944.

<sup>126</sup> H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H Policy Summaries 126-149.

<sup>127</sup> CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>128</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 30 Jan 43, *DDP*, I/4:160.

<sup>129</sup> *Pocket Guide to Germany*, 28.

possible,” Morgan quipped: “To the best of my imperfect recollection since about 1860 the normal condition of Germany has been one of intense preparation for war. So what?”<sup>130</sup>

The Treasury Department received help in understanding the Germans from a number of émigrés brought in for consultation in late summer 1944. In this context, European history professor Hans Kohn told Treasury policymakers that “the devil we are fighting is not Hitler, it is Bismarck.” While younger Germans were devoted to Hitler, the older folks might criticize his methods but approved of his objectives.<sup>131</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, a German-born education and philosophy professor and a prominent pacifist, offered a similar assessment. Calling it dangerous to differentiate between good and bad Germans, as some Americans were wont to do, Foerster argued that there was, indeed, a good Germany, but it had succumbed to German propaganda and joined the gangsters. According to the official memo of the meeting, Foerster explained that Treasury officials needed “to recognize that there is a terrible solidarity between the good and bad Germany. Nationalism has become the religion of Germany. Prussianism is a combination of Potsdam and Weimar, it is Beethoven in the trenches.”<sup>132</sup> A week later, the department’s magnum opus of German policy recommendations captured the spirit of these conversations in a section titled “German Militarism Cannot Be Destroyed By Destroying Nazism Alone.” Here, the Treasury staff argued that the present regime was “essentially the culmination of the unchanging drive for German aggression.” For “at least three generations,” German society had been dominated “by powerful forces fashioning the German state and nation into a machine for military conquest and self-aggrandizement.” Bluntly put, the Nazi regime was “*not* an excrescence on an otherwise healthy society but an organic growth out of the German body politic.” Moreover, “even before the Nazi regime seized power, the German nation had demonstrated an unequalled capacity to be seduced by a

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<sup>130</sup> F.E.M. to C.O.S. and C.A.O., 4 May 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 2, Box 113, F: 322.011 Germany CCS Directives to SCAEF for Military Government of Germany Prior to Defeat or Surrender.

<sup>131</sup> Memorandum, Meeting on the German Problem, 31 Aug 44, NA, RG 56, Entry 360P, Box 21, F: Conferences – Mr. White’s Office 1944. On Hans Kohn, see note 43.

<sup>132</sup> Memorandum, Meeting in Mr. White’s Office, 2 Sep 44, NA, RG 56, Entry 360P, Box 21, F: Conferences – Mr. White’s Office 1944. A member of the Vansittart Society for the Prevention of World War III, Foerster had a long history of activism against German nationalism and militarism. In a 1942 meeting, one State Department advisor remarked “that Foerster was an extreme pacifist and had only about six men associated with him”—a remark that prompted Welles to respond that “he thought that was the trouble.” Memorandum, “Biographies,” 4 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diaries*, Reel 47, Vol. 768; Michaela Hönicke Moore, “American Interpretations of National Socialism, 1933-1945,” in *The Impact of Nazism: New Perspectives on the Third Reich and Its Legacy*, ed. Alan E. Steinweis and Daniel E. Rogers (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska University Press, 2003), 13 [hereafter “American Interpretations of National Socialism”]; Protokoll der Sitzung des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 16 Jan 43, *DDP*, I/4:73; “F.W. Foerster, 96, Author, Educator; Foe of German Nationalism Dies in Switzerland,” *NYT*, 22 Jan 66.

militarist clique offering the promise of economic security and political domination in exchange for disciplined acceptance of its leadership.” The achievement of the Nazis had been “to systematically debauch the passive German nation on an unprecedented scale and shape it into an organized and dehumanized military machine integrated by all the forces of modern technique and science.”<sup>133</sup>

Given to Roosevelt, the Treasury’s briefing book in many respects affirmed the president’s own views. Though he publicly referred to German “war lords” imposing militarism on their “enslaved peoples,” he personally refused to limit his condemnation of the Germans to a band of Nazi criminals who had grabbed the reins of power.<sup>134</sup> In late summer 1944, Roosevelt intimated to State Department official Robert Murphy that militarism had begun to permeate German society already around the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>135</sup> In reprimanding Stimson for an excessively lenient SHAEF handbook at about the same time, the president indicted the German people more directly. Every German should be made to realize that Germany had lost the war, Roosevelt argued, so that they would think twice about starting another one. He later complained that too many people blamed only Germany’s Nazi leaders for recent events. This view, he contended, was false. “The German people as a whole must have it driven home to them that the whole nation has been engaged in a lawless conspiracy against the decencies of modern civilization.”<sup>136</sup>

A 1943 State Department research study more carefully cataloged the extent of Germany’s popular militarism. Like the OSS analysts, it found support for “German Militarism and the Tradition of Armed Conquest” across the social spectrum. The Junkers had been champions of German nationalism, guardians of German military tradition, and the bedrock of the German officer corps. Sections of the “upper bourgeoisie,” most especially those in charge of heavy industries, had backed Germany’s conservative and often nationalistic parties and allegedly desired a strong Germany as a “bulwark against Bolshevism.” Large portions of the lower middle classes had become discontented during the Depression, were afraid of communism, and therefore had

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<sup>133</sup> Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 139-140. (Emphasis in original.)

<sup>134</sup> Address to the Congress on the State of the Union, 6 Jan 42, *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 11:35; Hönicke, “American Wartime Images of Germany,” 244-248.

<sup>135</sup> Robert Murphy, Memorandum of Conversation with President Roosevelt, 9 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 144.

<sup>136</sup> F.D.R. Memorandum for the Secretary of War, 26 Aug 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 30, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Working File. For Roosevelt’s views on the historical militarism and aggressiveness of the German people, see also Arthur Murray to President, 8 Feb 40, FDRL Digital Archives, PSF, Safe File, British Diplomatic Files: Murray, Arthur: 1940-41 Index; President to Arthur Murray, 4 Mar 40, *ibid*.

supported the Nazi Party.<sup>137</sup> In May 1944, department officials similarly described past supporters of “ultra-nationalism” and militarism as including “the Junkers, the military caste, the great industrialists, reactionary intellectuals, and the ultra-nationalist element of the bureaucracy.”<sup>138</sup>

Particularly noteworthy on the crowded lists of advocates of militarism were German industrialists. If Junkers and German officers were by far the most vilified and long-standing members of the club, industrialists drew their share of criticism. Much like the Junkers, they had purportedly funded and disseminated militaristic propaganda and exerted political influence in favor of rebuilding Germany’s military strength.<sup>139</sup> In considering which Germans might need to be excluded from influential public positions, therefore, State Department planners in 1944 pointed not only to assorted Nazis, Junkers, and officers, but also to “the highest stratum of the directing and managerial personnel in the industrial and financial organization of Germany.” “This disablement of old dominant groups would alter the social basis for the government of Germany,” the planners suggested. If they were not dislodged, there was less chance of creating a lasting democracy resistant to imperialism.<sup>140</sup>

While Germany’s industrialists could be denounced for their social and political influence, their primary transgressions were, not surprisingly, financial and economic. Germany’s autarkic policies, cartels, and heavy industry had enabled the nation’s desires, American officials maintained.<sup>141</sup> Morgenthau, the U.S. government’s chief proponent of German deindustrialization, was unequivocal on this point. Had heavy industry not equipped it, he believed, “the whole scheme of German aggression would have had to dissipate itself in empty mouthings and ridiculous parades.” Hitler “must have remained a figure of fun if it had not been for Krupp and Thyssen and Hugenberg.”<sup>142</sup> As in Japan, the Treasury Department’s briefing book explained, “the rapid evolution of a modern industrial system in Germany immeasurably strengthened the economic base

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<sup>137</sup> P Document 189, 29 Jan 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 57, F: P Documents 170-200.

<sup>138</sup> CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>139</sup> “Comment on the Proposals Advanced by the Hon. Gerard Swope,” n.d., NA, RG 59; Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 154.

<sup>140</sup> WS-217, 20 Jul 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 499, Box 150, F: WS Documents 211-232.

<sup>141</sup> In making these accusations, the Americans were certainly not wrong. Among other works, see Werner Abelshauser, et al, *German History and Global Enterprise. BASF: The History of a Company* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Peter Hayes, *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Henry Ashby Turner, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1985); and William Manchester, *The Arms of Krupp* (Brown: Little Brown, 1968).

<sup>142</sup> Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 123.

of German militarism without weakening the Prussian feudal ideology or its hold on German society.”<sup>143</sup>

Although State Department planners consistently opposed Morgenthau’s calls for mine closures and the dismantling of heavy industrial operations, favoring a policy of future economic cooperation and integration over controls and coercion, they nevertheless agreed that German industry posed a problem. “In the interest of eliminating the social and economic bases of recurrent militarism,” argued an important departmental policy paper from 1944, the “privileged position” of “the great financial and industrial monopolies” should be destroyed.<sup>144</sup> How to prevent Germany’s economic elites from once more turning the country’s industries toward war remained the crux of the dispute.<sup>145</sup>

If German society was filled with supporters of militarism, Morgenthau’s “ridiculous parades” and the reprehensible activities of German industrialists were just two pieces of evidence revealing a broad-based German militarism. American policymakers had little trouble identifying the symptoms and consequences of militarism in Germany’s society, economy, and government, both historically and more recently. Impossible to overlook was the German penchant for flags, uniforms, and marching—a fetish that had only intensified under Nazi rule.<sup>146</sup> American officials criticized Germany’s patriotic and imperialistic associations, as well as its nationalistic political parties, and condemned the veterans organizations and paramilitary groups that had appeared in the wake of World War I and helped to destabilize the fledgling Weimar Republic.<sup>147</sup> They denounced Alfred Hugenberg for the nationalistic propagandizing of his press network during the days of the republic. Controlling the country’s largest filmmaking enterprise, he had also joined other motion picture entrepreneurs in using films “to glorify Germany at war and to celebrate Prussianism.”<sup>148</sup> German publications,

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<sup>143</sup> Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 139.

<sup>144</sup> PWC-141b, 5 Aug 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 60.

<sup>145</sup> The question of German industrialists and their culpability for German aggression was clearly tied up with the problem of the postwar treatment of Germany’s heavy industry and cartels. This issue is covered in other studies and is therefore treated only cursorily here. In addition to note 32 above, see Wiesen, *West German Industry and the Challenge of the Nazi Past*; Stokes, *Divide and Prosper*; Berghahn, *The Americanization of West German Industry*. On the American trials of key industrialists in the late 1940s, see Gerd R. Ueberschär, ed., *Der Nationalsozialismus vor Gericht: Die alliierten Prozesse gegen Kriegsverbrecher und Soldaten, 1943-1952* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999).

<sup>146</sup> CAC-34, 17 Dec 43, *DDP*, I/4:716; CAC-132, 27 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2; Draft Directive to the US (UK) (USSR) Commander-in-Chief, “Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training in Germany,” 19 Sep 44, NA, RG 260, Record Received by USGCC, Box 11, F: Directive No. 13 134.15 Military Training.

<sup>147</sup> CAC-34, 17 Dec 43, *DDP*, I/4:716; CAC-132, 27 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>148</sup> H-136, 14 Feb 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Summaries 126-149.

motion pictures, and radio broadcasts, moreover, had become even more dangerous instruments in Nazi hands.<sup>149</sup> Educational institutions had also clearly promoted militaristic ideas. Outside of schools, German youth organizations, which were already politically active before the Nazis came to power, had eventually been subsumed in the Hitler Youth. Prior to 1939, the State Department's research staff explained, this organization had "succeeded in making youthful Germany war-minded by stressing the grievances and needs of Germany, the necessity for a strong military establishment, and the obligations of youth to state and party," instilling ideals such as "racial pride, hero-worship, hatred of Germany's enemies, the righteousness and inevitability of war, . . . and an intransigent nationalism." The "Hitler Youth of today," they emphasized, "is completely mobilized for war service. . . ."<sup>150</sup>

Summarizing factors that had made Germany a threat to world security, State Department staffers concluded that Germany was a country of more than 60 million individuals who were "physically and mentally vigorous, long accustomed to social and military discipline, [and] highly skilled in industrial and military techniques." Germany's armed forces had been "built around a corps of officers imbued with a strong military tradition and trained in advanced military techniques," while the reintroduction of universal conscription had allowed its leaders to draw on the entire nation to "fill out the cadres of the war machine which had been planned in the course of twenty years [after World War I]." In addition, the Third Reich's unopposed centralized government now served as "the supreme instrument for shaping the will of the German people toward war and for coordinating the national manpower and economy in the preparation and prosecution of war."<sup>151</sup>

In perceiving and criticizing a broad-based German militarism, American officials showed a greater uniformity of opinion than was common in more general wartime assessments of Germany. Government postwar planners were, in fact, just a subset of the many Americans engaged in evaluating the Germans. Analyses of Nazism, the German people, and the problem posed by their aggressive state filled the programs of

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<sup>149</sup> T.J. Davis to Distribution List, 11 Dec 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 18, F: AG 371.1 Service of Information (Information Control Policy); JCS 1109, 16 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 14, F: 134.5 Directive No. 3 Public Information.

<sup>150</sup> H-127, 8 Mar 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Summaries 126-149.

<sup>151</sup> P Document 189, 29 Jan 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 57, F: P Documents 170-200.



conferences and the pages of books and magazines. Was Germany's aggressiveness an inborn German trait or a Nazi transgression? Was Nazism an organic result of ideas long promoted by esteemed German philosophers and German traditions practiced for decades, even centuries? Were the Nazis just a band of gangsters who had seized control of the government? If so, were the German people miserable and oppressed? Or had they learned to love their masters and enthusiastically support their program?<sup>152</sup>

Overall, American responses to these questions, within and outside of the government, were diverse and changing. Though not exhausting the possible range of opinions, a common point of divergence concerned the German people and their relationship to Germany's Nazi leaders. Some observers argued that the Third Reich was an aberration in German history, with its National Socialist rulers a group of criminals whose first—innocent and terrorized—victim had been the German people. But others, often in the Vansittart camp, saw Nazism as a natural outgrowth of German history that drew on wide popular support for its racist, nationalistic, and foreign policy ideas due to their close correlation with common German desires, fears, and feelings of having been wronged. Finding it difficult, in particular, to attribute the perceived excesses and barbarities of Nazism to a people so similar to themselves, the majority of Americans tended toward the first interpretation of Nazism. This basic dichotomy in thinking was evident even in official planning circles, where Stimson was inclined to spare the German people from censure, while Morgenthau and Roosevelt refused to excuse the broader population from responsibility for the evils of Nazism.<sup>153</sup>

In considering German militarism specifically, however, the perspectives of American officials were more homogeneous. They also conflicted to some extent with the views opinion polls attributed to the American people. Whatever ideas regarding German militarism had been floating around in American society since the late nineteenth century, Americans during World War II did not necessarily blame the German people for the current hostilities—though their willingness to do so apparently increased as the war progressed. In late 1939, one opinion poll revealed that more than 66 percent of those surveyed believed “that the Germans were ‘essentially peace-loving and kindly’ but unfortunately misled by their rulers.” Another poll conducted regularly between February 1942 and May 1946 by the National Opinion Research Center asked those

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<sup>152</sup> Benjamin L. Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy, and American Public Culture: Envisioning the Totalitarian Enemy, 1920s-1950s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 191.

<sup>153</sup> Hönicke Moore, “American Interpretations of National Socialism,” 1-2, 4-5, 9-14; Hönicke Moore, ““Prevent World War III,”” 165-166.

interviewed to indicate their agreement with one of three statements: “(1) ‘The German people will always want to go to war and make themselves as powerful as possible,’ (2) ‘The German people may not like war, but they have shown that they are too easily led into war by powerful leaders,’ or (3) ‘The German people do not like war. If they could have the same chance as people of other countries, they would become good citizens of the world.’” Forty-two percent of poll respondents agreed with the third statement as of February 1942, though by July 1945, support for this idea had gradually decreased to 19 percent. Moreover, in 1942, just 21 percent believed that the Germans always wanted to go to war; by mid-1945, this number had risen to 39 percent—a significant leap, but still low enough to suggest that this was not the dominant American viewpoint.<sup>154</sup>

American postwar planners were more willing to see the German people themselves as belligerent. The reason for this is difficult to decipher. Many American elites had personal experience in Germany, which may have played a role, as may the fact that scores of central European scholars had taken refuge in American universities, with a large number of American and émigré scholars eventually going to work for the wartime federal government. Whatever the reason, even when policymakers were ready to believe that Nazism was primarily a disease of the Third Reich’s rulers, accusations of German militarism were not necessarily similarly confined. Even Stimson saw a German people indoctrinated to favor military aggression.<sup>155</sup> His concerns, and those of the State Department regarding the postwar treatment of Germany, resulted directly from worries that harshness would so aggravate German sensitivities that another war would follow.<sup>156</sup> The various government departments might bicker over which economic measures would most effectively prevent a third world war, but they all identified widespread German militarism as a problem. Moreover, American officials did not need to assume that the German people enthusiastically supported the entire Nazi program, or hold the German people responsible for Hitler’s rise to power and subsequent actions, to accuse them of militarism. In fact, detecting German militarism did not even require blaming the German people for the outbreak of World War II, though clearly many American policymakers did so.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy, and American Public Culture*, 219. Alpers notes that “the first of the eight times [the latter poll] was presented, the third viewpoint was worded somewhat differently: ‘The German people are like any other people. If they could choose the leaders they want, they would become good citizens of the world’” (219n65).

<sup>155</sup> Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, 314-315, 570, 575, 581-583.

<sup>156</sup> Hönicke Moore, “Prevent World War III,” 166-167.

<sup>157</sup> See, for example, P Minutes 43, 30 Jan 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 54, F: P-Documents; Memorandum, Inter-Divisional Committee on Germany Meeting No. 44, 1 Apr 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 499, Box 117, F: Reports

On the other hand, American officials also saw the German people as entangled in the net of German militarism. The American conception of cultural conditioning rested on the idea that the German people had been led astray, though not solely by Nazi gangsters. How the process worked, exactly, was not usually explained, and references to German indoctrination could be vague and inconsistent. Certain was that, culminating in the calculated and pernicious Nazi propaganda program, government officials and teachers had used German schools to preach a nationalistic, militaristic agenda since at least 1919.<sup>158</sup> More generally, American policymakers attributed Germany's capitulation to militarism to the harmful influence of Prussia, named German military officers as the primary culprits, or pointed to the dangerous philosophies of Fichte, Hegel, and Treitschke. They were also plainly convinced that associations, churches, and economic elites should shoulder blame as well.<sup>159</sup> In sum, starting already long before the arrival of Hitler, the German people had been indoctrinated from "classroom, pulpit, and rostrum" with ideas of military glory, national calling, the centrality of the state, and the magnificence and rights of power. American officials saw an intentionality in this development, without defining the precise relationship between the ideas and the society that preached them. The implied assumption was that the process was self-sustaining. Germans indoctrinated with militaristic ideas institutionalized this militarism in their cultural practices and in state and social institutions, which, in turn, perpetuated Germany's "militaristic ways" through education and ritual and thereby indoctrinated the next generation. The National Socialists, under the guiding hand of Hitler, had continued these efforts with fanatical purposefulness.<sup>160</sup>

Insufficiently explained was the exact relationship between Nazism and militarism. American planners readily labeled the Nazis "militarists." Often, they discussed National Socialism as the most recent incarnation of German militarism; Nazis were the modern ambassadors of Prussianism. Typical was a Treasury

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of the Meetings of the Country and Area Committees, Division of Territorial Studies, Book I; H-197, 30 Oct 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 155, F: H-Policy Summaries 195-209.

<sup>158</sup> Sitzungsprotokoll des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 30 Jan 43, *DDP*, I/4:157-161; CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2; PWC-164a, 27 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>159</sup> See also Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 102-115.

<sup>160</sup> In this thinking, the Americans were not being wildly imaginative. The Nazis, certainly, and earlier government programs, social groups, and, to a lesser extent, private initiatives had infected German institutions and education with militaristic ideas. The Americans' sometimes dramatic tone and the psychiatric language they occasionally used were often excessive and probably unwarranted. But by the early 1940s there was undoubtedly a problem. Frevert, *Nation in Barracks*, 212-258.

Department study asking “How Defeated Germany Rose to Power” which, with reference to interwar rearmament, maintained that “it was only a change in degree, although an important one, and not a change in kind when Hitler finally took over in 1933 and Germany openly entered on the path to war.”<sup>161</sup> In other words, as a British friend informed State Department advisor Myron Taylor, Hitler was merely a “vulgarization of Bismarck.”<sup>162</sup>

However, although they frequently suggested that Hitler was a natural product of Germany’s militaristic history, many American policymakers also clearly sensed a qualitative difference between traditional “Prussianism” and the values of the men currently in power. Germans, some argued, could be both anti-Nazi and militaristic. Supplying Washington with the names of anti-Nazi Germans for potential postwar appointments, several State Department officials formerly stationed in Germany emphasized this point. One described anti-Nazi acquaintances who subscribed to the “ancient atheistic creed of racial superiority and world conquest” but “loathed the guttersnipes who were smart enough to produce a political leader and dominate the civilian part of the German machine.”<sup>163</sup> Another wrote that “in general, nearly all members of the nobility in Germany, especially the landowners, however anti-Nazi they might be, would presumably wish the return of Germany’s greatness coupled with the resurrection of the German Army, and probably the monarchical system, and this would disqualify them [from holding positions of influence].”<sup>164</sup> Contrary to standard assumptions, then, American policymakers did not necessarily equate Nazism and Prussian militarism. The two might overlap, but were not the same. Often, militarism joined racism, nationalism, the *Führer* principle, and other negative philosophies in the basket of Nazi ideology to be condemned.<sup>165</sup> How the militarism of the Nazis compared with or related to that of the traditional “military caste” nevertheless remained largely unexamined.

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<sup>161</sup> “How Defeated Germany Rose to Power,” n.d. [ca. 44], NA, RG 56, OASIA, Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 86, F: Germany – Treas. 9 “How Defeated Germany Rose to Power.” See also Protokoll der Sitzung des Subcommittee on Political Problems, 23 Jan 43, *DDP*, I/4:110-114.

<sup>162</sup> Leopold Amery to Myron Taylor, 12 Feb 43, enclosed in Myron Taylor to the President, 8 Apr 43, FDRL, PSF, Safe File, Diplomatic Correspondence, Box 52, F: Vatican: Taylor, Myron C. 1943.

<sup>163</sup> Roy E. B. Bower to the Secretary of State, 19 Apr 45, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 3664.

<sup>164</sup> J.C. White to the Secretary of State, 24 Apr 45, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 3664. See also note 170 below and SHAEF, “Manual for the Control of German Information Services,” Annex E, 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 78, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Bulky Package.

<sup>165</sup> L.W. Jefferson to Joint US Advisors, EAC, 9 Sep 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 14, F: 134.46 Control of Educational Institutions in Germany; PWC-164a, 27 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

Without specifically appraising or delineating the difference between Nazism and militarism, or describing their commonalities, policy documents and presidential speeches normally called for the elimination of both.

### **Conclusions**

From the day the United States entered World War II, American policymakers identified German militarism as a primary cause of the conflict. Ensuring future peace, they agreed, demanded that this militarism be uprooted. Yet, no policy for eradication could be developed successfully without an understanding of the nature of the problem, and here American views were more uncertain. Was Prussia the primary menace? Were professional officers a militaristic cancer in German society? Or was there an even bigger problem?

Analyzing Germany from afar, American policymakers sifted through both competing and complementary ideas in attempting to make sense of the situation. Over time, a synthetic view emerged which in many respects could subsume within it competing emphases. Ultimately, American officials perceived a German militarism that was not something unique to the Third Reich, but a long-standing, culturally produced phenomenon embodied in an aggressive military machine, belligerent leaders, an industrial system customized for war production, and a society and culture marked by military aesthetics and shaped by military ideals that celebrated and upheld German military tradition, espoused the glories of war, and saw conquest as a national right.

This American assessment of German militarism was not always consistent or based on rigorous analysis. But it would prove sufficiently coherent—and was shared by enough people—to produce agreement on most of the tasks that would eventually make up a social and cultural demilitarization program.

### Chapter 3

#### **“GAMBLING WITH THE VERY DESTINY OF CIVILIZATION”: POLICIES FOR OCCUPIED GERMANY**

Destroying the “militaristic spirit” of the German people “will of necessity be an arduous process,” Treasury Department officials argued in the briefing book they prepared at Secretary Morgenthau’s direction during the fall of 1944. “For a long time to come,” they added, “it would be gambling with the very destiny of civilization to rely on an unproven capacity for self-regeneration in the face of [the Germans’] proven capacity for creating new weapons of destruction to be used in wars of aggression.”<sup>1</sup> From the department’s perspective, these stark facts meant that neutralizing German industry and strengthening Germany’s neighbors should be key American objectives.

While frequently more skeptical of the Germans than most federal policymakers, the Treasury Department’s staff nevertheless zeroed in on what was essentially the crux of the problem for many American officials planning for the occupation of Germany. In short, the future attitude of the German people was of critical significance. Along with their understanding of the origins and manifestations of German militarism, recognition of this fact guided policymakers in developing a demilitarization program. If German militarism involved more than an imperialistic Wehrmacht and a hostile government, demilitarization efforts must as well. Indeed, the most troublesome aspect of German militarism was its pervasiveness in society and culture, a condition that shaped individual attitudes and perpetuated the problem institutionally. Jackbooted troops and warehouses filled with guns only posed a threat if a nation believed in the glory, necessity, or inevitability of using them. It was thus necessary not only to deprive the Germans of the means to make war, but also to eliminate their desire to do so and to destroy the influences that inspired and sustained that desire.

In formulating a prescription for treating German militarism, a rough consensus thus emerged among American wartime planners. Ultimately, they endeavored to “psychologically disarm” the Germans through a wide range of policies aimed at changing Germany society and culture. Under the umbrella of this general

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<sup>1</sup> Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 9 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 140.

approach, concrete policy decisions and related regulations continued to reflect the varied assumptions and emphases of the policymakers involved—or, perhaps, in the face of inconsistencies and uncertainties, simply reflected a desire to eliminate all possible sources of evil. Specific measures therefore sought to undercut the power of Prussian Junkers, to reduce the danger posed by military officers, to free German institutions, social practices, and material culture of the effects of militarizing influences, and to undo the militaristic indoctrination of the German people.<sup>2</sup>

### Identifying a Solution

In developing plans for Germany, American officials always kept one eye on the past. Allied leaders had first attempted to destroy German militarism after World War I. The Treaty of Versailles had “demilitarized” Germany by shackling its industries, closing its officers’ schools, abolishing its general staff, and substantially limiting the men and materiel of its armed forces. Yet just 20 years later, Adolf Hitler was deploying a massive army equipped with the latest technology and backed by well-stocked arsenals. American analytical reports and committee discussions regularly invoked this splendid failure. In considering how to prevent future German rearmament, one State Department study was explicit: “At the end of World War I the trunk and branches of German militarism were cut but the roots were allowed to remain.”<sup>3</sup> This time the Allies meant to do better.

Chief among American objectives, then, was the *permanent* eradication of German militarism leading to a lasting peace. Some officials conceded that the war itself might rein in German militarism, at least in the short term,<sup>4</sup> but few believed that defeat alone would prove to be an enduring solution. If nothing else, their

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<sup>2</sup> For a helpful overview of the scope of Allied concerns, see Brigadier, Chief, Planning Committee, G-5, to G-2 SHAEF (Main), 10 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 302, F: V37-1/2 SHAEF, G-5, Letters Jan-Mar '45.

<sup>3</sup> H-3108, 5 Jun 43, *DDP*, I/4:327. For extended analyses of what went wrong, see P Document 186, 22 Jan 43, NA, RG 59, Entry 498, Box 57, F: P Documents 170-200; S Document 65/P Document 182, 23 Jan 43, *ibid.*; “How Defeated Germany Rose to Power,” n.d. [ca. 44], NA, RG 56, OASIA, Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 86, F: Germany – Treas. 9 “How Defeated Germany Rose to Power”; “German Evasions of the Military Provisions of the Treaty of Versailles,” n.d., enclosed with Brigadier van Cutsom to Distribution, 6 Jul 44, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 79, F: CCS 388.4 Germany (7-20-44) Bulky Package.

<sup>4</sup> “H[amilton] F[ish] A[rmstrong]: Views,” n.d. [ca. Apr 42], NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 498, Box 56, F: P-Documents 1-17; H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Policy Summaries 126-149; G.H. Dorr Memorandum to Mr. McCloy, 10 Nov 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 26, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Nov. 1944 thru Dec. 44; G.H. Dorr Memo to Mr. McCloy, 8 May 45, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 27, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – Jan. '45 thru.

knowledge of history made them wary. Germany had lost World War I, its dead had numbered in the millions, and its defeat had led to revolution, inflation, social unrest, and political instability. Yet the result had not been a hegemonic pacifism, but paramilitary activism, military ascendancy, and Hitler, all glued together with a “Stab-in-the-Back” legend denying military defeat and fueling an intense desire for revenge. German “military tradition,” noted a draft of the State Department’s Swope response, “was sufficiently ingrained to survive the catastrophe of 1918.”<sup>5</sup> Morgenthau offered a similar perspective in 1945, writing, “After 1918, it seemed impossible to the victors that the vanquished could take seriously the sort of rhetoric the Kaiser and their sages had dished out to them. But an idea cannot be beaten by a battle. . . . An idea needs to be beaten by another idea, and their military defeat had given birth to no new ideas among the Germans.”<sup>6</sup>

World War II had rained bombs and destruction on the German homeland and would surely result in a defeat more complete and devastating than the Germans of 1918 could ever have imagined. Yet American leaders saw a people in Germany who not only retained certain cultural characteristics, but who were more thoroughly militarized than the generation that had lost the previous war. “Inevitably the Germans will remember much more clearly how close they came to victory than how they came to be defeated,” asserted Morgenthau in 1945, projecting post-World War I experiences onto the residues of the most recent conflict.<sup>7</sup> Arguing against those who were urging the Allies to give the Germans a second chance to establish their own democracy, Welles contended that conditions this time would be even less favorable for such an initiative. The youth of Germany, in particular, had been educated only by the Nazis, taught, among other things, ideals of domination. This did not bode well for the rest of the world. “These millions of Germans will be at the prime of their life during the next two decades. They will be a controlling force . . . . Theirs will be a force of fanaticism and revenge.”<sup>8</sup> A radical change in German attitudes and behavior was not presumed to be inevitable.

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<sup>5</sup> David Harris to Mr. Notter, 13 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 489, Box 79, F: S-Germany (Swope) & Welles.

<sup>6</sup> Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 111. For Roosevelt’s similar views, see the radio chat cited in the opening to Chapter 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>8</sup> Welles, *The Time for Decision*, 357-358. For concerns about Germany’s indoctrinated youth, see also H-127, 8 Mar 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Summaries 126-149.



The challenge was thus a long-term one, and as much an intellectual as a physical one. Laying out the issues in November 1944, a McCloy advisor reasoned that with some 70 million people, agricultural land, many natural resources, large—if damaged—industrial plants, research instincts, and organizing ability, Germany would soon have a high military potential again, unless all of the Germans were deported or wiped out, which were not practical options. The problem, he argued, was not their military potential, “but the danger of the persistence or recurrence of the aggressive Nazi or military ideas.” Negative actions, he added, would be insufficient. Affirmative longer-term measures, such as education, an international security organization, and economic rehabilitation and interdependence with other areas, must be attempted, while the occupiers also acted as governmental authorities for some years.<sup>9</sup> One SHAEF manual was more succinct: “By the terms of the peace settlement the Allies can suppress the physical ability to commit acts of aggression. But no peace settlement can destroy the spirit of aggression. That can be achieved only by long-term education.”<sup>10</sup>

The State Department’s 1944 basic policy statement on “The Treatment of Germany” took a similar position. Continuing control and coercion would be expensive and might disintegrate if the capabilities and will of the Allies did. The least costly and best assurance of enduring security, therefore, “would be the German people’s repudiation of militaristic ambitions and their assimilation, as an equal partner, into a cooperative world society.” The U.S., in other words, needed a policy that would both forestall German aggression and “pave the way the way for the German people in the course of time to join willingly in the common enterprises of peace.”<sup>11</sup> Earlier, the department’s Interdivisional Committee on Germany had discussed how this might be achieved. Defeat would lead to widespread disgust with the Nazi government and military catastrophe would “be a powerful lesson, supplementing that of 1918, in the consequences of ultra-nationalism, militarism and aggression,” its members agreed. But defeat alone would not change German values. They concluded, rather, that “a fundamental repudiation of that type of nationalistic mentality which reached its most extreme development in National Socialism” was as critical to preventing German aggression as were military and economic controls and called for an “attempt to bring about the psychological disarmament of the German

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<sup>9</sup> G.H. Dorr Memorandum to Mr. McCloy, 10 Nov 44, NA, RG 107.

<sup>10</sup> SHAEF, “Manual for the Control of German Information Services,” 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 78, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Bulky Package. (Emphasis in original.)

<sup>11</sup> PWC-141b, 5 Aug 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 53-54.

people as rapidly as possible through a carefully planned program of re-education” not only in schools but in German society at large.<sup>12</sup>

Even Morgenthau did not dispute the value of seeking to change German attitudes. His passionate advocacy for radically reducing German industrial capabilities rested in his belief that reeducating the Germans would, at worst, be impossible, and, at best, require a very long time. In the meantime, they could not be trusted with the resources necessary to wage war.<sup>13</sup> Here, his views were again similar to those of Roosevelt, who had chided his Joint Chiefs of Staff at one point for implying that a new, post-Nazi German state would contribute to peace in Europe immediately. The president was convinced, instead, that “German philosophy cannot be changed by decree, law or military order,” but that “the change in German philosophy must be evolutionary and may take two generations.” He cautioned, too, that “to assume otherwise [was] to assume, of necessity, a period of quiet followed by a third world war.”<sup>14</sup>

In essence, a specific understanding of German militarism led American policymakers to the means with which to eradicate it. If militarism was a learned condition, then it could be unlearned. Deeply ingrained, it might take time to be fully eliminated and success could not be guaranteed. But for lasting world security, the Americans saw few alternatives to a program of “psychological disarmament.”

### **Constructing a Regulatory Framework**

Defeat, occupation, and the prosecution of war criminals were necessary first steps toward psychologically disarming the Germans. Much as Roosevelt had urged when criticizing SHAEF’s draft handbook, U.S. officials were intent upon bringing home to the Germans that this time they had been soundly beaten. While also averting a new “Stab-in-the-Back” legend and its potential consequences, this recognition of defeat—with the victors occupying all of Germany—would begin the reeducation process. War, it should be

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<sup>12</sup> CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2. See also especially H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Policy Summaries 126-149.

<sup>13</sup> Morgenthau, *Germany is Our Problem*, 114-116; Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 140.

<sup>14</sup> F.D.R. Memorandum for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1 Apr 44, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 75, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Sec. 2. Roosevelt was objecting to a statement proposed by the JCS to clarify Allied intentions when they used the term “unconditional surrender.” The statement included the following assertion: “The nations of the world well know that peace in Europe will ultimately require the active cooperation of a new German state. The common people of Germany, once they have proven they can no longer be made to follow false leaders who proclaim world domination and military conquest, shall be given the opportunity to shape their own free existence. Only unconditional surrender can provide the necessary basis for a fresh start.” William D. Leahy Memorandum for the President, 25 Mar 44, *ibid*.

learned, did not pay.<sup>15</sup> Beyond this, achieving American objectives would require a wide range of both positive and negative measures.<sup>16</sup> Instilling new values championing peace and tolerance would be the ultimate goal. As Morgenthau and Roosevelt suggested, it was difficult, if not impossible, to force a change of philosophy via battlefield routs or laws and decrees. An idea needed to be defeated by a new idea. But this assignment was challenging. In the meantime, deconstructive and preventative measures would be necessary as well, and more pressing. Every influence in Germany's social and cultural environment which nurtured militaristic tendencies had to be eliminated. Hence even as Allied troops reached Germany's borders, crossed the Rhine, and eventually moved into Württemberg and Baden in March and April of 1945, American planners were developing a series of rudimentary policies to accomplish this task.

Perhaps surprisingly, American policymakers devoted the least amount of attention to Germany's infamous Prussian Junkers. In September 1944, State, War, and Treasury officials had all agreed that because the Junkers' large estates provided an economic foundation for Germany's military caste, they should be partitioned among tenants.<sup>17</sup> But this apparently did not become an official component of the early occupation policy of the United States. No iteration of JCS 1067, the interim directive for the post-surrender period, included a provision specifically calling for this action, although the most authoritative version from the spring of 1945 (and the *de facto* governing policy for the American Zone for several years) instructed Eisenhower to "direct the German authorities to utilize large-landed estates and public lands in a manner which will facilitate the accommodation and settlement of Germans and others or increase agricultural output."<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, when considering the removal of possible "militarists" from influential positions, SHAEF directives did

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<sup>15</sup> H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59; J. J. McCloy Memorandum for the Chief of Staff, 25 Feb 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 38, F: ASW 387; Col. L.W. Jefferson to Joint US Advisors, EAC, 15 Jul 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 12, F: 134.17 Directive No. 17 Disposal of German Forces.

<sup>16</sup> H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59; CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>17</sup> Memorandum, "Suggested Recommendations on Treatment of Germany From the Cabinet Committee for the President," 4 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 96.

<sup>18</sup> Holborn, *American Military Government*, 165. It seems unlikely that formerly consistent American views would have shifted substantially in less than a year. It may be simply that estate partitioning was not seen as so urgent as to require immediate post-surrender action, or that officials assumed a decision regarding the fate of Junker estates should await tripartite action, particularly since the vast majority of Junker estates lay within the Soviet Union's zone of occupation.

expressly call for careful scrutiny of members of large landholding families from Prussia and Germany's other eastern territories.<sup>19</sup>

Far more wide-reaching than policies pertaining specifically to the Junkers were those relating to Germany's soldiers. American planners had long accepted the necessity of disbanding the German General Staff and "rooting out" Germany's military caste.<sup>20</sup> In Washington, the influential September 1944 version of JCS 1067 manifested these concerns in ordering the arrest of all general staff corps officers not captured as prisoners of war, while promising further instructions as to their disposition and the treatment of other German officers. Intent on weakening the social status of Germany's military elites, JCS 1067 also prohibited the payment of military pensions except in cases of physical disability.<sup>21</sup> The revised interim directive sent to Eisenhower in the spring of 1945 retained these instructions and, in addition, required the disbanding and demobilizing of Germany's armed forces and paramilitary groups; the dissolution of the general staff, officer corps, reserve corps, and all military academies; and the exclusion of "supporters of militarism" from positions of authority and influence in Germany's society and economy. As an approved set of U.S. policies, JCS 1067 also ultimately became what one observer described as "the party line for the U.S. element in SHAEF."<sup>22</sup> And already during the fall of 1944, SHAEF planners were busy devising explicit guidelines for military commanders to use prior to and immediately following Germany's surrender. Not surprisingly, then, revised SHAEF pre-surrender policies finalized in late 1944 stressed the Allies' intent to eradicate militarism as well as Nazism, mandated the disbanding of the German armed forces, and required the dismissal of "all militarists and leading military figures" from government posts and other influential positions.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> SHAEF to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 24 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 3, F: AG 014.1 Military Government of Germany, Interim Directive for. See below for details on this point.

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, CAC-5, 23 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 1.

<sup>21</sup> Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany in the Period Immediately Following the Cessation of Organized Resistance, 22 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conferences at Malta and Yalta*, 146, 152.

<sup>22</sup> Eric Biddle to Harold D. Smith, 31 Dec 44, NA, RG 43, Entry 1055, Box 1, F: Miscellaneous – EAC Correspondence [1].

<sup>23</sup> W.B. Smith to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 9 Nov 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 3, F: AG 014.1 Military Government of Germany, Interim Directive for; SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*, Dec 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 7. The previous pre-surrender directive, CCS 551, had focused primarily on Nazism. It had, however, also prohibited general staff members from holding influential posts and required the disbanding of the German General Staff and High Command. Holborn, *American Military Government*, 137-138.

The American commitment to removing objectionable persons of all types from positions of influence in Germany spawned additional policymaking challenges. Just as American planners often vaguely lumped together “Nazism and militarism” as forces to be eradicated, instructions relating to personnel arrests and removals typically referred jointly to “Nazis and Militarists.” Here, however, a variety of Allied planning organizations at least attempted to define the universe of affected individuals.

As late as December 1944, a SHAEF official pointed out that the Supreme Headquarters staff had produced a variety of regulations for Allied invasion forces pertaining to Nazis and militarists without offering clear definitions or consistent and comprehensive classifications.<sup>24</sup> In early 1945, responding to requests from military commanders in the field, SHAEF staffers finally made their first concerted attempt to define a “militarist.” In identifying “Nazi and militarist” personnel slated for mandatory removal from key positions, their multi-page catalog of those who had wielded influence in the Third Reich included long-standing Nazi Party members, prominent business officials, key civil servants, high-level government administrators, and a host of officials from Nazi formations and Nazi-affiliated organizations. Buried in the lengthy list was a subheading titled “Military Service,” which encompassed two groups: “Persons who have at any time been members of the German General Staff Corps” and “Persons who have been National Socialist Indoctrination Officers.”<sup>25</sup> Going on to discuss those subject to discretionary removal, SHAEF officials called for removing from influential positions “persons likely to perpetuate the militaristic tradition of Germany.” Here they alluded in vague terms to the aforementioned “militarists” (without specifying who among the multitudes, specifically, might be painted with this brush) and indicated that career military officers and “any persons who represent the Prussian Junker tradition” should also be scrutinized as potential militarists. Admitting that the latter category was hard to define, they advised SHAEF occupation authorities to pay particular attention to any person who was apparently “a member of an aristocratic Prussian or East Prussian, Pomeranian, Silesian or Mecklenburg family, or of one which is the owner of extensive property in Prussia” and to any former members of any of the

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<sup>24</sup> Frank J. McSherry to All Branches, G-5, Dec 44, attached to H.F. Corcoran to All Branches, 22 Dec 44, NA, RG 43, Entry 1055, Box 2.

<sup>25</sup> D.G. Heyman to G-1 Div., SHAEF, et al, 23 Feb 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 3, F: AG 014.1 Planning Directives (German Country Unit, USGCC) (Nos. 1 to 26 – New Series).

“elite German University Student Corps” or “East Prussian or Silesian Landschaften [*sic*].”<sup>26</sup> Issuing a subsequent directive specifying who should be disqualified from occupying “any post of authority or important governmental or civil position,” the U.S. Army’s 6th Army Group made the identification process even simpler, describing ineligible “militarists” as current or former members of the German General Staff Corps, National Socialist Indoctrination Officers, career military officers, and persons representing the “Prussian Junker tradition,” as explained in the SHAEF directive.<sup>27</sup>

A SHAEF manual on the control of German information services drafted about the same time similarly incorporated the SHAEF removal guidelines in a set of annexes, but also put forward more expansive ideas when discussing personnel appointments. Emphasizing that Germany contained two enemies—Nazis and militarists—it argued that while the “obvious Nazi” could be recognized by his party affiliation, many less zealous Nazis and most militarists were harder to identify because they might be associated with nearly any political party or group. They might also be non-partisan. The manual suggested that “broadly speaking” information control officers could “assume that anyone who before 1933 actively supported any party advocating German nationalism and militarism is suspect and may be even more dangerous than many Nazi Party members.”<sup>28</sup> The staff of Robert Murphy, the U.S. Political Advisor for Germany, drew similar conclusions in developing general guidance on personnel appointments. Warning against appointing any former high-ranking officer or “militarist” (as defined in the SHAEF directive) to “any position in Government or private business,” they added that “as a general rule, industrialists, big businessmen, and large landholders must be considered suspect, as all these groups have supported either Nazism, militarism, or German nationalism, not only since 1933 but long before that date.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. The final version of the removal guidelines issued in March did not change the text on militarists. SHAEF to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 24 Mar 45, NA, RG 260. The Secretary of State and the head of the department’s Central European Affairs Division both received copies of these instructions. Robert Murphy to the Secretary of State, 7 Apr 45, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 664.

<sup>27</sup> J.L. Tarr to Commanding General, Seventh Army, et al, 30 Mar 45, appended to “Historical Report, G-5 Section, 6th Army Group, for Period 1 Through 31 March 1945,” NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 54, Box 169, F: 17.8 Historical Reports Sixth Army Group March 1945.

<sup>28</sup> SHAEF, “Manual for the Control of German Information Services,” 16 Apr 45, 4, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 78, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Bulky Package.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Murphy to Brig. Gen. Frank J. McSherry, 4 May 45, attached to Robert Murphy to the Secretary of State, 7 May 45, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 3665. (Emphasis in original.) Offering specific advice on evaluating the party affiliation of potential appointees, they suggested that “parties to the right of the former Center Party (Nationalist Party, German People’s Party) may have been anti-Nazi; but they were so generally imbued with German nationalism,

How difficult it was to decide who should be considered a militarist (and the variety of possible answers to this question) was underscored by an exchange that occurred during a late April 1945 Informal Policy Committee on Germany meeting attended by Assistant Secretary of State William Clayton, Army Civil Affairs Division chief General John Hilldring, Undersecretary of the Navy Ralph Bard, Foreign Economic Administration head Leo Crowley, his colleague H.H. Fowler, and the Treasury Department's Harold Glasser, J.B. Friedman, and D.W. Bell. Assembled to hammer out final changes to the version of JSC 1067 that became the guiding policy of the U.S. occupation, the men considered a provision on denazification which specified that all active Nazi party members, "all active supporters of Nazism or militarism," and any other individuals "hostile to Allied purposes" were to be removed or barred from public office and influential positions in the private sector and stated that Germans would fall into these categories if they had "held office or otherwise been active at any level from local to national in the party and its subordinate organizations, or in organizations which further militaristic doctrines," "authorized or participated affirmatively in any Nazi crimes, racial persecutions, or discriminations," "been avowed believers in Nazism or racial and militaristic creeds," or "voluntarily given substantial moral and material support or political assistance of any kind to the Nazi Party or Nazi officials or leaders."<sup>30</sup>

At the meeting, Bard opened the discussion by declaring that the provision under consideration began by specifying that any man who had been in the army was excluded, which meant "everybody, practically." Clayton disagreed, prompting an exchange as to what, exactly, the provision did mean.

Mr. Bard: It says, "All active supporters of Nazism or militarism." A soldier is a supporter.

Gen. Hilldring: That is a stricter interpretation than we have put on it, Mr. Bard.

Mr. Bell: Everybody above the age of six.

Mr. Clayton: Of course, those soldiers—just an ordinary private has no other choice; he has to serve. Many of them, I dare say, have served that would have liked very well not to.

Mr. Fowler: What you really mean are Fascists and supporters of Nazism.

Mr. Bell: You certainly mean SS Troops.

Mr. Bard: I could interpret it that a soldier carrying a gun was a supporter of Nazism.

Mr. Clayton: You could so construe it. That may be, General, something that will come up early in its application.

Gen. Hilldring: Yes. This formula isn't much different from what [Eisenhower's] present denazification policy is, and I don't think he will apply it that rigidly.

Mr. Crowley: You'd think he is going to have so damn much business he isn't going to get down to that right away.

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militarism, and conservative traditionalism as to make their members unsuitable for all purposes. In many cases members of these rightist parties are only less dangerous than the Nazis themselves."

<sup>30</sup> *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 1257.

Gen. Hilldring: Not right away, but what Mr. Bard says is true.  
Mr. Crowley: It will be back for revision before he gets down that far.  
Mr. Clayton: You will have to cable right away.  
Mr. Bell: Just about the same as you had in Italy.  
Gen. Hilldring: Not as tight as that.  
Mr. Friedman: They will do it, anyway, if they want to.  
Mr. Glasser: Militarism in that sense is really an ism, more of the doctrine of military organization. That is what is intended here, and that is the way the ism is usually interpreted. I think a soldier in the Army is part of a military organization, is really a puppet of whatever militarism there may be in the community.  
Gen. Hilldring: I think he will interpret this as saying he won't use Army officers and SS Troops. But I think we could assume that under this language he could use others.  
Mr. Clayton: You will recall, General, if you get anything out of the discussion here as to what the intent is, and instruct him accordingly.  
Gen. Hilldring: If it is a question like that, cables will be coming back in the weeks and months ahead when he gets down to it.<sup>31</sup>

In short, in the space of some 10 minutes, eight men offered at least three different ideas as to who might be considered a "supporter of militarism": soldiers, civilians, or officers.<sup>32</sup> Not surprisingly, the IPCOG officials expected Eisenhower to have many questions when called upon to actually enforce JCS 1067.

Overall, the work of American postwar planners revealed two coexisting convictions regarding militarists: one, that many Nazis were militarists and, two, that Germans could be militarists without being Nazis. Presumably, when it came time for removals or arrests, each individual would be excluded or rounded up for their most egregious sin. More concrete attempts at classification seldom went beyond segregating offenders based on such factors as profession, office, or background. Traits, behaviors, or beliefs that militarists shared with Nazis or which set them apart from non-militarists went mostly unexamined. Similarly, American officials left unanswered the question of how a subcategory of "militarists" could even exist in a nation of individuals who had been subject for decades to a deliberate program of militaristic instruction and cultural indoctrination. SHAEF regulations seemed to focus primarily on those likely to "perpetuate the German militaristic tradition." Understandably, persons thought to be responsible for teaching, training, and organizing, such as military officers, might be considered militarists. But policymakers had left little doubt that they

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 1258.

<sup>32</sup> Ten days earlier, General F.C. Meade, head of the USGCC's Internal Affairs and Communications Division, had suggested to McCloy that the term "militarists" in JCS 1067 needed a closer definition. The assistant secretary, perhaps thinking only of the directive's section on arrests, had replied that these were "confined principally to the members of the German General Staff," as a more extensive list of categories once under consideration "had been too extensive to be practicable." Minutes of Staff Meeting of Division Directors of US Group CC, 17 Apr 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 289, F: V60-12/1 USGCC, HQS, Staff Meetings, 1945; Notes by V.M[eyer] at Versailles Conference with Mr. McCloy, 10 Apr 45, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 21, F: 322 Joint US Advisors EAC.



believed German militarism ran deeper than German elites. Evidently Germans could be prone to militarism, supporters of militarism, brainwashed believers in militarism, and exemplars of militaristic qualities, and not officially be considered “militarists.” Conversely, planners spoke regularly of seeking assistance during the occupation from untainted Germans—a strategy that assumed that certain Germans had not succumbed to the onslaught of militaristic ideology and training to which they had been subjected. But American officials never attempted the daunting task of drawing more nuanced distinctions between “militarists,” Germans inclined toward militarism, and Germans who rejected militarism.<sup>33</sup> American regulations stated that militarists must be kept from positions of influence. Identifying these people would remain a challenge.

Despite the problems posed by the need to make personnel decisions on the basis of imprecise guidelines, the SHAEF directive from early 1945 provided invading forces with at least some direction when dealing with local German administrations. It also gave military commanders a certain amount of latitude, permitting them to delay taking action where it might impede successful combat operations and allowing them to use German personnel to help demobilize German troops.<sup>34</sup> Specifically designed as a pre-defeat directive, it nevertheless held sway until SHAEF dissolved and guidance modeled on the SHAEF directive but applicable only in the American Zone took effect in July 1945.<sup>35</sup>

Along with the formulation of personnel removal instructions, the development of policies for handling German officers immediately following Germany’s defeat became critical as the Wehrmacht was gradually pushed back in the field and began to disintegrate in late 1944 and early 1945. As of September 1944, SHAEF planners had few guidelines for field commanders.<sup>36</sup> Although EAC officials were discussing the subject, long-

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<sup>33</sup> SHAEF’s information services control manual provided perhaps the most complex discussion of different types of Germans in descriptions it provided to help information control officers evaluate people for possible future appointments. Here, SHAEF not only referenced the background, party membership, and past experiences of a person, but also included both a list of questions to be asked of potential appointees—including their views of the war—and suggestions for how to interpret various answers. Yet even in a manual that explicitly drew attention to militarists, detailed guidelines focused primarily on identifying Nazis and Nazi sympathizers. A section titled “Guidance on How to Recognize a Nazi” had no equivalent for militarists. SHAEF, “Manual for the Control of German Information Services,” 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 218.

<sup>34</sup> SHAEF to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 24 Mar 45, NA, RG 260.

<sup>35</sup> R.B. Lovett to Commanding General, 12th Army Group, 29 Jun 45, NA, RG 107, Entry 183, Box 56, F: ASW 370.8 Germany-Control.

<sup>36</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Commander Owen, et al, 16 Sep 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff.

term tripartite policy for the post-hostilities period remained undecided.<sup>37</sup> SHAEF planners could therefore only speculate as to what the ultimate course of action might be for dealing with Germany's military caste, though they clearly had their own views on the subject. Hoping that the general staff and other elements of the officer corps who could lay the groundwork for Germany's military resurgence would be exiled, they recommended in November that these men be allowed to return home, secure in their ignorance of Allied plans for their eventual arrest, while SHAEF officials checked their records and monitored their whereabouts. This approach would facilitate future detention and deportation en masse, but would also let Allied military commanders focus initially on the enormous and more immediately important task of capturing Nazis and other "blacklist personnel" and enable them to rely on German assistance in disarming and demobilizing millions of German soldiers.<sup>38</sup>

While most SHAEF officials consulted on the matter approved the recommended policy,<sup>39</sup> one officer argued that exterminating or segregating the general staff corps might dampen German militarism immediately following the war, but was not a permanent solution. Executions would create martyrs and exile would not get rid of powerful German military writings. He suggested, instead, that the Allies find a way to discredit the general staff in the eyes of the German people, perhaps simply by emphasizing the miserable effects of Germany's recent military disaster.<sup>40</sup>

More significantly, a Psychological Warfare Division official expressed his division's strong objections. Although he agreed that dangerous German officers should be exiled, he called for their immediate detention. If action was delayed, he reasoned, Wehrmacht officers were likely to simply vanish or, permitted to operate freely in their posts, would cheat the Allies whenever possible. A delaying policy, moreover, would "create indignation" in the United States and Britain and suspicion in Moscow. "If the most dangerous

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<sup>37</sup> EAC (45)1, 1 Jan 45, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 12, F: 134.17 Directive No. 15 Disposal German Forces.

<sup>38</sup> T. N. Grazebrook to ANCXF, et al, 12 Nov 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff. By the time SHAEF officials solidified these recommendations, they had received copies of the September 1944 iteration of JCS 1067, with its instructions to arrest all general staff officers. A British document submitted to the EAC provided the most current indication of British views. Less severe than JCS 1067, it permitted commanders considerable latitude in detaining, disbanding, replacing, or temporarily retaining German officers, with no specific references to the general staff or officer corps.

<sup>39</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Chief, Plans Section, 28 Nov 44, *ibid*.

<sup>40</sup> C.R. Kutz to Chief, Plans Section, 14 Nov 44, *ibid*.

elements of the Wehrmacht remain at liberty and negotiate as responsible officers with the Allied command,” he argued, “the spectacle will give the impression that we have abandoned our policy of eradicating German militarism.” The German people would draw this conclusion as well, thus nullifying reeducation efforts from the start. Furthermore, his division believed that the need to prevent the general staff corps and other dangerous officers from acting was “greater and not less than the need to liquidate minor Nazi officials.” Immediate arrest was therefore necessary. German officers cooperating in disarming activities should be “forced to do so under some form of detention” and treated severely. And these actions should be publicized. On the other hand, although the division believed the Allies should demonstrate their strength, it did not advocate a deliberate campaign of humiliation and degradation. Alluding to post-World War I anti-army sentiment, the official added, “If an anti-militarist swing of opinion should occur, we should have to consider carefully what use to make of it.”<sup>41</sup>

When to arrest and how to use German officers in demobilizing the Wehrmacht without threatening larger occupation objectives thus became a point of some contention between the Psychological Warfare Division and other SHAEF organizations.<sup>42</sup> In the long run, the Psychological Warfare approach won out, perhaps encouraged in part by JCS 1067. SHAEF post-hostilities policy, as embodied in an “Eclipse” memorandum, ordered the immediate arrest of all general staff corps officers not taken as prisoners of war, explaining that because the general staff was the primary proponent of Germany’s quest for world domination, this task was critically important. The general staff, it added, could be destroyed by isolating its members, taking away their files to prevent study of the most recent conflict and planning for the next, carefully tracking key members (especially men between the ages of 25 and 35), and “fostering among former officers a conviction of irrevocable and final defeat and impotency in face of Allied power and exploiting all methods which will keep them from uniting on a common basis.”<sup>43</sup> A subsequent directive indicated that general

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<sup>41</sup> Charles A.H. Thomason to Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Section, 23 Nov 44, *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> K.G. McLean to DAC of S, G-3, 1 Dec 44, *ibid.*; K.G. McLean to DAC of S, G-3, 16 Dec 44, *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Captain H.D. Owen, 11 Feb 45, *ibid.* How to handle German officers nevertheless remained a point of dispute. Officials from Britain’s 21st Army Group argued for monitoring, rather than arrest. They wondered about treating “security suspects” not guilty of war crimes the same as war criminals during their joint internment, since general staff officers were simply being restrained, not punished. Moreover, treatment the men viewed as unjust might encourage subversive activities. “It is considered that, unless they are to be interned for life or banished from the country on the strength of being members of the General Staff Corps, little purpose will be served by detaining them in the first place,” they argued. Some at headquarters also called for stringent monitoring of German officers, under threat of death for violation of SHAEF rules and controls, rather than long-term detention. On the other hand, SHAEF counter-intelligence officials

officers not needed for administering the German armed forces should be divested of their authority, forbidden to wear “decorations or other symbols of military achievement,” and “allotted to the various concentration areas containing German Forces,” where they were to be “maintained by the German Commander of the area on the same scale as the German Forces.”<sup>44</sup>

The specifics of the latter policy were in part a product of the arguments of a SHAEF counter-intelligence staff determined to get rid of German militarism. Calling for denying officers their symbols of rank and achievement, they had also urged that all “pomp and circumstance” be eliminated and the officers “reduced to the position of thoroughly defeated men.” The Germans should not, counter-intelligence officials had stressed, be allowed to “strut about wearing distinguished insignia, medals, and acting in such a manner as to give the impression that the German Army is still alive.”<sup>45</sup> Effective psychological disarmament thus required attention not only to the immediate disposition of German officers, but also to their specific treatment. They were to recognize their own impotence. Moreover, the image they presented— bearing authority to lead only at the discretion of the Allies and suffering internment with millions of other faceless German troops—would serve as a lesson for their enlisted men and the German people as a whole.

Similar considerations played into decisions regarding the demobilization of Germany’s armed forces. Allied officials remained acutely conscious of the aftermath of World War I, when defeated units of imperial soldiers had marched smartly back into Germany, weapons in hand, providing nutritious fodder for myths of civilian backstabbing. Intent on preventing a recurrence of this delusional and dangerous thinking, SHAEF officials discussed whether marching troops home in battalions, unarmed, minus their senior officers, to arrive

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supported the policy of detaining general staff officers to prevent their war planning. They contended that banning the officers from Germany permanently was impractical, as was permanent internment, but advocated detaining them outside of Germany for a number of years. See Field Marshal, Commander-in-Chief, to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, 5 Mar 45, attached to T.N. Grazebrook to Colonel Brooks and Lieutenant Colonel Miller, 8 Mar 45, *ibid.*; T.J.Koenig to Intelligence Section, 20 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism (Dissolution of the German Armed Forces and Paramilitary Organizations, etc.); Coordinating Route Slip, “Treatment of Senior German Commanders and Staff,” 13 Mar 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff.

<sup>44</sup> W.B. Smith to ANCXF, et al, 29 Apr 45, NA, RG 331, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of German Military Staff. The directive also explained that members of the general staff, being held as a precautionary measure, should be segregated from war criminals and other security suspects. The SHAEF handbook governing the occupation indicated that “Senior Commanders and other high ranking officers (other than those in arrest categories)” not needed for controlling German troops should be assigned to concentration areas and “not be discharged from the forces without authority from Supreme Headquarters.” SHAEF, *Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation*.

<sup>45</sup> Coordinating Route Slip, “Control and Disposal of German Forces and Allied Problems,” 28 Mar 45, NA, RG 331, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of German Military Staff.

“in a fairly bedraggled state,” would be less or more effective than sending them home “piece-meal by train.” Here, counter-intelligence officials contended that marching troops home, regardless of their overall appearance, would not only pose security risks, but would attract onlookers in each town they passed through, who would “endeavor to cheer the men on their way and supply them with food and flowers and endeavor to make their progress as much of a triumphal march as possible.”<sup>46</sup> In the end, SHAEF regulations prohibited disbanded soldiers from marching home in “formed bodies.”<sup>47</sup> Officials throughout Washington’s planning network also essentially endorsed this approach, approving a draft directive prepared by the American EAC delegation which emphasized the need to impress upon the Germans that their army was beaten. Disbanded personnel, the directive stipulated, would “in no case be permitted to return to their homes in military formations or with arms, bands or displaying flags, banners or emblems of distinction.”<sup>48</sup>

American determination to teach the Germans a lesson on the perils of militarism also extended to regulating the conduct of American troops. In early 1944, Emil Ludwig, a German-born, Swiss émigré historian and acquaintance of the president, drafted a set of 14 rules for occupation officers which he sent to the White House. He also submitted a copy to the War Department, leading Hilldring’s Civil Affairs Division to take his rules under consideration. Under Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson passed along yet another copy to McCloy, with a cover note remarking, “Ludwig, I believe, knows the German psychology.” This psychology, according to Ludwig, required American occupation soldiers to be strict and forceful and to speak English. “Don’t keep smiling,” he urged. They should not shake hands or offer cigarettes to people they did not know well—“The Germans will respect you as long as they see in you a successor of a Gauleiter—who also never offered them his hand.” American officers should distrust anyone who had not yet proven they were honest—“Then after some weeks, the Germans will realize that under your government, personality and character count higher than military grades.” They should always wear a uniform, which, Ludwig explained,

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<sup>46</sup> Robert W. Blum to Colonel Brooks, G-1 Division, 28 Nov 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 27, Box 88, F: 387.4-5 Control and Disposal of German Forces During Middle Period; Coordinating Route Slip, “Memorandum on Control and Disbandment of the German Field Forces after defeat (GCT 387.4-5/PHP) dated 28 November 1944,” 29 Nov 44, *ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> Eclipse Memorandum No. 17, enclosed in H.H. Newman to Distribution, 30 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism.

<sup>48</sup> Planning Directive No. 7, 24 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 20, F: 381 Planning Directives US Group CC No. 1-10 (1944); Planning Directive No. 7, Change 2, 1 Jan 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 20, F: 381 Planning Directives US Group CC No. 1-10 (1944). Never approved by the EAC, the document nevertheless represented agreed American policy and its provisions eventually found their way into other American regulations.

“represents a symbol of authority to the Germans, who for three-hundred years have been governed by soldiers. . . .” “The only way to get along with the Germans,” his fourteenth rule cautioned, “is to make them feel the hand of the master.”<sup>49</sup>

According to Ludwig, then, American occupation officers should in certain respects seek to become more like the Germans, in order to earn their obedience and respect. This leitmotif, in fact, ran through a number of discussions dealing with the practical issues of the occupation. Most notably, a draft SHAEF study dealing with the handling of German troops included an appendix assessing the possible role of psychological warfare in arousing a recognition of Germany’s absolute defeat, eliminating the soldiers’ esprit de corps, and destroying “the spirit of German militarism.” Among other factors, the authors of the appendix stressed that “the display of Allied military might and the bearing of the occupation troops” would be critically important. “Correctness of behavior, military smartness, a show of discipline and efficiency and a certain degree of aloofness, are qualities which the German soldiers have always claimed to be more highly developed in the German Army than in any other armed force.” Therefore, they would be “impressed in proportion as the Allied soldiers display these same qualities.” Regardless of their “material situation,” the writers added, “German soldiers are not likely to be convinced of their military defeat if they find their victors lacking in the ‘soldierly virtues’ which they have hitherto believed to be the prerogative of the Herrenvolk.” They went on to recommend that two conduct guides be prepared: one for German troops and one for Allied forces.<sup>50</sup> A directive distributed by U.S. military authorities in March 1945 demanding improved professionalism and discipline on the part of American troops responsible for guarding and handling German prisoners of war reiterated many of these themes. It also hinted at the difficulties involved in making U.S. soldiers “preserve a strict and impersonal attitude in their relations with prisoners of war” while “dressed in the proper uniform at all times” and behaving in a “military manner.”<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> E.M.W. to the President, 29 Jan 44, FDRL, PPF 3884; J.H. Hilldring Memorandum for Mr. McCloy, 1 Feb 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 183, Box 55, F: ASW 370.8 Germany – 1944. For more on Emil Ludwig and his relationship with Roosevelt, see Hönicke, “‘Know Your Enemy,’” 392-397.

<sup>50</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Captain P.H. Walter, ANCXF, et al, 9 May 44, attached to C.W. Wickersham Memorandum for the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, 16 May 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 12, F: 134.17 Directive No. 15 Disposal German Forces.

<sup>51</sup> R.B. Lovett to Commanding General, United Kingdom Base, Communications Zone, and Section Commanders, Communications Zone, 5 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 21, F: AG 383.6 Prisoners of War (German) – Policy. The directive called for the immediate initiation of training programs which should use for instruction various

Where many Americans were eager to demonstrate that democracies could defeat militaristic dictatorships, American military officials apparently were less certain that the more casual approach (whether intentional or not) of the U.S. military would do much to help the psychological disarmament process. The Allies had triumphed as a superior military power, and only by acknowledging this would German troops admit defeat and abandon their own superiority complex and will to world conquest. That forced submission to the commands of a conquering army might instead remind them of the rewards of military victory and therewith strengthen desires for maintaining exceptional military power was evidently not deemed a prohibitive side effect.

Instructions regarding the treatment of the entire German population contained a diluted version of this basic philosophy. “The Germans, as a nation, hold the armed forces and all things military in deep respect,” SHAEF’s occupation handbook explained. This meant that Allied personnel should preserve a “high standard of conduct and discipline.” Soldiers should be “just, but firm” and “adopt an attitude of stern courtesy” when carrying out official business. They were to “make it clear by words and attitude that immediate compliance with orders and instructions will be required and enforced.” Additionally, SHAEF’s much-maligned non-fraternization policy was designed to convince the Germans of their nation’s total defeat and their own role in bringing about the disaster.<sup>52</sup> In effect, U.S. soldiers could use the militaristic inclinations of the Germans as a means of control and as an early step toward the achievement of longer-term American demilitarization objectives.

An environment rich with military symbolism and rituals provided other educational opportunities as well. In early 1945, the military salute came under scrutiny when Britain’s counterpart to the USGCC circulated draft instructions on relations between Allied personnel and the German people that barred Allied soldiers from saluting German officers and officials, but compelled Germans to salute Allied officers and demanded that these salutes be returned.<sup>53</sup> Several USGCC officials questioned the latter provision, as did the State Department’s Murphy, with one suggesting that exchanging salutes would “tend to maintain a military

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military issuances, including those covering “Military Courtesy and Discipline; Articles of War,” “Care of Clothing and Equipment,” “Dismounted Drill,” “Protection Against Carelessness,” and “German National Psychology.”

<sup>52</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation*.

<sup>53</sup> DCC/P(44)22, 21 Dec 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 4, F: AG 014.13 Relationship of Military Government Personnel with Germans (Fraternization).

atmosphere which we are attempting to destroy.”<sup>54</sup> The British proposal spurred USGCC officials to comb through existing American and SHAEF regulations for guidance and prompted an exchange of correspondence between General Wickersham, head of the USGCC, and his British equivalent, Major General S.W. Kirby. At issue were matters of legality (including the terms of the Geneva Convention), practicality (“If we require a German to salute, we must return it or technically he could never drop his hand”), and Allied objectives.<sup>55</sup>

The British, Kirby explained, intended “to break up the German military caste and to indicate that Wehrmacht behaviour in this war has forfeited all their rights to normal international courtesies.” However, convinced that Germans must salute when working with Allied officers, the British also believed these salutes must be returned, lest Allied officers imitate the “undignified” behavior of the Nazis.<sup>56</sup> (SHAEF’s military government handbook explicitly prohibited “rough, undignified or aggressive conduct” and the “insolent overbearance which has characterized Nazi leadership.”<sup>57</sup>) Many within the USGCC preferred to get rid of all saluting. German officers and officials “should not be entitled to the privilege of a military salutation,” Wickersham maintained, adding that not exchanging salutes “fits best with our mission of demilitarization of Germany and also with our position as conquerors.”<sup>58</sup> Responding to Wickersham’s request for input, Major General R.W. Barker, assistant chief of staff of SHAEF’s personnel section, distinguished between salutes used as greetings and salutes used to acknowledge orders. The former were “one of the perquisites of membership in the ‘Fraternity of Arms’”—a privilege that should be granted only to members “in good standing.” “Clearly,” he wrote, “from our point of view, no member of the German armed forces will be in such standing” and it was therefore “highly inappropriate” to permit the use of salutes as a form of greeting. Conversely, saluting to

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<sup>54</sup> Administrative Form, General Milburn to Exec., PC, In Turn, 28 Dec 44, *ibid*; C.W.W. to Ambassador Murphy, 18 Jan 45, *ibid*.

<sup>55</sup> C.W.W. to Major Simpich, 14 Feb 45, *ibid*; F. Simpich to The Acting Deputy, 16 Feb 45, *ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> General Kirby to Brigadier General C.W. Wickersham, 23 Feb 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 16, F: AG 335 Honors and Ceremonies.

<sup>57</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany*.

<sup>58</sup> C.W. Wickersham to Major General S.W. Kirby, 3 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 16, F: AG 335 Honors and Ceremonies. Comments concerning the entitlements of the Wehrmacht reflect a more general disgust on the part of Allied officers towards the Wehrmacht. What is not always clear in planning discussions is whether this attitude resulted from frustration with the Wehrmacht’s role in fomenting a new war, disapproval of its tight relationship with Hitler, or revulsion resulting from knowledge of specific activities. At a minimum, wartime policymakers were clearly incensed by the role German officers had played in planning and fighting the current war. On Eisenhower’s treatment of Wehrmacht officers during the war, see his *Crusade in Europe*, 156-157.



acknowledge receipt of orders was simply standard military procedure. “By requiring Germans of whatever rank to render the salute whenever given instructions by Allied officers, regardless of their military rank, we are impressing upon the Germans the fact of their defeat,” Barker reasoned. “If we adopt that rule, then I think we should adhere to the usual military custom of returning a salute so given.”<sup>59</sup>

In May 1945, Barker’s staff prepared a directive covering “military courtesy” as a whole, for civilians as well as military personnel. Here, “military courtesy” was defined “as the expression of consideration and deference accorded to a nation, to the national symbol of a nation, or to an individual by reason of his rank or position in the military service of such nation.” These courtesies, the directive’s writers asserted, “were of far-reaching significance.” Saluting one’s own flag showed adherence to the principles and ideals the flag symbolized and to the nation devoted to them. Alternatively, when a defeated German showed respect for an Allied flag, it demonstrated “his recognition of the authority of that nation, and his willingness or obligation to obey the valid and proper orders thereof.” The directive went on to state that German military personnel were only to salute Allied officers to acknowledge orders, with their salutes to be returned. German officers were otherwise simply to come to attention in the presence of Allied officers and German enlisted men were to do likewise in the presence of all Allied personnel, except when both were in motion outdoors. German soldiers would be permitted to exchange salutes amongst themselves, though they might not use the Nazi greeting. German civilians, including policemen and fire officials, were not to salute. In addition, the directive stipulated that all German men should come to attention and remove their hats when any Allied funeral procession or flag passed (and remove their hats when passing such a flag) or upon hearing the national anthem, or a similar song, of any Allied nation at ceremonies. Similar conduct was expected when “flourishes, ruffles, march or other personal honors” were rendered for the Allies, but such honors for German officers were prohibited. The Germans were also barred from displaying Nazi flags and other paraphernalia and from public playing or singing of the German national anthem, Nazi songs, and military music.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> R.W. Barker to General Wickersham, 7 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 16, F: AG 335 Honors and Ceremonies.

<sup>60</sup> R.W. Barker to Chief of Staff, 6 May 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 2, Box 113, F: 335.11 Germany Military Courtesy in Germany; H.H. Newman to All concerned, 13 May 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 4, F: AG 014.13 Relationship of Military Government Personnel with Germans (Fraternization).

By the time SHAEF issued its instructions, other American officials had been discussing martial music and flags for some time. Already in September 1944, the first JCS 1067 iteration specified that “no German military music, or German national or Nazi anthems shall be played or sung in public or before any groups or gatherings” and also prohibited the Germans from publicly displaying German national or Nazi flags, with both restrictions apparently first appearing in a Treasury Department revision of a working draft of the directive. In a complementary measure, the interim directive prohibited all “German parades, military or political, civilian or sports,” a clause Morgenthau made sure to insert to meet Roosevelt’s expectations. Discussing the fate of Germany with the Treasury Secretary in anticipation of the Quebec Conference, Roosevelt had explicitly stated that he considered three measures to be essential psychologically and symbolically. The Germans should be denied aircraft and prevented from wearing uniforms and marching. The last two items, he believed, would be the most effective means of driving home their defeat.<sup>61</sup>

In the meantime, Winant’s advisors had prepared a draft directive on military training which, in addition to outlawing all training, dealt with a range of other military-related activities they hoped to prohibit. The WSC, State Department, and JCS had all approved the directive for EAC submission, but only with the proviso that it be modified to include the JCS 1067 language prohibiting flags, music, and parades.<sup>62</sup> Although Winant’s advisors revised their directive accordingly before submitting it to the EAC, they were not entirely pleased with the change, suggesting that songs dating from before the Nazi era might furnish “an emotional outlet for the German people” and later wondering if “it would be unrealistic to prohibit pre-Nazi German

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<sup>61</sup> Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany, 149; Interim Draft Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany in the Period Immediately Following the Cessation of Organized Resistance, 8 Sep 44, NA, RG 56, OASIA, Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 84, F: Germany: Policy Toward Vol. I; Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation of Germany,” 363-366. The immediate impetus behind the restrictions on music and flags is unclear. Their introduction might be interpreted as symptomatic of the sterner Treasury position. Yet such an interpretation is speculative at best and not necessarily supported by other evidence. One of the earliest references in the planning files to the possible banning of military music came not from vengeful Treasury personnel, but from the generally more mild British. In February 1944, Winant informed Hull that during one of his staff’s informal meetings with the British EAC delegation regarding German surrender terms, when discussing German troops the British members had expressed a desire to include “a prohibition of Germans use of their military bands, regimental colors, and like signs of military honors.” WS-66, 8 Feb 44, NA, RG 43, Entry 1055, Box 1, F: Working Security Comea Dispatches. Moreover, when McCloy raised objections to restrictions on uniforms and insignia, which the Treasury staff also inserted in early policy documents, Morgenthau waved off his concerns, rather than raising loud objections as was typical when his passions were ignited. “The secretary said that the principal thing was not concerned with such matters,” notes a conference memo, “and that on the matter of reducing the economic strength of Germany he had not changed his position.” Morgenthau saw an American role that went beyond economic concerns, but the latter remained his primary interest. Conference in Secretary’s Office, 6 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 533.

<sup>62</sup> JCS 1124, 20 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 11, F: Directive No. 13 134.14 Military Training; State Department to Officer in Charge of the American Mission, London, 28 Oct 44, *ibid*.

national anthems.” When the British proposed a modification prohibiting the “rendering in public of martial music,” the Americans questioned whether the new phrasing might also be unrealistic “in view of the difficulty of defining the term ‘martial music.’”<sup>63</sup>

Despite its concerns about restrictions on German music, the U.S. EAC delegation illustrated in its draft directive on military training the importance American officials placed both on concrete problems, such as preventing Germans from venerating their military past and learning to be good soldiers, and on symbolism and ritual. Picking up on concerns long expressed in State Department planning documents, Winant’s advisors called for disbanding and outlawing all organizations with “military characteristics,” all veterans organizations or “other groups designed to carry on the German military tradition,” and any organizations providing—or likely to provide—military training, regardless of the organization’s purported function. The directive defined military training as any activity “designed directly or indirectly to teach the theory, principles, technique or mechanics of war or to prepare the participants for any war activity.”<sup>64</sup> In this rather sweeping definition, it implicitly acknowledged Germany’s past use of athletic clubs and youth organizations to circumvent the Versailles Treaty’s troop strength limitations. Convinced of the significant role “military paraphernalia” played in developing military systems,<sup>65</sup> the advisors also called for Allied commanders to “prohibit the adoption or use by any organization or individual, of distinctive military uniforms, insignia, flags, banners or tokens, or of distinctive military salutes, gestures, or greetings.”<sup>66</sup> That the powerful psychological impact of such “paraphernalia” was also on the minds of Winant’s men is suggested by the draft directive on German troop demobilization which was working its way through the approval process about the same time.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Planning Committee, Joint US Advisors, EAC, “Comments: Directive on ‘Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training in Germany,’” 3 Jan 4[5], *ibid.*; Planning Committee, Joint US Advisors, EAC, “Comments on EAC (45)45 – Comments by UK Delegation on US Directive No. 13 ‘Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training in Germany,’” 12 May 45, *ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> E. Allan Lightner, Jr., to the Secretary of State, 28 Sep 44, *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> “Comments: Directive on ‘Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training in Germany,’” 3 Jan 4[5], *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> E. Allan Lightner, Jr., to the Secretary of State, 28 Sep 44, *ibid.* The directive did permit the use of non-military uniforms and insignia by public health and public service personnel and the like.

<sup>67</sup> Planning Directive No. 7, 24 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 20, F: 381 Planning Directives US Group CC No. 1-10 (1944).

In the end, the draft directive on military training did not receive tripartite approval before hostilities ended, nor did SHAEF issue its own military training law.<sup>68</sup> However, regulations already in place by that time met many of its objectives. SHAEF's military occupation handbook, for example, warned against the dangers potentially posed by "sporting clubs, old comrades' associations, ex-officers' unions" and similar groups, prohibited all forms of military training, and stipulated that local Allied commanders supervising German troops might allow "route marches and physical training" but should not let them become "opportunities for military display." Similarly, officials could manipulate SHAEF's Military Government Ordinance No. 1, "Crimes and Offences," to prosecute destructive organizations, unauthorized parades and military formations, and the "provocative display of German and Nazi flags and emblems."<sup>69</sup>

A more problematic issue for postwar planners involved the wearing of uniforms. American officials generally shared Emil Ludwig's view that uniforms historically had served as symbols of authority for Germans. Moreover, the dominant visual imagery of the Third Reich included brown-bedecked Nazi leaders, gray-clothed military officers, and rows of men and boys uniformed in brown, black, and gray and ornamented with assorted badges, medals, cords, and decorative emblems. Cognizant of the harmful role paramilitary groups had played in Germany during the interwar years, State Department planners had early on expressed a desire to prohibit organizations that adopted such military trappings as salutes, uniforms, insignia, and marching.<sup>70</sup> Winant's advisors had focused on the service these and similar groups, along with their accouterments, performed in providing unofficial military training and the foundations of a strong military system. In calling for a ban on the wearing of uniforms, Roosevelt, meanwhile, linked his decision to a personalized analysis of German history. In September 1944, Murphy recounted a recent conversation with the president in which Roosevelt had talked of studying in Germany as a child. The president recalled that he had become "fond of the German people as they were in the 1890's—their music and love of liberty, and the absence of militarism." At that time, he told Murphy, no one wore uniforms; "even the railroad station masters

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<sup>68</sup> Draft directives approved for submission to the EAC nevertheless represented agreed American policy.

<sup>69</sup> Walter L. McKee Memorandum to Colonel T. W. Hammond, 5 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 11, F: Directive No. 13 134.14 Military Training; SHAEF, *Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany*; Hayden N. Smith to Headquarters, US Group CC (Main), 7 May 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 642, F: ACA AG 010.6 Control Council Law No. 8. For a copy of Ordinance No. 1, see W.B. Smith to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 9 Nov 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 3, F: AG 014.1 Military Government of Germany, Interim Directive for.

<sup>70</sup> CAC-34, 17 Dec 43, *DDP*, I/4:716; CAC-132, 27 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

would wear civilian clothes, with only a uniform cap.” Four years later, he had returned “and found a great change in this respect—the students had started wearing uniforms and were marching in formation. Militarism took the ascendancy from then on.” Whether or not his youthful memories were accurate, Roosevelt, like others in the early 1940s, associated German uniform-wearing with German militarism.<sup>71</sup>

The president’s call for outlawing uniforms led Treasury Department personnel to insert an appropriate ban in a version of the Morgenthau Plan, while also adding a clause barring the wearing of medals and insignia of rank or branch of service. But they had some concerns. “The uniform is going to be troublesome,” noted Harry Dexter White, “because probably five million people have nothing else to wear.” Treasury officials ultimately concluded that “if you treat it as a uniform—so they don’t wear the whole thing,” the ban was probably enforceable. And enforceability was the key. The German émigré advisors the department had brought in had stressed the importance of not introducing measures that could not be enforced.<sup>72</sup> McCloy, on the other hand, questioned both halves of the provision, indicating that “he didn’t see why soldiers who had fought in the war should be deprived of wearing ribbons if they wanted to.” More to the point, in light of his position as a War Department official planning on his commanders’ behalf, he thought the requirement would be “impossible to administer, and should be left to the discretion of the officers on the ground.”<sup>73</sup> In a later draft of their plan, Treasury officials dropped the reference to insignia and medals, but retained a clause prohibiting the wearing of military or quasi-military uniforms. The president was pleased, quickly searching out the

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<sup>71</sup> Robert Murphy, Memorandum of Conversation with President Roosevelt, 9 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 144. Michaela Hönicke points out that Roosevelt’s articulated childhood memories did not always correspond to his own experiences. Hönicke, “‘Know Your Enemy,’” 148-155.

<sup>72</sup> Group Meeting on Disarmament of Germany, 4 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 485; Memorandum, “Suggested Post-Surrender Program for Germany,” 5 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 104.

<sup>73</sup> Conference in Secretary’s Office, 6 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 533. In commenting on the paragraph of the EAC delegation’s draft directive on military training that dealt with uniforms, a McCloy aide clarified the assistant secretary’s perspective on uniforms. He explained: “Admittedly, no organizations should be permitted to have distinctive military uniforms and insignia or to effect propaganda by the use of such paraphernalia along lines hitherto practiced by the Nazis as a method of political organization. However, to forbid individuals to wear distinctive uniforms may prove to be wholly impracticable for a considerable period.” He noted that “there may be many discharged soldiers and others who will have no clothes other than their uniforms and will be in the position of having to wear portions of their military equipment for some time” and suggested the directive be revised to take this into account. “It might leave to the reasonable discretion of the Commanders what restrictions . . . to impose on organizations and what regulations of this type to make with respect to individuals. It should be so phrased as to avoid requiring the military commander to attempt impracticable regulation and restraint which would be impossible to enforce.” Cutter Memorandum re JCS Memo 318, 17 Oct 44, NA, RG 107, Entry 180, Box 33, F: ASW 370.8 EAC (Working Security Committee).

provision when given a copy by the Treasury Secretary.<sup>74</sup> But the September 1944 version of JCS 1067, while honoring Roosevelt's wishes in denying the Germans aircraft and banning parades, did not mention uniforms.<sup>75</sup> Nor did its absence apparently prevent the president from approving the directive.

SHAEF officials in England not surprisingly drew conclusions similar to those voiced in Washington regarding German uniforms. Recognizing the severe shortage of civilian clothing in Germany, military policymakers did not prohibit the wearing of uniforms and permitted soldiers being released to keep one full uniform. Although they considered it "highly undesirable" that discharged troops retain their uniforms permanently, they conceded that administrative challenges were too great to permit a withdrawal sometime in the future. Official policy for disbanding the German armed forces did, however, require the removal of all insignia and badges of rank before troops might go home.<sup>76</sup> The SHAEF military government handbook also noted that "the deliberate and provocative display of Nazi emblems" would be forbidden by proclamation, but cautioned that this was "a matter which must be handled with care and discretion" since "extreme measures" would "only give such emblems a new and romantic value as symbols of resistance to the occupying forces."<sup>77</sup>

When it came to German emblems and insignia, however, extant instructions were not always explicit enough for military officers encountering unfamiliar items in the field, and SHAEF's general policies had to be clarified in response to specific inquiries. In the chaotic days of May 1945, for instance, SHAEF received a cable from Germany's Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel. Certain British troops were ordering the removal of "*Hoheitsabzeichens*" from Wehrmacht uniforms. Should he expect an order applicable to the entire Wehrmacht or was this—in the words of one rough translation—"the whim of a few local Commanding Officers of the British"? The resulting flurry of cables on the subject showed SHAEF officials attempting to decide what factors needed to be considered in responding. One SHAEF officer explained that the *Hoheitsabzeichen* was the "combination of eagle and swastika" that was part of all German orders and decorations without a swastika.

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<sup>74</sup> Briefing Book Prepared in the Treasury Department, 130; Group Meeting, 9 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 608-609.

<sup>75</sup> Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany, 143-154.

<sup>76</sup> Eclipse Memorandum No. 17, enclosed in H.H. Newman to Distribution, 30 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism. The British had advocated the removal of insignia and badges of rank at least since mid 1944 when they circulated an EAC draft directive on disbanding German troops. Draft Directive, n.d., attached to T.W.H. to General Meyer, n.d. [ca. Jul 44], NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 12, F: 134.17 Directive No. 15 Disposal German Forces.

<sup>77</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook Governing Policy and Procedure for the Military Occupation of Germany*.

Another jotted a note to a colleague pointing out that “the Germans use daggers or dirks (*Dolch*) which they class as decorations” and recommending that these be confiscated as weapons.<sup>78</sup> In late May, Eisenhower finally determined that “*Hoheitsabzeichen, Kokade* and any insignia, emblem, decoration or medal of Nazi nature” should not be worn, while “medals and decorations awarded for merit or long service” might be worn, so long as “all Nazi emblems, e.g., *Hakenkreuz* [swastika]” were “obliterated or removed.”<sup>79</sup>

If American planners paid careful attention to the emblems and insignia worn by ordinary Germans, they also could not overlook the symbolism of physical objects on a grander scale. Reworking a draft JCS 1067 clause calling for occupation officials to protect works of art and related items, Treasury Department planners added a provision directing that “all archives, monuments and museums of Nazi inception, or which are devoted to the perpetuation of German militarism shall be seized, closed and their properties held pending further instructions.”<sup>80</sup> Moreover, they were not the only people concerned about the possible negative influences of German material culture. In early 1945, Admiral H.M. Burroughs wrote to Eisenhower concerning the World War I German Naval War Memorial at the entrance to Kiel Bay. He described the memorial as a stone structure reminiscent of a ship with a tomb of an Unknown Soldier located underground in an area whose walls contained German ship names and depictions of naval scenes. Someone had pointed out, Burroughs reported, that the monument could not be viewed as an important cultural or historical object “unless the pictures in the underground portion depicting British ships being sunk right and left by German ships rated as such” and that if the Allies were “to stamp out the German military spirit, records such as these must be obliterated.” The admiral agreed with this perspective, but wanted to avoid desecrating the tomb. As a compromise, he recommended that the Unknown Soldier “be re-buried in some convenient cemetery with full religious ceremony, but NO military ceremony” and that the monument be destroyed.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Keitel to SHAEF fwd for Eisenhower, 11 May 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 2, Box 116, F: 421.4 Germany; Bushman to Kessinger, 13 May 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 6, Box 32, F: 421 Uniforms and Insignia; [Unsigned] to Col. Brooks, 21 May 45, *ibid*.

<sup>79</sup>SHAEF fwd, signed Eisenhower, to ANCXF, et al, 31 May 45, NA, SHAEF, Entry 2, Box 116, F: 421.4 Germany.

<sup>80</sup> Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany, 147.

<sup>81</sup> Hoymans to Political Affairs, German Affairs, 16 Feb 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 6, Box 34, F: 619.3 Monuments & Memorials.

Burroughs' letter prompted one SHAEF official to observe that war memorials might have a "mischievous psychological and political effect as rallying points of German military sentiment." But he also pointed to the proper conduct of the Germans with respect to U.S. and British cemeteries in France and Belgium and expected a "similar correctitude" on the part of the Allies. If some memorials had a "potentially mischievous character," this was a risk they should accept.<sup>82</sup> Another SHAEF officer responded by noting that there were World War I memorials throughout the country and it would be best to wait for measured, tripartite action concerning them.<sup>83</sup>

Ultimately, SHAEF policy made no mention of militaristic monuments, but did call for closing all museums, primarily to protect their contents, with re-openings to be determined by military government officials.<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, with minor modifications, the JCS 1067 phrase pertaining to monuments and museums survived in all subsequent iterations of the directive.<sup>85</sup>

In discussing German museums, one SHAEF official had pointed out that German *Heimat* [local] museums could not be re-opened until experts modified their exhibits. Museums, after all, served an educational function and "these museums might be a valuable instrument for counteracting the misuse of historical teaching in Germany during the last 15 years."<sup>86</sup> Indeed, from the American perspective, museums represented just one component of a vast German educational machinery (which also included schools, the media, and public entertainment) that would need to be, first, silenced, then redirected. Particularly critical were German educational institutions. Not only did they need to be cleansed of militaristic teaching, but they could help to ensure the success of a future democratic government. American officials firmly believed that democracies were not likely to start wars, and most also realized that constructive political parties, effective governing institutions, and free elections required informed and committed democratic citizens. Schools could reeducate the German people to become such a citizenry.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> H.E.K. to General Barker, 23 Feb 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 6, Box 34, F: 619.3 Monuments & Memorials.

<sup>84</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*; Geoffrey Webb to Chief, Ops Branch, G-5, SHAEF, 3 Jan 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 302, F: V37-V2 SHAEF, G-5, Letters Jan-Mar '45.

<sup>85</sup> Holborn, *American Military Government*, 161.

<sup>86</sup> Webb to Chief, Ops Branch, 3 Jan 45, NA, RG 260.

<sup>87</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 1-2, 17.



In their earliest policy discussions, State Department planners acknowledged the necessity of a fundamental transformation of the German outlook, but initially shied away from considering measures aimed at textbooks, teachers, or any type of institutional control, instead talking of education in general terms and hoping that a recognition of guilt, just treatment by the Allies, and guaranteed basic rights in a future constitution would foster a change in German attitudes.<sup>88</sup> Over time, however, their thinking changed. And U.S. policy studies began to ponder how best to replace German personnel and change the substance and teaching priorities of German education. During the spring of 1944, the department's Interdivisional Committee on Germany gave the issue particular attention, concluding that German schools should be barred from teaching "Nazi concepts of race, history, militarism, the Fuehrer principle, and comparable ideas" and that "active National Socialists" should be removed from school administrative and teaching staffs. In the long term, successful eradication of old doctrines would require their replacement with "a constructive set of beliefs and objectives based on the best elements of the German tradition and offering to the German people hope for the future." A key goal, then, was "a German school system reflecting a democratic outlook in which a humanitarian and international point of view supersedes the current ultra-nationalism." Yet the committee members insisted that this could not be achieved through foreign control of schools or via new curricula drafted by outsiders. Rather, they believed changes would be effective only if designed and carried out by the Germans themselves, under Allied supervision.<sup>89</sup>

As scholars have often noted, no substantive long-range policy for German education emerged from Washington's planning organizations before the war ended.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, SHAEF education officials could not operate without a program for the short term. Accordingly, the ill-fated original version of SHAEF's

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<sup>88</sup> Beate Rosenzweig, *Erziehung zur Demokratie? Amerikanische Besatzungs- und Schulreformpolitik in Deutschland und Japan* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998), 83-84. Much has been written regarding American education policies in occupied Germany. For an early study, see Karl-Ernst Bungenstab, *Umerziehung zur Demokratie? Re-education-Politik in Bildungswesen der US-Zone 1945-1949* (Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, 1970). More recently, see Birgit Braun, *Umerziehung in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone. Die Schul- und Bildungspolitik in Württemberg-Baden von 1945 bis 1949* (Münster: Lit, 2004) and Brian Puaca, "Learning Democracy: Education Reform in Postwar Germany, 1945-1965" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2005).

<sup>89</sup> CAC-151a/PWC-164b, 18 Jul 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2.

<sup>90</sup> JCS 1067 contained only brief instructions similar to those eventually distributed by SHAEF while also pointing to the later implementation of a positive program. All schools and universities were to be shut until purged of Nazi teachers and Nazi or militaristic textbooks were not to be used. "An affirmative program of reorientation" would be introduced to "eliminate Nazi and militaristic doctrines and to encourage the development of democratic ideas." Holborn, *American Military Government*, 163.

handbook took a first stab at outlining a policy, calling for eliminating National Socialist influences among teachers and in teaching materials, but also pressing for a speedy re-opening of schools and expecting to rely heavily on anti-Nazi Germans to do much of the work. It assumed, further, that enough Weimar era texts would be on hand to replace unusable publications and that, where necessary, teachers could operate without textbooks. The Germans themselves would vet school textbooks, supported by occupation officials, and draft new ones. Nazi-tainted works, meanwhile, would still be available in libraries, “where new learning materials would expose their deceit.” SHAEF officials also “condemned book-burning as too reminiscent of the practices of the Third Reich.”<sup>91</sup>

By contrast, the educational instructions incorporated in the revised December 1944 handbook included a larger number of negative measures. Stressing the importance of indirect control and utilizing acceptable German educators wherever possible, its authors nevertheless emphasized that the objective of military government was to take over the Germans schools and purge them of Nazi and militaristic influences.<sup>92</sup> All institutions would therefore be closed until satisfactorily cleansed of offensive textbooks and tainted personnel. Teachers were to remove from their lessons, among other themes, anything that “glorifies militarism, expounds the practice of war or of mobilization and preparation for war, whether in the scientific, economic or industrial fields, or the study of military geography” and would be “immediately dismissed and punished” if they failed to do so. “Physical training,” moreover, was not to be “expanded to, or retained at, a point where it becomes equivalent to para-military training.” Occupation authorities were to discharge all officials and instructors considered “active Nazis, ardent Nazi sympathizers or militarists.” Black, white, and gray categories of teachers described in the handbook largely correlated to the degree of their involvement with Nazism, although the gray list also specifically included “persons who in their public speeches or writings have actively and voluntarily propagated National Socialism, militarism, or racialism.” The handbook went on to order the confiscation of all schoolbooks and teaching materials “reflecting a Nazi or militaristic outlook,” but specified that “books in public libraries and the libraries of universities and reference books in the libraries of other institutions of higher education will not be removed, impounded, or destroyed.” In addition, it called for

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<sup>91</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 25-26.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

disbanding all Nazi youth organizations and indicated that no new youth groups might be established without the supreme commander's consent.<sup>93</sup>

While some scholars have linked the harsher tone of the new handbook to Morgenthau's influence, James Tent has helpfully pointed to new information available to the handbook's writers during the fall of 1944. In particular, he notes, they now recognized that almost all textbooks showed some Nazi influence and had discovered that few Weimar texts were available in Germany. In addition, they had learned of the difficulties confronted in occupied Italy when U.S. officials tried to re-open schools and had to operate without adequate textbook supplies. The USGCC staff was thus evaluating copies of Weimar texts and arranging for re-printing of selected works. And German schools would remain closed until further notice.<sup>94</sup>

Regardless of their intent to be accommodating and hands-off, American officials had to reconcile themselves to the idea of democratizing the Germans using removals and controls and demilitarizing them by way of orders that had to be obeyed. Similar harmful inevitabilities would color American attempts to clean up Germany's information and entertainment services and redirect them to encourage more peaceful German attitudes. American policymakers agreed that the German press, cinema, and other "opinion-forming agencies and organizations" must be controlled in some fashion, with the State Department's Interdivisional Committee on Germany suggesting that themes to be banned might include "the glory of war, the rearmament of Germany, [and] imperial expansion." Department officials were nevertheless also convinced that a delicate balance had to be maintained to enable "the free play of opinion which should prove an effective prophylaxis against the discredited Nazi ideology." The ICG cautioned, too, that foreign control should be as unobtrusive as possible and that where feasible anti-Nazi Germans should be consulted and utilized.<sup>95</sup> At one point, the ICG argued against undertaking a "systematic effort to indoctrinate the German people," believing that accurate and freely circulating information and "the renewal of untrammelled cultural activity" should serve as the primary means

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<sup>93</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*. See also SHAEF, *Technical Manual for Education and Religious Affairs*, Feb 45, NA, RG 331, Entry 47, Box 7. The latter document also stipulated that all Nazi sport and physical training organizations should be disbanded.

<sup>94</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 27-28; Rosenzweig, *Erziehung zur Demokratie?*, 88.

<sup>95</sup> H-128 Preliminary, 13 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Policy Summaries 126-149; CAC-167 Preliminary a, 4 May 44, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 2; Suggested Recommendations on Treatment of Germany from the Cabinet Committee, 96; E. Allan Lightner, Jr., to the Secretary of State, 6 Sep 44, NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 14, F: 134.5 Directive No. 3 Public Information; H-136, 14 Feb 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59, Notter File, Entry 500, Box 154, F: H-Summaries 126-149.

of reeducation. During the fall of 1945, however, the WSC and JCS approved as agreed U.S. policy an EAC draft directive on the “Control of Public Information in Germany” which included in its list of objectives “convincing the German people of their total defeat by the United Nations and of the futility of future wars of aggression” and “conducting counter-propaganda to destroy the attitudes created under the propaganda program of the Nazi party.” It also permitted the zonal commanders, in the absence of tripartite policy direction, to “determine the general character and content of books, news material, editorials, feature articles and photographs and entertainment, which will be approved for publication, broadcasting or exhibition” and “the source and general character of cinema films which will be approved for exhibition.”<sup>96</sup>

SHAEF, meanwhile, was laying the groundwork for any policies the Allies would choose to implement later. Objectives listed by SHAEF officials prescribing information control measures for occupied Germany included helping to eliminate Nazism and militarism, averting the “dissemination of doctrines and propaganda of the nature dictated by the Nazi Party,” and convincing the Germans of their total defeat. Military Government Law Number 191 therefore demanded that all publishing, printing, and film production activities cease, shut down all radio stations and wire services, and closed all cinemas, theaters, and other entertainment venues. In addition, Ordinance Number 1 barred the “distribution, circulation, and sale” of periodicals and books preaching Nazi doctrines. A thick SHAEF manual divided the anticipated work of information control officers into three phases. Closures and prohibitions formed the heart of Phase One. Phase Two would include investigating local conditions, seeking out politically reliable and qualified Germans for assistance, and using Allied newspapers and radio broadcasts as the Germans’ primary information source. During Phase Three, to begin when SHAEF directed, Allied information control authorities would supervise and scrutinize the efforts of carefully screened, specially licensed Germans. Militarists as well as Nazis were to be excluded from positions of authority and influence. Reeducation could ultimately be achieved only by the Germans themselves, reasoned the manual, but “those few Germans willing and able to do it” could not be successful unless the Allies gave them access to German information sources and denied the same to persons still imbued

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<sup>96</sup> H-136, 14 Feb 44, attached to note from D[avid] H[arris], 11 Mar 44, NA, RG 59; JCS 1109, 16 Oct 44, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Records Received by USGCC, Box 14, F: 134.5 Directive No. 3 Public Information; Note in file, 23 Oct 44, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 76, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Sec. 5.

with the “spirit of aggression.” “It lies with us, through the fact of victory,” the manual explained, “to place the control of opinion-forming instruments where we will.”<sup>97</sup>

### Conclusions

“The Washington bureaucratic maze in World War II was not conducive to developing consistent or logical plans for the Occupation, and all facets of national policy, including the notion of reeducation, suffered accordingly,” James Tent has noted in embarking on his study of American treatment of the German educational system. To some extent, his assessment, shared by many contemporary and subsequent observers, is supported by an examination of American discussions and planning for the elimination of German militarism. When the guns cooled in May 1945, American military government officers in Germany carried a set of SHAEF directives and handbooks that described the Allies’ overall short-term objectives for the occupation of Germany and contained specific instructions for beginning the work of eradicating German militarism. What the occupation would look like after SHAEF dissolved, however, was still not entirely clear. The main statement of U.S. post-surrender policy, JCS 1067, laid out broad principles, but few particulars. Furthermore, State Department officials remained committed to developing joint programs for all of Germany, intending to work with the British, the Soviets, and, since the Yalta Conference decision to divide Germany into four occupation zones instead of three, the French. But the work of the EAC was bogged down and when the Allied Control Council would begin its duties was not yet known.

On the other hand, by the time Germany surrendered, American officials had agreed that German militarism should be uprooted and had established the general principles that would govern the pursuit of that goal. German militarism, they had decided, should be attacked on all fronts, including in the critical social and cultural arena, where symbolic practices, museums, school textbooks, and newspapers were just a few of the many aspects of German life that required attention. Careful handling of German troops would be critical as well, with the attitudes and conduct of the Americans implementing the U.S. program to be specially tailored to further Allied goals in this regard. The exact means and methods of best achieving American objectives

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<sup>97</sup> H.H. Newman to Distribution List, 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 18, F: AG 371.1 Service of Information (Information Control Policy); SHAEF, “Manual for the Control of German Information Services,” 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 78, F: CCS 387 Germany (12-17-43) Bulky Package; Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn in Heidelberg und Mannheim 1945-1949*, 68-69.

remained uncertain in some cases and the seeming impracticality of some measures raised doubts as to whether they would ever be undertaken. But the framework was in place and would not be substantially altered in the years to come.

The chosen approach of the United States was not without its ironies and paradoxes. Convincing the Germans of their utter defeat, maintaining control, and ensuring the security of occupation troops meant exploiting the militaristic inclinations that made Germans respect assertive authority, obey when commanded, and defer to men in uniforms. While hopeful of exorcising German militarism, the Americans adopted many policies that would demand and expect complete obedience, rather than discussion. In making plans for Germany, they clearly recognized certain puzzles: Was dismembering Prussia more or less likely to produce future German aggression? Would demanding too much of the Germans provoke resentment and revanchism? However, in other instances, the inherent complexities and challenges of their task seemed to go unnoticed. Demilitarization meant revoking officer privileges and discouraging reverential treatment of ceremonial flags, military music, and men in uniforms. Yet German men were to remove their caps and stand at attention when Allied flags passed, show respect for American military anthems, and comply with orders issued by uniformed officials. To the military victor went the spoils. Contradictions were thus built into the demilitarization effort from the start, not least because the U.S. occupation was a military operation. The Americans may have assumed that the design of the uniform or the color of the flag would be more important than its essence: form being more important than function. And given the perceived link between German militarism and German nationalism, this optimistic assumption was perhaps not unfounded. But given their understanding of the Germans, contemporaries might also have viewed such a notion as playing with fire. The line between eliminating and reinforcing German militarism might be a fine one.

In retrospect, the reach of wartime planners at times appears excessive, even comical. But American policymakers and their Allied counterparts were plainly frustrated and angry. They had no reason to assume that the Germans and their “militaristic tendencies” would change, regardless of the carnage left by the war. Thus, to call some of these measures “draconian,” as one scholar recently did, is to miss the point.<sup>98</sup> At heart, they were not about punishment. They were about prevention. And American officials were motivated less by vindictiveness than by exasperation and determination. Their knowledge of conditions in Germany was

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<sup>98</sup> Large, *Germans to the Front*, 24.

incomplete and occasionally simply wrong. They worried about introducing policies that could not be enforced and agreed to certain measures that no doubt fell into that category. They adopted certain tactics that were extreme. Their choices, they knew, would be resented by many Germans. Yet there was a clear logic to their decisions based on a sometimes vague and undeveloped, but not unsophisticated, conception of how societies and cultures change, one that considered not only political movements and powerful military, societal, and political leaders, but also ordinary people, the influences that shaped them, and the world they helped to create.

## Chapter 4

### MILITARISTS IN THEIR MIDST

Reporting on a small gathering of young people from Stuttgart who were interested in reviving the German youth movement, an American officer in June 1945 recounted the remarks of “an ex-soldier in his twenties [who] spoke for the young soldiers.” “Militarism must be destroyed,” the veteran had argued, “but you can’t destroy it by denouncing returning soldiers as ‘Schweinehunde.’” Soldiers, he had added, “are often less militarist than civilians.”<sup>1</sup> Just who had denounced returning soldiers as swine was not discussed in the report. The young man may have heard this accusation himself, misinterpreted less offensive comments, or listened to stories told by others. Whatever their stimulus, his remarks reveal clear frustration at what he perceived to be unfair epithets aimed at soldiers in the immediate aftermath of the war. They also allude to the host of problems associated with any effort to rid militarists of their influence in Germany.

At the close of World War II, all returning German soldiers walked into an environment where American officials from Military Governor General Dwight D. Eisenhower to Colonel William Dawson, Württemberg-Baden’s top officer, to local military government functionaries were stressing that the United States was committed to eliminating German militarism and curtailing the influence of militarists.<sup>2</sup> And those dispensing accusations and calling passionately for change sometimes included the neighbors of returning soldiers as well. But along with plans and pleas for change came a difficult question: what or who, exactly, was a militarist?

Although American wartime policymakers had variously criticized industrialists, teachers, and media barons as perpetrators of German militarism, the earliest U.S. occupation regulations governing dismissals and hiring centered largely on a far smaller set of individuals perceived to be particularly dangerous, namely, former military officers. On the other hand, those eventually charged with implementing the regulations generally

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<sup>1</sup> William J. Sailer to Commanding Officer 6871 DISCC, 6 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities, Stuttgart 1945 [2].

<sup>2</sup> “Botschaft des General Eisenhowers,” *Amtsblatt der Stadt Ulm und des Landkreises Ulm* [AU], 15 Aug 45; “Demokratie auf kommunaler Grundlage,” *Nachrichtenblatt der Militärregierung für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart*, 29 Aug 45.



believed that they could not simply equate officers and militarists. Some pointed to people this presumed correlation left out. Many preferred to assess the individual, rather than the group; in fact, military government officers, German personnel administrators, and university admissions committees usually acted on this preference. In certain instances, they even intentionally sought out former soldiers for vacant positions, appreciating the veterans' untainted political histories or proven disciplined conduct.

Significantly, the anti-militarist rhetoric and exclusionary policies of the immediate postwar period helped encourage the German people to reflect on the history and legacy of their now disbanded Wehrmacht. At the same time, the Americans were deliberately pressing the Germans to look at their formerly much esteemed soldiers in a different light by holding up the highest military leaders of the Third Reich as ranking among its most egregious and contemptible militarists. But German attitudes toward their soldiers, their former armed forces, and their country's military past refused to settle into stable, predictable, or uniform patterns. If the meaning of the word "militarist" remained obscure, German views of German soldiers remained variable and varied.

Meanwhile, the Americans' decision to radically overhaul their denazification program in early 1946 led to a substantial change in the official definition of the term "militarist," one that emphasized attitudes, goals, and activities as determining factors, rather than just professions or positions, but one that also alluded to abusive behavior and criminality. More nearly reflecting the original views of Washington's policymakers, a new law describing those to be penalized as militarists set the stage for an analysis of German contributions to the outbreak of war in 1939 that looked beyond those wearing officer's braid. In theory, the Germans would now police their society for militarists of all shapes and sizes. In practice, their efforts left much to be desired. Militarists were bad, all Germans agreed. When actively sought, however, they could seldom be found.

### **Removals and Restrictions**

The American commitment to eradicating militaristic influences in German society prompted U.S. policymakers to issue directives at the very beginning of the occupation that demanded the removal and exclusion of militarists from jobs where they could shape the views of their fellow citizens. Carrying out these directives was a challenge for both American military government officers and the German administrators charged with helping them, however. Moreover, although their efforts did inspire potentially valuable

conversations regarding the threat former career officers might pose to a democratic Germany, the overall results were mixed. For returning soldiers, meanwhile, both the regulations and contemporary discussions concerning the detrimental influence of militarists in German society could bring real material consequences, directly impacting their employment and educational opportunities. Still, even as some veterans felt the sting of discrimination, others reaped the blessings of wartime service spent far from home and the lure of local politics.

### *Laying the Groundwork*

For American military government [MG] officers, a critical early task in Germany involved removing Nazis and militarists from positions of influence and appointing clean replacements, a task they undertook with varying degrees of thoroughness and zeal. Where there was hesitancy it usually resulted from a particularly vexing aspect of the job: the challenge of keeping cities and towns running when SHAEF removal criteria made many competent individuals ineligible to hold influential posts. Furthermore, during the earliest months of the occupation, MG officers had to enforce a range of directives containing different interpretations of what constituted a removal-worthy Nazi. With individuals deemed unacceptable one day, acceptable the next, and perhaps unacceptable again under yet another new policy, early removal efforts caused anxiety for the Germans and could exasperate their occupiers as well.<sup>3</sup>

The key directive for dealing with militarists in Württemberg-Baden appeared in late March 1945, when the U.S. Army's 6th Army Group distributed "new, firm instructions" on removals designed to clear up any confusion generated by less specific SHAEF guidelines issued earlier. According to the directive, militarists to be removed or excluded from positions of influence included all persons who had ever been members of the German General Staff Corps, National Socialist Indoctrination Officers, career officers of the Wehrmacht or its predecessors, and anyone who "represent[ed] the Prussian Junker tradition"—the latter candidly admitted to be hard to define, though the army group pulled language from SHAEF's instructions to

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<sup>3</sup> On the administrative and personnel problems faced by the Americans during the early months of the occupation, see Rebecca Boehling, *A Question of Priorities: Democratic Reforms and Economic Recovery in Postwar Germany* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1996), 75-79. For a basic outline of the vagaries of denazification efforts in the American Zone during 1945, see Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 380-390. For a detailed analysis of U.S. denazification policies in general and their implementation in Bavaria in particular, see Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*. On denazification in Karlsruhe, Heidelberg, and Stuttgart, see, respectively, Borgstedt, *Entnazifizierung in Karlsruhe*; Fredericke Reutter, *Heidelberg 1945-1949: Zur Politischen Geschichte einer Stadt in der Nachkriegszeit* (Heidelberg: Verlag Brigitte Guderjahn, 1994), Chapter 5; Bernhard Neidiger, "Entnazifizierung und Bevölkerungsstimmung aus der Sicht der Stuttgarter Stadtverwaltung," in *Stuttgart in den ersten Nachkriegsjahren*, ed. Edgar Lersch, Heinz H. Pöker, and Paul Sauer (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1995), 131-174.

help with this task. In particular, aristocratic families from Germany's eastern territories, property ownership in Prussia, or membership in "elite German University Students Corps" were to arouse suspicion.<sup>4</sup>

A new U.S. Army directive took effect when SHAEF was dissolved in mid July 1945.<sup>5</sup> Theoretically somewhat broader, it reminded that U.S. policy called for removing from public office and important positions in "quasi-public and private enterprises" any more-than-nominal Nazi Party members and "all active supporters of Nazism or militarism and all other persons hostile to Allied purposes." This meant any Germans who had held office or been active at any level of the party "or in affiliated organizations which further militaristic doctrines" or who had "authorized or participated affirmatively in" Nazi crimes or persecutions, "been avowed believers in Nazism or racial and militaristic creeds," or voluntarily given "substantial" moral, material, or political assistance to the party or its leaders. Now well-worn mandatory and discretionary removal lists nevertheless narrowed these rather sweeping criteria. All present and former members of the German General Staff again found their place on the mandatory removals list alongside National Socialist Indoctrination Officers and any post-January 1933 members of the Wehrmacht High Command and the high commands of its subordinate arms. Career officers and persons who smelled of Prussian Junkerdom fell on the discretionary removal list, though the directive also suggested that, even if membership in the categories listed was only a "danger sign" and did not ensure that individuals were "hostile to Allied purposes," it was best to remove or avoid appointing them unless better candidates were unavailable.<sup>6</sup>

Auxiliary instructions specified where incriminating information might be found on the six-page questionnaires (*Fragebogen*) the Americans distributed to Germans to ferret out undesirables. These helpfully noted, for example, that "the family names of 'Junkers' almost invariably have the prefix 'von' or 'zu'" and that holding more than 250 hectares of land in Prussia should be considered suspicious. Because Junkers typically grew potatoes and "the Reich . . . traditionally subsidized the 'Junker' class by paying inflated prices for

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<sup>4</sup> "Historical Report, G-5 Section, 6th Army Group, for Period 1 Through 31 March 1945," NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 54, Box 169, F: 17.8 Historical Reports Sixth Army Group March 1945. Included in the 6th Army Group were the American Seventh Army and the First French Army, the two armies that occupied southwestern Germany. For more on the SHAEF directive, see Chapter 3.

J.L. Tarr to Commanding General, Seventh Army, et al, 30 Mar 45, appended to "Historical Report, G-5 Section, 6th Army Group, for Period 1 Through 31 March 1945," NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 54, Box 169, F: 17.8 Historical Reports Sixth Army Group March 1945.

<sup>5</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 382.

<sup>6</sup> R. B. Lovett to Commanding General, 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group, 29 Jun 46, NA, RG 107, Entry 183, Box 56, F: ASW 370.8 Germany-Control.

industrial alcohol distilled from the potato crop,” Fragebogen reviewers were also to keep an eye out for any distilleries included on lists of estate buildings. In a type of cross-referencing, a military academy education, a career as an officer, and service with the German General Staff were also to be considered possible evidence of “Junkerism.”<sup>7</sup>

While the July directive addressed primarily public positions and large businesses, an August supplement broadened the removal pool to influential public figures in general, including those in the professions. Military Government Law No. 8, issued in late September in response to fiery criticism in the American press regarding the state of denazification, called for even small retail enterprises to cleanse their shops, permitting party members to be employed only as common labor.<sup>8</sup> But those affected might now submit an appeal to a German review board appointed by the local mayor. If an individual could persuade the board that he or she had not been actively involved in Nazi party activities or those of its affiliate organizations and MG officials approved the board’s decision, the person might return to his or her position.<sup>9</sup>

Given these guidelines, it seems clear that during the spring and early summer of 1945 MG officers in the territory that became Württemberg-Baden would have had very little work to do when it came to removing militarists from positions of influence or rejecting their applications for employment. The vast majority of general staff officers, National Socialist Indoctrination Officers, career soldiers, and former university students were either locked up in prisoner of war enclosures or confined to civilian internment camps as individuals falling into “automatic arrest” categories or named on Allied blacklists. Similarly, the number of Prussian aristocrats or individuals who had any connection to Germany’s eastern territories, while perhaps higher than before the Soviet Union counterattacked, could not have been great in southwest Germany. At that point, Fragebogen in Württemberg-Baden would likely have revealed a set of university educated businessmen and civil servants; disabled or retired career soldiers who had transitioned into civil service, industry, or banking jobs; some elderly pensioners; and perhaps the odd noble. And at least a portion of those who strictly met the

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<sup>7</sup> “Evaluation of the Revised Fragebogen,” n.d. [post 30 Jun 45], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 586, F: Denazification Prior to March 46. See also Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart [HStA] EA 1/920 Bü 699.

<sup>8</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 382-386.

<sup>9</sup> Elmer Plischke, “Denazification Law and Procedure,” *American Journal of Law* 41, no. 4 (1947): 816; U.S. Office of Military Government, Civil Administration Division, *Denazification, cumulative review. Report, 1 April 1947-30 April 1948*, 49, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, The History Collection, Germany Under Reconstruction, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.Denazi>.

“militarist” criteria could be stamped with equally, if not more, damaging accusations of Nazism as well. Over the course of the summer, however, a more complex situation developed.

### *Return of the First German Troops*

Some 16 to 17 million German men served in the Wehrmacht during World War II,<sup>10</sup> and at war’s end, nearly eight million found themselves in American custody either in Europe or the United States.<sup>11</sup> Several years passed before the U.S. released all of the Germans in its hands, and its allies retained many of their prisoners even longer, usually employing them on reconstruction projects at home. A worrisome portion remained in Soviet custody into the mid 1950s, and even the Americans held high-ranking German officers well into 1947.<sup>12</sup> But food shortages in Europe almost immediately spurred an accelerated release program for most of the soldiers detained by the U.S.

A series of disbandment directives called for first freeing priority labor categories such as coal miners and agricultural workers, then women, and, fast on their heels, men over fifty. But U.S. Army officials also often ignored the stipulated categories, eager to divest themselves of responsibility for POWs they were having difficulty feeding. By early June, the 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group was releasing roughly 30,000 men a day, while the U.S. Third Army had discharged more than 500,000 by June 8. In late June, SHAEF permitted a general discharge of German soldiers not included in automatic arrest categories<sup>13</sup> and the number of men in U.S. custody subsequently diminished rapidly. By mid July 1946, the U.S. had released 98 percent of the men in its hands, with more than 3.2 million discharged into the American Zone.<sup>14</sup> Summer 1945 thus saw the beginning of what would prove over the next several years to be at least a regular, if not always heavy, stream of returning soldiers.

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<sup>10</sup> Hans-Erich Volkmann, “Einführende Bemerkungen,” in Müller and Volkmann, *Die Wehrmacht*, 968.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Military Government of Germany, “Demilitarization (Cumulative Review),” in *Monthly Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 20 Aug 46, 2.

<sup>12</sup> This issue is discussed further in Chapter 5.

<sup>13</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 291-295. Automatic arrest categories included, among others, SS men, war criminals, and general staff officers.

<sup>14</sup> “Demilitarization (Cumulative Review),” 20 Aug 46, 2.

For many of these men, returning home was traumatic. Shaken by the collapse of an ideology they had embraced to a greater or lesser degree, confronted with a German Reich that lay in ruins both physically and spiritually, and facing the challenge of reconstructing lives that for years had centered on little else but winning a now-lost war or even on survival itself,<sup>15</sup> they also often encountered material conditions that prevented them from working through any barrage of emotions the end of the war might have provoked. For some, their primary concern was locating family members. Many had to find housing and clothing. Nearly all needed work.

To make matters worse, they could not count on widespread concern for their emotional challenges, fears, or material needs. Depending upon where their homeward journey took them, many met only indifference. American policymakers were no doubt delighted to learn that the experiences of most were quite different from those of their predecessors from World War I. “Unlike 1919,” noted American journalist Julian Bach in early 1946, “the returning German soldier has been greeted, not as ‘hero’ with flowers thrown in his path as he marched home under his own banners and officers, but as an ‘unfortunate fool’ as he comes straggling in off a train in a half-destroyed station.”<sup>16</sup> Former military government officer Robert Wolfe similarly remembered seeing a “truckload of German *Landser* [privates] being unceremoniously discharged in the Heidelberg Kornmarkt.” For these men, he recalled, “there were no welcoming bands and speeches, no family members, and womenfolk were conspicuously absent.”<sup>17</sup>

The quagmire of warfare in the trenches of France had kept the First World War at arm’s length from most Germans, leading them to venerate front soldiers as heroes or “heralds of a new age” during the interwar period.<sup>18</sup> World War II, by contrast, had destroyed the line between the front and the home front, bringing war home in the form of relentless bombing, invasion, and occupation, with countless civilian deaths eliminating any claims soldiers might have had to knowledge, insight, or heroism born of special suffering. Psychologically and emotionally battered and reeling from the disintegration of Germany’s power, the neighbors of returning

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<sup>15</sup> Stephen G. Fritz, *Frontsoldaten: The German Soldier in World War II* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 220-224.

<sup>16</sup> Julian Bach, Jr., *America’s Germany: An Account of the Occupation* (New York: Random House, 1946), 291.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Wolfe, “Revival of Democratic Culture during the American Occupation of Heidelberg, 1945-1949,” in *Heidelberg 1945*, ed. Jürgen C. Hess, Harmut Lehmann, and Volker Sellin (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1996), 28.

<sup>18</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 69-70.

soldiers also had their own relatives to track down, living quarters to locate or rebuild, and food and clothing to procure. In addition, the needs of displaced persons and an incoming surge of expellees were already overtaxing the resources of local administrations. In some communities that had advance notice, veteran homecomings prompted public speeches, the offering of small gifts, and informational assistance. But such initiatives were localized.<sup>19</sup> And only in mid 1946 did German officials begin to pull together an infrastructure of release and transition camps equipped to handle the requirements of returning POWs.<sup>20</sup>

If official reactions to returning soldiers varied, German opinions regarding the earliest returnees did as well. In July 1945, one American observed that all of the Stuttgarters he had interviewed agreed on just one point: “The simple German soldier is not responsible for the defeat. The German government, or fate, put the soldier before an impossible task. He fought valiantly, but necessarily failed.”<sup>21</sup> In a similar vein, American personnel stationed in Karlsruhe reported in August 1945 that the “higher ranking officers of the German Army fall daily into deeper discredit,” but that “no strong feeling against militarism has been observed, and the German soldier is still regarded as a hero.”<sup>22</sup> After speaking with a diverse group of Heidelberg veterans, another MG officer agreed that few had complained about poor treatment by civilians. Yet he also described a 40-year-old who after six years of service found it “quite disheartening to come back and be ‘a nobody’ while having been ‘everything’ to [German civilians] during the war.” Frustration at being a “nobody,” the American contended, was now “ever present in most discussions with returned [prisoners of war].”<sup>23</sup> Other Germans seemed to blame even lowly returning soldiers for their misery. Bach reported that Germans in Württemberg had “sheared the army leaders of most of their ‘glory,’” but suggested, too, that “even many common soldiers are finding that their risks have not gained them preferred treatment from their civilian neighbors. What some Germans call an ‘anti-militaristic trend’ is reflected in the fact that returning draftees, not simply regulars, complain that they are looked upon by some of their neighbors as ‘militarists.’” Reserve officers, he noted,

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<sup>19</sup> Bessel, *Nazism and War*, 181, 195; Smith, *Heimkehr aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 33-36.

<sup>20</sup> Biess, *Homecomings*, 45.

<sup>21</sup> Intelligence Report No. 106, 16 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 390.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1945 [2].

<sup>22</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, Headquarters 106<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 18 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 547, F: Weekly Int Report.

<sup>23</sup> Intelligence Report No. 59, 11 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [1].

“complain of particular discrimination.”<sup>24</sup> Wolfe, on the other hand, later viewed the indifferent reception given to soldiers in Heidelberg as evidence that “they were now looked on as enablers, if not the perpetrators, of Nazi terror and atrocities.”<sup>25</sup>

### *German Land and City Administrations*

Shortly after the war ended, then, two processes collided in Württemberg-Baden. Even as soldiers began appearing and searching for work, German officials operating under the steady pressure of American MG officers were dismissing government personnel and seeking replacements. Depending upon a veteran’s location and personal history, this confluence of events could work to his advantage or disadvantage.

Past Nazi Party membership and related organizational transgressions led to the vast majority of personnel removals.<sup>26</sup> But both German administrators making recommendations and MG officers making final decisions sometimes singled out militarists as well. In September 1945, for example, American officials dismissed an employee from the Württemberg Interior Ministry’s filing office as a “militarist” because he had been a professional soldier from 1921 to 1933—and thus was a “a member of the ‘First One Hundred Thousand’ ‘Reichswehr’ around which Hitler built the German Army”—and had been recalled to service in 1938.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, officials looking around at literally thousands of posts left vacant by the removals faced an even more daunting task than identifying unacceptable personnel. Where to find qualified men with unsoiled records to fill them? Here an interesting phenomenon emerged. While American regulations

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<sup>24</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 253.

<sup>25</sup> Wolfe, “Revival of Democratic Culture,” 28.

<sup>26</sup> On the German side, see the reports of the Stuttgart examination board responsible for determining potential dismissals and appointments. Stadtarchiv Stuttgart [StAS] Personalamt No. 82. On the MG side, see the lists of names sent to the Landrat of Landkreis Karlsruhe stating who should be removed and why. Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe [GLA] 357 No. 35.769.

<sup>27</sup> Accountable MG authorities reinstated the man two months later, upon appeal, in light of his original “discretionary with adverse recommendation” status and his lack of policy-making or supervisory responsibilities. James A. Tobey to Herr Ulrich, 18 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 297, F: Denazification – Non-Employment Mandatory; Annex I attached to Ministry of Interior, Personnel Department, to U.S. Military Government, Württemberg/Baden, 17 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 297, F: Denazification – Applications for Reinstatement; SB to Col. Tobey, 8 Nov 45, *ibid*; James A. Tobey to Herr Dr. Koch, 8 Nov 45, *ibid*.



explicitly excluded many Nazi Party members from government service,<sup>28</sup> most German officers fell into the “discretionary” employment group. Furthermore, until 1944 soldiers had been prohibited from joining the Nazi party and their Fragebogen therefore looked relatively clean. Entering the German civil service, moreover, was a perfectly respectable career move for former soldiers and one retired officers had made often in the past. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, some military government and German officials began recruiting returning soldiers to fill emptying German administrations.<sup>29</sup> “In general little or no Nazism is found in those who have been in the Wehrmacht for 5 or 6 years,” Landkreis Karlsruhe’s MG detachment confidently reported in late August 1945. “Although usually inexperienced in governmental affairs they are well-disciplined, learn quickly and carry out military government orders with alacrity.”<sup>30</sup> Colleagues responsible for Karlsruhe agreed, adding, “Most positions of inferior responsibilities can be filled with such men.”<sup>31</sup> In late July 1945, MG officers similarly reported that their difficulties locating suitable personnel in Landkreis Aalen had led them “to resort to discharged German Army officers for the recruitment of Burgermeisters [mayors].”<sup>32</sup>

In recent decades, some historians have criticized American occupation officials for their tendency to exclude left-leaning individuals from responsible posts in favor of more conservative types who were both more experienced and more like themselves.<sup>33</sup> One former German soldier similarly hinted at this partiality in 1948 in commenting that “Army minded American officials” preferred German military officers to “genuine progressive minded democrats.”<sup>34</sup> Yet even in mid 1945, the methods chosen to address personnel deficits drew

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<sup>28</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 382.

<sup>29</sup> This did not mean MG officials always sought out former soldiers or even officially endorsed the tactic. Following a meeting of local MG officers and German officials from Landkreis Buchen in September 1945, for instance, one American officer noted in his daily report: “Names of people for high positions to be presented in a few days. – No Nazi or militarial.” Daily Report, Capt. Green, 10 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 524, F: Daily Reports Det. G45.

<sup>30</sup> Summary Report on Military Government Activities, Landkreis Karlsruhe, Germany, 21 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 546, F: Instructions and Memo to Troops, etc.

<sup>31</sup> Summary Report on Military Government Activities, Karlsruhe, Germany, 22 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 547, F: 10300 Reports, Weekly, F-17 (G1E2). On this point, see also Niederschrift über die Sitzung der Prüfungskommission vom 18.9.1945, StAS Personalamt No. 82.

<sup>32</sup> Weekly Consolidated Report for U.S. Zone, Württemberg and North Baden, 29 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 525, F: 12/157-2 7.

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, Boehling, *A Question of Priorities*.

<sup>34</sup> Stefan W. Stillich to Dr. Henry Ehrmann, 20 Mar 48, University at Albany, State University of New York, M.E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, Henry W. Ehrmann Papers [hereafter Ehrmann Papers], Box 4, F: Stillach, Stefan, 1946-1948.

complaints from some Germans. Historian Jörg Echternkamp has pointed to the affinity for National Socialism many Germans—unlike the Americans in Karlsruhe—attributed to Wehrmacht soldiers in the immediate aftermath of the war and noted that personnel administrators flooded with applications from “clean” professional soldiers greeted them with some suspicion, particularly since it had been shown that in most offices, the percentage of party members among former military men who had become civil servants was greater than among their colleagues who had not been professional soldiers.<sup>35</sup> But for some Germans, whether due to personal convictions or uneasiness regarding American expectations, a soldier’s military pedigree was equally or even more worrisome. The appointment of former career soldiers to public positions thus stimulated both criticism from the German people and discussions among city administrators regarding the suitability of specific individuals and entire categories of men for such posts.

In late July 1945, for instance, Franz Eberhard, the head of Karlsruhe’s Ruppurr-Gartenstadt district, formally complained about the recent decision of city education officials to replace the provisional superintendent of the Ruppurr *Volkschule* (elementary school). The previous head was a former socialist who had been forced to join the Nazi Party in 1942, Eberhard explained. His replacement had never joined the party, but he had left the military in 1919 as a lieutenant, volunteered for the new Wehrmacht in 1936, and ended up as the *Stadtkommandant* (city commander) of Colmar, France, in 1940, while a captain, and as *Stadtkommandant* of Lemberg (today Lviv, Ukraine) in 1942-1943, with the rank of major. Eberhard maintained that the man’s voluntary reporting and his success in the military proved that he was an adherent of militarism, a “militarism that stood completely under the influence of the NSDAP [Nazi Party].” However, Eberhard was more interested in the larger political considerations of the case than in the two individuals. In particular, he argued that

the decision of a new school administration, which nevertheless has the task of appointing teachers to supervising positions who will be, and must be, given the job of eliminating even the thought of militarism from the heads of adolescent youth, demands an exacting examination of the past activities of the proposed teacher if the city school authorities do not want to fall under the suspicion that they are themselves still stuck in the old ways.

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<sup>35</sup> Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht,” 1068. For evidence of this thinking, see also Weekly Military Government Report, Detachment E1, Stuttgart, 19 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45.

He asked that city officials verify his information and contended that it was the duty and responsibility of every devout socialist to forcefully intervene or they would risk losing, again, everything the Nazis had previously taken away.<sup>36</sup>

More generally, American counterintelligence personnel operating in Karlsruhe in late summer 1945 reported the “popular feeling” that the return of former officers might “make possible the reestablishment of the military clique, since junior officers, such as those now being released, greatly influenced the political life of Germany, after World War No. I.” As an example, the Germans pointed to discriminatory measures applied to civilian doctors who were party members but not to former military doctors.<sup>37</sup> In early November 1945, members of the works councils of various enterprises in the city endorsed a resolution addressing soldiers directly. “In the employment in responsible posts of former professional soldiers who voluntarily entered the Wehrmacht after the [Nazi] seizure of power in 1933, the assembly sees an endangering of the political situation and a glorification of Prussian militarism,” read the statement approved by nearly 250 works council delegates. “Therefore the full assembly of factory council members demands the immediate cleansing of businesses and offices from these camouflaged pests.”<sup>38</sup> The following August, a letter sent to Heidelberg’s *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* and subsequently forwarded to MG officials expressed surprise “that the professional soldiers whose job was killing are slowly but steadily settling down to a sedate career in the civil service instead of spending a few years cleaning up debris first.” The letter, noted the Americans, was “considered typical of the attitude of a large part of the Heidelberg population.”<sup>39</sup>

Some German government officials and administrators shared the concerns of these public critics. City leaders in Ulm strongly opposed the appointment of former officers to influential positions, even though American denazification initiatives were decimating the city’s governing apparatus. When lord mayor (*Oberbürgermeister*) Robert Scholl reported to his advisory council in August 1945 that the Americans did not

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<sup>36</sup> F. Eberhard to Städt.Bezirkshauptverwaltung z. Hd. von Herrn Aug.Furrer, sen., 26 Jul 45, Stadtarchiv Karlsruhe [StAK] 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No.12. Karlsruhe’s 16 district administrations were a stronghold of former anti-Nazis. At the start of the occupation, the heads of the districts included 14 socialists and two communists. Susanne Asche, et al., *Karlsruhe: Die Stadtgeschichte* (Karlsruhe: Badenia Verlag, 1998), 535.

<sup>37</sup> Frank R. Shinn to Colonel Albrecht, 19 Sep 45, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Demob. Br Files Reading File November and December 1945 2 of 2.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Werner, *Karlsruhe 1945*, 279.

<sup>39</sup> Intelligence Report No. 287, 13 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 86, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [1].

object to former active officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) assuming positions with state, city, or community administrations, so long as they had not been party members, the news elicited vocal criticism. Supported by his council, Scholl even went so far as to write a letter to MG officials, with a copy to Württemberg's Interior Ministry, stating that using these individuals in Ulm would be hazardous. Officers were "far more dangerous than harmless party members," contended council member Hermann Wild, a gymnasium teacher appointed supervisor of schools in Ulm by the Americans and a future leading member of the classical liberal Democratic People's Party (DVP). The Americans were going to accomplish the exact opposite of their goal of eliminating "Prussian militarism, root and branch," he argued, for the officers would again gather in positions of authority and then would have the opportunity to eat away at the state from within.<sup>40</sup>

Other German authorities were less inclined to dismiss former officers out of hand, but remained suspicious. In Stuttgart, city officials wondered whether they should put a former lieutenant colonel in charge of the city's sports activities, particularly since the position entailed working with the city's youth, though they eventually did so after receiving the blessing of local MG officials.<sup>41</sup> On the other hand, they did not endorse the applications of all former soldiers. In one instance, they rejected as a "militarist" a 45-year-old former colonel and holder of the Knight's Cross who had applied for a city post.<sup>42</sup> Heidelberg city administrators, meanwhile, told a MG official in late 1945 that they refused employment to anyone "who volunteered for military service during peace time or who held military positions." A local trade union steward examined all other applications to assess the applicant's baseline suitability for a city job prior to further consideration by a particular office or by city council officials.<sup>43</sup>

In early 1946, the president of North Baden circulated new rules to his department heads regarding the hiring of *Angestellten* and *Beamten* (tenured and untenured civil servants) that similarly provided specific guidance on the issue. Required to complete a Fragebogen, each job applicant was also to supply witnesses, if

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<sup>40</sup> Beratungen des Oberbürgermeisters mit den Beirat der Stadt Ulm, 10 Aug 45, Stadtarchiv Ulm [StAU] B 005/5 S/IV 1945 Band 307; Beratungen des Oberbürgermeisters mit den Beirat der Stadt Ulm, 17 Aug 45, *ibid.*; Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 22 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2]; "Nun ist Prof. Wild an der Reihe," *Ulmer Nachrichten*, 27 Feb 54, StAU G2 Wild, Hermann K. Chr. Unfortunately, a search for the Ulm letter itself proved fruitless.

<sup>41</sup> "Betr: Politische Beurteilung des Max Baumann," 29 Nov 46, StAS Personalamt Baumann, Max.

<sup>42</sup> Niederschrift über die Sitzung der Prüfungskommission vom 7. November 1945, StAS Personalamt No. 82.

<sup>43</sup> Intelligence Report No. 149, 28 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [1].

needed, and additional information, if requested. Excluded from appointments altogether were not only Nazi activists, but those whose manner suggested a “militaristic attitude.” Former active officers and NCOs were therefore always to be hired only on a three-month trial basis, even when their Fragebogen and any follow-up evidence suggested that they were unobjectionable. Their attitude would subsequently be scrutinized and, if deemed acceptable, they would be officially employed at the end of the probationary period.<sup>44</sup>

Speaking to members of Stuttgart’s various Military Government Law No. 8 review and appeals boards in late 1945, Stuttgart’s lord mayor Arnulf Klett noted that the questions “How should officers be handled? Are they militarists? Or are they not militarists?” kept arising. Alluding to three different cases MG officials were still considering, he admitted that the overarching question of who was a militarist was still unresolved. Citing his own experiences and conversations with the Americans, Klett suggested that each case had to be evaluated on its own merits. “One cannot simply say that because someone was in the military, he is a militarist, or when he has reached this or that rank, he is a militarist.” Klett nevertheless did advise the board members that the higher the rank, the more it would be appropriate to judge carefully and not retain or employ a man too readily.<sup>45</sup>

In the end, caution was clearly the word of the day. Land and city officials greeted requests for employment from military men warily, although they did not always reject them even at a point when American calls for the eradication of German militarism were at their peak. Evidence suggests, too, that concerns regarding former officers did not immediately subside. In November 1946, for example, the administration department of Stuttgart’s city council discussed the “demilitarization” of the city’s administration, in which former high-ranking military personnel occupied several important posts. As explained by an American report on the meeting, “a German Colonel, administrative head of the municipal hospital in Bad Cannstatt was suspended, and the city council decided to thoroughly investigate all similar cases involving former high

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<sup>44</sup> Der Präsident der Landesverwaltung Baden to Herr Landesdirektor für die innere Verwaltung, 22 Dec 45, GLA 481 No. 1176.

<sup>45</sup> Sitzung des Prüfungsausschusses, et al, 20 Nov 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 79. In a set of questions and answers regarding Law No. 8 prepared in October 1945 for broadcast on Radio Stuttgart, MG officials had, in fact, explicitly stated that former officers should not automatically be considered militarists; instead, they had argued that whether one was a militarist was “a question of a belief, actively held and promoted, that military force is the only important factor to be considered in the relation between people.” Charles D. Winning to Ministerpräsident Dr. Reinhold Maier, 30 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 217, F: 370.2/S/WB/DN – MG Optns in Land WB – Denazification 1945/46.

ranking army officers.”<sup>46</sup> Interestingly, as part of this effort they followed up on the case of the man appointed to head Stuttgart’s sports office and learned from the city official tasked with the investigation that the man had generally received acceptable reviews. The president of the *Landessportverband* (state sports association), for instance, had expressed satisfaction with the man’s performance—although he had also pointed out that his staff had repeatedly complained about the former lieutenant colonel’s “officer’s tone” and noted that during disagreements the man had frequently stressed, “I was an officer.”<sup>47</sup> Stuttgart officials let the man keep his job.

Perhaps most intriguing was the case of Ulm. During the second half of 1946, MG officials monitoring local opinion and activities for OMGUS’s Information Control Division regularly reported on conversations and incidents relating to “militarists,” former officers, and assorted reactionaries in the community. The frequency of these references may simply be evidence of bias, or particular interest, on the part of the reporting official (though it is worth noting that more than one was involved).<sup>48</sup> But it seems likely that the number of former officers in the community and the city’s reputation as a postwar stronghold of Nazism also played a role. American officials and local politicians may have been especially alert to signs of danger and may also have been reacting to activities and attitudes that were legitimate causes of concern.<sup>49</sup>

According to these American reports, for example, some local officials continued to worry about the possible repercussions of former soldiers assuming city leadership positions. In July 1946, MG intelligence officer Herbert van der Berg recalled a recent conversation with Dr. Paul Mayer, the city’s Social Democratic

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<sup>46</sup> Weekly Activity Report, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 817, F: Intelligence Reports, 1947. In March 1947, MG officials reported that 1.6 percent of Stuttgart’s “local government office-holders” were ex-officers and 23.5 percent were former enlisted men. M. Milton Potter to Chief, Policy Enforcement Branch, CA Div, OMGUS, 8 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 809, F: Administration.

<sup>47</sup> Aktenvermerk, 2 Jan 47, StAS Personalamt Baumann, Max; Auszug aus der Niederschrift des Personalprüfungsausschusses, 22 Jan 47, *ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> Regarding the various intelligence reports circulating within OMGUS, former Heidelberg MG officer Robert Wolfe commented several decades later: “One wrote reports, and no one read them! An intelligence man always reacted to the worst. Such reports were often written out of resentment or fear and must be so interpreted.” Manfred Heinemann, ed., *Hochschuloffiziere und Wiederaufbau des Hochschulwesens in Westdeutschland 1945-1952*, Part 2, *Die US-Zone* (Hildesheim: Lax, 1990), 129.

<sup>49</sup> With one special report, for instance, MG intelligence officer Hugh H. Weil forwarded a copy of a letter “being passed from hand to hand in Ulm in nazistic-militaristic circles” under “strict orders of secrecy” because the Germans were supposedly not permitted to see it. Weil assessed the letter, which described an alleged report to the U.S. Congress by General George C. Marshall, former chief of staff of the U.S. Army, as “in general . . . a white-wash of the German general-staff,” adding that because Ulm was “an old German garrison town and presently many exprofessional officers and their families and friends liv[e] in the city it is hard to guess thru how many hands the letter already has passed.” Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 26 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].

assistant mayor. “He fears many of the one time regular Army officers and E[nlisted] M[en] will slip into the city administration, just as they did in 1918,” wrote the van der Berg. Referring to the several hundred thousand former professional officers and NCOs who were “politically clean,” Mayer worried “that reactionary groups might make use of a goodly number of these men, and thereby gain power for themselves.” He had explained

that he often receives letters from these officers which still show their arrogant tone, when they are requesting jobs. Not all of them have lost their superiority complex. [In o]ne of the letters which he received an applicant appealed and said: “I have done my duty to my country for more than 11 years and have received many decorations so that I can now expect decent treatment from my government, which should offer me a job that suits me.”

Mayer believed that these men were “more dangerous for Germany than the ordinary PGs [party members] – that Nazism was the result of militarism,” van der Berg reported.<sup>50</sup>

The mayoral election in Ulm in early fall 1946 also shed light on the sensitivity of the issue. In early August, van der Berg noted that 30 applications for the position of lord mayor had already been received. The letters would not be opened for another week, he pointed out, but it was “generally known in Ulm that the majority of the applicants are former high officers or other militarists.”<sup>51</sup> Of the 116 total applicants, van der Berg later confirmed, “it was found that many . . . were former militarists.”<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, one of the final four candidates considered by the city council (which was to make the final choice) was a Dr. Liebl, a Baden-born engineer who was “a former civilian administrator with the Wehrmacht, who held the equivalent rank of Lt. Col[onel],” and who was one of two candidates backed by the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) members of the council.<sup>53</sup> After each candidate spoke to the council in mid September, van der Berg reported that Dr. Liebl had “tried in vain to convince the members . . . that he was not a militarist.” Communist Party (KPD) representative Georg Siegwarth later informed the American that both the SPD and KPD strongly opposed the man’s election. “Liebl,” he added, “was a former engineer Lt. Col. in the Wehrmacht. He still behaves like a Prussian officer. He said in his brief speech . . . that to him ‘Nothing is impossible.’”

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<sup>50</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, Week Ending 21 July 1946, 22 Jul 46, *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Frame of Mind Report, 6 Aug 46, *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, Week Ending 18 August 1946, 20 Aug 46, *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 10 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 360.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3].

Ultimately, in an election that proved controversial for reasons having nothing to do with Liebl, the CDU members threw their weight behind the unaffiliated incumbent Scholl and he remained in office.<sup>54</sup>

More curious was a January 1947 vote choosing a certain Rudi Haussmann as the city's new police director. Elected by a 20-16 vote, Haussmann was a Social Democrat and former public prosecutor for Ulm's denazification tribunal. Interestingly, however, a U.S. intelligence report noted that not only did most people consider the 35-year-old Haussmann too young for the position, but he was "known to be a militarist," having been in the Wehrmacht from 1935 to 1945 and earned the rank of captain.<sup>55</sup> In this instance, all of the CDU's votes went against Haussmann, as did Scholl's. He was, therefore, elected largely on the strength of SPD and DVP votes, suggesting that party considerations rather than concerns about reactionary influences were decisive. And in fact, the council was riven with conflict at the time, with Scholl standing squarely at the center, accused of incompetence, snuggling up to former Nazis, and, in a specific charge, of re-employing two former police officers in lesser positions but with their old wages who, according to van der Berg, had been dismissed "on charges of having been active militarists."<sup>56</sup>

In hindsight, it seems likely that party politics influenced both elections far more than any fears regarding the future impact of military elements in Ulm. But some city leaders clearly worried about the possible machinations of former officers. Moreover, both elections suggest that, at the very least, accusations of militarism could, like charges of Nazism, be used as political tools, and political tools are seldom considered worth wielding unless backed by real political or public concerns.

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<sup>54</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 17 Sep 46, *ibid*; Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 16 Sep 46, *ibid*; Herbert P. van der Berg, Report Excerpt, 24 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 682, F: Wuerttemberg-Baden Ulm F-11. At the time of the election, the city council's party membership was as follows: CDU 16, SPD 8, DVP 6, KPD 2, and the *Gruppe der Freien Wählervereinigung* 4. *Zusammensetzung des Gemeinderats im Jahre 1946*, StAU B 005/5 S/IV 150 Band 309.

<sup>55</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, Week Ending 26 January 1947, 28 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 84, F: Political Movements, Org. & Activities Ulm 1947.

<sup>56</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, Week Ending 15 September 1946, 16 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3]; Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 26 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [4]; "Weichen bis in die heutige Zeit gestellt," *Neue Ulmer Zeitung*, 23 Oct 93, StAU G2 Scholl, Robert. American MG officers also viewed Scholl as decidedly anti-occupation and anti-American.



### *German Police Services*

The January 1947 election in Ulm points to another personnel question that similarly became entangled in discussions concerning the relationship between militarism and former Wehrmacht officers: namely, the composition of local police forces. The deep involvement of German policemen in the Nazi system of terror, as well as the military appearance and training that had allowed them to be easily converted into fighting forces, made the overhaul of the police a top priority for the United States. Remarkably, however, the Americans erected no special employment restrictions in this regard, relying only on their ubiquitous removal and hiring regulations. The Germans, on the other hand, were somewhat more cautious.

In a special survey conducted some nine months after the occupation began, MG officials made a point of collecting information regarding the employment policies of Württemberg-Baden's police forces with respect to former officers. At that time, they learned that Stuttgart city officials had dismissed approximately 850 of 900 policemen and were scrambling to replace them. Of 500 new recruits, just six were former officers, U.S. investigator William Stevens recorded, although "quite a number" of professional NCOs had also been hired. To prevent former career officers "with Nazi ideologies" from joining the police, the city had set up a school to screen applicants. "An entrance examination consisting of political essays, discussions etc. has been prepared," Stevens explained. "In addition talks and instructions of reliable anti-Nazis and police experts follow." He noted that Land officials had created a similar system for the Land police.<sup>57</sup>

Stevens also pointed out that, according to everyone he had spoken with, the largest number of applicants for the police forces were NCOs and regular army officers, including many captains and majors who were ready to begin as "simple policemen." But they had trouble getting hired. He explained:

In spite of the fact that MG authorities did not object of [*sic*] employing of regular Army men for the police, the German authorities took it upon themselves to reject officers and typical Army NCO's for the reason of preventing militarists from entering the German police. The basic idea of the men in charge at city as well as on land level is to keep all those out of the administration who are under the suspicion of being militarists or Nazis. But all people asked agree that due to the fast denazification they have been forced to take quick action in replacing many Pg's. This way they could not give most of the new policemen a thorough screening and schooling as it would have been necessary. The percentage of 'Nazi-But-Non-Pg's' and militarists in the police force is being carefully estimated as to be approx. 15%. Now, where the first run is over, a thorough investigation and schooling will prevent Nazis or obvious militarists from entering the German police.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Intelligence Report No. 461, 18 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1945 [1].

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

From neighboring North Baden, MG officer Claude Picard reported that officials were not only subjecting new police employees to the general restrictions circumscribing all Land-level administrative hiring, but were also completely excluding certain categories of men, including former active officers holding the rank of colonel or higher and former police officers who had voluntarily left the police force for the Wehrmacht—though not necessarily those who had been sent to the Wehrmacht as part of a police formation. Any others were carefully examined for possible militaristic leanings, considering such factors as their family and the company they kept. According to Picard, the “German Chief of Police” had intended to turn away all former regular army officers and NCOs, but could not. On one hand, he explained, “several American Public Safety Officers demanded the employment of former regular army officers in the police force” and, on the other, an American-issued directive on the creation of border patrols had stated that former army personnel were “desirable for disciplinary reasons” and, once this patrol had been established, “the personnel was transferred to the regular civilian police.” Two men on the force were thus American-appointed former professional officers new to the police, while the remaining officers had transferred from the police to the Wehrmacht and were, like the “considerable number” of NCOs on staff, now being closely watched for militaristic tendencies.<sup>59</sup>

Picard also described the situation in Heidelberg, where city officials reported that they checked the background of each applicant and accepted only those not “politically compromised.” He noted that since early April 1945 the city police force had hired 29 former regular officers and 49 former professional NCOs for a force that had a “normal complement of approximately three hundred men (uniformed police).” Sixteen of the men were “former police men who were taken over by the Wehrmacht in 1935” and 13 had joined the military in 1937. One third had lost limbs and was now working for the criminal police or police administration. The city’s police director, Picard stated, had assured him that none of the former professional soldiers were “ardent militarists.” But Picard also appended comments to his report that backed up his assertion that “old time democratic police officials, trade union officials and some part of the civilian population” believed that there were too many professional soldiers in the police. “In their minds,” he explained, “a professional soldier, even when disabled, always remains a militarist.” They had argued that “the same militaristic spirit which used to prevail in the German police is again noticeable today” and called for banning the further employment of

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<sup>59</sup> Intelligence Report No. 149, 28 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [1].

former regular army officers and NCOs. Concerns about creeping reaction in the form of “wolves in lamb-skins” provided the common theme of the appended materials.<sup>60</sup>

Although they never set limits on the hiring of former military officers, OMGUS’s Public Safety Branch officials continued to keep an eye on the composition of German police forces, motivated in part by questions raised in quadripartite discussions in Berlin.<sup>61</sup> And Wehrmacht veterans continued to comprise a substantial portion of the men employed after 1945, though the number of former commissioned officers remained relatively small. Thus, as of March 1946, Württemberg-Baden administrators indicated that 268—or 3.8 percent—of a total of 6,844 police officers of all types were ex-officers, including among them three lieutenant colonels.<sup>62</sup> By November, Land police officials were reporting that they employed 2,528 men, including 281 NCOs, 52 commissioned officers below the rank of major, and three with a higher rank.<sup>63</sup> At the time, Württemberg-Baden’s urban police departments employed 4,836 men, 23 percent of whom had served in the Wehrmacht both before and during the war, though a “considerable part” of these had been drafted prior to the war’s beginning and were therefore not former professional soldiers. The 23 percent included 1,039 NCOs, 97 officers below the rank of major, and seven officers with the rank of major or above. Those who had served only during the war included 943 NCOs, 80 officers below the rank of major, and two with the rank of major or above.<sup>64</sup>

Drafting a report for a U.S. Senate committee in late 1946, OMGUS Armed Forces Division officials noted that former officers comprised 2.4 percent of all police personnel in the U.S. Zone. “This percentage is not considered excessive,” they added.<sup>65</sup> The early comments out of Heidelberg nevertheless suggest that not all Germans were happy with the composition of their local police forces, and MG officials continued to hear sporadic grumbling regarding the situation. “Many people complain about the fact that so many former

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> These talks are discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>62</sup> O.W. Wilson to Mr. Stauber, AF, 21 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2606-A Organization and Control of Fire Service Reports from Field.

<sup>63</sup> Robert L. Perry to Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), 13 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 282, F: 014.125 Police.

<sup>64</sup> Robert L. Perry to Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), 27 Dec 46, *ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> W.W. Holler to Control Office, 26 Oct 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 25, F: Demil. Br Reading File, 1 August 1946 – 28 October 1946 1of 2.

professional soldiers are now employed in the Land police,” noted a report from Landkreis Mosbach in late 1946. “Complaints are most frequent about the arrogant manner of these men.”<sup>66</sup> “Many people residing in the Heidelberg area are discussing, with interest, the influx of many former German army officers into leading positions in the [Land police],” a mid-June 1948 intelligence report similarly observed. Ordinary policemen were protesting that they were “once more being subjected to the sneering, supercilious superior attitude that the German officer traditionally affected in treating subordinates.” In addition, the report stated, “Comment has been made that this situation was certainly not the objective of the Occupation Forces but was instead a plan formulated by the former army officers to become a unified group.”<sup>67</sup>

Other Germans were somewhat more measured in their thinking when it came to the police. In late 1946, Stuttgart police authorities informed U.S. counterintelligence officials of news—or rumors—circulating to the effect that all police *Beamten* in the Soviet Zone’s Brandenburg had been let go as “militarists” if they had been NCOs or held a higher rank. Stuttgart’s police officials and citizens, both, had responded to this information either with sharp criticism or with a smile, the authorities noted. In general, they added, people were saying that being a militarist did not necessarily have anything to do with one’s rank—there were militarists in civilian clothes who wanted to fight to the death; there were militarists who because of an insufficient number of positions or thanks to their intellectual limitations only rose to become intimidating lance corporals; and there were also officers who were not militarists.<sup>68</sup>

### *Other Employment*

Regardless of any uncertainties concerning the scope of the term “militarist,” former professional soldiers were clearly more likely than others to be accused and penalized as militarists when seeking public employment. Much to their frustration, they might face similar problems in other venues as well, compounding the already substantial challenge of locating much-needed work. In the end, however, these experiences tended to be localized and did not prevent even most former professional officers from eventually finding at least some

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<sup>66</sup> Weekly Report on German Reactions and Opinions, 1 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

<sup>67</sup> Intelligence Report, 4 Jun 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 457, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports 11 Aug 47 – 4 June 48 Vol. II.

<sup>68</sup> Polizeipräsidium Stuttgart to Dienststelle des CIC, 29 Dec 46, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 49.

kind of employment, if perhaps not a position they considered to be in keeping with their pre-war social standing.

Almost all former soldiers needed to make a living, yet a variety of obstacles could stand in the way of their ability to do so. Young conscripts had no former positions to fall back on. A contemporary law gave others the right to return to their old jobs, and some firms held positions open for absent employees, but the law did not always ensure job security.<sup>69</sup> “The extreme dislocation of industrial life as well as the general invalidity of Nazi law have combined to make this ‘right’ a dead letter,” Heidelberg MG officers reported in August 1945.<sup>70</sup> Allied bombing had destroyed industries, and some veterans had formerly lived in areas now lost to Germany. In some rural communities and small towns, returnees discovered that there were no open positions. If labor shortages in agriculture and mining meant others quickly found themselves in the fields or mines, there were far fewer jobs for skilled blue-collar or white-collar workers given the silent factories and suspension of normal commerce. And a tangle of red tape slowed those who sought to relocate in hopes of finding employment. Individuals living in cities could readily find rubble-clearing work, but many middle-class veterans were not interested in manual labor of that sort and got their hands dirty only when driven into the streets by desperation.<sup>71</sup>

A number of former soldiers coped with the problem by seeking out new military opportunities. Expectations of a future conflict between the United States and Soviet Union combined with rumors of American recruitment led some young men to volunteer—unsuccessfully—to serve in the U.S. Army. “I have done enough for my Fatherland, and never got any thanks,” one told a MG officer in Stuttgart, then admitted that “his real reason for wanting to enlist was that he had nothing to go back to in civilian life.” In view of a poor family situation and little hope of decent employment, he preferred “some excitements,” even at the risk of his life, to “dull physical labor.”<sup>72</sup> Others saw the American military as a path to a good income and sufficient food and housing. “I have no use for the damned Amis,” proclaimed one volunteer, explaining that “ethics and

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<sup>69</sup> Biess, *Homecomings*, 117.

<sup>70</sup> Intelligence Report No. 59, 11 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [1].

<sup>71</sup> Biess, *Homecomings*, 117-119; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 67-68.

<sup>72</sup> Intelligence Report No. 150, 8 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1945 [1].

morals don't fill empty stomachs." "We might even have the chance to take our revenge on those Russian 'Schweinehunde'," his friend argued. To stem the tide of German volunteers, the U.S. Army recruiting office in Heidelberg finally put up a sign in July 1946 reading "For American Nationals Only."<sup>73</sup> But if the American military categorically rejected Germans, the French were less fussy, welcoming disaffected or discouraged veterans into its famed foreign legion and enlisting large numbers from among the POWs in its custody as well. In 1946, Germans made up some 60 percent of the legion's 22,000 members, and the French were still recruiting.<sup>74</sup>

Former professional officers might have certain advantages in pursuing a foreign legion career, but elsewhere they encountered special challenges. Now denied a military career, they might also have few civilian skills to market—a problem particularly acute for longer-serving professional officers and NCOs.<sup>75</sup> To address the employment problems of all former soldiers, some communities eventually began offering specialized training classes. In June 1946, for example, courses in the skilled construction trades and for radio technicians were up and running in Landkreis Ludwigsburg.<sup>76</sup>

Outright discrimination also compounded the troubles of at least some veterans. The frequency with which this occurred is hard to gauge; that it happened is not in doubt.<sup>77</sup> Some employers treated former soldiers as scapegoats for all that had recently gone wrong in Germany, others acted on long-standing prejudices against military men, and still others worried about American opinion. Bach, for example, met one veteran who,

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<sup>73</sup> Intelligence Report No. 270, 23 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [1].

<sup>74</sup> "Fremdenlegion – letzte Hoffnung?" *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* [RNZ], 11 Oct 47; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 22; Smith, *Heimkehr aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 49-50.

<sup>75</sup> For a substantive assessment of the range of problems facing (particularly older) former professional soldiers and detailed recommendations for addressing them prepared by a retired colonel living in Mannheim, see E. P. to Herr Ministerpräsident, 28 Jan 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 698.

<sup>76</sup> Weekly Summary Report, Education and Religious Affairs Division, 14 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2]; Weekly Report, Education and Religious Affairs Division, 14 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports – E&CR 1947.

<sup>77</sup> In his work on German officers, Georg Meyer paints of a grim picture of the life of former officers in the postwar period. James Lockenour follows suit. Bert-Oliver Manig suggests that the degree of discrimination has been exaggerated. Frank Biess does not discuss discrimination against soldiers, or even officers, in his analysis of the experiences of returning POWs with respect to employment; additionally, his general conclusions regarding the issue of employment are derived largely from sources dealing with the British Zone, with an emphasis on the late 1940s and early 1950s when attitudes towards former soldiers had softened. The evidence from Württemberg-Baden presented below is mixed and to a large extent anecdotal. A firmer determination of the extent of discrimination would require in-depth analysis of local employment office records, corporate archives, and a range of other records.

rejected in his attempt to get his old job back, had complained to his former employer that Germany's soldiers had been fighting for six years and had "come home to get nothing." The employer had responded with little sympathy, Bach reported, telling the veteran that that was exactly the problem: "'You've been fighting and that's what we're all suffering for now.'" <sup>78</sup> On a broader plain, former professional officers found it difficult to get jobs in some union-controlled industries, as the relationship between the military and German socialists had traditionally been a hostile one. While leaders of the SPD and the German Federation of Trade Unions spoke of the military without rancor and eventually established reasonable relations with soldier organizations, the situation at the local level could be another matter entirely. The publishing and metal workers' unions, among others, greeted former officers with undisguised animosity. Bad wartime experiences, unpleasant memories of the Weimar years, and concerns about competition led them to refuse admission requests, a stance that persisted into the early 1950s. <sup>79</sup>

American and Allied regulations played a role as well. Denazification directives in the U.S. Zone could lead to rejections, depending upon how local MG authorities and Germans in private enterprise chose to interpret and implement them. And in early 1946, the Allied Control Council erected certain barriers to the teaching profession. Calling for the creation of training programs to combat severe teacher shortages, the council limited admission to those who were "capable of educating youth in a democratic spirit," which, it stipulated, meant excluding certain types of people, including former Wehrmacht officers. <sup>80</sup> In doing this, it might be noted, they had the implicit or explicit support of some Germans. In June 1946, for example, the superintendent of schools for Landkreis Ulm told Ulm's van der Berg that "a large percentage" of his teachers were former officers and "that these men just did not have enough heart for their pupils, that they still acted like officers, although they are out of uniform." <sup>81</sup> Similarly, the Allied perspective appeared eminently reasonable to Ulm's *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung*. Conceding that "a large portion of German officers were less officers by calling than by command," a short opinion piece nevertheless reminded the paper's readers of Hitler's

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<sup>78</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 253.

<sup>79</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 21.

<sup>80</sup> Bryan L. Milburn to Director, Officer of Military Government for Wuerttemberg-Baden, et al, 21 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 14, F: Admission to Nazis.

<sup>81</sup> H. P. van der Berg, to Chief, Information Control Division, 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].

reception of thousands of young officer candidates following the completion of their military training. “These young men, who were already infected with the poison of Nazism and militarism while in the Hitler Youth, experienced the high point of their young lives in the handshake of their Führer.” Tens of thousands then went on to senselessly die a “hero’s death” for their leader. And now, the paper suggested provocatively, some wanted to “put the fox in charge of the henhouse.”<sup>82</sup>

Predictably, obstacles to decent employment drew protests from those affected. One 61-year-old retired colonel pleaded with Minister-Präsident Reinhold Maier to intercede with private and public sector employers to help older former officers locate and secure decent jobs.<sup>83</sup> Treated well, former career soldiers could greatly assist in Germany’s reconstruction efforts, treated poorly or disparaged, they would “go other ways,” argued another veteran in an essay sent to Württemberg-Baden officials. These men wanted to work, he explained, but not only with the “shovel and hoe” (although he clarified that they “naturally” wanted to do their part for reconstruction in this fashion, too). They desired to serve in positions that were important for the new state. “Why, for example, should a former officer, who for years secured supplies for a division or army—that is, for 15,000 or 150,000 men—under the most difficult circumstances, not become the head of the *Wirtschaftsamt* [Commercial Office] of a city?” he asked. Soldiers had not only worn uniforms and drilled, they had learned valuable skills that could be used in civilian jobs with little additional training.<sup>84</sup> Visiting Heidenheim MG officials in late 1945, one former officer was less polite, complaining “that he was unable to obtain a position commensurate with his training and education and that all he was accepted for was in a common laborer’s job.” According to the Americans, he had then gone on to the threaten

that unless Military Government approved the appointment of former professional Army Officers in leading professional and executive positions, serious consequences are bound to follow. The educated Officer, he added, demanded a chance to use his qualifications and talents and unless this chance is given him, he will become the core of a dangerous opposition. Before resigning himself to the fate of a common laborer, he will put up a ‘fight’ using his military skills and experiences to defeat the purposes of Military Government.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> “Ehemalige Offiziere als Jugenderzieher?” *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* [SDZ], 9 Feb 46.

<sup>83</sup> E. P. to Herr Ministerpräsident, 28 Jan 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 698; E. P. to Herr Ministerpräsident, 2 Feb 46, *ibid*.

<sup>84</sup> Kurt K., “Wir ehemaligen Berufssoldaten,” 1 Jan 46, *ibid*.

<sup>85</sup> Weekly Military Government Report, 4 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMG WB No. 18 2 September 45 – No. 35, 30 December 45.



As this example suggests, a drop in economic or social position might be especially painful, and especially humiliating, for former officers who had attained such lofty heights on the status ladder of the Third Reich. Yet it also highlights a related issue—the fact that the officers’ own sense of entitlement sometimes not only led them to see special suffering (their own) where it did not exist, but also to voice unreasonable demands or use a tone of voice unlikely to generate much sympathy. In truth, countless veterans were coping with a distressing deterioration in their material circumstances and social status.<sup>86</sup> And other Germans, too, were having trouble locating acceptable jobs.<sup>87</sup> Meeting difficulties finding employment or, worse, refusing proffered work opportunities did not necessarily mean one was being uniquely mistreated. Nor was unwarranted prejudice always the cause of cool treatment from neighbors. An air of entitlement hardly made sense in a postwar German society characterized by physical devastation, economic uncertainties, political helplessness, and evolving social hierarchies.

Ultimately, former officers ended up in a wide range of jobs and careers, including those which earlier would have been regarded as inappropriate to their status, establishing new lives in the civilian world as toolmakers, journalists, traveling salesmen, miners, carpenters, and insurance agents. Far from putting up a fight, most were effectively, if sometimes unhappily, integrated into the new German economy.<sup>88</sup>

### *Education*

If concerns about militarism played into public and private hiring decisions, they also affected the functioning of German institutions of higher learning. On one hand, they influenced university admissions decisions. On the other, the large number of former soldiers eventually admitted sometimes raised apprehensions among German and American observers and added to the headaches of U.S. military government officials.

By June 1946, seven institutions of higher learning were operating in Württemberg-Baden. Already in August 1945, Heidelberg University had begun offering refresher courses for medical students recently released from the Wehrmacht (chiefly to help cope with a worrisome public health situation) and university-wide

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<sup>86</sup> Biess, *Homecomings*, 118-120.

<sup>87</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 60-61.

<sup>88</sup> Meyer, “Soldaten ohne Armee,” 695.

instruction started in early 1946. Hohenheim Agricultural College opened its doors in December 1945; Stuttgart Institute of Technology, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, and Stuttgart's Academy of Music in February 1946; and Stuttgart's Academy of Plastic Arts and the Mannheim College of Commerce in summer 1946. In granting permission for the schools to resume operations, American authorities required the removal of Nazis and militarists from staff positions, prohibited potentially dangerous student organizations, and restricted what might be taught, particularly with respect to science and technology. The Stuttgart Institute of Technology, for instance, shifted its focus from projects associated with the war effort toward research related to low cost housing.<sup>89</sup>

As expected, the institutions received a torrent of applications from potential students eager to resume their interrupted studies or launch academic careers delayed by Wehrmacht service. For former officers who wanted to do more than clear rubble or manufacture tools, a university education was a coveted necessity. But gaining admission could be tough. Even before the war began, school administrators had begun restricting admissions, and postwar conditions made this even more essential.<sup>90</sup> Destroyed facilities, buildings occupied by U.S. troops, housing shortages, and faculties decimated by waves of denazification all limited the ability of schools to accept students.<sup>91</sup> When MG officials took the first steps to reopen Heidelberg University, they also worried that students would collect in the area under the guise of studying but instead conspire against the occupation forces.<sup>92</sup> Although more than 8,000 students applied for admittance to Heidelberg, MG officials therefore set an enrollment ceiling of 3,000. Stuttgart Institute of Technology similarly could accept only 3,000 of 5,000 applicants.<sup>93</sup> Even then, most institutions in Württemberg-Baden were overcrowded; in mid 1946, the student population was more than double that of 1939 (see Appendix A).

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<sup>89</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 58-59, 62-63; Richard Griffin Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden Under United States Military Government" (M.A. Thesis, University of Virginia, 1949), 136-140; Annual Report, Higher Institutions, 19 Aug 1946, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMBWB, Box 916, F: 2.13 Higher Institutions of Learning (Reports in English). On the issue of personnel removals at the University of Heidelberg, see especially Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth*, Chapters 4-6.

<sup>90</sup> Waldemar Krönig and Klaus-Dieter Müller, *Nachkriegssemester: Studium in Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990), 129.

<sup>91</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 137-138, 224; Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 64.

<sup>92</sup> Volker Sellin, "Die Universität Heidelberg im Jahre 1945," in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 95.

<sup>93</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 137-138.

In addition to the sheer number of applicants and normal concerns about past academic training and intellectual promise, however, an applicant's personal history could affect his prospects. Applicants with a documented Nazi past were, of course, especially vulnerable to rejection, but they were not alone. Many young men likely to consider a university education mandatory for a successful future were the same middle and upper class young men who had previously sought out professional military careers. During the Weimar Republic, such students had proved to be an insidious, reactionary influence and were thus regarded with caution by German and American officials during the occupation. Furthermore, lower-ranking Wehrmacht officers were both publicly associated with German military traditions and frequently imbued to a greater or lesser extent with National Socialist ideas.<sup>94</sup> One or more of these factors might hurt their chances for admission.

Early on, American officials took an interest in the admissions process, but essentially left it in German hands, believing, too, that the reopening of schools should not wait for MG clearance of all students. The first detailed directive concerning institutions of higher education, issued in late fall 1945, instructed German authorities to set admissions standards and gave MG university officers assigned to oversee operations at the schools responsibility for ensuring that the Germans admitted no one who was "seriously compromised with the Nazi party or otherwise unsuitable for university studies." American admissions requirements thus remained rather vague, a state of affairs that had certain consequences. As James Tent points out, "since Nazis and 'militarists' were the primary targets, strict interpretation could exclude former military officers, especially career officers."<sup>95</sup> And there were certainly German officials who had reservations about at least some former officers. Dr. Karl Schmid, the "Acting Land Director of Württemberg for Culture, Education and Art" (who was himself about to be removed from his position), suggested to several MG officers in late August 1945 that if young soldiers and officers were barred from educational institutions, they might "in their dismay at the chaos in their land, . . . become bitter destructionists or nihilists." But there were also students he *would* exclude. As

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<sup>94</sup> On the latter point, see, especially, Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 35-42.

<sup>95</sup> "Implementing Instructions to accompany Directive on Reopening of Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning," 21 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 24, F: Directive; Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 63. While Tent emphasizes the leeway ambiguous regulations gave—or perhaps, in some instances, the pressure they exerted on—German authorities to exclude certain types of students, the primary author of the MG directive probably intended the regulations to be rather relaxed. In an early August 1945 draft of guidelines for reopening universities, MG university officer Edward Hartshorne recommended "a relatively lenient policy" regarding the "exclusion of students on political grounds," reasoning that "being a student is hardly to be treated as a 'public office' and a warning should suffice to make the 'suspected' student prove his good intentions by hard work and blameless behavior." Hartshorne added that "admission to study need not therefore wait on completed clearance." E.Y. Hartshorne, "Guidance Notes (Draft SOP)," 6 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 24, F: Directive.

an example, one American reported, Schmid “described a young German major with ‘Ritterkreuz’ [Knight’s Cross] at his throat. This young major, accustomed to being a strong leader and to a position of importance in the German army, would be a malcontent in a German university under American supervision and would very likely form subversive cells.”<sup>96</sup>

Under this early system, Heidelberg University required all applicants to fill out a Fragebogen, draft a narrative personal history, and describe the goals of their education. A student-faculty committee selected by the institution’s rector then evaluated the submissions, considering both the academic and political suitability of the applicant. Those subject to mandatory removal were barred from admission; other former career officers might only be admitted after a special examination of each case.<sup>97</sup> Heidelberg officials then forwarded all decisions to the responsible MG university officer for review.

The late issuance of the U.S. regulations, combined with the fact that American university officers each had jurisdiction over several schools, were overburdened with work, and were often young and inexperienced, resulted in both the American officers and the institutions acting with a fair degree of independence in interpreting and implementing the regulations on school reopenings.<sup>98</sup> But the Americans eventually tightened admissions requirements in March 1946, setting percentage limits on the admission of former Nazi party members. And when a new denazification law took effect in the U.S. Zone shortly thereafter, decisions of the German denazification tribunals also influenced admission determinations. Former officers were still not singled out for special treatment in any U.S. regulations *as* former officers. Yet new directives barring from acceptance those who had been “more than nominal participants in, or supporters of, National

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<sup>96</sup> Samuel Shulits to Education and Religious Affairs Branch, G-5 USFET, 30 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 75, F: Stuttgart.

<sup>97</sup> Sellin, “Die Universität Heidelberg im Jahre 1945,” 95-96; “Implementing Instructions to accompany Directive on Reopening of Universities and Institutions of Higher Learning,” 21 Nov 45, NA, RG 260. For a selection of applications, see NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 911, F: Admittance of Heidelberg Students (cont.) [3]. For a description of the standards used to evaluate candidates for the Heidelberg Law Faculty, see “Principles according to which Students were admitted to the Law Faculty,” n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 911, F: Admittance of Heidelberg Students (cont.) [2]. No special exclusions for military officers are mentioned here. Moreover, applicants earned points in their favor for “invalidity of war (ranged according to degrees)” and “participation in the war (subdivided as to the number of lost years of studies).” Points might also be received for residing within the surrounding region. Applicants who received at least two “preferential points” were the first to be admitted. Local veterans who had not been party members or high-ranking Hitler Youth leaders would therefore seem to have had, at least in theory, a good chance of admission if there were open slots.

<sup>98</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 63, 65; James F. Tent, “Edward Yarnall Hartshorne and the Reopening of the Repracht-Karls-Universität in Heidelberg, 1945: His Personal Account,” in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 71.

Socialism or militarism,” but who had not yet been evaluated by a tribunal, clearly offered both German and American evaluators a justification for refusing admittance to former officers at least temporarily.<sup>99</sup>

Despite a variety of concerns, Württemberg-Baden’s educational institutions ultimately enrolled a relatively large number of former officers. According to statistics compiled in August 1946 regarding 3,167 Heidelberg students, regular army officers comprised .7 percent of those in the institution’s Medicine Faculty (school), .7 percent of the Philosophy Faculty, 1.1 percent of those in Mathematics and Science, 2.7 percent of those in Theology, and 3.7 percent of those in Law. The percentage of reserve officers varied from 6.4 percent in Medicine to 30.3 percent in Law, with the other three faculties reporting enrollments in the 10 to 13 percent range.<sup>100</sup> A June 1946 MG report stated that former officers made up 28.5 percent of the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology student body, accounting for no less than 35.8 percent of the 905 males enrolled there.<sup>101</sup> Similarly, in early 1947, Stuttgart Institute of Technology reported that 23 percent of its students had been officers,<sup>102</sup> while a mid 1948 MG study showed some 658 of 4,270 students at the school, or 14 percent, were former second lieutenants.<sup>103</sup>

Even after admittance, former officers could not be entirely certain they would see their studies through to completion, however. The combination of persistent American concerns regarding Nazis and militarists and the initial hands-off admissions policies eventually produced a messy situation in Württemberg-Baden. When MG officials in early 1946 finally examined the files of those students originally admitted to Heidelberg, they ended up rejecting several hundred as unacceptable.<sup>104</sup> And among the many chosen for dismissal were career military officers whose application materials revealed no trace of organized Nazi

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<sup>99</sup> Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 134; DIAC/AEC/Memo(46)18, 17 May 46, NA, RG 260, U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Directorate of Internal Affairs and Communications [hereafter DIAC], Box 204, F: DIAC/AEC/Memo(46)(47)(48).

<sup>100</sup> Weekly Summary Report, Education and Religious Affairs Division, 16 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2].

<sup>101</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, Office of Military Government, Württemberg-Baden, 22 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 87, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Karlsruhe 1946 [2].

<sup>102</sup> “Education and Religious Affairs Division,” 20 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR 1947.

<sup>103</sup> “Report on Stuttgart Institute of Technology,” n.d. [ca. summer 1948], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 881, F: 203.02.

<sup>104</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Education and Religious Affairs Section, 1 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 20, F: Conference – Minutes of Branch.

activities. Thrust back outside the doors of the institution, these men were given the right to appeal their cases, and at least some compiled exculpatory evidence. But there was no guarantee they would be readmitted.<sup>105</sup> Altogether, those “ex-matriculated” included 174 who fell into the “discretionary adverse” recommendation category (as opposed to the “mandatory” dismissal category). Of these, 121 petitioned for reinstatement, with 82 eventually approved.<sup>106</sup>

Though it is hard to assess how typical the case might be, a closer look at one case is instructive for the light it sheds on German and American decision-making processes and how they could impact individuals. In this instance, a former major ex-matriculated by the Americans from the study of law had enlisted in the Reichswehr in 1931 at the age of nineteen, participated in the campaigns in France and the Soviet Union, assisted in the occupation of France and, briefly, Poland, and helped to defend the Rhine in 1945, picking up an Iron Cross First Class and a number of other citations along the way. This history, apparently, had not prevented Heidelberg screeners from admitting him to the university. Once dismissed by the Americans, he spent some 18 months seeking reinstatement. His repeated verbal and written appeals to the university’s administration emphasized his disabled veteran status, his need to develop a new career in order to care for his wife and two children, and the “not affected” clean bill of health he had received recently from the local denazification tribunal. His pleas said very little about his choice of a military career or his wartime activities. The leaders of the Law Faculty, meanwhile, expressed some concern for the man’s plight, but also considered other cases to be more compelling. Additionally, they wondered whether MG authorities would approve his reinstatement. At one point, a Heidelberg official recalled that when the university rector had brought another former major to the attention of the responsible MG officer, asking that the man be granted special admission outside the bounds of the enrollment ceiling, the American had argued that the applications of such former officers were less urgent than others and had to be viewed as a lower priority. He had further expressed his “astonishment” that the rector had brought him this petition when there certainly were more pressing requests at

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<sup>105</sup> Hubertus P. to Herr Dekan der Medizinischen Fakultät der Universität Heidelberg, 18 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 913, F: Student Petitions Not Recommended by the Committee and Recommended by the Committee – Heidelberg University. See also assorted application materials in NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 911, F: Admittance of Heidelberg Students (cont.) [3].

<sup>106</sup> John W. Taylor to Office of Military Government for Württemberg-Baden, 14 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 86, F: 388 Militarism: Denazification; Memorandum, “Students dismissed for reasons other than academic,” n.d., *ibid.*

hand. Ultimately, however, both the school and the current university officer permitted the major's readmission during the fall of 1947.<sup>107</sup>

In making their cases for reinstatement, this former major and his colleagues were doing so at a time when both local MG officials and the entire U.S. military government were coming under fire for their allegedly lax policies with respect to German universities. Locally, loud criticism came from American counterintelligence officer Daniel Penham, whom MG education officials—perhaps wrongly—viewed as something of a loose cannon.<sup>108</sup> In a February 1946 report, Penham actually called for the university to be closed until it could be cleaned up. Highlighting the checkered pasts of certain faculty members, citing evidence of enduring Nazi attitudes, and railing against the current administration's unwillingness to cooperate in addressing these problems, Penham also argued that "the student body, both German and foreign is rife with Nazi and militarist elements." Among others, he specifically singled out Wehrmacht veterans for condemnation:

It is known that former officers among the medical students listen to the Internal Surgery seated together in the upper tier of the auditorium, thus forming in everyone's eyes an officers clique. Many former officers are seen walking about the campus in almost complete uniform with shining boots and medals, lacking in some cases only insignia of rank. The great majority of the students in the upper semesters in the medical school is composed of former non-coms and officers who were studying at Heidelberg under the former "ASTP" program, the Studenten Kompanien, military formations of persons who were permitted to pursue their studies in medicine at the expense of the Wehrmacht. In each unit, there was a National Socialist Fuehrungs Offizier [Indoctrination Officer], . . . No attempt has been made to have these dangerous elements removed until very recently, when the Rector and Dean were informed by CIC of their presence.<sup>109</sup>

Penham's report, moreover, surfaced just as the American press was launching an assault on German universities. Following a January 1946 episode at the University of Erlangen in Bavaria, where students had disrupted a speech by German Pastor Martin Niemöller attributing collective responsibility for the Nazis and the horrors of the past decade to the German people, the *New York Times* published a succession of articles

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<sup>107</sup> Dr. Karl J. Arndt to Dean of the Law Faculty, University of Heidelberg, 23 Oct 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 912, F: Numerus Clausus.

<sup>108</sup> On Daniel Penham and his conflicts with the university's administration and American MG officials, see, most recently, Uta Gerhardt, "Die Amerikanischen Militäroffiziere und der Konflikt um die Wiedereröffnung der Universität Heidelberg 1945-1946," in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 30-54; Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth*, Chapter 5.

<sup>109</sup> Daniel F. Penham, "Memorandum for the Officer in Charge," 23 Feb 46, reprinted in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 420-423. The Americans never shut down the university, although MG officials did follow up on some of Penham's concerns. John P. Steiner to Chief, I A & C Division, 22 Mar 46, reprinted in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 430-432.

painting German universities as hotbeds of Nazism, nationalism, and militarism.<sup>110</sup> “Young men [at Erlangen], many of whom still wear worn bits of army uniforms, talk excitedly of a ‘revival’ of Germany and of a ‘soldiers’ party’ that will wrest political leadership from the old men who now hold it,” wrote Drew Middleton, a correspondent who never shied away from stirring up controversy. “There is no great enthusiasm for a democratic Germany among the students, and almost no idea of the workings of a free society,” he added. “This is understandable in view of the age of most of the students. . . . But what is frightening is that they think of the Government only as a vehicle for creating a new strong Germany.”<sup>111</sup>

Although they attracted less attention from American journalists, students from institutions in Württemberg-Baden also made their presence felt. At a Stuttgart performance of the early nineteenth-century play *Woyzzek*—described by Penham as “a protest against the militaristic tendencies of Germany in those times”—students pelted the actors with potatoes. In Ulm, they disrupted a commemoration service for the victims of fascism.<sup>112</sup> With their colleagues elsewhere, they also elicited expressions of concern and censure in the local papers. Social Democrat Johannes Weisser, an Ulm city councilman and editor of the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung*, worried about the impact current students might have in the future when they assumed leading positions in the nation’s administrative, economic, and cultural life.<sup>113</sup> His co-editor Kurt Fried called for

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<sup>110</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 74-82.

<sup>111</sup> Drew Middleton, “Pan-Germanism, Militarism Goals of Ex-Soldier Students at Erlangen,” *NYT*, 18 Feb 46. See also, for example, Tania Long, “Munich Hotbed of Nazism,” *NYT*, 23 Apr 46.

<sup>112</sup> Daniel F. Penham, “Memorandum for the Officer in Charge,” 23 Feb 46, reprinted in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 424; Johannes Weisser, “Hochschulen und Staat,” *SDZ*, 27 Feb 46. An internal MG investigation eventually disapproved a *Stuttgarter Zeitung* article that described the offenders at the *Woyzzek* performance as all officer candidates. Instead, it concluded that, excepting one participant, the offenders were (mostly 18- and 19-year-old) pupils from a local gymnasium who had had few, if any, political motives. Intelligence Report No. 450, 15 Dec 45, and attachment, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 289, F: Film, Test Screenings (Audience reactions, etc). On the other hand, Penham subsequently reported that when a group of students at a Heidelberg University forum was asked its opinion of the disturbance, all but one of those present had approved of the action, viewing the play, in Penham’s words, as “an example of ‘Jewish, Bolshevistic, degenerate, concentration-camp art.’” Penham, “Memorandum for the Officer in Charge,” 23 Feb 46, 424.

<sup>113</sup> Weisser, “Hochschulen und Staat.” A July 1946 MG report noted that Weisser was a “very significant personality in the political life of Ulm.” He had been politically active as a trade union and SPD member already while working as an apprentice watchmaker prior to World War I. After serving in the war, he was elected a steward of his local metal workers union and then secretary of the local SPD, first in Schwennigen and later in Ulm. Concurrently, he worked as editor of the SPD’s newspaper in southern Germany. In 1933, he was arrested by the Nazis and spent a number of months in a concentration camp. He later led a small resistance group in Ulm. The Nazis arrested him again following the July 20, 1944, attempt on Hitler’s life. After Germany’s surrender, he became the first chairman of Ulm’s reestablished SPD. Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 22 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2]; “Chefredakteur J. Weisser zum Gedächtnis,” *Ulmer Nachrichten*, 10 Apr 54, StAU G2 Wiesser, Johann M; Ralf Heisele, “Die ersten Ulmer Gehversuche in der



former soldiers to hunker down and learn, and to stick to their studies until they were finished. “The only possible result of such excesses [at the universities] can be that the universities will again be closed,” he warned. “Who would be served by that? Only those who, just as they senselessly destroyed bridges and factories, want to destroy our whole people [*Volk*] only because they may no longer ‘lead’ it.” Forced to abandon dreams of military leadership, these men sought instead the doctoral cap. But for them it was not about serious work in service of scholarship, but rather about status and external glory. There was, he maintained, no room for such men at the new universities.<sup>114</sup>

In the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, a severely disabled veteran took a different tone in urging his former comrades to change their ways lest the universities be closed and this much-needed intellectual guidance lost. He asked older, more level-headed veterans and fellow students to show their younger colleagues, with gentleness and understanding, that “the Fatherland could not be served with troublemaking and demonstrations, but through the desire for truth and objective scholarship” that would lead them all “from the false teachings and pseudo-science of the past” back to the “old greats of the German spirit [*Geist*].” But he also referred to the resistance mounted by students at the University of Munich during the war. The universities, he argued, were not shelters of militarism and Nazism, but sites of intellectual reconstruction and the healing of the German character. Eliminating these types of incidents could best be achieved through “kindness, instruction, and human understanding,” rather than by throwing students out of school.<sup>115</sup>

While institutions in Württemberg-Baden did not draw the degree of public scrutiny experienced by their Bavarian counterparts, they did feel the ramifications of American concerns in 1946 and 1947. New investigations led to the removal of additional teaching personnel due to Nazi leanings and other past indiscretions.<sup>116</sup> In addition, in late May 1946 U.S. Military Governor General Joseph T. McNarney called Württemberg-Baden MG officials directly to discuss the issue of “militaristic tendencies” among university

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wiedergewonnenen Freiheit,” *Südwest Presse*, 29 Apr 95; *ibid*; Jakob Resch, “Das Datum des 20. Juli hat auch in Ulm seine Geschichte,” *Südwest Presse*, 20 Jul 94, *ibid*.

<sup>114</sup> Kurt Fried, “Der kategorische Imperativ: Zum Problem der Universitäten,” *SDZ*, 16 Feb 46. A July 1946 local MG report described Fried as a “half-Jew” who had been persecuted by the Nazis. The cultural advisor (*Referent*) for Ulm, he was “not much of a political figure, however, a very influential person and best known in the D[emokratische]V[olks]P[artei] leadership.” Van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 22 Jul 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>115</sup> Brief an die Herausgeber, *Stuttgarter Zeitung* [*SZ*], 23 Mar 46.

<sup>116</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 95-98.

students. These tendencies, a Land education officer, Richard Banks, later told zonal education officials, had apparently been “evidenced more by a scornful attitude toward democratic practices and principles of school administration than it had in overt militaristic action.” But the general had “instructed that prompt and vigorous action with reference to each student be taken” and criticized as “not sufficiently vigorous” the current practice of dismissing students at the end of the term, rather than immediately.<sup>117</sup> To reassure McNarney and Clay regarding the status of students found “undesirable for being militarists or for other reasons,” zonal officials subsequently requested information on the number of students dismissed from various institutions for reasons other than academic ones. Württemberg-Baden officials accordingly reported that while the two institutes of technology had dismissed no students, Heidelberg had ex-matriculated 376 students, second in the zone only to the University of Frankfurt.<sup>118</sup> In June 1946, Banks also directed authorities in Württemberg-Baden to review all student dossiers once more, this time in light of the newest regulations.<sup>119</sup>

Though the eye of the storm had passed, concerns did not dissipate entirely after these high profile events. As late as 1948, American officials were still expressing unease about the presence of former officers at German universities. Writing in the journal *Commentary* in May, Haverford College assistant professor J. Glenn Gray, recently returned from service as an education officer in Bavaria, outlined some of the challenges he perceived in reeducation initiatives at German universities. The politically incriminated individuals and questionable officers who had sought his help in gaining admission to the University of Munich could not be reeducated by excluding them from further study, Gray argued. But he also believed it was “obviously unwise and unjust to admit large numbers of them . . . unwise because their collective weight might well choke the growth of a more liberal spirit there; unjust because they would be taking places away from unincriminated students.” Former professional officers he saw as “more dangerous” than the others. Rarely politically tainted, they had been “robbed of a career that most of them chose voluntarily in the 30’s” and now wanted to prepare

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<sup>117</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Education and Religious Affairs Branch, 25 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 20, F: Conference – Minutes of Branch; C.L. Adcock to Public Safety Branch, 28 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 18, F: AG 014.3 Denazification of Heidelberg.

<sup>118</sup> C.L. Adcock to IA &C Division, 12 Jun 46, *ibid.* In reporting the zonal figures for students dismissed for non-academic reasons, OMGUS’s Internal Affairs and Communications Division cited a total of “1304 students dismissed as militarists,” implying that all late releases were militarists. This assumption seems to be thrown into question, however, by the subsequent explanatory remark that “dismissal for any reason other than National Socialist or Militarist activities is handled by the competent German authority in each school, and no record of such dismissals is available.”

<sup>119</sup> Richard G. Banks to Ministry of Culture, Stuttgart, 14 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 891, F: Ministry of Culture Letters up to 31 Mar 48.

for “some profession which will save them from physical labor.” However, in addition to questioning their intelligence, Gray believed that their many years in the military made them “even less likely to be won for democratic ways than the young ex-Nazis” and suggested that “informed German opinion” would contend that “many of the young Nazi leaders now believe that they followed false gods,” but most “professional officers regard the present merely as a waiting period of uncertain duration until they can resume their former careers.” Added Gray, “This element obviously requires the closest watch, to make certain that they gain little influence in public life.”<sup>120</sup>

Notably, even the former officers’ fellow students did not always appreciate their presence in the universities, with discharged privates critical of their former superiors’ unofficial devotion to National Socialism and worried about their potentially negative effect within the academy and in influential future careers.<sup>121</sup> In August 1947, the *Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund* (Socialist German Students League) actually passed a resolution demanding that no former active officers be permitted to study so long as there were other students still being denied admission, reasoning that professional officers had originally had no plans to study.<sup>122</sup>

Responding to criticism of their conduct and to accusations of militarism, former officers not only cited their politically untainted pasts, but also condemned blanket categorizing and warned against souring their attitudes and driving them into opposition.<sup>123</sup> Outsiders also came to the defense of the men. “Can you reproach a soldier with having done his duty, and having as a good soldier been promoted officer?” asked Theodor Bäuerle, Württemberg-Baden’s Deputy Minister of Culture, in a late November 1945 letter to Land MG officials criticizing the many dismissals and exclusions provoked by U.S. policies. The hopes and ideals of returning soldiers, which had been spoiled by “mendacious propaganda,” were now “completely shattered,” and they wanted “to shape for themselves a new philosophy, to return to civilian life, to learn a profession, to do excellent work and to collaborate in reconstructing their country.” But their Fragebogen prevented this. As a result, he suggested, “a whole generation is driven into nihilism and despair,” something that posed “an

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<sup>120</sup> J. Glenn Gray, “Munich University: Class of ’50. A Case Study in German Re-Education,” *Commentary* 5 (May 1948), 442-443.

<sup>121</sup> Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht,” 1076-1077.

<sup>122</sup> “Aktive Offiziere sollen nicht studieren,” *SZ*, 30 Aug 47.

<sup>123</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 61; Briefe an die Herausgeber, *SZ*, 9 May 46.

immense danger for the inner peace and the future of the whole nation” as well as a threat to the security of the Americans.<sup>124</sup> Culture Minister Theodor Heuss echoed these thoughts and argued, further, that the “soldierly honor” of young veterans should not be injured. “The fact that one was promoted due to his competence in war must not be used as an obstruction in his professional or political life,” the minister asserted. “This would be completely wrong psychologically and would only keep alive a secret ‘militaristic’ spirit.”<sup>125</sup> A writer in Karlsruhe’s *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* came to a similar conclusion in 1947, contending that young men whose educational background had led to an officer’s promotion during the war should not now be penalized for this.<sup>126</sup>

How much of a threat these former officers actually represented is difficult to assess. Penham certainly was not the only one who denounced their conduct. “You can really say that the reaction is hiding in the universities,” commented one German veteran. Writing to an émigré who had taught in an American “democratization” school for German POWs that he had attended, the writer described watching former officers walking to the University of Frankfurt in the morning. “Because of the many officers’ boots, one often thinks one is standing along the route to a war academy,” he suggested, then charged that the men acted “democratic” in order to be admitted to the university. “Otherwise they are not at all embarrassed to speak about democracy in the same way that they think about it, that is, derogatorily,” he explained. “It is astonishing how that can occur without protest, in part in public discussions.”<sup>127</sup>

Reporting on his experiences sitting in on classes at Heidelberg University in 1946 and 1947, Wolfe remembered that conversations with veterans about their mutual war experiences had two “recurring themes.” One was their argument that Wolfe—who had seen frontline service—“had fought against civilized enemies who surrendered when they knew they were beaten,” unlike the Soviets. The second was their claim that U.S. soldiers and their leaders had only won the war due to a superiority of resources rather than military skill. “My

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<sup>124</sup> Bäuerle to U.S. Military Government, Baden – Württemberg, 19 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 917, F: 6.1 Denazification (General).

<sup>125</sup> Theodor Heuss to Major Steiner, 1 Dec 45, *ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> Hermann Ulbrich-Hannibal, “In Hundert Jahren,” *Badische Neueste Nachrichten [BNN]*, 9 Aug 47.

<sup>127</sup> Alois Hilbert to Henry Ehrmann, 16 Nov 46, Ehrmann Papers, Box 4, F: Hilbert, Alois 1946-1948. Similarly, an Ulm MG official quoted in full a long, particularly angry and reactionary letter sent to the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* and commented, “In the opinion of the undersigned this article represents the typical viewpoint of many young men, formerly officers of the German Wehrmacht.” Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 11 Mar 47, , NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 84, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1947.

memory may be playing me false,” said Wolfe, “but the phrase that lingers is that Eisenhower and his generals did not possess ‘a drop of oil from the head of Frederick the Great.’” He had countered their arguments, he added, but did not take offense, still remembering their rather unceremonious return.<sup>128</sup> On the other hand, Wolfe said nothing of Penham’s “officer’s clique” in shiny jackboots. Instead, he recalled being “conspicuous in an American officer’s uniform.” Many of his classmates wore uniforms, too, only they were dyed. His was “snug.” Theirs were not.<sup>129</sup>

Contemporary MG reports conveyed concern, but sounded no outright alarms regarding former officers at institutions in Württemberg-Baden. The writer of a May 1946 report on the Stuttgart Institute of Technology, for example, indicated that most students—including the 4 percent who were former professional officers and the large number of former reserve officers—were “worried much more about their own personal future than . . . the political future of Germany.” Economic problems were a key concern, wrapped up as they were with potential job opportunities after graduation. Geopolitical questions concerning the fate of the Ruhr or the agricultural eastern territories were thus reduced, in part, to practical worries. Offering no particular warning related to the observation, the investigator concluded that most students were right of center on the political spectrum. There was only a “tiny leftist minority,” which tended to be more politically interested. He noted, too, that one of his contacts was a 29-year-old first-year student and former first lieutenant who was presently organizing a visit to the school by Culture Minister Heuss, a DVP politician. The young man had “expressed the fear of many officers that sooner or later they might be dismissed from school.” He was already old, he had pointed out, and “not too prosperous,” and “the prospect that he might be merely wasting his time and money without being permitted to finish his studies worrie[d] him greatly.” This fear, he had added, was “shared by all ex-officers.”<sup>130</sup>

In late November 1946, one of Heidelberg’s student leaders spoke of two kinds of students at his university. One group was politically interested, motivated, and beginning to feel responsible for public concerns. The second group was “disappointed” and not interested in the many initiatives underway in

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<sup>128</sup> Wolfe, “Democratic Culture During the American Occupation,” 27-28.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Intelligence Report No. 743, 7 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2].

Germany; some “unbridled nationalism” still “smoldered” among its members, he believed. These young men, he charged, were waiting for something that would descend from above to make them happy—perhaps a new leader—and lived off their resentment about many things, from fuel shortages to the occupation authorities, blaming everything negative on “democracy.”<sup>131</sup>

A report produced by Württemberg-Baden’s MG education officials six months later reached a similar, if marginally more benevolent, conclusion, in describing three “uncertain categories” of university students. The first, probably smallest, group was “fully conscious of the responsible part they must assume in the life of the community” after finishing. They recognized the challenges of the age, but were determined to rise above the material privations and “spiritual confusion” and to “help in the development of a new German culture.” The second, probably largest, group viewed the current material situation as “hopeless” and could not believe that they had contributed to their own unhappy circumstances. They coasted along, willing to be led by outside influences, and were not inclined to worry about their future responsibilities. Rather, they remained fixated on finishing their studies and making a living. The third group of students had descended from the second. Embittered by their present hardships, they had “a tendency to be cynical about American democracy because every American soldier has not been a shining light of the democratic ideal.” They might truly detest National Socialism, but as idealists, were dissatisfied with the beginnings of democracy in Germany.<sup>132</sup>

Significantly, both the Heidelberg student and the MG report agreed that veterans did not automatically fall into any of the categories. Rather, students in the most promising group might have tainted political records. They may, in fact, have been Hitler Youth leaders or former army officers.<sup>133</sup>

### **Militarists at Nuremberg**

Even as American military government officers and German officials were attempting to identify and negate the influence of militarists locally, Allied authorities were attacking the problem on a much bigger stage. In words and documents, through photographs and film, they were presenting the former leaders of the Third

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<sup>131</sup> Hugo S. to Herr Professor Karsen, Education Branch des OMGUS, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 69, F: Universities – Students.

<sup>132</sup> “Topical Report 10 June 1947: Universities,” NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 879, F: 101.02 [2].

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, Hugo S. to Karsen, Education Branch des OMGUS, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260.

Reich to the German people and to the world as unscrupulous men who had launched an illegal war of aggression and committed a multitude of heinous crimes in waging it to a disastrous end. In pursuing this course, the Americans hoped not only to mete out warranted justice, but also to devalue the standing of Germany's military leaders and illuminate the evils of German militarism by exposing Germany's culpability for World War II. The proceedings of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and, to a lesser extent, other war crimes trials would provide a valuable opportunity for reeducation. Seeing Germany's leading militarists called to account, the Americans believed, would help to immunize the German people from the deleterious influence of any successors.<sup>134</sup>

### *The Trial*

Allied officials had begun discussing the need to bring German war criminals to justice already early in the war, though what that should entail and who, exactly, should be judged remained contentious questions. Another key issue was that of definition. During extended international negotiations, some officials called for limiting the term "war crimes" to its traditional meaning, namely, specific acts committed by soldiers during hostilities that violated the laws and customs of war. Others lobbied for a broader interpretation, one that encompassed, for example, the instigating of a war of aggression and offenses committed by German leaders against their own people prior to the start of the war—although this approach raised the difficult question of whether individuals could be prosecuted for actions that contemporary laws had not outlawed as crimes.<sup>135</sup>

In the end, the Americans adopted a number of procedures. American military courts tried cases involving more traditional war crimes, particularly offenses committed against American soldiers, and cases involving concentration camp personnel and those accused of other mass atrocities. German courts eventually became involved in trying cases covering offenses committed by Germans against other Germans after 1933.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> This point was made explicitly in 1948 by a U.S. prosecutor involved with the 12 supplementary war crimes trials held later at Nuremberg, which included several high-ranking German officers. Stressing the Americans' interest in preventing the creation of legends regarding the innocence and harmlessness of Germany's former military leaders, Walter H. Rapp explained, "I believe the fact that the generals' true faces have now been exposed and that they have been shown for what they really are must be a great help in ensuring that in future the population will never place blind trust in a general or expect him to bring about the reconstruction or rebirth of Germany." Quoted in Wette, *The Wehrmacht*, 221; original reference Meyer, "Soldaten ohne Armee," 709-710.

<sup>135</sup> For a detailed exploration of these points, see Arieh J. Kochavi, *Prelude to Nuremberg: Allied War Crimes Policy and the Question of Punishment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

<sup>136</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany*, 390-395.

Meanwhile, the trial with the highest profile—and greatest reeducative value—was that held in Nuremberg from November 1945 to September 1946.

In an agreement signed in London in August 1945, the Allies agreed on a format for the trial, with an International Military Tribunal (IMT) staffed by judges from the four major powers to hear cases against both individuals and organizations. Allied prosecutors would eventually indict 22 individuals and six organizations on four different counts. The latter included: 1) involvement in a “Common Plan or Conspiracy” to carry out the other crimes—a charge the judges ultimately limited to the planning of aggressive war; 2) “Crimes Against Peace,” defined as the “planning, preparation, initiation and waging of wars of aggression, which were also wars in violation of international treaties, agreements and assurances”; 3) “War Crimes,” in the traditional sense of the word; and 4) “Crimes Against Humanity,” encompassing crimes associated with German concentration camps and other atrocities.<sup>137</sup>

Significantly, the drafters of the London Agreement—at the urging of the Americans, in particular—accepted the revolutionary premise that waging an aggressive war was, in fact, a crime. Neither the charter establishing the IMT nor the subsequent indictment defined the term “aggressive war,” nor was there any existing basis for the term in international law. But those behind the agreement contended that international law evolved over time and pointed to the Covenant of the League of Nations from 1919 and the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 as examples of international agreements from the interwar period that reflected and revealed changing attitudes. By 1939, argued the agreement’s defenders, most civilized people believed that starting an aggressive war was morally wrong to the point of being criminal and deserving punishment. In issuing their verdicts, the Nuremberg judges would likewise tend to focus on violations of existing agreements and treaties in assessing the guilt or innocence of the various defendants, although, as historian Bradley Smith has observed, most international documents of this sort contained no stated sanctions for violations committed by signatories. As a whole, the Allied approach to charges of conspiracy and crimes against peace made instigating an aggressive war the punishable responsibility of not just military men, but of all of the Third Reich’s highest

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<sup>137</sup> Kochavi, *Prelude to Nuremberg*, 224-226. For copies of official documents pertaining to the Nuremberg proceedings, see The Avalon Project at Yale Law School, The Nuremberg Trials Collection, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/imt.htm>.



leaders. The IMT thus indicted all 22 defendants on conspiracy charges and 16 for crimes against peace. German planning for and launching of an aggressive war became a focal point of the trial.<sup>138</sup>

In naming defendants, the Allies counted the “General Staff and High Command” among their six allegedly criminal organizations and included four career military officers among the 22 indicted individuals. Specifically, Allied prosecutors accused Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the Wehrmacht High Command (OKW) beginning in 1938, of working closely with Hitler in developing Germany’s war plans and, later, of signing off on some of the more egregious orders permitting and even encouraging military atrocities. Most significantly, Keitel had authorized the infamous *Kommissarbefehl*, ordering the immediate killing of Soviet political commissars captured by the Wehrmacht. Generaloberst Alfred Jodl faced similar accusations, having been involved in detailed planning for various invasions, as well as in issuing the *Kommissarbefehl* and other problematic orders in his capacity as chief of operations of the OKW. Admiral Erich Raeder, commanding admiral of the German fleet and chief of the Naval High Command until he retired in 1943, was attacked for expanding the German navy in violation of the Treaty of Versailles, involvement in German war planning, passing on Hitler’s “commando order” calling for execution without trial of captured commandos, and authorization of unrestricted submarine warfare. Prosecutors also laid responsibility for the latter offense at the feet of Admiral Karl Dönitz, commander of the German navy’s submarine arm until replacing Raeder as chief of the Naval High Command in 1943 and, in April 1945, succeeding Hitler as head of the Third Reich. Accusing Dönitz of sanctioning a policy of refusing to rescue, and even killing, survivors of ships sunk by German submarines, Allied officials also cited his 1943 recommendation that concentration camp labor be used in German shipyards. Field Marshal Hermann Goering also fell under the military rubric in his capacity as a Luftwaffe officer. His notoriety and value to the tribunal were nevertheless derived much more from his economic and political contributions to the Third Reich, as he was the only surviving member of the highest ranks of Nazi leadership.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Bradley F. Smith, *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 16-17, 146; Kochavi, *Prelude to Nuremberg*, 227-228.

<sup>139</sup> For an analysis of the individual cases—albeit with insufficient attention to the degree to which Germany’s military officers supported the Nazis’ ideological program and acted accordingly—and the reasoning of the judges, see Smith, *Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg*.

For more than nine months, then, Allied prosecutors aired the dirty laundry of the Third Reich, while German defense attorneys presented mitigating and exculpatory evidence and identified holes in the prosecution's arguments. In the end, the court found eight defendants guilty of conspiracy and 12 guilty of crimes against peace. It convicted Dönitz on counts two and three, sentencing him to 10 years in prison, and Raeder on counts one, two, and three, sentencing him to life imprisonment. Both Keitel and Jodl were declared guilty on all counts and condemned to death by hanging.<sup>140</sup>

But the Allied judges decided against labeling Germany's "General Staff and High Command" a criminal organization. This decision had less to do with the past actions of the Wehrmacht's leaders than with more technical issues, however. For one thing, the group was small (approximately 130 officers), which meant individual trials would be feasible and a blanket decision was unnecessary. Second and more importantly, the group existed as a coherent body only in the IMT's indictment. "Whatever the conduct of the men in question," observes Smith, "to hold them liable for membership in a nonexistent organization was too much for the Tribunal."<sup>141</sup> Evidence showed that the tasks and operational methods of the Wehrmacht High Command and related staffs were much like those of any other army. Examining this "pattern of activities" did not lead to the conclusion that an organization or group existed, the judges explained; rather, the officers in question were "an aggregation of military men" who happened to hold high-ranking positions at a certain time.<sup>142</sup>

Yet the judges also explicitly refused to condone the behavior of these men. Prosecutors had presented "clear and convincing" evidence of their participation in "planning and waging aggressive war, and in committing war crimes and crimes against humanity." The officers had been "responsible in large measure for the miseries and suffering that have fallen on millions of men, women, and children" and were "a disgrace to the honourable profession of arms." Without their assistance, "the aggressive ambitions of Hitler and his fellow Nazis would have been academic and sterile." While not a group according to the terms of the IMT charter, they were "certainly a ruthless military caste," the judges contended, adding that "contemporary German militarism flourished briefly with its recent ally, National Socialism, as well as or better than it had in the

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<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>142</sup> "Judgment: The Accused Organizations," The Avalon Project at Yale Law School, The Nuremberg Trials Collection, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/proc/judorg.htm#staff>.

generations of the past.” In conclusion, the court recommended that the men be tried individually so that the criminals among them could be identified and punished.<sup>143</sup>

### *The Response*

However one evaluated the trial’s outcome, one thing was certain: it directed a bright light on the Third Reich. Dredging up multitudes of documents for public scrutiny and stringing out detailed testimony regarding the actions and beliefs of key military and civilian leaders, it did not disappoint the U.S. Information Control Division officials who in early November 1945 had suggested that the trial would give the German people an opportunity “to learn the truth about the character, policies and consequences of German Nazism and militarism.” With the “true history” of the Third Reich before them, MG authorities hoped the Germans would “identify themselves with the prosecution.”<sup>144</sup>

U.S. officials did not leave this effect entirely to chance, however. “It was felt essential to make it difficult for German ears and eyes not to hear and see the convincing evidence presented to them,” Clay later explained. Military government radio broadcasts and publications regularly covered the trial, as did the American-licensed German media sources.<sup>145</sup> To facilitate the desired coverage, the Americans allowed German reporters into the courtroom, made trial documents available to them, and provided most newspapers and magazines with special additional paper allotments.<sup>146</sup> They also monitored the German newspapers. Thus a January 1946 “scrutiny report” on the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* noted that the paper had devoted roughly 15 percent of each issue during the past month to the trial, with “good coverage and prominent, lively headings.”<sup>147</sup> A March issue of the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* was criticized for assigning a meager 6 percent of its space to Nuremberg,<sup>148</sup> while a May report complimented the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* on a recent Nuremberg page,

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Quoted in Hartenian, *Controlling Information in U.S. Occupied Germany*, 134.

<sup>145</sup> Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 281.

<sup>146</sup> Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn in Heidelberg und Mannheim*, 117.

<sup>147</sup> Joseph Dunner to Mr. Luther Conant, 29 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Information Control Division [hereafter ICD], Box 221, F: *Stuttgarter Zeitung*.

<sup>148</sup> HJW to Arthur Eggleston, Chief, Press Control Branch, 30 Mar [46], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 220, F: *Schwäbische Donau Zeitung*.

commenting that the headline “The German way to war” gave an indication of its contents. The Heidelberg paper, the reviewer added, had earlier been one of the worst papers for trial reporting but had since become one of the best, a development he attributed to advice received from MG press control officers.<sup>149</sup>

For nearly a year, then, Württemberg-Baden’s major papers closely followed the proceedings. Editors interspersed articles describing the trial and first person reactions to the process with inch upon inch of reprinted prosecutorial accusations and verbatim testimony from witnesses and defendants detailing Wehrmacht operations and high level government discussions. Headlines proclaimed “General Staff for War Already in 1923,” “Keitel Confirms the Systematic Preparation for War,” “Shootings and Political Measures: Jodl Claims to be an Honorable Man,” and “The Generals are Responsible.”<sup>150</sup> Ultimately, press coverage all over Germany revealed a Wehrmacht quite different from the nobly heroic fighting forces lauded by the Nazis and celebrated by many Germans right up until the end of the war. In this version, German soldiers became exploiters, plunderers, issuers of criminal orders, and murderers. Germany’s recent struggle for existence (*Schicksalskampf*), moreover, became a war of aggression systematically planned and secretly prepared for—even as Hitler lectured the world on his desire for peace—and an internationally recognized crime that Germany’s generals had endorsed and enabled.<sup>151</sup> Denouncing the defendants, the licensed press also sometimes explicitly underscored the value of the trial. Analyzing the contents of the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* and *Mannheimer Morgen*, historian Birgit Pape notes that both stressed the fundamental importance of the proceedings for an appraisal of Germany’s past, as well as for Germany’s future, and generally viewed the Allied approach as justifiable (*berechtigt*). For both papers, Pape concludes, the deeper meaning of Nuremberg lay in hopes for a new legal order in the world.<sup>152</sup>

Not surprisingly, the trial provoked indignation, anger, excuses, and arguments from former officers that effectively echoed the major claims of Nuremberg’s military defendants. Germany’s soldiers had sworn an

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<sup>149</sup> JH to Arthur Eggleston, Chief, Press Control Branch, 22 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 220, F: Rhein Neckar Zeitung.

<sup>150</sup> Kurt Fried, “Auf dem Nürnberger Prozess,” *SDZ*, 2 Feb 46; Walter Schwerdtfeger, “Ist’s auch gleich Wahnsinn, hat es doch Methode,” *BNN*, 22 Mar 46; “Die Angeklagten haben gesprochen,” *SZ*, 6 Jul 46; “Generalstab schon 1923 für Krieg,” *SDZ*, 9 Jan 46; “Keitel bestätigt die planmässige Vorbereitung des Krieges,” *SZ*, 6 Apr 46; “Erschiessungen und politische Massnahmen,” *SDZ*, 12 Jun 46; “Die Generalität ist verantwortlich,” *BNN*, 31 Aug 46.

<sup>151</sup> Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht,” 1060-1067.

<sup>152</sup> Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn*, 117.

oath of loyalty to Hitler, were bound to obedience, and had thus simply done their duty. They had not fomented war, but rather warned against it. They had not endorsed the regime's agenda, participated in its crimes, or been capable of escaping the coercion of the Gestapo to extract themselves from service to criminals. Furthermore, they believed the trial itself was an outrage, introducing new legal principles for the sole purpose of handing out punishment to former enemies. Ongoing war crimes trials in American military courts, proceedings in German venues and foreign countries, and several high profile trials later conducted at Nuremberg by the Americans, all of which convicted additional high-ranking officers of war crimes, only amplified the tendency of Germany's former military elites to see themselves as unjustly accused, unfairly persecuted, and wrongly defamed. Even as they questioned the legitimacy of the legal proceedings, however, they would also increasingly latch onto the IMT's acquittal of the "General Staff and High Command" as evidence of their innocent and honorable behavior, conveniently overlooking or ignoring the court's explicit condemnation of the Wehrmacht's conduct.<sup>153</sup>

Many other Germans were far less aroused by the proceedings. Contemporary observers, in fact, pointed to a wide range of responses. Writing with typically bold strokes, *New York Times* reporter Raymond Daniell suggested in December 1945 that German reporters attending the trial "might as well be reporting a second-rate boxing bout for the music page for all the reader interest they are getting." In Frankfurt, he continued, it was "very noticeable that in restaurants newspaper readers fold their papers so that they can ignore the unpleasant reminders from Nuremberg."<sup>154</sup> Many Germans were just too obsessed with their own needs to ponder the Nuremberg process, a German writer suggested in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* in February 1946. In addition to these individuals, she divided her disinterested fellow citizens into three main groups: those who blithely assumed the criminals would be properly punished—just as they had always assumed Hitler would do the right thing; those who argued that they could not believe anything any more after being so badly lied to and let down; and those who complained that they had heard enough about atrocities and crimes—they had not known their leaders were such robbers and murderers and, even if they had, they could not have done anything about it. But she also pointed to those who were more engaged: the indignant military cadres and a large group of people who objected to a long, highly publicized trial that would allow the defendants to strut before the

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<sup>153</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 28-29; Meyer, "Soldaten ohne Arme," 703-709.

<sup>154</sup> Raymond Daniell, "'So What?' Say the Germans of Nuremberg," *NYTM*, 2 Dec 45.

public once again, preferring that the men instead be quickly disposed of by shipping them off to Siberia for forced labor, hanging them from lampposts, or making them do reconstruction work under labor camp conditions. Only a very small set of persons comprehended the true significance of the proceedings the writer asserted, adding that “a political system of such danger must be brought before the eyes of all the world in all its details, from the story of its founding to its downfall, as a deterrent for all political and military criminals of the future.”<sup>155</sup>

Not all Germans ignored the moral component of the proceedings, but they also did not always draw conclusions welcomed by the Americans. Some thought Nuremberg might atone for the sins of all of the German people in the eyes of the world.<sup>156</sup> Observers also identified a strong tendency among Germans to happily blame their Nazi leaders for their country’s recent conduct. The attitude of many, wrote Daniell, was “very much like that of the legendary Russian family in a troika pursued by wolves who tossed their babies out behind them to appease the hungry animals.”<sup>157</sup> One German who was a teenager in Bavaria at the time later recalled that once the war was over everyone in his village “wanted to believe that no one had been for it. And no one had admitted they knew about the Holocaust, or at least not its magnitude.” As a result, the trial had been “received with relief.” “Here they sat in the dock—fat Hermann Goering, rigid General Keitel, crazy Rudolf Hess, and all the others. *They* had done it. Good riddance. *We* are innocent. Let’s go on with our lives.”<sup>158</sup>

If interest in the proceedings varied, the verdicts caused a stir. “Wherever a radio could be found, one could see a group of people gathered around listening in tense silence. . . . Many downtown administration offices stopped work completely,” wrote Herbert van der Berg from Ulm.<sup>159</sup> Heidelberg’s *Rhein-Neckar-*

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<sup>155</sup> Erika Neuhäuser, “Das deutsche Volk und Nürnberg,” *SZ*, 2 Feb 46.

<sup>156</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 256-257.

<sup>157</sup> Daniell, “‘So What?’ Say the Germans of Nuremberg.” See also Bach, *America’s Germany*, 256.

<sup>158</sup> Bernat Rosner and Frederic C. Tubach, *An Uncommon Friendship: From Opposite Sides of the Holocaust* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 169-170.

<sup>159</sup> Herbert van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 1 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3].

*Zeitung* put out a special edition and “all over town people could be seen reading as they went along,” reported a local MG officer. “Here and there groups formed to discuss the pros and cons.”<sup>160</sup>

While many Germans concluded that the judgments were generally fair, they also sometimes disagreed strongly with individual decisions. Tasked with compiling German opinions, MG officials identified an array of perspectives. Some of those interviewed appraised the operations of the tribunal as a whole. “The most important thing established at Nuremberg is that wars are to be outlawed in the future,” a Karlsruhe streetcar conductor asserted, expressing a view shared by others as well. One attorney saw an international court that made aggressive war illegal as “a sign of hope for world peace.” But other Germans complained that the Allies were hardly in a position to pass judgment. “I was a soldier myself,” said one Karlsruhe businessman. “All our acts are termed crimes, but what the partisans did in the East and at other fronts, no mention is made of this at Nuremberg nor in the press.” “But how about the air attacks on open German cities, where hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children lost their lives?” asked a “craftsman” who also cited the rapes and robberies that had occurred when French soldiers occupied Karlsruhe. “If one wants to judge someone else, one has to be clean himself.”<sup>161</sup>

Meanwhile, a forum in Ulm sponsored by Radio Stuttgart and attended by more than 1,000 people degenerated into what van der Berg termed a “circus.” Several members of the crowd first “jeered” a featured speaker who condemned Jodl and Keitel for having prolonged a lost war and Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop for plotting the use of force to regain lost German territories. And many later loudly cheered lord mayor Scholl when, in a “mildly worded” speech, he suggested that judges from neutral countries should also have participated. When the floor opened for discussion, a local member of the KPD stated that he had been jailed in both the “second Reich” and Third Reich and expected to be jailed in the “Fourth Reich.” “Truth is always on the side of the victorious nations, they are the ones who can do no wrong,” he argued. “In my opinion,” he added, “the war mongers, such as Churchill and Truman are equally as guilty and should have just as ruthlessly been punished as our men.” The crowd, van der Berg reported, had immediately “burst out in loud cheering, in agreement with what had been said” and the forum chairman was forced to stop the man from

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<sup>160</sup> Intelligence Report No. 336, 7 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

<sup>161</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, 5 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 87, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Karlsruhe 1946 [2]. (Emphasis in original.)

speaking. A later commentator questioned Allied use of German POWs as “slave laborers,” which provoked disruptive “abusive cat calls” from the crowd, as did other similar questions. “One thing is certain,” wrote van der Berg in conclusion, “the whole affair carried a pro Nazi tune, and when leaving the forum one definitely had the impression that Ulm is still a Nazi Hochburg [stronghold].”<sup>162</sup>

Opinions regarding the specific verdicts were also mixed. The news that the tribunal had not declared the general staff to be a criminal organization reportedly received a “joyful reception of welcome in Ulm and Heidenheim.”<sup>163</sup> The mayor of Pforzheim viewed this decision “with suspicion” given the convictions of Jodl and Keitel, but expressed the opinion “that to have termed the General staff guilty collectively would have been wrong.” One Karlsruhe merchant referenced the general staff verdict with the comment “I consider all the militarists criminal,” while a Karlsruhe “Communist civic official” also openly disagreed with the judgment. “He claims that this is decisive in the attempt to stamp out militarism and imperialism,” reported a local MG official.<sup>164</sup> American officials in Stuttgart similarly indicated that the general staff decision was “under attack, mostly from the extreme left.”<sup>165</sup>

A common reaction to the Raeder and Dönitz verdicts, meanwhile, was the charge that they were too lenient. Many in Heidelberg suggested the sentences should have been reversed. The Keitel and Jodl judgments were still more controversial. Widespread was the view that the two had been unfairly sentenced, punished simply for doing their duty for the Fatherland, although others suggested that the men were receiving their due.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 29 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3]. (Emphasis in original.) It is worth noting that on at least one occasion Kurt Fried, *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* editor and Ulm’s cultural advisor, also apparently referred to the fact that Ulm was still called a “Nazi Hochburg.” Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 8 Oct 46, *ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 1 Oct 46, *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, 5 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 87, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Karlsruhe 1946 [2].

<sup>165</sup> Intelligence Report No. 992, 3 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [4].

<sup>166</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, 5 Oct 46, NA, RG 260; Weekly Report on German Reactions and Opinions, 8 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2]; Intelligence Report No. 336, 7 Oct 46, *ibid.*; Intelligence Report No. 992, 3 Oct 46, NA, RG 260.



Most interesting was criticism variously articulated by both those who approved the Jodl and Keitel verdicts and those who condemned them. The men, it was argued, should at least be shot rather than hanged. Two “outstanding scientists and university professors” from Karlsruhe, a local MG officer explained, “agree in the contention that the two ‘soldiers’ sentenced to death should be granted a soldiers death.”<sup>167</sup> A local member of the SPD—“an ex-soldier who lost an arm”—considered the Keitel and Jodl sentences to be “awfully hard,” wrote an American in Stuttgart. “He believes they obeyed orders, they deserve an honorable death, if to be given capital punishment.”<sup>168</sup> Heidelberg officials reported to the local MG office that even many among the working classes, especially veterans, thought that Jodl and Keitel deserved to be shot, as was appropriate for soldiers.<sup>169</sup> Here, too, a baroness with two commanding generals as brothers had voiced indignation that men such as Jodl and Keitel were treated the same as the Nazi propagandist Julius Streicher. “The soldiers should at least have been sentenced to die by firing squad.”<sup>170</sup> Conversely, those quite content to let the men hang reportedly included “socialists, communists and anti-Fascists” in Mannheim who had been persecuted by the Nazis; the SPD secretary in Heidelberg who argued that because “they had not acted chivalrously they did not serve a soldier’s death”; and a former general staff officer from Stuttgart who believed that the two “did not deserve another death.” To Karl Grathwohl, DVP Chairman in Heidelberg, the lesson to be derived from this line of argument was clear. Reported a local MG official, “The majority of Germans are, as he believes, in favour of a soldiers death for the condemned generals; this attitude shows how little the people have forsworn militarism.”<sup>171</sup>

### *Germans and the Wehrmacht*

In their various initiatives to reduce the influence of militarists in German society, the Americans were not ready to label all soldiers or even all officers “militarists.” But they did want to see a change in German

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<sup>167</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, 5 Oct 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>168</sup> Intelligence Report No. 992, 3 Oct 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>169</sup> Wochenbericht für die Zeit vom 30 Sept. bis 5.Okt.1946, Stadtarchiv Heidelberg [StAH] AA 239 No. 19.

<sup>170</sup> Intelligence Report No. 336, 7 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

<sup>171</sup> Hugh H. Weil to Information Control Division, 23 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [4].

attitudes toward their own soldiers. The military profession and military leaders should no longer be elevated and glorified. This meant ending instinctive deference to highly-decorated military uniforms, branding the Wehrmacht's top leaders war-mongers and criminals, and, through these and other measures, reducing the standing of soldiers in German society and the automatic respect they frequently demanded and elicited. German reactions to the Nuremberg trial, however, hint at the complexity of the relationship between the German people and their now disbanded military in the aftermath of the war. Many Germans readily agreed that militarists should be denied influence in German society. And those responsible for dismissals and hiring made certain choices designed to achieve this goal. But despite both this readiness to condemn militarists and a tendency to link the terms "militarist" and "military" in some fashion, the Germans had diverse, evolving, and sometimes conflicted views regarding the Wehrmacht. And despite often sharing a rhetoric of anti-militarism with the Americans, the opinions the Germans expressed concerning their own soldiers were not always quite what their occupiers wished they were.

Recently, historian Frank Biess has shed new light on German views of their country's recent military past and on the relationship between the Germans and their veterans by considering how communal narratives regarding returning soldiers evolved in the immediate postwar years. During the first year or two of occupation, he argues, public discussions of returning POWs differentiated between individual soldiers in terms of guilt and responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism and Germany's defeat, leaving room for perpetrators, bystanders, and collaborators, as well as victims. Yet this trend rather rapidly gave way to "a ubiquitous discourse of German victimization," according to which former POWs were innocent victims whose present suffering bore no relationship to any past German aggression or crimes. Moreover, by the mid 1950s, he concludes, soldiers returning from Soviet captivity had evolved into the protagonists of "redemptive narratives," their allegiance to "transhistorical and essentially German values" such as "Christianity, *Heimat*, [and] German culture" having enabled them to survive Soviet totalitarianism, with these values now "to serve as moral guideposts for the process of postwar reconstruction."<sup>172</sup>

Analyzing German newspapers from the immediate postwar period, historian Jörg Echternkamp has reached a complementary conclusion. Coverage of war crimes trials illuminated the criminal activities of the Wehrmacht as well as its close ties to the National Socialist regime, he notes. The war itself, moreover, was

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<sup>172</sup> Biess, *Homecomings*, 46-60, 102-105.

unveiled as a criminal war of aggression with the Wehrmacht generals backing and controlling Germany's rearmament behind the scenes. Yet even as criticism rained down upon the nation's former military elites for these failings and their destructive and unnecessarily deadly prolongation of the war, at least some Germans resisted condemning German military tradition out of hand, lamenting that the Wehrmacht's relationship with National Socialism had eroded the honor of the German military and thus marked a regrettable end to Germany's glorious military past. Some commentators also stressed that the average German soldier had retained his honor. There was no shame in defeat, they maintained, treating the character and purpose of the German soldier during the recent war as comparable to that of a long line of honorable soldiers. The fact that Germany's "true soldiers," who comprised a majority, had failed to act against their despicable Nazi comrades could be explained both by the efficacy of Nazi propaganda and surveillance and by the praiseworthy discipline of Germany's soldiers. They had been apolitical men who obediently did their duty, as expected. The majority of Germany's troops, it could therefore also be argued, had been the badly misused victims of Germany's Nazi leaders and their military toadies.<sup>173</sup>

As Echternkamp shows, Theodor Heuss advanced many of these ideas in the pages of the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, as perhaps might be expected from the minister who also pleaded with MG authorities on behalf of young former officers. This type of thinking was evident in other newspapers in Württemberg-Baden as well. If any military men were to be excluded from exoneration and sympathy, they were NCOs, whom former subordinates denigrated for their arrogance and abusiveness, and high-ranking German officers, criticized for their concessions to Hitler and responsibility for Germany's destruction.<sup>174</sup> But even attacks on Germany's military leaders were not universal or without gradations. Ulm's Kurt Fried was among those who stressed that not all professional officers should be attacked and excluded as militarists. Some were quite ready to settle into civilian life and to help with reconstruction, and they should be welcomed in this arena. Officers, he argued, should be evaluated individually. Those "who as troop officers did their—occasionally in the literal sense of the word, damned—duty might expect that this will be respected." They should be treated differently than those who had mistreated their subordinates, blown up bridges, or committed war crimes. And both groups

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<sup>173</sup> Echternkamp, "Wut auf die Wehrmacht," 1058-1080.

<sup>174</sup> See, for example, "Deutsche Sorgen," *SZ*, 17 Nov 45; Franz Reuter, "Zum Gedächtnis des 20. Juli," *RNZ*, 20 Jul 46; "Waren Sie denn überhaupt bei der Wehrmacht?" *SZ*, 23 Oct 46; Briefe an die Herausgeber, *SZ*, 2 Nov 46; "Die Schuld der Generäle," *SZ*, 7 May 47.

should be handled differently than those who had held influential positions in the higher reaches of the Wehrmacht and thereby “actively supported the lunatic conquest policies of Hitler.”<sup>175</sup>

The ambivalent views of the Germans regarding militarists, their former soldiers, and their country’s military past did not go unnoticed by the Americans in OMGUS’s Information Control Division. In an attempt to determine to what extent “militaristic tendencies” still existed in Germany, they initiated a multi-phase study in mid 1947 that began by asking “leading Germans” in all four zones to draft short definitions of the term “militarism.” This initial exercise, observed the report eventually prepared by information control officials, “revealed a strong tendency on the part of Germans to differentiate between militarism—which was universally condemned—and soldierliness (*Soldatentum*), for which the majority expressed anything from tolerance to admiration.” The Americans pointed out, too, that because “no respondent was inclined to classify himself as a militarist, it was necessary to penetrate beyond surface protestations to determine actual convictions and underlying prejudices.” In interviews subsequently conducted with some 200 church leaders, businessmen, educators, politicians, and other “opinion leaders,” the Americans thus posed a series of questions aimed at digging deeper, asking about the value of military training, the role of militarism in German history, the threat militarism posed to democratic governance, the desirability of reconstituting a German military, the reasons the pacifist movement had failed during the Weimar era, and the most recent demilitarization efforts being carried out by the Germans.<sup>176</sup> The results of these interviews showed clear trends in German thinking regarding militarists and the role of the military in German society, but also brought to light a multiplicity of opinions. Both are worth looking at more closely.

Two-thirds of the respondents, for example, indicated that they could not support any type of military education for Germany’s youth because of the substantial threat of a rebirth of militarism. Most of those interviewed, reported the Americans, seemed to agree with a Bavarian official who had argued “that, even though a period of military training could inculcate the soldierly virtues of love of order, cleanliness, discipline, respect for duty, and a sense of group feeling, he preferred that such characteristics be developed by other, less dangerous, methods.” Other interviewees, however, had endorsed military training as a valuable way of

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<sup>175</sup> Kurt Fried, “To give a chance,” *SDZ*, 19 Apr 47.

<sup>176</sup> Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Information Control Division, Research Branch, “German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany Today As Revealed by the Attitudes of Opinion Leaders,” 12 Feb 48, 2, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 17, F: German Militarism and Re-militarization.

instilling “discipline, order, and respect for society” in children, while some “more violent critics” saw no advantages to such education and protested that it fostered blind obedience. Opinion leaders in Berlin were most likely to support this type of training, the report suggested, while those in south Germany, especially Bavaria, “were more inclined to condemn all soldierly training as Prussian militarism.”<sup>177</sup>

Appraisals of Germany’s past were similarly varied, the Americans observed. The idea “that German history had been dominated by a spirit of militarism and controlled by militaristic rulers” was endorsed by “leaders of all major political parties and by outstanding educators, journalists, and public officials.” But there were differences of emphasis. If KPD and SPD respondents often “regarded the ‘industrial barons of the Rhineland and Silesia in the first ranks’ of war agitators,” the more typical response, particularly from Bavarians, was to stress the “specifically Prussian nature of militarism.” Sometimes voicing nuanced opinions concerning historical figures such as Frederick the Great, Bismarck, and Wilhelm II, the interviewees regarded Hitler as “the arch militarist – ‘the prototype of the most dangerous, chauvinistic militarism’ and the ‘absolute exponent and final culmination of a development’ in this direction.” Beyond this, the Americans reported, war guilt was “charged chiefly to the nazis and the general staff,” although many agreed with the remark of one person who had contended “that ‘differentiation among the chief militarists is impossible; National Socialists, generals, and industrialists are all children of the militaristic-aggressive-arrogant spirit.’”<sup>178</sup>

Asked whether “former military figures of acceptable reputation could be useful to a new German democracy,” those interviewed were “divided.” Some drew a distinction between “old-line generals”—with their “chivalry and regard for professional honor”—and “political generals.” Others thought making such distinctions was “unrealistic.” Noted the Americans, “Leftist opinion as a whole was that, even though there might be a theoretical difference, in practice all generals were the same: they were militarists who regarded military aims above every other consideration.” The “majority viewpoint,” the Americans added, was that “even though old-line generals may be less dangerous politically, . . . they and the nazi generals are equally militaristic.” Given these views, moreover, it was “not surprising” that the respondents almost unanimously agreed that “former generals should not be allowed to fill important positions in democratic Germany,” rejecting the men “either because of their war guilt, the threat of renascent militarism to democracy, or because

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

of the narrowness of their military education.” Only a few had called for evaluating each man individually. One Bavarian official had asserted, moreover, that if the German people were asked to choose between a popular general and a civilian in a presidential election, they would elect the general. But he had also suggested that “because of fear of the occupying powers . . . no party would dare nominate a general now.”<sup>179</sup>

Finally, nearly all of the opinion leaders had contended that a country could “maintain its honor without an army.” On the other hand, more than half thought that a country “probably could not long maintain its independence without an army.” They wished it were otherwise, but believed that the current international situation made “some sort of German military force essential to national existence”—though it would need to be “democratic and non-aggressive in character.” The Americans also reported, however, that a “substantial minority” strongly opposed reconstituting a German military “on the grounds of both fear and hope: fear of returning power to the hands of the former ruling class and fear of a revival of German militarism and the consequent danger to democracy and peace; hope that an international police force . . . will render such national armies unnecessary and obsolete.”<sup>180</sup>

In assessing the results of these and other findings, the Americans saw much to praise. First and foremost, they concluded that “among German leaders militarism, i.e., the enthusiastic dedication to the principle of armed force in settling international disputes, is at a low ebb.” Conceding that some respondents may have been reacting to the fact that militarism was currently “unpopular,” they argued that the German answers nevertheless had shown that most “sincerely reject[ed] a philosophy which glorifies a martial spirit.” However, the Americans also maintained that the unanimous opposition to “what might be called the excesses of militarism” did not necessarily signify anything, since most people were always against “what is regarded as the excesses of a system.”<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 5-7.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 7-8.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 11. The differing military government and German perspectives highlighted in the MG report were also made manifest in contacts on the grass roots level. A June 1946 ICD report from Stuttgart, for example, included descriptions of interviews conducted with the mayors of two small communities nearby. One began with the following anecdote: “Since his office was closed for the holiday, the mayor of Neckartailfingen was interviewed in his home. On the walls behind the desk there were on the left: a picture of the crucifixion, on the right: a document stating ‘In the name of the Führer and Supreme Commander I bestow upon you the Iron Cross First Class.’ On the opposite wall, a picture of two young men in uniform, the mayor’s sons. The mayor did not quite understand interrogator’s surprise at seeing the wall decorations. He told with great pride that the son who had received the Iron Cross First Class always had been a ‘Draufgänger’ [go-getter], always in the thick of every fight. The mayor also described himself as a peace-loving anti-Nazi.” The mayor of another small community—a Stuttgart Institute of Technology student and former lieutenant still in his 20s—had “decidedly better taste”

Looking more closely, then, they reported approvingly that about half of those interviewed seemed cognizant of the fact “that to give the devil one finger means to give him the whole arm, and for that reason they reject military activities in post-Hitler Germany altogether” and “appear[ed] to be aware of the complex nature of the problem,” with an “anti-militaristic approach” that was “both intelligent and enthusiastic.” But the views of the remainder led the Americans to suggest that militarism was “far from dead in Germany.” They explained:

Military education, military training, a new army, though rarely advocated without reservation, are not infrequently advocated as the lesser evil, the greater evil being domestic unrest, national defenselessness, the threat from the East. And it must be remembered that in the 1930’s the conviction that Hitler and rearmament were the lesser evil was more important in bringing the nazis to power than the relatively small number of political fanatics.

There is another reason emerging from the interviews why even those who—no doubt with sincerity—profess distaste for the excesses of militarism would be a poor bulwark against it. Their approach to militarism is surprisingly limited; they do not see it as a problem tied up with all other social and political, even cultural, questions in Germany. Thus, they reveal that they cannot be regarded as being well equipped to combat an evil whose true nature, i.e., its close interrelation with all other German problems, they fail to recognize.<sup>182</sup>

Still, the Americans concluded that these German leaders appeared to be far less militaristic than the German people in general. A 1946 survey had shown, for instance, that 39 percent of Germans believed that “education of youth *should* be based on military principles,” 31 percent “considered the Treaty of Versailles the source of World War II,” 45 percent thought Germany “should have an army to defend herself against aggression from other European nations,” and just 45 percent believed the Allied decision to deny Germany an army was justified. The Americans thus considered the views of Germany’s leaders to be a very hopeful sign, but also intimated that Germany’s future path would ultimately depend greatly upon what happened in other areas of German life.<sup>183</sup>

Significantly, in reaching these conclusions, the Americans were also taking into account comments they had gleaned from German leaders regarding yet another effort explicitly aimed at demilitarizing German society. In 1946, MG officials had turned over to the Germans primary responsibility for the denazification and demilitarization of German society as they pertained to individuals. And it was here, as much as anywhere, that the German people were showing both the limits of their critique of the Wehrmacht and an unwillingness to

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in wall decorations, the report writer noted, “but there was also the inevitable photograph showing the present mayor in uniform.” William J. Sailer to Chief, Information Control Division, 4 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2].

<sup>182</sup> “German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany,” 10.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

engage the related problem of militarism to the extent that the Americans clearly thought desirable and that the Germans' often ready condemnation of the phenomenon would seem to have warranted.

### **The Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism**

The earliest American and German removal and hiring actions clearly associated militarists and soldiers. This may be explained partly by the fact that some suspected militarists were also obviously Nazis and their perceived militarism thus a mere footnote to a Fragebogen cluttered with incriminating membership dates. Semantic influences and historical stereotypes no doubt encouraged the tendency as well. But the driving force was likely the narrow interpretation supplied by U.S. regulations. Most harried German and American authorities would have had little desire to expand the scope of removals or rejections beyond the circle specified by law. The twists and turns of American denazification efforts, however, soon forced MG officials and their German counterparts to sit down and ponder anew what, exactly, made someone a militarist and who, exactly, should be labeled as such.

By mid autumn 1945, almost no one was happy with the American denazification program. Württemberg-Baden's highest officials were only a few among many Germans who openly criticized its far-reaching effects, condemning as arbitrary and reminiscent of Nazi practices an approach that based removals on organizational memberships and career achievements rather than on individual assessments; stressing that the host of dismissals was incapacitating the German economy and schools, obstructing the ability of German administrations to govern, and hindering the creation of a strong democracy built on the rule of law; and warning of possible unrest and the likely resurgent appeal of National Socialism with so many so negatively affected. Many MG officers were dissatisfied as well and seeking a way to both strengthen Germany's administrative apparatus and avoid impeding—or appearing to impede—the reconstruction of Germany's economy. In time, the Americans decided that turning over responsibility for denazification to the Germans themselves offered the best hope of addressing the most pressing problems.<sup>184</sup>

Accordingly, in late 1945 and early 1946, MG officials worked with German leaders to develop an entirely new approach to denazification and demilitarization that assigned the Germans primary responsibility

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<sup>184</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 272-273, 287-290; Clemens Vollnhals, *Entnazifizierung. Politische Säuberung und Rehabilitierung in den vier Besatzungszonen 1945-1949* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991), 15-16.



for implementation and replaced category-based decisions with individualized appraisals of both Nazis and militarists. The fundamental tone of the undertaking also changed, with an emphasis on removal and exclusion from German society replaced by a focus on evaluation and punishment. The latter now not only targeted those who had committed criminal offenses during the Third Reich, but also those who had supported the Nazi movement without engaging in clearly illegal activities.<sup>185</sup> As one MG official scribbled on his copy of the applicable law during a briefing, the new initiative “fixe[d] individual responsibility and impose[d] punishment in proportion to the individuals responsibility for and participation in Nazi activities.”<sup>186</sup> To the satisfaction of the Germans, moreover, with punishment came also the possibility of rehabilitation and reinstatement.

Procedurally, the new German Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism required every German to fill out a questionnaire which a government-appointed prosecutor subsequently used either to exempt a person from further obligations or to assign the person to one of five categories: major offender, offender (activist, militarist, profiteer), lesser offender (probationer), follower, or exonerated person. A local tribunal (*Spruchkammer*) of non-Nazi Germans then considered each case and made a final classification, subject to appeal. Throughout the process, the onus was upon the accused to disprove the initial charges. Those charged as major offenders and offenders, meanwhile, could only work in positions of “ordinary labor” until the tribunal decided their cases.<sup>187</sup>

In handing out verdicts, the tribunals also assessed penalties within a framework specified by the law. Thus, major offenders had to serve two to 10 years in a labor camp, lost their property permanently, forfeited voting and party membership rights, were denied all public pension claims, faced possible housing restrictions, and were barred from participating in many business or professional activities for at least 10 years. Offenders faced similar penalties, though they could be sentenced only to a maximum of five years in a labor camp (or, alternatively, were conscripted for community work), might have only part of their property confiscated, and

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<sup>185</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 305-306.

<sup>186</sup> “Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism of 5 March 1946,” n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 302, F: Law 5 March 1946.

<sup>187</sup> Office of Military Government for Germany, *Military Government Regulations, Title 24, Important German Legislation*, 1 May 47, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 28, F: C-38 Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis and Militarists [etc]. Exempted from this provision were the owners and employees of small businesses, retail shops, farms, and the like that employed fewer than 10 people and also those in the independent professions who did not employ more than two assistants. “Ordinary labor” meant “any activity in skilled or unskilled labor, or as an employee in a position of subordinate importance, in which the employee is not active in any way in a supervisory, managerial, or organizing capacity, and does not participate in any way in hiring or discharging personnel or in any other personnel policies.”

were kept from business and professional activities for up to five years. Lesser offenders were subject to two or three years of probation, during which time their work options were severely restricted, they were required to make payments to a reparations fund, and they might receive reduced pensions. Followers had to pay fines and faced potential employment penalties.<sup>188</sup>

In general, the substance and evolution of the negotiations that produced this new system are outside the scope of this study and are covered more than adequately elsewhere.<sup>189</sup> The elements of the legislation aimed explicitly at militarists have received much less attention, however. Hardly emerging as an exceptionally divisive point in either internal conversations or American-German discussions, the question of who should be targeted in this respect was nevertheless also not one that had an obvious or easy answer. What is more, the new law ultimately introduced a transformed definition of what constituted a “militarist,” theoretically increasing the number of individuals who might be charged with this offense and evidencing a variety of preconceptions, concerns, resentments, and, perhaps, a new understanding of militarism that explicitly took note of its most recent manifestation in the Third Reich. The deliberations that produced this transformation and the ways in which the new definition was applied therefore warrant more careful analysis.

### *Drafting the Law*

Responding to the widespread desire for change in the American approach to denazification, Clay in late November 1945 formed a Denazification Policy Board (DPB) and tasked it with evaluating the status of denazification in the U.S. Zone and devising a new program that would give the Germans “as much responsibility as possible.”<sup>190</sup> The Germans, meanwhile, were moving forward independently. American officials never authorized a denazification plan the Bavarians drafted of their own accord, but, in early December, Clay encouraged the minister-presidents of the three American-occupied German states (Bavaria, Hesse, and Württemberg-Baden) to prepare a joint plan under the auspices of the *Länderrat*, a council charged

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Niethammer’s *Entnazifizierung in Bayern* remains the most detailed, dependable treatment of this topic.

<sup>190</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 273-274; Philip Elman, Memorandum for Mr. Fahy, 5 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Denazification Policy Board. The DPB included Clay’s Political, Financial, Economic, and Legal Advisors, as well as the directors of the Office of Intelligence and the Internal Affairs and Communications Division.

with helping to coordinate policy and activities in the U.S. Zone. In response, the Germans formed an ad hoc committee and agreed to use the Bavarian draft plan as a starting point for discussion.<sup>191</sup>

Much like existing American regulations, the Bavarian document took a minimalist approach to the issue of militarists. Categorizing political offenders into four categories ranging from “criminally or otherwise politically especially severely incriminated” to “follower,” the draft worried primarily about National Socialist attitudes, memberships, and leadership functions in doing so. The only exception came in prescribing an automatic initial assignment to the “politically severely incriminated” category for general staff officers active after 1935 and for “members of the Wehrmacht and *Reichsarbeitsdienst* [RAD, or Reich Labor Service], regardless of rank, who misused the power of their position (*Dienstgewalt*) to obtain personal benefits or to bully their subordinates.” Thus, aside from general staff officers and any militarists dressed in Nazi uniforms, the Bavarians considered only aberrant soldiers to be politically suspect.<sup>192</sup>

Württemberg-Baden’s ministerial directors were mostly satisfied with this approach. After reviewing the draft, they suggested only that general staff officers should not be automatically assigned to the “politically severely incriminated” category but should instead be classified among those who could also possibly be assigned to the “politically less incriminated” category.<sup>193</sup>

Officials from Hesse, however, arrived at the first ad hoc committee meeting in late December 1945 with a very different proposal. Emphasizing that the totality of a person’s actual conduct, not formal memberships, should determine a person’s “political responsibility,” Hesse’s draft law described five types of particularly responsible people. Laying out these categories in general terms, an opening section stated that, among many others, “activists” included those who championed militarism after Germany had surrendered, “profiteers” included those who had benefited from war or rearmament, “political offenders” included those who had promoted the goals of militarism or benefited from them, and “followers” included those who had

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<sup>191</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 260-272, 279-280.

<sup>192</sup> “Gesetz über die Reinigung Bayerns von Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus,” n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 699. The Bavarian plan was first drafted by a KPD minister whose work was subsequently revised by other members of the Bavarian cabinet and Land administration. While the original version had included former professional officers, high-ranking reserve officers, and professional soldiers who had enlisted prior to 1939 in a “less active” category, they had been removed at the suggestion of Bavarian Minister-Präsident Wilhelm Hoegner, a Social Democrat. Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 265, 269n33.

<sup>193</sup> Kurzbericht über die 10.12.1945 Staatsministerium Stuttgart Olgastr. 7 stattgefundene Besprechung der Ministerialdirektoren der Württ. Landesministerien, n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 699.

supported fascism and militarism “simply through membership.” But it also singled out specifically as “militarists” anyone “who sought to orient all of national life toward a policy of military force or who advocated or was responsible for the domination, exploitation, or deportation of foreign peoples.”<sup>194</sup> This definition was consistent with a related explanatory document, in which the Hessians argued that in using the term “militarist,” “the soldierly” (*das Soldatische*) should not be rejected lock, stock, and barrel. Rather, “the ruthless subordination of all of public and private life” to considerations of a policy of force was more important. “The good soldier need not be a militarist,” they maintained, “while, conversely, many a civilian, especially many a banker, absolutely was a militarist.”<sup>195</sup>

Interestingly, the Hessians effectively backtracked from this broad conception in describing those individuals who, according to their plan, would be required to register with German authorities as militarists. Here, they slid into language more familiar to those well-versed in U.S. regulations, citing anyone who had been active in the armed forces holding a rank of colonel or higher; staff officers who had served as members of the general staff after 1935; “anyone who, without being compelled by official duty, was a member of the Organization Todt, with an officer’s rank”; anyone professionally active in the RAD holding an officer’s rank; and all National Socialist Indoctrination Officers. Since these men would be given the opportunity to refute their formal assignment to the “militarist” group before a German tribunal, the Hessians also described for the tribunals the types of individuals who, in particular, should be declared militarists. These included “anyone who treated foreign civilians or POWs in a way contrary to international law in either Germany or the occupied territories”; “anyone responsible for excesses, plundering, or deportations, even in combating resistance movements”; “anyone who, as a commander, was responsible for the destruction of cities and the countryside in Germany after the invasion”; “anyone who ordered that youth under the age of 18 or the *Volkssturm* should be used in combat”; “anyone who ordered the bombing of residences”; and, as the Bavarians had first proposed, Wehrmacht and RAD members who misused their positions.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> “Gesetz über die politische Befreiung von Faschismus und Militarismus (Hessischer Entwurf),” n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 697.

<sup>195</sup> “Begründung,” n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 699. Although the origins of the Hessian draft lay in several business-friendly documents created earlier in the fall, Niethammer also points to the influence of four left-leaning Land officials (three SPD, one KPD) on this particular draft. *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 280-286.

<sup>196</sup> “Gesetz über die politische Befreiung von Faschismus und Militarismus (Hessischer Entwurf).”

Not ready to brand all soldiers militarists, the Hessians thus helpfully attempted to explain what exactly it was that made a person a militarist. Yet the characteristics they described were unusual. American occupation policies had consistently embodied the assumption that there were Nazis who were militarists, but also militarists who were not Nazis, including, especially, German military officers. Similarly, they recognized that Germany had its share of war criminals, but counted only a portion of Germany's officers among them. German officials and journalists frequently acted and argued according to these assumptions as well. The drafters of this proposed law, however, put something quite different forward. Alluding to a rather traditional view of militarism in suggesting that, in general, militarists desired to bring all of German life into line with a policy of military force, they apparently did not believe this type of thinking needed to be considered in determining who, in particular, would be declared militarists. Instead, the principal distinguishing attributes of a militarist were, at best, deviant or morally repugnant forms of soldierly behavior, and, at worst, criminal conduct. The reason for this is difficult to pin down, although the context in which the proposal was formulated may offer some clues.

In recent decades, historians have stressed the degree to which Germany's military leaders bought into the ideological assumptions of the Nazi regime, launching and waging a war that was, in its fundamental essence, a criminal war of racial extermination. With this as a backdrop, historian Manfred Messerschmidt has analyzed the "new face" of German militarism during the Third Reich and cited as its identifying characteristics the "inclusion of the whole '*Volksgemeinschaft*' [people's community] in the war preparations" and "the grounding of the state's authority on two armed 'pillars,' the Nazi Party with its armed forces on one side and the Wehrmacht on the other."<sup>197</sup> The German military thus became a functionary of the Nazi state, with Hitler controlling all military policy. Through these developments, Messerschmidt maintains, older forms of militarism were systematically combined and radicalized to the point of criminality. He goes on to explain that for the militarism of the Nazi state and its Wehrmacht the conduct of the war in southeastern and eastern Europe became symptomatic. An existing German tendency to discount international law in the interests of waging a successful war reached a new level of conviction; laws were now subordinate to Hitler's desires. The territories controlled by the Wehrmacht became the focal point of a war of worldviews where law did not exist and "militarism manifested itself as a criminal phenomenon." The war here was distinguished by Germany's

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<sup>197</sup> Wette, "Für eine Belebung der Militarismusforschung," 22.

occupation methods, with distorted views of the enemy and the power of Hitler's orders making systematic murder and mass destruction fundamental—and justifiable—war goals. This new German militarism, Messerschmidt observes, “held moral concepts, traditions, and legal convictions to be disposable based on decisions of the Führer.”<sup>198</sup>

Notably, already in late 1945, Allied prosecutors at Nuremberg were beginning to make these linkages in unveiling Germany's highest-profile militarists as obedient war criminals. German newspapers, moreover, were not only reporting on the trial, but circulating unvarnished accounts of other court proceedings that painted a dark picture of the recent conduct of Germany's military elites. It seems likely, therefore, that German officials, while hardly positing updated theoretical interpretations of German militarism, were nevertheless perceiving Germany's traditional military leaders and their actions in a new way and translating those insights into concrete regulations. The Nuremberg proceedings also offered German leaders a clear picture of Allied complaints against the German General Staff and High Command, something they perhaps believed they could not ignore in crafting a new law targeting militarists. Then, too, as one later observer suggested, the “militarist” category of the law offered the Germans a means of corraling for examination allegedly apolitical military men for a political accounting, “as many soldiers explicitly or implicitly filled with national socialist ideas were militarists.”<sup>199</sup>

Significantly, however, by classifying as militarists only those who had held responsible military or political positions and/or whose activities were deviant or criminal, the Hessians also effectively safeguarded the greater part of the once fully mobilized *Volksgemeinschaft* from charges of militarism. Whether intentionally or not, their legislation spared good soldiers from censure and ignored many individuals who may have contributed to the persistent seeping of military practices and values into German society and culture and to the nation's steady push toward war before 1939, not to mention the crowds, both literal and figurative, who had wildly cheered the Wehrmacht's early prowess in World War II.

After considering both this Hessian draft and the Bavarian document, the Länderrat's ad hoc committee chose the former as the basis for further talks. A revised version of the draft law that emerged from

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<sup>198</sup> Messerschmitt, “Das neue Gesicht des Militarismus in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus,” 82-93.

<sup>199</sup> Intelligence Report No. 187, 18 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 86, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

these initial conversations, with its provisions on militarists intact, was also later discussed at a meeting of the ministers of justice of the U.S. Zone. On this occasion, participating American officials also obtained a copy, which they circulated widely within OMGUS during the days that followed.<sup>200</sup>

In the meantime, German officials continued to debate the merits of the revised draft. In Württemberg-Baden, its provisions generated an assortment of external and internal comments. Among the letters received by state officials, for instance, was one sent from Landkreis Pforzheim by former Major General Erich von Falkenhayn.<sup>201</sup> Referencing a recent newspaper article on the law, the general tried to refute what he perceived as attacks upon his profession. If, in using the term “militarists,” one meant men who wanted to subdue other people using force of arms and to rule internally with the sword, then one would need to look somewhere other than the German officer corps to find them, the general argued. Germany’s officers had done their duty and focused on winning the war as deliberately apolitical instruments of the legally established government. It was “unjust” and “not democratic” to defame and punish them as militarists for this. Even more unjust was singling out a group of officers according to their rank or professional activities. Either all professional soldiers were militarists—including Allied soldiers—or this was limited to exceptional individual cases. One should expect, Falkenhayn suggested in conclusion, that German officials would show more understanding for the men who had done nothing more than do their duty for the Fatherland and their fellow Germans during the past two wars.<sup>202</sup> A retired colonel in Mannheim likewise fumed with frustration at the treatment of loyal professional soldiers. Complaining that there was no obvious definition for the term militarist—he cited a variety he had come across—he sought to deflect criticism by contending that reserve soldiers had also been involved in war planning and activities and that their ranks probably included a greater number of “virulent militarists.”<sup>203</sup>

By including colonels in its collection of presumed militarists, the proposed law contained a definition of “militarists” that was even broader than that subscribed to by American and British soldiers, protested yet another letter writer, who then argued vigorously for excluding most Wehrmacht *Beamten* (civilian officials)

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<sup>200</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 291-294. The Americans mistakenly identified the document as the product of the justice ministers themselves.

<sup>201</sup> This General von Falkenhayn should not be confused with the General Erich von Falkenhayn who served as chief of the German General Staff during World War I and died in 1922.

<sup>202</sup> Erich von Falkenhayn to Herr Ministerpräsident des Landes Württemberg-Baden, 26 Dec 45, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 698.

<sup>203</sup> E. P. to Herr Ministerpräsident, 2 Feb 46, *ibid.*

and technical experts from the pool. His own proposed categories intimated that the key defining criteria should be whether a person had helped to plan for the war, had held political or military authority and responsibility for issuing orders, and/or had been involved in criminal activities, whether in the form of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or contributions to Germany's destruction. With this as a standard, he was quite ready to consign German generals, general staff officers, and high-ranking Wehrmacht *Beamten*, doctors, and judges to the ranks of the militarists.<sup>204</sup>

On the other hand, several comments from official circles stressed ideas rather than professional groupings. A memo committed to Württemberg-Baden's files argued that the definition of militarist should not be expanded beyond the bounds of existing Allied declarations. In recent months, the writer contended, the Americans and British had pointed out that it was not possible to penalize, persecute, or describe as criminal all or even certain groups of professional soldiers due only to their occupation, rank, or specific function. "Military" did not equal "militarist," he stressed. Teachers, editors, politicians, and others could, on the basis of their work, be identified as militarists. In point of fact, only two types of people could logically be described as militarists, he argued. They included "anyone who preaches the use of military force (war) solely for the purpose of conquest or who orders the deployment of the military power of a state for this goal" or "anyone who carries over to the whole state, or parts of the state—for example, the civil administration or economic life or political life—manners [*Formen*] and institutions specific to and necessary only for military service." In both cases, he added, it was a matter not of military, but of political activities.<sup>205</sup> A high-level government advisor likewise questioned the "schematic" categorizing of colonels and staff officers, citing another view of militarists that saw as the heart of the matter whether someone believed that military force should be regarded as the only meaningful factor in relations between nations.<sup>206</sup>

Württemberg-Baden's principal decision makers, however, did little to alter the existing draft's language. When the Länderrat's ad hoc committee reassembled in early January, the Land's representative

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<sup>204</sup> Dr. Fritz N. to Herr Ministerpräsident des Landes Württemberg-Baden, 2 Jan 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 690.

<sup>205</sup> "Stellungnahme zum bayrischen Entwurf eines Gesetzes über die Reinigung des öffentlichen Lebens von Nationalsozialisten und Militaristen," n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 699. The title of this memo seems either to be wrong or to be referring to a different draft than the Bavarian document originally discussed by the Länderrat's ad hoc committee. Its analysis of the groups who were to register as militarists cites categories identical to those found in the draft law that emerged from the first meeting of the committee.

<sup>206</sup> Fritz Adae, "Denkschrift zum Gesetzentwurf über die Säuberung Württembergs und Badens (Nord-Württemberg und Nord-Baden) vom Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus," 4 Jan 46, *ibid.*



brought along a revamped draft law that nevertheless contained few changes in its stipulations regarding militarists. It merely dropped colonels from consideration, with the relevant phrase now covering only “anyone who was active in the Wehrmacht in the rank of a general after 1935 or in a superior rank.”<sup>207</sup>

Although the committee’s subsequent discussion of new draft laws developed by each of the three states resulted in yet another draft, the Germans largely stuck to the original Hessian ideas regarding militarists. The second clause in the opening remarks was amended to condemn not only anyone who advocated or was responsible for the domination of foreign nations, but also those “who for this purpose promoted armament.” References to persons who had deployed juveniles and the *Volkssturm* were deleted, while those censured for abusing their authority now also included members of the Organization Todt and the Transport Group Speer. The German officials also adopted the Württemberg-Baden revisions regarding general officers and went on to modify the clause covering the general staff, narrowing the pool of those affected to encompass only “staff officers who after the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 1938 as general staff officers belonged to the leading staff of the armed forces (Wehrmacht)” or the headquarters of the Wehrmacht, army, air force, or navy.<sup>208</sup>

Even as the Germans were refining their stance, OMGUS officials were criticizing the earlier draft on multiple counts. Only a few people could be accused of having attempted to bring all of German national life into line with a policy of military force, argued one civilian official. The definition therefore undercut U.S. policy goals.<sup>209</sup> A militarist was not necessarily “anyone ‘responsible for dominating, exploiting, and deporting other peoples,’” the chief of the Disarmament Branch of OMGUS’s Armed Forces Division protested and suggested that the references to colonels and higher-ranking officers and to any staff officers who were

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<sup>207</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 294-296; “Entwurf. Württemberg-Baden Gesetz zur politischen Befreiung von Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus,” n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 697; “Richtlinien,” n.d., HStA EA 1/920 Bü 699.

<sup>208</sup> “Translation of proposed denazification plan, submitted by Minister Presidents of the three Lands of the U.S. Zone,” 21 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Legislative History of Denazification Law. Niethammer points out that this early January 1946 draft represented the version the Germans would have adopted if left to their own devices, but that it was not entirely an embodiment of their own ideas. Instead, the draft also represented a reaction to previous U.S. measures, a compromise between the German Lands themselves, and a reflection of their assumptions as to what the Americans would be willing to permit. *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 297. While the criminal overtones of the draft law’s description of a militarist seem to be a German contribution, its detailed presumptive categories clearly echoed existing regulations.

<sup>209</sup> Mr. Schopler to Mr. Elmer, 29 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Legislative History of Denazification Law.

members of the general staff after 1935 did “not adequately cover the field.”<sup>210</sup> The head of the Government Affairs Division of Bavaria’s Land office argued that “the militarist tradition of the German General Staff has been constant since the days of Scharnhorst and Clausewitz” and that he saw “no change of character or intentions . . . as concerns members of the imperial general staff responsible for World War I, the general staff officers guilty of illegal rearmament during the Republic, and the members of the general staff of Hitler who plotted the present war.” He thus believed the law should target anyone who had ever been a member of the general staff.<sup>211</sup> Another official was less certain that “all those holding the rank of colonel or superior rank should be deemed militarists,” although he was ready to defer to the views of the Armed Forces Division on this. He questioned, however, the clauses targeting those who had sent juveniles and the *Volkssturm* into combat, ordered the bombing of residential areas, or bullied their subordinates. The bombings might be “a very nasty thing” and abusive army officers “might be bad actors,” but he was not sure punishing these people was one of the American denazification and demilitarization goals.<sup>212</sup>

On the other hand, Dr. Karl Lowenstein, an émigré law professor working for OMGUS’s Legal Division, believed certain groups were missing, including editors of military journals and “leading members of the officers organizations which consistently propagated militarism even though they did not hold the rank of colonel.”<sup>213</sup> Major Fritz Oppenheimer, another émigré working in the same division who, like Lowenstein, was involved in talks with the Germans regarding the law, questioned their overall approach. Comfortable with the “basic policies” and “general structure” of the German draft, he criticized its amalgamation of “elements of purification, reparation and punishment.” Criminal punishment, he asserted, should be left to regular courts. “The emphasis upon criminal aspects is particularly apparent in the definition of the category of militarist,” he added, “which as it stands is almost equivalent to war criminal.” Conversely, he thought that the Germans gave “insufficient attention” to “those who represent the militarist tradition in the generally accepted use of the term,

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<sup>210</sup> R.W. Yates to Director, Armed Forces Division, 28 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 799, F: Reports (Demilitarization) Demobilization.

<sup>211</sup> Richard J. Jackson to Director, Office of Military Government for Germany, 1 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 16, F: AG 014.13 Relationship of Military Gov’t pers. Thru AG 104.3 Denaz. (Policy) Law of Liberation 45-46.

<sup>212</sup> “Analysis of Proposed Denazification Law Prepared by the Land Ministers of Justice,” n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> Karl Loewenstein to Mr. Fahy, 5 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Legislative History of Denazification Law.

i.e. persons who aim at the primate [*sic*] of the military over the civil power, who subject the entire policy of the country to military considerations, who regard war as a normal and permissible means of foreign policy, and who advocate or glorify military aggression and conquest.”<sup>214</sup>

The American Denazification Policy Board was also busy formulating its own proposal. A draft document circulated in December 1945 by its working committee had contained no clauses specifically aimed at militarists, but the board was still gathering comments.<sup>215</sup> And at least two OMGUS memoranda dealt with the issue directly.

One complained that the United States had done little to date to remove and exclude militarists, observing that the Americans were currently targeting numerous “professional militarists” but taking no similar precautions with respect to “many of the most ardent, active and culpable of the German militarists” who were not in the regular army. To support his interpretation, the writer pointed to past experiences with the Stahlhelm, which had been “created and supported by Hugenberg and other German industrialists and militaristic-minded Germans.” Some Germans had noticed this shortcoming of U.S. policy, he reported, and were arguing that “German militarists are far more dangerous and equally if not more guilty than the Nazis.” The writer thus called for sanctions against and mandatory removals for anyone who had “actively advocated, supported or voluntarily given substantial moral or material support or political assistance of any kind to the employment or threat of employment of aggressive war as an instrument of national policy.”<sup>216</sup>

The second memorandum agreed that militarists should be included in a program that would “exclude [them] from public life and deprive them of any economic base from which they might exercise influence in the community.” But it also underscored what all contemporary German and American discussions relating to the issue, taken as a whole, make patently clear. The question “What is a militarist?” presented almost insurmountable problems. Much like a dog chasing its tail, the writer explained,

The easiest answer is to say that all ex-regular officers of the German Armed Forces and all ex-officials of the many German militaristic societies are ‘militarists’. But when such a broad definition carries with it the severe penalties and disabilities under discussion, doubt arises as to

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<sup>214</sup> F.E. Oppenheimer, Memorandum, 20 Dec 1945, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 452, F: [Unlabeled]. Other commentators did not think the draft went far enough in defining criminal punishments for anyone charged under the law. See, for example, the aforementioned “Analysis of Proposed Denazification Law Prepared by the Land Ministers of Justice.”

<sup>215</sup> “Analysis of Proposed Denazification Law Prepared by the Land Ministers of Justice,” n.d., NA, RG 260.

<sup>216</sup> “Considerations re German Militarists,” n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 452, F: [Unlabeled].

whether in justice, all ex-regular army officers should be subjected thereto. Nor does any distinction based upon rank have very much sense. What distinguishes a 'militarist' is particular attitudes and beliefs and the question is whether all ex-regular officers of the German Armed Forces shared them. There is reluctance in reaching this conclusion, because there is no unanimity of opinion as to the attitudes and beliefs which make up a 'militarist.' This makes it very difficult to provide, as in the case of Nazis, that the penalties and disabilities shall be imposed only after a quasi-judicial hearing and judgment that a particular individual was a 'militarist.' It is difficult to see what the concrete issues at such a trial would be. For the same reason, it would not produce a satisfactory result to throw the problem of definition and individual application into the hands of the German authorities, especially since what we would consider to be manifestations of militarism might in their opinion merely reflect deep feelings of patriotism.

We can say, however, that it is preferable, in order to eliminate militarism, to err on the side of stringency and subject all ex-regular Army officers to the penalties and disabilities proposed for active Nazis. It is feared, however, that to do so would meet with the opposition of the German people as a whole. It would be most unwise to make the military men, as a group, the objects of widespread sympathy. To take the position, however, that no further action is necessary in addition to what has already been done may fail to accomplish the objectives of allied policy.

The writer ultimately called for subjecting all ex-regular officers to "certain sanctions not as severe as those proposed for active Nazis" and prescribed these, as well, for anyone who had been an officer holder or "otherwise active" at any level in "any organization which furthered militaristic doctrines," including such groups as the Stahlhelm, Free Corps, and German National People's Party.<sup>217</sup>

In mid January 1946, the DPB released a final report outlining a proposed denazification program that also addressed militarists. Indicating it would treat these individuals similar to "leading and active Nazis," the board also argued against including an "unduly large group as militarists" by, for instance, requiring all former German officers to register. "The problem of defining a 'militarist,'" it added, "would create issues of fact before the Tribunals of almost insoluble difficulty." Moreover, such an extensive program "would probably not find ready acceptance either among the Germans or by United States public opinion." In an attached illustrative denazification plan, the board left the question of who might presumptively be considered "active militarists" unanswered. Its description of persons tribunals should classify as militarists, however, differed considerably from that found in German documents. Not surprisingly, given trends in American thinking in recent years, OMGUS officials were far less concerned about deportations and plunder, the destruction of German cities, and the abuse of subordinates than about German attitudes toward war and plans for world conquest. Their militarists thus included all persons who "represent the German military tradition" or who had "by word or deed . . . glorified war or militarism"; "advocated geo-political ideas or theories"; "advocated the Germanization of

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<sup>217</sup> Untitled, n.d., NA, RG 260, U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Military Directorate [hereafter DMIL], Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46).

Eastern Europe, including incorporation of the Baltic states into Germany”; “organized or participated in the organization of military training for youth prior to 1935”; or been “active at any level from local to national in any organization which furthered militaristic doctrines.”<sup>218</sup>

At an early February meeting, the Americans presented a more detailed version of their plan to the Germans which the Germans subsequently worked to incorporate into their own draft. During the days that followed, the two parties wove together their differing conceptions of what distinguished a militarist and also expanded and refined a list of presumptive militarists. In part, the Americans’ insistence that the new German law be compatible with the Allied Control Council’s recently issued Directive No. 24, which contained the usual lists of categories of individuals to be removed or excluded from positions of influence, shaped the latter project. This demand distressed the Germans, who were eager to replace arbitrary categories with individual evaluations and thus return many people to their former positions in the interests of administrative efficiency and out of concerns for the stability of German democracy. They were upset, in particular, by the number of individuals who would be affected. Interestingly, however, the new law’s listing of presumptive militarists actually encompassed a wider array of people than the directive.<sup>219</sup>

In the end, the draft finished in mid February included among its major offenders anyone who treated foreigners or prisoners of war in ways that violated international law, those “responsible for excesses, plundering, deportations, and other acts of violence,” individuals “active in leading positions” of militaristic organizations, and “persons who otherwise gave major political, economic, propagandistic or other support to the National Socialist tyranny.” Its general definition of “militarists” retained the Germans’ over-arching characterization, with its references to redirecting the life of the nation toward a policy of force, dominating foreign peoples, and promoting armament for these purposes. In terms of specific activities, however, it now targeted as militarists not only those who abused their positions, ordered the bombing of residences, or were responsible for destruction in Germany after the invasion, but also “anyone who, by word or deed, fostered militaristic doctrines or programs, or was active in any organization (except the Wehrmacht) engaged in such

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<sup>218</sup> “Report of the Denazification Policy Board to the Deputy Military Governor,” 15 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Regional Government Coordinating Office, Box 113, F: Denazification (German Regulations).

<sup>219</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 308-318; “Vorläufiger Entwurf,” 9 Feb 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 78; “Vorläufiger Entwurf,” 11 Feb 46, *ibid*; “Verschiedene Aenderungen des Gesetzes zur politischen Befreiung von Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus,” 16 Feb 46, *ibid*. For Directive No. 24, see *Denazification, cumulative review. Report, 1 April 1947-30 April 1948*, 98-113. ACC Directive No. 24 closely followed the July 7, 1945, regulations of the U.S. Zone.

activities” and “anyone who before 1935 organized or participated in the organization of the systematic training of youth for war.”<sup>220</sup>

A lengthy appendix to the law resurrected, in modified form, the standard lists of positions, ranks, and memberships that marked individuals as politically suspect, but now grouped them into “Class I” and “Class II.” Public prosecutors were to automatically charge the former as major offenders and the latter as offenders. Here, the various presumptive categories made their appearance. Under the heading “The German Armed Forces and Militarists,” those assigned to Class I included high-level National Socialist Indoctrination Officers, all general staff officers “who were attached, since 4 February 1938, to the Wehrmachtsführungsstab (Executive Staff of the Armed Forces)” of the high commands of the Wehrmacht, Army, Navy, and Air Force, “chiefs and deputies of military and civilian administrations in countries and territories formerly occupied by Germany,” and “all former officers of Freicorps ‘Schwarze Reichswehr.’” Class II encompassed former National Socialist Indoctrination Officers and general staff officers active after February 4, 1938, who did not fall in Class I, high level occupation officials (civilian and military), military commandants and their deputies in cities and towns, officials of the Raw Materials Trading Company, high-ranking officers of the Organization Todt and Transport Group Speer, all executive officials and members of the training staffs of war academies and officer schools, “all professors, lecturers and writers in the field of military science since 1933,” all members of the “Schwarze Reichswehr” and members of the Free Corps who joined the party but who were not included in Class I, and, finally, all regular officers of the Wehrmacht “including the rank of Major General or equivalent rank provided they reached this rank after the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 1936” as well as all “professional officials of the Armed Forces down to the rank of Oberst (colonel).”<sup>221</sup>

As a whole, therefore, the proposed law particularly singled out military officers and, to a lesser extent, government officials as the most likely militarists. Leaving the door open for convictions of teachers and authors, its detailed lists also effectively established certain boundaries for the pool of potentially culpable militarists. Notably absent were any references to Prussian Junkers. Meanwhile, the distinguishing

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<sup>220</sup> Charles Fahy to Mr. Robert Murphy, et al, 19 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 438, F: Law for Liberation—Drafting of Preliminary Version, Comments on Early Drafts.

<sup>221</sup> “Appendix to the Law,” 14 Feb 46, attached to “List of Groups of Persons Enumerated in Control Council Directive No. 24 binding Germany,” n.d., *ibid.*

characteristics of a militarist included a mixture of activities and beliefs conceived of in relatively traditional terms and conduct that was morally questionable or criminal.

Draft law in hand, the German negotiators now sought the official endorsement of their respective governments—an assignment that proved particularly difficult in Württemberg-Baden. Although the Land's leaders were not happy with existing U.S. policies, they also had not been enthusiastic about preparing a German law, especially considering that any German plans had to be established within constraints set by the Americans.<sup>222</sup> Essentially incapable of resisting pressure emanating from the other states, not to mention the Americans, and concluding that securing German control over denazification was key, they had grudgingly cooperated, striving to push through their own ideas in the process. Above all, they had pressed for former party members to be evaluated on an individual basis. They desired a judicial hearing for each, called for an end to interment based strictly on formal charges, and wanted a temporary reinstatement of dismissed officials until their cases could be considered. The revisions provoked by the wide-reaching Directive No. 24—with removals to occur prior to tribunal decisions—were therefore especially disturbing to them. At one of three cabinet meetings held to evaluate the newest draft, Minister-Präsident Reinhold Maier also expressed doubts about the law's overall approach, arguing, by way of example, that militarists could not be caught using the method provided. "The greatest militarist of our time, the corporal Hitler, would not be caught either," he added. Disappointed with the law's final composition, the cabinet nevertheless eventually felt compelled to endorse it.<sup>223</sup>

With all parties agreed, if with gritted teeth, to the major contours of the legislation, they put the finishing touches on it in late February. Primarily a matter of simplifying the text and improving the language,

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<sup>222</sup> Niethammer suggests that a number of factors were responsible for their tepid reaction to this assignment. Only Württemberg-Baden's government, he notes, was clearly dominated by the middle class parties, that is, the CDU and DVP, whose constituencies had been—and would be—most affected by the dismissals demanded by denazification and whose commitment to the rule of law meant any perceived threat to this might also undercut the credibility of their government and, they believed, threaten the establishment of a solid democracy. Working class pressure for a thorough cleansing also therefore did not come into play in any meaningful way. In addition, Württemberg-Baden officials headed a shaky hybrid political entity and worried about introducing policies that varied significantly from those in neighboring French-controlled areas. These circumstances prevented them, too, from viewing a new German-administered law as a means of consolidating state authority in the way Bavarian politicians did. *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 286-291, 322.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 286-296, 322-327; "Achte Sitzung des Staatsministeriums," 19 Feb 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 690.

those doing the revising also discarded the reference to persons who had ordered the bombing of residences.<sup>224</sup> The reason for this is not clear. The Americans may simply have decided, as one had remarked before, that these individuals did not really qualify as militarists. But they may also have desired to minimize the Germans' ability to defend themselves by pointing to comparable Allied actions—a tactic employed relatively successfully by the naval defendants at Nuremberg. In the end, all parties signed the final version of the law on March 5, 1946.<sup>225</sup>

### *Implementing the Law*

If both American officials and German observers recognized that during the early months of the occupation concerns about militarists had generally taken a backseat to worries about Nazis,<sup>226</sup> Ulm's Weisser was among the Germans pleased that “the finger [could] be put on the militarists now.”<sup>227</sup> But even the Germans who midwived the legislation appreciated its weaknesses. When at a November 1946 meeting of the Länderrat's denazification subcommittee a MG officer asked whether it would be possible to clarify the term “militarist,” he was told that despite considering this problem at length, the law's creators had been unable to come up with a comprehensive definition.<sup>228</sup> Those charged with carrying out the law likewise acknowledged the challenges it presented.<sup>229</sup>

In view of the problems associated with the law from the start, the chances of its achieving its objectives would seem to have been modest at best. The question thus becomes: What role did the law's

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<sup>224</sup> Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 325; Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism, 5 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 438, F: Law for Liberation—Drafting of Preliminary Version, Comments on Early Drafts.

<sup>225</sup> For an official version of the most pertinent sections of the new law, see Appendix B.

<sup>226</sup> Extent records from both German and American files confirm this emphasis as well.

<sup>227</sup> Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 15 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 3502. Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [1]; Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 26 Jun 46, *ibid*.

<sup>228</sup> Protokoll über die Sitzung des Denazifizierungsausschusses beim Länderrat am 6. November 1946, HStA EA 1/014 Bü 256.

<sup>229</sup> According to a MG report, the Land official in charge of Württemberg-Baden's denazification program told the Bürgermeisters of Landkreis Heidenheim at the first session of the local Spruchkammer that determining militarists was the most difficult assignment. “Militarism is a basis [*sic*] attitude, independent from military rank,” he cautioned. Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 25 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].



provisions regarding militarists actually play in the work of the German tribunals? Or, more specifically, how much did concerns about militarism affect appraisals of a person's guilt as a Nazi? And how often did tribunals convict individuals as militarists even when they were not judged to be Nazis?

Conclusive answers to these questions are difficult to develop. Even apart from the immense volume of Spruchkammer records, the extant case files vary greatly in size and do not always disclose the reasoning behind final decisions. While some are thick with petitions from the accused and letters of supportive testimony—the infamous *Persilscheine*—from friends and acquaintances, others include only the most basic paperwork or lack key documentation. In addition, various amnesties eventually approved by the Americans—for individuals born after 1918, for low-income followers, and for returning POWs—frequently truncated proceedings and generally reduced the need for a thorough investigation and detailed verdict. Thus, the available record of charges, responses, defensive testimony, and decision-making can be sketchy and is almost always incomplete. On the other hand, a review of more than 100 tribunal decisions dealing with individuals of a variety of ages, genders, and occupations, including a large number of teachers and former soldiers, did hint at certain patterns. (See Appendix C for a description of the records and selection criteria.)

*German Civilians.*<sup>230</sup> All of the individuals included in a sampling of some 60 case files addressing German civilians had been members of the Nazi party or one of its associated organizations. Not unexpectedly, in these instances the past Nazi-related activities of the defendants drew the greatest amount of scrutiny from German tribunals. When and why had they joined the party? Did their neighbors or professional colleagues believe they had actively promoted National Socialist ideas or displayed enthusiasm for the party in speech, action, or dress? How had they treated Jews? Had they pressed others to join the party? Did they benefit from their party membership in any way?

Here the opinions of the accused regarding the Jews were understandably of concern to both the defendants and German denazification officials. Conversely, most of the extant documentation revealed very little interest in any other tenets of National Socialist thought, including the defendants' views on war or the military. Only occasionally would a supporting statement argue that a defendant was against the war or had insisted, out loud, to others, that it was a disaster or hopeless. This approach was typical even for the many

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<sup>230</sup> This term refers to individuals who were not professional soldiers.

persons ultimately convicted as followers. While the law stated that, in general, a follower was anyone “who was not more than a nominal participant or an insignificant supporter of National Socialism and who did not manifest himself as a Militarist,” no one apparently worried much about manifestations of militarism—a narrow approach likely encouraged by the law’s Nazi-centered supplementary clauses (see Appendix B).

On the whole, this focus on Nazi activities also held true for some twenty educators—ranging from elementary school teachers to university professors to sports instructors—who, theoretically, might very well have “formulated or disseminated militaristic doctrines or programs,” been active outside the Wehrmacht in organizations that promoted militaristic ideas, or “organized or participated in the organization of the systematic training of youth for war” before 1935. The files revealed no particular interest on the part of German officials—nor any particular defense offered by the educators—regarding what exactly had been taught during the 1930s, other than to confirm that the defendants had not taught the political or *weltanschauliche* (worldview) ideas of the Nazis. Clearly, National Socialist ideas could have included twisted interpretations of past German history, poisonous views of neighboring peoples, and skewed assessments of current geopolitical circumstances that may also have passed for militaristic. But no one seemed to dig very deeply, or very specifically, on this count. Instead, the tribunals typically accepted the assurances of acquaintances, colleagues, and parents of former students that a particular person had not promoted Nazi ideas.

Instructive in this regard is the case of one elementary school teacher who was in his mid forties at the end of the war. A party candidate since 1938, a member of the Nazi welfare organization, and a soldier who had emerged from more than five years in the Wehrmacht as an NCO, Hermann R. had joined the *Deutscher Luftsportverband* (DLV, or German Air Sports League) in 1934 and, after it was forcibly incorporated into the *Nationalsozialistische Fliegerkorps* (NSFK, or National Socialist Flying Corps), was appointed, in 1938, to a middling rank in the new organization. At one point, he took a two-year leave of absence from teaching—as requested by others—to focus on his NSFK duties, which involved supervising a local working group devoted to building model airplanes to fly in national and international competitions.<sup>231</sup>

Taken as whole, Hermann R.’s personal history raises certain suspicions as to whether he met the March law’s stipulations regarding militarists. For one thing, both the DLV and NSFK were established, in part, to further German capabilities and interest in aviation. During the interwar years, the country’s military

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<sup>231</sup> Staatarchiv Ludwigsburg [StAL] EL 902/20 Az. 37/4/7516.

leaders had actively supported the sports flying activities these organizations promoted, particularly gliding, which sharpened flying skills and generated useful data for the German military aircraft industry. In addition, the DLV had helped to train both active and future Luftwaffe personnel at a time when the Versailles Treaty restricted the size of Germany's air force. In fact, whether civilian flying enthusiasts or military pilots, the league's members had worn the same uniforms.<sup>232</sup> During the occupation, moreover, U.S. regulations prohibited both model airplane flying and gliding as militaristic sports.<sup>233</sup>

The bulk of the paperwork in Hermann R.'s file nevertheless centered on his relationship to the party, how he came to be on staff with the NSFK, and whether he had been in any way politically engaged while working for the organization. The accused and his defenders argued repeatedly that he was a gifted technician and his technical skills alone were put to use. Hermann R. was politically passive, had entered both flying organizations unwillingly, and had achieved his rank based on the success of his model builders in competition; he had no authority over any unit of men. One former comrade did suggest—in a letter that deflected nearly every accusation that might be devised to paint the teacher as an active Nazi—that Hermann R. had condemned the war from the start and even in the successful early days repeatedly expressed his dislike of the National Socialists and their power politics in both domestic and foreign arenas. No one said much of anything about what Hermann R. taught in school. Without preparing a written decision explaining its action, the responsible Spruchkammer eventually assigned the teacher to the ranks of the followers.<sup>234</sup>

Like Hermann R., many of the younger men described in the files had seen military service. Among them were some who had been NCOs or lieutenants or who had achieved higher ranks by war's end. Aside from several who simply disappeared, most of these men were rather quickly excused from further tribunal investigation by the various amnesties (which applied when there was nothing to suggest that the person should be charged as anything more than a follower). Tribunals pronounced nearly all of the rest to be followers. Here again, those individuals German officials scrutinized in any detail apparently faced few questions regarding the issue of militarism, despite the fact that a number were teachers destined for German classrooms and despite the

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<sup>232</sup> Matthew Cooper, *The German Air Force, 1933-1945: An Anatomy of Failure* (London: Jane's, 1981), 383; Karl-Heinz Völker, *Die Deutsche Luftwaffe, 1933-1939: Aufbau, Führung und Rüstung der Luftwaffe sowie die Entwicklung der deutschen Luftkriegstheorie* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1967), 66-68.

<sup>233</sup> S.R. Brentnall, Memorandum for Record, 7 Mar 1944, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 645, F: AG 010.6 Control Council Directive No. 23; Milburn to Directors, 13 Mar 1946, *ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/4/7516.

tendency of some Germans to equate officers and militarists. The law's presumptive labeling of only high-ranking officers may have contributed to the latter seeming inconsistency. However, even possible questions regarding the treatment of subordinates—seemingly logical ones, given the criticism that appeared periodically in German newspapers regarding the abusive behavior of NCOs—remained unaddressed in almost all cases.

Distinctive in this respect was the file pertaining to the Stuttgart Institute of Technology's Professor Karl R. Employed at the institution since 1928 and dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Supplementary Subjects from 1938 until his dismissal in January 1946, the professor had been a member of the party from 1933 to 1939 and of the SA-Reserve from 1933 to 1937. A veteran of World War I, he had served in the Wehrmacht from 1939 to 1943, emerging with the reserve officer rank of major. Unlike most veterans, Professor R. dealt with his wartime experiences directly in his missives to Stuttgart tribunal officials, arguing that he had prevented "arbitrary action by my troops," personally appealed to military court judges to treat his men leniently, and earned the animosity of many other officers because he had successfully "achieved the utmost for the accused." A former subordinate confirmed that the professor always "had a heart for the soldiers," treating them humanely, as individuals. Another letter asserted that he had "never concealed his complete rejection of war, nor his pessimistic attitude with regard to the likely outcome of this one." Professor R. had pointed out "the insanity of the war and the disaster of the situation" so bluntly within the officer corps that he had put himself in danger, added his lawyer.<sup>235</sup>

On another front, Professor R. defended his activities as "honorary counselor for settlement and diminishing of unemployment" with the SA-Reserve. He had joined the organization, he explained, to be able to continue work he had already started in dealing with these social problems and, indeed, had created a technical *Lehrsturm* (training group) that undertook useful projects in his area of interest, construction. Members of the group had discussed technical topics and had held training workshops for workers while also improving the living situations of the latter by helping them to build "their own little houses." Forming this group had been part of the professor's effort to do everything he could, "in spite of much enmity," to "free the men from the senseless marching, the playing at soldiers and the parades." When the nature of the SA's work changed in the late 1930s, stated Professor R., he had left the organization.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/6/9517.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

It seems plausible that the professor's various letters and the sheaf of supportive testimony from colleagues and acquaintances persuaded the responsible tribunal that whatever hints of militarism were evident in his biography had been effectively explained away. In any event, the Stuttgart officials who declared him a follower centered their analysis on the level of political engagement he had shown in his SA activities and whether or not he had obtained unique advantages—in particular, promotions at the university—due to his party membership, or whether he had disadvantaged anyone else based on political criteria. Left unexamined, by both sides, was the nature of Professor R.'s scholarship and teaching during the Third Reich.<sup>237</sup> According to one MG official, for instance, prior to the Americans' arrival the work of the Stuttgart Institute of Technology "had been largely concentrated in fields of interest to the German war potential."<sup>238</sup>

A similar lack of attention to the big picture issues that were in many ways of greatest concern to the Americans can be seen in the case of a high-level Stuttgart sports official. Kurt Rupp had headed the city's sports office beginning in 1928, joined the party in 1933, and in 1936 accepted the position of *Gausportwart* (regional sports manager) for Württemberg within the Nazi mass sports organization, the *Nationalsozialistischer Reichsbund für Leibesübungen*. In explaining his personal history to Stuttgart denazification officials, Rupp argued that he had joined the party simply to arm himself against the demands of other Nazi organizations and was otherwise politically passive. Emphasizing that his work had always been of a purely technical nature, he pointed with pride to his role in advising other officials on the construction of new sports venues and asserted that, as of 1928, there were no major sporting events in Stuttgart that he had not organized and carried out, including helping with the much publicized 1933 rendition of the *Deutsche Turnfest* (German Sports Festival). In filling out his questionnaire, Rupp stressed, unasked, that he had for 12 years been decidedly hostile "toward the solely militaristic conception of sports and disastrous handling of the gymnastics and sport clubs by the Nazis" and, in a lengthy treatise of defense and explanation drafted later, commented regarding the organizations under his jurisdiction that "preliminary training was for us, thank God, forbidden."

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid. In his *The Heidelberg Myth*, Steven Remy has examined this phenomenon on a wider scale and in detail, underscoring the degree to which even the allegedly "objective" scholarship and instruction at Heidelberg University during the 1930s supported the Nazi regime's ideological and military goals—a fact which Heidelberg's Spruchkammer generally ignored in deciding the fate of the university's faculty.

<sup>238</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 138. A history of the institution suggests that this shift in focus occurred, at least in some key areas of the university's work, already during the mid 1930s. Otto Borst, *Schule des Schwabenlands: Geschichte der Universität Stuttgart* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1979), 404-405.

Yet he never followed up on these provocative statements. Instead he saved the bulk of a great deal of typescript for raging against the Nazis' brutal interference with the existing sports management system: shutting down independent clubs, confiscating their fields and buildings, replacing existing officials with party loyalists who knew nothing about sports, allowing youth to train other youth under the auspices of the Hitler Youth organization with a "disastrous effect on mass sports and competitive sports," and demanding that sports officials build new facilities to accommodate the needs of the SS. He had never been a National Socialist, Rupp insisted, adding that after what he had experienced, this was impossible. Similarly, he noted, "I am militaristically fully unincriminated and was never in my life a soldier because of extremely bad eyesight."<sup>239</sup>

Notably missing here was any acknowledgement that Hitler, the Nazis, and others outside the party had promoted physical education and athletic competition in general—and not just the paramilitary activities of the Hitler Youth—as necessary to strengthening in German youth the mental and physical abilities needed for combat. Similarly, the Nazis' handling of the 1933 *Deutsche Turnfest* apparently drew Rupp's ire more for the money they had denied the original organizers and the changes they had made in arrangements for suppliers and the like than for the fact that the Nazis had turned the event into a nationalistic party spectacle at which traditional *Wehrturnen* (military sports) assumed new prominence. According to a festival publication, for example, a new contest featuring squads of young men competing in the hammer throw, obstacle course, and air gun shooting had conveyed the "certainty" that these youths were "ready and willing to fight [*wehrwillig und wehrhaft*]." The responsible German tribunal nevertheless confirmed Rupp's political passivity and declared him a follower.<sup>240</sup>

If in most cases, the issue of militarism received rather short shrift, one relatively high profile Stuttgart case involved a defendant charged primarily as a militarist, and not solely due to his past military service.<sup>241</sup> Under scrutiny was Dr. Trudbert Riesterer, managing director of the Stuttgart branch of the Deutsche Bank from 1935 until 1939. Never a party member, he had belonged to several Nazi organizations, including the

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<sup>239</sup> StAL EL920/20 Az. 37/13/6756.

<sup>240</sup> Michael Krüger, *Von Klimmzügen, Aufschwüngen und Riesenwellen: 150 Jahre Gymnastik, Turnen, Spiel und Sport in Württemberg. Jubiläumsschrift des Schwäbischen Turnerbundes* (Tübingen: Silberburg-Verlag, 1998), 130-136; StAL EL920/20 Az. 37/13/6756; Norbert Heymen, Gertrud Pfister, und Irmhild Wolff-Brembach, "Erziehung zur Wehrhaftigkeit im Sportunterricht," in *Schule und Unterricht im Dritten Reich*, ed. Reinhard Dithmar (Neuwied: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1989), 163-176; Hajo Bernett, *Der Weg des Sports in die nationalsozialistische Diktatur: Die Entstehung des Deutschen (Nationalsozialistischen) Reichsbundes für Leibesübungen* (Schorndorf: Verlag Karl Hofmann, 1981), 75-82.

<sup>241</sup> "'Vertreter des Individualismus,'" *SZ*, 8 Jan 47.

NSFK, into which he had been transferred automatically due to his existing membership in the DLV. A pilot in World War I, he had served in the Wehrmacht from 1939 to 1945 as a reserve officer, participating in training exercises during the mid 1930s and emerging from the war with the recently attained rank of lieutenant colonel.

Viewing the banker's personal history, a local public prosecutor determined that Riesterer should automatically be assigned to Class II, in light of his professional position, but also pointed to evidence that the banker was a militarist. A report from the bank indicated that during the 1930s, Riesterer had attempted to evade requests to join the party by emphasizing his military interests, while an investigation had ascertained that he was a zealous promoter of his firm's sports program and premilitary training in small caliber shooting. The banker's five years of service in the *Führerhauptquartier* (FHQ, or Führer's Headquarters) seemed to prove that he had been viewed as politically reliable. And he had allegedly propagandized for National Socialism and militarism via letters from the FHQ to his bank's staff and to leading Nazis in his neighborhood and firm.<sup>242</sup>

Claiming that professional competitors were behind any accusations against him, Riesterer adamantly denied the charges. He had joined his bank's sports club because he had always been a sportsman, but he had exercised no influence over its activities. The club itself had provided no premilitary training—in fact, only three employees were young enough where that would have even made sense. The shooting section, he advised, was founded before he arrived and at the instigation of disabled veterans who were mostly unable to participate in other athletic activities. A letter from a former club staffer confirmed that the director had been a simple member who participated more often in gymnastics and track and field exercises than in shooting practice.<sup>243</sup>

As for his military service, Riesterer explained that he had taken part in reserve exercises in the 1930s, just as all reserve officers had, but had actually skipped them in 1938 and 1939 citing his overwhelming professional obligations. Called into service in August 1939, he had eventually flown on 12 missions as an observation officer (*Beobachtungsoffizier*) before being ordered, after roughly a year, to the FHQ. There, he had served in a section that collected and compiled reports regarding weather and air conditions and forwarded them to higher levels. Just a tiny group in an organization of thousands, its staff had not been entitled to wear armbands identifying them as members of the FHQ and had gone only rarely, as part of a large party, to dinner

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<sup>242</sup> StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/6/5610.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

in the actual headquarters with Hitler. So far as he knew, his political reliability was never considered in choosing him for what was, essentially, a military position. Furthermore, his political unreliability had resulted in his not receiving promotions befitting his years of service.

To deflect charges that he was a militarist, Riesterer repeatedly stressed that he had recommended that two acquaintances not allow their sons to pursue careers in the officer corps. In confirming this, one of the acquaintances quoted liberally from a detailed letter Riesterer had written to his own wife (which she had read to the man) in which the banker advised against choosing an engineer-officer career with the argument that in the military only rank mattered, not skills or intelligence. For a talented, spirited young man, being required to submit to a superior officer simply because he was a superior officer, even if he was less accomplished, could be extremely difficult and painful, Riesterer had maintained. A man also could not move to a different job if he was dissatisfied. “Before every achievement, my reverence,” Riesterer had written, “but never before someone who through the passage of time has earned one star more. And in the military there is always someone there who has one star more!” Such comments suggest that Riesterer, a successful businessman, was less anti-military out of principle than unhappy with the constraints placed on him by the rigidity and hierarchy of a military institution run by unaccomplished career soldiers. In any event, Riesterer ultimately argued that extended service in the military, even in the FHQ, did not mean he had been either politically reliable or a militarist.<sup>244</sup>

His denazification tribunal concurred. Its members agreed that, although Riesterer had managed Deutsche Bank’s Stuttgart branch, he was not responsible for the bank’s overall policy of supporting the regime during the 1930s and thus his own actions should be decisive. Working their way through the original charges, they noted that the firm’s sports club was founded in the late 1920s not due to any desire to promote *Wehrsport*, but because a bank merger produced a large enough staff to warrant such a move. There was no evidence that Riesterer had influenced its subsequent operations or taken an excessive interest in military-related sports. They repeated his arguments regarding his wartime service record, indicated there was no overwhelming proof that he had propagandized in his letters (they had no copies), and outlined the ways in which he had resisted Nazi influences in his bank. As to the fact that Riesterer “sought a certain connection with the Wehrmacht after 1935,” they concluded that a man in his position had probably had no other choice at that time. Alluding to a

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid. (Emphasis in original.)



point the banker himself had made earlier, they added that during those years, many men saw the Wehrmacht as a type of counterweight to the National Socialists, without necessarily pursuing the goal of directing all of the life of the German people toward a policy of militaristic force or the domination of foreign peoples and the like. These men, they asserted, could not have realized that the generals were on their way to selling themselves to the Hitler regime. The tribunal declared Riesterer “not incriminated” (*nicht belastet*).<sup>245</sup>

*Elite Professional Officers.* If German civilians were unlikely to be questioned regarding past activities or attitudes that might have been considered militaristic, German military officers were a very different story. Public opinion and official policies both regarded these men with a great deal of suspicion. Notably, however, their fate at the hands of German tribunals proved to be not all that different from that of their civilian neighbors.

Although the March 1946 law required most general staff officers to be presumptively assigned to one of the top two groups, German denazification officials did not always know quite what to do with them. In Karlsruhe, for example, plans called for more than 100 of these officers held in a nearby internment camp to be processed by two local tribunals. As an American inspector explained the problem, however, most of the officers were former first and second lieutenants. Technically they fell within the categories listed in the law, but the responsible prosecutor “did not know how to prepare his charges” because he had “little chance to place those officers under article 8,” the section dealing with militarists.<sup>246</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, then, these proceedings turned out to be rather perfunctory. In June 1947, for example, a MG officer described the trial of a 34-year-old major who had been a general staff officer from 1943 to 1945. “In his defense respondent said his functions were non political, he condemned and criticized the destruction made to Germany by her own troops, he regretted very much that the conspiracy against Hitler in 1944 had not succeeded.” The former soldier “regarded himself as not falling under the law,” the German prosecutor had agreed, and the tribunal, “without drawing for consultation,” had determined that the proceeding should be “quashed.” Its explanation was that “as in numerous similar cases the incrimination of the respondent is only a matter of form.” Three subsequent

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid. Riesterer eventually returned to his post at the bank and later headed Stuttgart’s stock exchange.

<sup>246</sup> Arthur Klingenstein to Major W.J. Garlock, Chief, Denazification Division, 2 Apr 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 300, F: K-47 SK/LK Karlsruhe. The inspector reported on the problem as a policy question requiring guidance from above, but the files reviewed did not contain any written response.

cases involving men in their thirties had produced comparable results. All three, wrote the American, “claimed that they did not fall under the Law by presenting numerous certificates, supposed to prove their unpolitical background, their non party membership and their kindness toward war prisoners.” The prosecutor had agreed that they did not fall under the law and the tribunal had quashed each of the proceedings. “All four cases,” noted the American, “were tried within 20 minutes.”<sup>247</sup>

Cases dealing with former high-ranking officers could be more involved, but had similar outcomes. In early 1948, for instance, another German tribunal tried a group of former general staff officers that included 11 generals, five colonels, four lieutenant colonels, and three majors and declared 19 of the 21 officers to be formally addressed by the law, by virtue of their past positions, but materially not incriminated. Those convicted—one as a follower and one as an offender—had both been members of the Nazi party and related organizations.<sup>248</sup> Similarly, of a set of 13 generals and two colonels tried by Stuttgart tribunals, all were determined to be not incriminated save for one general and one colonel whose cases were dropped under amnesties. Cited as a follower by the public prosecutor, the latter was the only officer of the 15 who had been a party member.<sup>249</sup>

To obtain these favorable judgments, the former officers provided the tribunals with personal narratives and supporting documentation that relied on tropes being developed by Wehrmacht veterans in war crimes trials and in other contexts as well.<sup>250</sup> But they also adhered closely to the terms of the law, taking seriously its requirement that they refute the charges leveled against them.

Usually presumptively assigned to the categories of major offender or offender, the men strove above all to counter suspicions of having supported the Nazi dictatorship. Virtually all therefore contended that they had never liked the Nazis nor promoted National Socialism. In fact, they had done their utmost to keep Nazi influences out of the Wehrmacht, resenting and resisting party interference with Wehrmacht operations and combating Nazi attempts to spread National Socialist ideas among their troops.

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<sup>247</sup> Intelligence Report, 16 Jun 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 545, F: Intelligence Report.

<sup>248</sup> HStA EA 11/101 Bü 1899. Nearly all of these men had participated in the history writing program supervised by the U.S. Army’s Historical Section. See Chapter 5.

<sup>249</sup> See Appendix C, note 2.

<sup>250</sup> In addition to the discussion below, see Chapter 5.

But the former officers also could not ignore charges of militarism. And here they typically stuck closely to the script handed to them by the law. In particular, the law encouraged a profusion of testimony verifying how well the men had treated their subordinates. These Wehrmacht officers, the paperwork confirmed, were capable, decent, model officers who handled their troops with fatherly consideration, listened to their concerns, and carefully protected their welfare, even to the point of challenging or rejecting orders that would have required unnecessary or excessive loss of life. In return, they had earned the admiration and affection of their men. A former tank division liaison officer captured the essence of these arguments in describing the former chief of staff of the 57th Panzer Corps. The officer, he wrote, was not “an impersonal or completely obstinate and heartless militarist who classifies everything according to epaulets and stars, but a man in the truest sense of the word, by whom all found complete acceptance, without regard to rank, who was decent and had character. He had a good word for everyone and cared for the members of his staff in a fatherly way. Everyone could express themselves to him and he improved things and helped where he could.”<sup>251</sup>

Those who had served outside of Germany during the war also made clear that they had obeyed all international laws in their dealings with POWs and local populations. In France, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Italy, Poland, Greece, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, and Russia, they had avoided unnecessary requisitions, attempted to minimize the effects of warfare on civilians, listened to and tried to address the concerns of the locals, and were sometimes praised by these people for their conduct. In addition, the officers had acted forcefully to prevent plundering, rape, and other excesses by their troops and had severely punished offenders. One former general received praise for often sharing with their Russian owners the farmhouses that he needed for quarters—even though the houses were very small.<sup>252</sup> Despite orders to the contrary, another had always had friendly relations with “reputable Greek families” who had admired him as a “just, understanding, and good soldier.”<sup>253</sup> One of this general’s former subordinates also testified that in the area of Ukraine where the man’s divisional staff quarters were located, “promenade concerts” had been held that were very popular with the civilian population.

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<sup>251</sup> Rolf E., Eidesstattliche Erklärung, 5 Jun 48, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/8/18859.

<sup>252</sup> Landesgerichtsdirektor R., Eidesstattliche Versicherung, 12 Jul 47, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/9/14277.

<sup>253</sup> Albert P., Eidesstattliche Erklärung, 26 Feb 48, *ibid.*

The locals had also had the opportunity to regularly attend productions of the “front theater” and ballets performed by Ukrainian dancers.<sup>254</sup>

Explicit references to the law’s other indicators of militarism were more sporadic. Some officers simply declared that they had never been active in militaristic organizations, disseminated militaristic ideas in text or speech, trained youth outside of the Wehrmacht, or abused their positions to obtain special benefits. Some pointed to specific actions they had taken to protect or prevent the destruction of German towns and cities in the final days of the war. Many explained the nature of the military posts they had held during the 1930s, variously emphasizing the technical nature of their work, their lack of authority, their involuntary assignment to certain positions due solely to their personal capabilities, and, in a few cases, their ignorance of Hitler’s true intentions. And some submitted evidence showing that they had at one point or another during the war criticized Hitler’s military leadership or argued that the situation was hopeless.

Focused comments regarding the proper role of a military in a state, the meaning and purpose of war, or their pre-1939 views of Hitler’s military and foreign policies were uncommon. In explaining their reasons for joining the military, several attempted to dispel suspicions that they had coveted military prestige and revered the use of force. One former general explained, for example, that he had entered the Reichswehr in 1921 in part because he had an interest in educational activities and enjoyed living with soldiers from all classes, but also because his family could not afford expensive training for a profession. An officer’s career at that time had little glamour, he stressed, and the chances of promotion in the Reichswehr were not particularly good.<sup>255</sup>

Most who advanced views regarding the use of the German armed forces merely stated that they had never championed a politics of force. Only a handful dealt with this issue in more than a bland statement of denial. Unusual here was a general who submitted two *Persilscheine* on the subject. One testified to the general’s conviction in 1939 that the Reich’s aggressive politics were not backed by a technically prepared

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<sup>254</sup> Gerhardt A. G., Eidesstattliche Versicherung, 29 Jan 48, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/9/14521. In her examination of German activities in the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine, historian Wendy Lower has described similar support for Ukrainian cultural performances and commented: “Mostly, the Germans allowed Ukrainians to perform because the Germans desired entertainment. In a patronizing way, they found the local folk customs amusing and believed that permitting some forms of cultural expression would go a long way toward placating and motivating the locals.” She adds, “This type of German-Ukrainian ‘cultural’ interaction coexisted with violent Nazi practices against the population, including the regular public hangings of Ukrainians in Zhytomyr’s Haymarket during 1942 and 1943.” *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 118.

<sup>255</sup> Hellmuth L. to the Zentralgeschäftsstelle der Spruchkammer Stuttgart, 7 Jun 48, EL 902/20 Az. 37/8/18859.

Wehrmacht, but were, rather, a form of “diplomatic smoke and mirrors” and that “Germany and the world would be helped the most if war was impeded and peace served.”<sup>256</sup> The second reported that the general had been pleased that the Sudeten crisis had not led to war, “which he saw as a misfortune for the whole world,” and that he had been uneasy at the time because he saw in Hitler’s foreign policy “a constant provocation to the other powers.”<sup>257</sup>

But the few men who discussed their earlier perspectives on war or rearmament more typically simply maintained or implied that they had been interested in defending Germany, not in attacking others. The lengthiest explanation of this sort came from a former Luftwaffe general. A pilot in World War I and a “passionate flyer,” as a civilian, after the war, he had responded affirmatively to the German Air Ministry’s request in 1935 that he help to create the new Luftwaffe. He did so, he explained, because he viewed the German armed forces not as a political establishment but rather as “a supra-party instrument for the protection of the people and state, as in every land.” No one could have foreseen then how the Wehrmacht would be misused for a war of aggression. Refuting possible charges of militarism, the general went on to argue that “only a crazy person or criminal could advocate a politics of force and desire a war for whose victorious waging, despite rearmament, all prerequisites were missing.” As far as anyone could judge back in the 1930s, a war of aggression would have terrible consequences for Germany. That “a state would voluntarily burden itself with responsibility for a new world war and expose itself to defamation in the whole world” appeared to be out of the question. No one could have known or guessed that “an irresponsible state leadership would, in spite of this, in a few years plunge our country into a war.”<sup>258</sup>

In this regard, the defense offered by one Stuttgart general was an exception that underscored the rule. Generalmajor Erich Dommenges had served as air attaché at the German embassy in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, an assignment he attributed to language skills he had acquired while living in Chile in the early 1930s. Intent on disproving suspicions of Nazi favor, the general built his defense on a narrative of resistance and consequent disadvantage. He had, he argued, protested this appointment to Spain in part because he disagreed with German activities there. This also had led him to submit reports to Berlin that exceeded the

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<sup>256</sup> Karl S., Erklärung, 3 Jul 47, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/16/13157.

<sup>257</sup> Erwin W., Erklärung an Eides Statt, 11 Aug 47, *ibid.*

<sup>258</sup> Jens Peter P. to Spruchkammer Stuttgart Zentralgeschäftsstelle, 18 Sep 47, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/17/9738.

bounds of his authority by commenting not only on military but also on political developments. He had, he explained, urged a withdrawal of German troops and called for bringing England in to mediate the whole affair because he saw in the conflict the “dynamite for a new world war” that would endanger Germany. From that point on, he insisted, his military career had ground to a halt. He was replaced, given lesser posts, granted little respect, forced to wait eight years for a promotion from colonel to general, and endured mental pain and physical illness as a result. Dommenget’s case, then, rested on the argument that he had suffered for his peace-loving views. Both his own letters and those submitted by others on his behalf thus detailed and stressed his opposition to the Nazi regime’s foreign policy as well as his own anti-war stance.<sup>259</sup>

Despite his purported suffering during the Third Reich, Dommenget remained a committed and proud officer, however, grumbling about earned medals he had not received and about his ruined career. In the end, too, he relied on the language of soldierly service to the Fatherland to explain his conduct.<sup>260</sup> And in this he was not unique. Rare was the officer who did not put himself forward as a loyal servant of Germany. “I was certainly no friend of war,” one fifty-eight-year-old former infantry general told a tribunal. But, he added, “When it comes to a war, every soldier must fulfill his duty. . . . He owes that to his people and his Fatherland. This I also did and nothing more.”<sup>261</sup> He and his colleagues were apolitical men focusing their military skills on the needs at hand. “I was a career soldier, but not a ‘militarist,’” more than one wrote on the questionnaire he gave to the local prosecutor.<sup>262</sup>

A thorough investigation of the accuracy of the information presented to the responsible tribunals by these former officers is beyond the scope of this study. However, a more careful look at several cases did reveal something about how the tribunals handled the issue of militarism when dealing with former officers. Among the officers evaluated, for example, was a Colonel Hermann Teske. A general staff officer from 1939 to 1944, he had served as an adjutant at an army sport school during the early 1930s and as a transportation officer in Galicia, Ukraine, Finland, and White Russia during the war. Testimony confirmed that he had never had any connection with the National Socialist regime, had never supported the conquest and domination of foreign

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<sup>259</sup> StAL Bü 37/019/266/10.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Protokoll, 30 Aug 48, StAL EL 902/20 Az. 37/9/14277.

<sup>262</sup> See, for example, StAL Az. 37/18/30067.

peoples, and had acted caringly toward the inhabitants of occupied areas. He had not attempted to influence soldiers under him politically, but was, rather, “a dutiful soldier and officer and always a role model to his officers, NCOs, and troops.” Accepting this information as a refutation of any possible incrimination, the responsible tribunal also indicated that articles Teske had written in the 1930s were “of a technical nature” and did not propagandize Nazi ideas.<sup>263</sup>

Whether the tribunal had ever actually seen Teske’s writings—or their titles—seems doubtful. If it had, its conclusions were astounding. For a glance at just two of Teske’s works suggests that he was far from an apolitical technician. In a 1936 booklet titled *Vormilitärische Schulerziehung* (Pre-military School Education), for instance, Teske offered philosophical guidance and practical advice aimed at helping teachers fulfill the mission he outlined for them in the text’s opening paragraphs: Germany’s youth had to learn to fight. Efforts toward this end were also needed at home and in the Hitler Youth, but schools were to “create the intellectual preconditions for fighting.” In chapters bearing titles like “Pre-soldierly Character Education” and “School Preparation for Soldierly Proficiency,” Teske laid out how they might do this, discussing such topics as how to encourage enthusiasm for military service and how to use even studies of the natural sciences to instill proper values. For example, by emphasizing that with the dying away of all natural things came regeneration, teachers might lay the groundwork for a soldier’s later willingness to die (*Todesbereitschaft*).<sup>264</sup>

If his teacher’s manual could be passed off as a technical instructional guide, a second text contained far fewer practical bits of advice and a much thicker layering of Nazi jargon. First published in 1939, *Wir Marschieren für Grossdeutschland* (We March for Greater Germany) recounted events in Germany during the period between the *Anschluss* and the invasion of the rump of Czechoslovakia. Praising Hitler for his peaceful acquisition of the Sudetenland, Teske nevertheless attributed this foreign policy victory to Hitler’s policy of strength, which had led to achievements that would have been impossible for the broken and defeated Germany

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<sup>263</sup> Spruch gegen Hermann Teske, 26 Apr 48, HStA EA 11/101 Bü 1899.

<sup>264</sup> Hermann Teske, *Vormilitärische Schulerziehung* (Langenfalza-Berlin-Leipzig: Verlag von Julius Belz, 1936), 3, 12, 21. Interestingly, the copy of the book consulted in writing this study was obtained from the Center for Research Libraries but bears a stamp on its first page reading: “Bezirkslehrer-Bibliothek Freising.” The book was thus originally among the holdings of a teachers’ library in Freising, Bavaria, and it seems likely that it was removed as a result of U.S. regulations ordering the confiscation of Nazi and militaristic books from German schools and libraries. (As is explained in Chapter 7, the U.S. Library of Congress facilitated the shipping of some of these books to American research libraries.) This would suggest that Bavarian officials and/or American MG officers in Bavaria believed the text was tainted and deserving of removal. The mandated removal effort may have made it difficult to secure any examination copies of Teske’s texts. On the other hand, German officials retained records listing books removed from German libraries and schools which might have been available for review.

of 1918, stabbed in the back by its civilian leaders. The conviction that both Austria and the Sudetenland rightfully belonged to a greater Germany was made abundantly clear. Moreover, Teske's praise of Hitler climaxed in a chapter describing the Führer's visit to the teary-eyed, grateful Germans in the former lands of Czechoslovakia. The overall tone and political bent of the text, meanwhile, were indicated already in its foreword. The goal of the book, Teske wrote, was to describe the contributions of the "greater German soldier of every character" to the "liberation" of the Sudetenland. "Carried along by the almost superhuman willpower of the Führer," he gushed, "during this historic summer every soldierly thinking person helped to prepare for and realize this feat of the Führer's, whether he was a commander or a rifleman, whether he worked as a laborer on the West Front or was drafted as a militiaman, whether he did his part as a border guard or as a Free Corps fighter." Teske ended by asserting that "every page and every line" of the book would speak "the fundamental tone of the melody of this summer: the thanks to the Führer." The title page identified Teske as a captain in the general staff.<sup>265</sup>

In another instance, German officials considered the case of General der Infanterie Walter Buhle. Like many high-ranking German officers, Buhle had served in World War I and continued his career in the Reichswehr. Among the many posts he had held, the two most suspect were a stint from December 1938 to February 1942 as chief of the Organization Department of the general staff and his position from February 1942 to January 1945 as chief of the army staff with the Wehrmacht High Command (OKW), representing the army's interests with respect to organizational and armament questions. In light of this history, the pertinent German prosecutor charged that Buhle had provided "extraordinary support" to the Nazi regime, per the terms of the law, and mentioned, in particular, Buhle's work in the Organization Department, where he had helped to arm the German military in such a fashion that it was capable of launching an aggressive war.

In response, Buhle argued that the rearming of the Reich was already completed when he assumed his post in 1939. Within the OKW, he had served mostly as a liaison and advisor, with no responsibility or right to issue his own orders. Buhle added, too, that he had been against a policy of force, worked to counter this,

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<sup>265</sup> *Wir Marschieren für Grossdeutschland: Erlebtes und Erlauschtes aus dem grossen Jahre 1938* (Berlin: Verlag "Die Wehrmacht", 1939), 9, 113-117. Teske's views of Germany's rightful place in the world were conveyed quite clearly. For example, recounting a reconnaissance flight over the Donau near Pressburg (Bratislava) before the signing of the Munich agreement, Teske wrote: "With astonishment, one determined that the river does not form the border here; a pair of kilometers wide, on pure German ground, a Czech bridgehead thrusts onto the right bank." Continuing to muse on this "unnatural border," he observed that Czechoslovakia reached "like a balled fist" into the heart of Germany, with Pressburg as its "pulse" and a site of incomparable strategic importance. The new German empire, he added, was now an iron clamp surrounding that fist (21-22).



resisted prolonging the war by protesting the arming of the *Volkssturm*, and impeded Hitler's scorched earth policy. He had also not advocated the domination of foreign peoples—this was not part of his scope of work, he explained, and he had not dealt with it. He, like other general staff officers, had sought to rearm Germany as a matter of defense.<sup>266</sup>

Interestingly, the tribunal concluded that, even if all of this was true, Buhle had, objectively viewed, met the terms of the law in giving “extraordinary support” to the National Socialist dictatorship. However, it also contended that the operative question was whether Buhle had *intended* (*Willensentschluss*) to support Nazi tyranny. Extensive testimony indicating, among other things, that the general had not endorsed Nazi ideas, had battled against the spreading influence of the National Socialists and SS, and had attempted to counter Hitler's destructive impulses at the end of the war proved that Buhle had not had this intent, the tribunal decided. For Buhle, “as an old soldier,” what mattered was simply to use German arms effectively and to help them to victory. This determination meant, too, the tribunal added, that there was also no evidence to support a charge of militarism. It thus declared Buhle not incriminated.<sup>267</sup>

What might actually be considered worthy of punishment under the law's militarist provisions was shown in a decision handed down by the tribunal that evaluated the case of Generaloberst der Waffen-SS Paul Hausser. Eventually judged an offender, Hausser had a lengthy, gleaming Nazi resume to justify this decision. In listing the elements of the law on which it had based this verdict, however, the tribunal also referred to the clause regarding those “who had attempted to bring the life of the German people in line with a policy of militaristic force.” As grounds for this, it noted that Hausser had been active outside the Wehrmacht in an organization that promoted militaristic ideas, namely, he had held high-level leadership posts in the Stahlhelm and SA-Reserve. Bolstering this assertion, too, was Hausser's own evidence confirming that he had been the creator and first soldier of the Waffen-SS and that his name was “inextinguishably tied to the good reputation of the Waffen-SS.”<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Spruch gegen den früheren General der Inf. Walter Buhle, 19 Mar 48, HStA EA 11/101 Bü 1899.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid. Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr., author of numerous popular histories describing German military operations during World War II, has described Buhle as a “rabid Nazi.” *The German Defeat in the East, 1944-1945* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2007), 62.

<sup>268</sup> Spruch gegen Paul Hausser, 17 Jun 48, HStA EA 11/101 Bü 1899.

In contrast to the personal narratives of innocence and innocuousness constructed by these former officers, historian Wolfram Wette has recently offered a blunt assessment of the militarism of the Third Reich's career officers: both Germany's National Socialist leaders and its military elites "shared the belief that great political questions are always ultimately decided by war and the force of arms." As a result, Wette writes, "one can speak of a shared conviction that was fundamentally militaristic in nature." Suggesting that "issues of national defense" were at best a "superficial rationalization" in their "ideology of war," Wette observes that "the expansion of Germany's boundaries was a given in this kind of thinking, and the potential goals of war—such as achieving hegemony in Europe, building an empire, making Germany a great power or even a world power—were debated solely in terms of their practical feasibility."<sup>269</sup> Research from recent decades describing the Wehrmacht's extensive involvement in the crimes of the Third Reich likewise casts doubt on the truthfulness of these narrated biographies.<sup>270</sup>

Significantly, however, even though the tribunals were composed of often left-leaning non-Nazis and anti-Nazis, these bodies refused to convict Germany's former elite officers as militarists even where the facts of the case might well have led them to such a decision. To their credit, they resisted any temptation to judge the men strictly on the basis of their profession, rank, or position, looking instead for specific offenses revealed through investigation and testimony. Yet evidence of an officer's past conduct was surely hard to come by, particularly if he had spent much of his time in foreign countries. The tribunals thus had to rely heavily on documentation provided by the defendants themselves, often in the form of sworn declarations from former subordinates and colleagues who, arguably, had good reasons of their own to disseminate rose-colored pictures of the Wehrmacht. Here, differentiating between truths, half-truths, and lies was undoubtedly difficult and evaluating a person's past thinking and attitudes must have been challenging, if not impossible. On the other hand, the "myth of the clean Wehrmacht" was also taking firm hold in German society<sup>271</sup>—perhaps reinforced by the tribunal proceedings and verdicts themselves—and some Germans clearly still clung to traditional ideas regarding soldierly honor and notions of the inherent righteousness of soldierly obedience and performance of

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<sup>269</sup> Wette, *The Wehrmacht*, 139.

<sup>270</sup> As a starting point, see Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, *War of Extermination: The German Military in World War II, 1941-1944* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000).

<sup>271</sup> Wette, *The Wehrmacht*, 194-226.

duty. Given the problem of evidence, these philosophical trends, and the Germans' lack of enthusiasm for denazification activities by the late 1940s,<sup>272</sup> it is perhaps not surprising that, in most cases, the written decisions of tribunal officials did little more than regurgitate the claims of the defendants.

In effect, the tribunals authenticated the self-portraits proffered by the accused which depicted Wehrmacht officers as apolitical soldiers minding their own military business, caring for their troops, providing technical instruction to young men, doing their soldierly duty, and attempting to mitigate any suffering experienced by civilians in combat and occupied areas. What the objectives of all of their military efforts had been, or how it had come to this, was seldom discussed. And where these questions arose, there was an easy answer: Hitler and the Nazis, for whom the Wehrmacht's leaders had had no use—and whom they had vigilantly tried to keep out of military matters—had, to the surprise of most of the men ready to defend the Fatherland, led the nation into a war of aggression which it was not prepared to fight and should have avoided. Far from condemning Germany's military elites as militarists or as Hitler's willing instruments in an aggressive war, the tribunals agreed that there was a difference between a skilled, obedient soldier and a debased militarist or war criminal and confirmed the virtue of the vast majority of former professional officers.<sup>273</sup>

*Final Results.* While it is impossible today to determine whether any of the uncensored individuals described above should rightfully be considered militarists, even a cursory look at their case files suggests that several met the specific criteria laid out in the law or had contributed to the perpetuation of German militarism in ways condemned by the Americans. In practice, however, concerns about militarism exerted very little influence on the process of charging, evaluating, and exonerating or convicting these Germans.

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<sup>272</sup> Neidiger, "Entnazifizierung und Bevölkerungstimmung aus der Sicht der Stuttgarter Stadtverwaltung," 164-167.

<sup>273</sup> In doing so, the tribunals acted in keeping with the thinking of at least a portion of the broader German public. In their early 1948 report on German militarism, the Americans observed that among the German "opinion leaders" they had interviewed "there was a division of opinion on the question of whether the German soldier, because he fulfilled his military duty, should be liable to prosecution as a militarist." They explained: "Although the majority agreed that the fundamental human ideas of morality and justice are superior to the concept of military duty, many respondents expressed the conviction that the German soldier should not be held accountable for having served the cause of militarism unless he actually violated the laws of war or committed atrocities. . . . Professor Lange of Mannheim asserted that 'with very few exceptions German soldiers behaved decently and correctly in war, perhaps better than the soldiers of the various occupation powers;' and Oberbürgermeister Bleek of Marburg suggested that those soldiers who 'honestly believed that they were only doing their soldierly duty' should not be denounced, but rather taught the way to democracy." The report went on to provide examples of Germans who had offered opposing views, including a Berlin professor who "was certain that the soldier in the recent war had been genuinely faithful to the old Prussian ideal of duty in disregard of the fact that the authority of humanity is higher than the authority of Prussianism." Note here again the German tendency to equate militarism with criminal actions. "German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany Today," 10.

The results of this sampling, moreover, are consistent with evidence from other areas of Württemberg-Baden and the American Zone as a whole. “Regarding the liberation from militarism, one hears nothing at all any more,” complained Ulm’s *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* in September 1947 in discussing the March 1946 law.<sup>274</sup> The president of a Heidelberg peace organization similarly told a MG official that he had actually written a letter to Württemberg-Baden’s denazification minister asking about the lack of verdicts against militarists. He had received no reply. “To the same extent that high military personages were convicted for war crimes so should actions which led to war be punished by denazification tribunals,” the man had explained to the American. Conceding that “the psychological moment for this” had passed, he nevertheless believed that “even if it takes place after ten years the question of war guilt should be finally decided by German courts.” A Heidelberg tribunal member belonging to the DVP confirmed that he also knew of no convictions of militarists—with the reason his own tribunal had issued no such verdicts perhaps explained in part by the views of militarism expressed by the man himself. “Most soldiers merely did what they considered to be their duty,” he told a MG interviewer. Although he thought German rearmament had violated the Versailles Treaty, the man also argued that “the propagandists and militarists certainly found much in the behavior of the victorious powers which they could exploit for their own purpose” and suggested that “in the future a few thousands [*sic*] war agitators must disappear in order that millions of innocent people may not give their valuable lives in another war.”<sup>275</sup> On a larger scale, the Americans’ early 1948 report on German militarism indicated that “virtually none” of the several hundred leading Germans interviewed knew of any convictions of militarists, even though they were “almost unanimous in believing that such convictions would be just,” agreeing that it was “at least as important to punish militarists as it [was] to convict National Socialists.”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> “Bemerkungen,” *SDZ*, 20 Sep 47.

<sup>275</sup> Intelligence Report No. 497, 4 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 92, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1947 [2]. Regarding the law’s implementation in Württemberg-Baden with respect to militarists, see also Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 3 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [4]; Borgstedt, *Entnazifizierung in Karlsruhe*, 75n.

<sup>276</sup> “German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany Today,” 10. Similarly, in late 1950, Bavarian officials informed a German doctoral student that, to date, no Bavarian tribunals had convicted anyone solely on the basis of the law’s provision’s regarding militarists. Erhard Assmus, “Die Publizistische Diskussion um den Militarismus unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Geschichte des Begriffes in Deutschland und seiner Beziehung zu den politischen Ideen zwischen 1850 und 1950” (Ph.D. diss., Erlangen University, 1951), 307. See also Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 590-591; Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 610.

Given this apparently solid support in influential quarters for punishing militarists, how can the tribunal results be explained? As with denazification, a partial explanation almost certainly lies in the German desire to get German governing, social, and economic institutions back on track and moving forward with rebuilding. But the issue of militarism had other dimensions as well. The uncertain definition of a militarist, along with a rather narrow interpretation of who should, presumptively, be considered one, was problematic. The law's drafters were not entirely sure who should be deemed a militarist, but Spruchkammer officials were somehow supposed to recognize them anyway. In addition, proving motivation or documenting past assertions could be troublesome, particularly when dealing with well-traveled military men.

But the Germans also seemed unwilling to explore the issue of militarism in all of its possible permutations. American policymakers took for granted the deep-rooted penetration of all of German society and culture with military priorities, ideals, and goals, at least after 1933, if not before. Above all, therefore, American concerns centered on the *cause* of the war. Fundamentally, German militarists were those who prepared for and instigated wars that the Americans did not want to fight. Conversely, German defendants, prosecutors, and tribunal officials—and arguably the drafters of the March law itself—viewed militarism differently or simply ignored or avoided considering this larger perspective.<sup>277</sup> When it came to evaluating a person's past for evidence of militaristic attitudes or activism, they paid much less attention to what had happened before the war than to what had happened during it.

Pushing the provisions of the law to their widest possible extent would likely have meant punishing an impossible number of persons. But the fact that the militaristic character of many German institutions and German attitudes had evolved over decades, occasionally even centuries, perhaps complicated matters, too. Some Germans were incapable of appraising the weaknesses of their own culture.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, to censure someone as a militarist because of their admiration for the Wehrmacht, their enthusiasm for rearmament, their

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<sup>277</sup> Niethammer has suggested that while the Americans focused on ascertaining responsibility for a war of aggression, Germans typically viewed "militarism" as a personal characteristic, associating it with "the formalism of military ritual, the red tape of the orderly's office behind the lines, and the lack of education of NCOs"—attributes the law did not address. He adds that accepting the American perspective would have "completely contradicted the tendency of the tribunals to introduce criminal, rather than political, criteria (*Massstäbe*) into the proceedings." While the case files reviewed for this study did not refute this explanation, they also hint at additional factors at work. *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 590-591.

<sup>278</sup> On the other hand, one Karlsruhe Spruchkammer official argued that the fact that "throughout many decades nationalism and militarism were systematically drummed into the German people" was the key reason it would be "utterly wrong" to assume that after implementation of the law the U.S. Zone would really be free of Nazism and militarism. "There are still a hell of a lot of Nazis and militarists," he wrote in April 1948. Dr. Oechsler to Spruchkammer Karlsruhe, 26 Apr 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 582, F: Report on Special Branch Tribunal's Work.

cries for a renunciation of the Treaty of Versailles or reclamation of Polish territory, their involvement in producing strong capable soldiers through sport, their scholarly arguments invigorating calls for the return of Alsace-Lorraine, or even their technical contributions to a successful attack on Poland or France could well have meant condemning oneself. And to criticize German institutions, practices, and attitudes was also to admit past failings and to acknowledge at least partial responsibility for the war and thus Germany's own destruction and suffering, rather than resting comfortably with the idea that the recent war had been solely—as many Germans were quick to label it—“Hitler's war.”<sup>279</sup> The wide-ranging support given to this endeavor, piece by piece, in small actions, in sometimes subtle ways, even if only through indifference or a simple commitment to doing one's job well without questioning, challenging, or admitting the larger consequences, remained mostly unexamined and uncondemned.

### **Militarists and German Society: Concluding Thoughts**

German militarists were a problem and needed to be weeded out of positions of influence in German society. This was a fundamental American belief heading into the occupation of Germany. But militarists were difficult to identify. Washington policymakers had frequently implied that the vast majority of Germans had militaristic tendencies. Postwar planners, more realistically, cited as militarists especially those who had promoted, prepared for, launched, and directed Germany's most recent war of aggression. They pointed to Wehrmacht elites, but also to industrialists, educators, and media barons. In the end, however, U.S. regulations called for culling out just a limited number of people, with early policies offering a relatively narrow interpretation of the term “militarist,” focusing especially on German officers and Prussian Junkers. And even some of these were excused.

The Americans were not alone in their struggles. Government officials in North Baden treated all former professional officers and NCOs as potential militarists until proven otherwise, even as Stuttgart's mayor cautioned that militarism did not necessarily follow rank. A retired colonel in Pforzheim pointed to reserve officers. A Heidelberg Spruchkammer member told MG interviewers that “after the treaty of Versailles the bankers, industrialists and Junkers were the most ardent militarists” and it was “they who again mobilized the

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<sup>279</sup> Saul K. Padover, *Experiment in Germany: The Story of an American Intelligence Officer* (New York: Duell, Sloan Pearce, 1946), 117-118; Georg-Hennig von. H., Eidesstattliche Erklärung, 25 Oct 47, StAL EL902/20 Bü 37/8/18859. See also James M. Diehl, “1918 and 1945: Some Comparisons and Contrasts,” *The History Teacher* 22, No. 4 (1989), 398.

old generals and other officers.”<sup>280</sup> A Land official weighing denazification legislation pointed to editors and teachers. A medical doctor in nearby Bavaria, meanwhile, told MG authorities that a militarist was “the red[-stripe]-trowsered, gold-braided, medal-jingling, and monocled general who recklessly rushes ‘his human materiel’ to their deaths to achieve a tactical goal to satisfy his own ambition,” as well as the arrogant NCO and the “enraged elementary school teacher” who demanded an impossible mission of his men to earn a promotion and Knight’s Cross. But it was also the mother who in “proud teariness” announced the death of her only—or fifth or last—son “for Führer, *Volk*, and Fatherland,” the person who said there was no such thing as an impossible command, one who sang “*Wir werden weiter marschieren, wenn alles in Scherben fällt*” (“we will keep marching, even when everything falls apart”), and the man who “fears his officer more than the loving God.”<sup>281</sup>

While political preferences often determined individual beliefs about militarists, with those who leaned to the right generally more sympathetic to military officers, they did not always make a person’s stance predictable. Thus, Ulm’s Hermann Wild, a DVP member, could worry about the influence of former officers in his city’s administration just as much as the Social Democratic assistant mayor and the Communist city councilor. Personal experiences during the Weimar era or in the Wehrmacht might do more to shape views of officers and ideas of what constituted a militarist than any political beliefs.

Still, when it came to “demilitarization” measures, former officers bore the brunt of the accusations and criticism. Whether American or German, the eyes of decision makers seeking to exclude militarists were likely to fall first on career military officers. Former officers sometimes hurt their own cause with unreasonable demands and a pronounced sense of entitlement, but this alone did not determine their treatment. Notably, particularly in the arenas of public administration and policing, German officials could be more reluctant to hire former officers than the Americans were, though it is not always clear whether this reluctance resulted from genuine worries about militarism, was a residue of old tensions from the Weimar era, or arose out of concern that the Americans would veto their choices. Beyond this, even when the March 1946 law broadened the

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<sup>280</sup> Intelligence Report No. 497, 4 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 92, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1947 [2].

<sup>281</sup> To Mr. Möller, 23 Jun 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Office of Military Government-Bavaria, Box 79, F: Militarism. Int. Brief #1 [1].

official description of a militarist, its implementation was bounded by presumptive categories that focused especially on military positions and activities.

On the whole, German attitudes toward the Wehrmacht and its former officers were far from uniform, consistent, and immutable, however. Common soldiers, despite sometimes perceiving themselves to be the object of persecution, were rather quickly absolved of any responsibility for the war and its horrors. Instead, former professional officers, and, above all, the Wehrmacht's leaders, endured the most pointed accusations. But while some Germans remained unfailingly critical of the men who had worn officer's braid, others steadily defended them, and still others tried to distinguish between blameworthy and honorable conduct. Jodl and Keitel were just good soldiers obeying orders, contended some. And even those inclined to condemn the two as war criminals were not always ready to allow an officer's soldierly honor to be disgraced by an unworthy method of execution. Denazification tribunals, moreover, were quite willing to dismiss even high-ranking generals without censure, so long as the testimony of their advocates confirmed that they conformed to the picture of the honorable German officer—disdainful of Nazism, innocent of war crimes, and viewed with respect and affection by his troops. Capable, loyal soldiers were neither criminals nor militarists.

Significantly, although asked to deal with it directly, German Spruchkammern paid very little attention to the issue of militarism as conceptualized by the Americans in pressing their demilitarization agenda. Holding the potential to encourage self-critical appraisal of German cultural practices and individual contributions to the onset of World War II, the March 1946 law stimulated neither. For both defendants and tribunals, true militarists were primarily only those who had abused their underlings and fought the war dishonorably, even criminally, at the side of the Nazis, perhaps helping to destroy Germany in the process. And the denazification tribunals did not identify many of these.

In the future, "militarists" would continue to be universally condemned, the activities of former military officers would be closely watched, and agitating for war would be taboo. But the impact of American-inspired exclusionary and punitive measures on the German people themselves was very limited.

Demilitarization efforts included a large dose of rhetoric and discussion, some action, and, clearly, genuine concern and good intentions on the part of individuals on both sides. At most, however, some lower-ranking career officers and NCOs were temporarily prevented from molding the thinking of others through their work and some of Germany's highest-ranking officers would be kept out of influential positions in German society



permanently. When push came to shove, few Germans were ready to judge their neighbor—whether a simple soldier, an officer, a government official, or a teacher—too severely. Asked to identify, exclude, and punish the militarists in their midst, the Germans for the most part declined.

## Chapter 5

### CARRYING THE IRON CROSS: THE AMERICANS, THE ALLIES, AND THE GERMAN OFFICER CORPS

“At first I moved around freely for weeks and was treated decently by the Americans (as long as they could use me),” wrote former Generalleutnant Hans von Donat in a September 1948 letter describing his immediate postwar experiences. In June 1945, he had been “suddenly, unexpectedly arrested” and delivered to a prisoner of war camp in Ochsenfurt, then moved to Moosburg, Neu-Ulm, Augsburg, and Garmisch. “The treatment,” he complained, “was horrific and insulting as well as grueling.” He had “almost starved to death and endured many severe illnesses” until finally, in June 1947, he was released and went to live with his elderly mother in Stuttgart. But his situation had remained difficult. Explained Donat:

I was incapable of working and then came down with a succession of other illnesses: jaundice, influenza, cystitis, inflammation of the gall bladder, and such. Because of this, I have remained incapable of working up to now and am badly off because of it. The currency reform [of June 1948] completely ruined me. I reside, penniless and roofless after the loss of my lovely residence, as a poor man with my old mother. With a lot of trouble, I have finally succeeded in obtaining the small 80DM monthly social security pension with which you are familiar. . . . It is simply horrific, how our dear *Volksgenossen* abandon us. The misery has now reached its upper limits. We can only survive by selling one piece after the other of our possessions. That can only continue for a few more months. And all of this, even though I have been denazified and declared “not incriminated”—thus completely blameless and baseless [*schuld- und grundlos*]. It is simply horrific.<sup>1</sup>

Written by one of several thousand officers held for two years or more by the Americans, Donat’s account points to a feature of occupied Germany that is often overlooked: the temporary empty spaces in German society. Until 1947, Germany’s leadership topography lacked not only former high-level Nazi officials, but also the majority of their military counterparts, men who, arguably, had generated more respect in certain nationalist and reactionary circles than their sometimes disdained civilian counterparts. Former high-ranking officers, moreover, were conspicuous in the earliest German discussions of “militarists” and “militarism” not because of any particularly shrewd or unpopular opinions they offered, but because they were

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<sup>1</sup> Hans von Donat to Herr Oberstleutnant i.G. a.D. R., 23 Sep 48, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv [BA-MA] N571 No. 506.

absent. They might submit an occasional missive of complaint or advice to German officials or Allied occupation authorities, but they were as a rule not part of any public dialogue.

Donat's letter also paints a picture other former elite officers would have recognized. At the end of World War II, the German officer corps was too large and too strained by the demands of war to be in any real sense homogenous, yet Donat's background and postwar experiences were not unique. Trained in the Kaiser's army and a veteran of the Weimar Republic's 100,000-man Reichswehr, Donat had served in a range of military capacities during the war, found himself unceremoniously deposited into an American prisoner of war enclosure at its conclusion, and waited impatiently for his release in a variety of American camps. Unhappy with his personal circumstances after finally achieving his freedom, he was typical, too, of men who churned with bitterness at their allegedly unjust treatment at the hands of the Allies and their German partners. Eventually, he would join fellow veterans in an insistent campaign to reverse the effects of Allied measures directed especially at Germany's high-ranking officers.

In recent decades, scholars have investigated the postwar experiences of men like Donat and other former officers and examined how they were successfully reintegrated into German society and a new democratic state. They have also studied these men within the complicated framework of issues relating to German rearmament and the reconstitution of a German military during the 1950s.<sup>2</sup> Outside of the arenas of Cold War diplomacy and rearmament negotiations, however, historians have asked many fewer questions about Allied thinking concerning Germany's former officers immediately after the war. Yet a closer look at quadripartite discussions in the late 1940s regarding the fate of these soldiers helps to explain both why the Allies detained them for as long as they did—thus incurring a great deal of resentment and criticism—and why, after years of vilifying the German officer corps as a virus infecting the German body politic with militarism, the Americans ultimately subjected former officers to so few long-term restrictions.

Overall, the Allies shared a commitment to demilitarization, in the sense of abolishing the Wehrmacht, negating the influence of soldiers in German society, and reducing their opportunities and ability to plan future wars. But this did not lead to easy decisions regarding the treatment of former officers. In fact, negotiations

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<sup>2</sup> See, among others, Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*; Large, *Germans to the Front*; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*; Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*; Foerster, *Von der Kapitulation bis zum Plevan Plan*; Fischer, *Entmilitarisierung und Aufrüstung*; and Kurt P. Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika: German Nationalism Since 1945* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1967).

pertaining to Germany's interned military elites dragged on for many months after May 1945, and what to do with Germany's former officers remained a point of sometimes heated contention virtually until the Allied Control Council collapsed in the spring of 1948, with the four Allied governments vacillating on the question of whether or not the Wehrmacht's high-ranking officers should be permanently interned and, if so, where, and disagreeing on whether or not, or to what extent, former officers should be allowed to serve in Germany's police forces or attend German universities.

Throughout, American officials repeatedly voiced their commitment to reducing the social standing of German officers and eliminating their ability to prepare for another war. But the fruits of this resolve varied, ranging from a relatively relaxed attitude toward the activities of most former officers to a steady stubbornness when it came to the payment of long-service pensions. American policies also changed in noticeable ways over time, with their flaws and unanticipated byproducts sometimes working to undermine the main objectives of the occupation.

### **Captivity**

For most of the Wehrmacht's elite officers, the frantic activity associated with defeat and capitulation rather rapidly gave way to several years of comparatively idle captivity. Classified by the Allies as Germany's leading militarists, the men were rounded up and put behind barbed wire where they would pose no danger to the occupying forces and could not influence their neighbors or make plans for a new war. Humiliated, isolated, and facing an uncertain future, Germany's general officers and general staff officers had no choice but to wait while the Allies decided their fate. For some like Donat, these experiences both heightened their sense of special suffering and substantially shaped their views of the Allies. Others ultimately made their peace with their former enemies and set about disseminating their own interpretation of the recent conflict—effectively undercutting the Allies' stated objectives in the process.

For Germany's officer corps, the waning months of World War II were its most taxing and exhausting. Multiple fronts disintegrated into rapid retreat and last-ditch efforts to fend off the Allies, senior officers worried about soldiers and civilians falling into Soviet hands, and Hitler's centralized government crumbled. Official surrender brought chaos, ignorance of conditions in other parts of Germany, uncertainty regarding the

future, and submission to enemy commanders.<sup>3</sup> As capitulation became reality, at least a few officers contemplated ways to outwit the Allies and spirit away weapons for future use. Others chose a different course and moved about in full uniform for weeks after May 8, helping to demobilize German troops as ordered by the Allies.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, more than one German officer was taken aback by the lack of respect shown to him by American officers. The cold greeting General der Kavallerie Siegfried Westphal received when first summoned by the U.S. Seventh Army was etched deeply into his memory. “Their officers entered the room we were waiting in, distinctly disrespectfully,” he remembered later, “both hands deeply buried in their pants pockets, as if they were glued there, without returning our salute, their partly martial, partly tormented gaze turned away while they spoke with us.”<sup>5</sup> Generalmajor Rudolf-Christoff Baron von Gersdorff recalled being invited with his own commander—whom he compared in rank to General George Patton—to the tent of an American division commander. The American had offered them a drink, commiserated regarding their fate, and was generally extremely amiable. When the Germans entered and left, however, he had not stirred from his position, relaxing in a field chair with his feet on a table. In his memoirs, Gersdorff reported that he had laughed about the situation at the time and later attributed the American’s behavior to the fact that he was a reserve officer who had had no intent to offend, but was simply behaving as he was used to behaving in civilian life. Gersdorff nevertheless saw fit to add that during the war he had often seen the Germans receive captured French and Russian generals with full military honors and according to established rules of military courtesy.<sup>6</sup>

In time, the discourteous Americans locked up all of Germany’s officers. While they began releasing lower-ranking officers who were not members of the general staff almost immediately,<sup>7</sup> the Wehrmacht’s elites met a different fate, as SHAEF’s April 1945 directive on internment called for detaining all general officers and

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<sup>3</sup> Ulrich de Maiziere, *In der Pflicht: Lebensbericht eines deutschen Soldaten im 20. Jahrhundert* (Herford: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 1989), 101-115; Siegfried Westphal, *Erinnerungen* (Mainz: v. Hase & Koehler, 1975), 343-349.

<sup>4</sup> Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 344-351.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 344.

<sup>6</sup> Rudolf-Christoph Frhr. von Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang* (Frankfurt am Main: Ulstein, 1977), 191. On the American treatment of German generals held captive in the United States during the war—and the far more deferential British treatment of German generals—see Arnold Krammer, “American Treatment of German Generals During War II,” *Journal of Military History* 54, No. 1 (1990): 27-46.

<sup>7</sup> Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 351.

all army general staff officers and their navy and air force equivalents. In demanding the automatic arrest of general staff officers amidst a throng of Germans of questionable political stripes, SHAEF specified that the detention of these military men was intended “not so much to punish them for misdeeds” as to prevent them from planning another war or plotting against the occupiers. The officers were therefore not to be interned with other security suspects or given the same treatment if it could be avoided.<sup>8</sup>

SHAEF’s blanket directive, combined with the language barrier, occasionally led to mistakes that took months to resolve. Pharmacists, paymasters, and doctors were among those rounded up with the general staff officers, thanks to official titles containing the prefix *Stab-* (staff), as in *Stabsapotheker*, *Stabszahlmeister*, or *Stabsarzt*.<sup>9</sup> The directive’s reach, moreover, was wide, encompassing all former as well as current general staff corps members.<sup>10</sup> Britain’s General Frederick Morgan, SHAEF’s deputy chief of staff, had specifically lobbied for the latter provision in April 1945, commenting: “Once a member of the German General Staff, always a member. And with the more senior surviving members there is always the danger of them being used as figureheads. Witness the case of Hindenburg.” He had added, too, that it was “of interest that we over-ran Field Marshal Von Mackensen yesterday or the day before.”<sup>11</sup> Whether this observation was meant to underline the urgency of a decision on the matter or to cite the elderly officer as a potential danger is unclear. It does, however, hint at the potential absurdity of the arrest policy, for the dangers posed by a 95-year-old Franco-Prussian War veteran who had first joined the German General Staff in 1891 would seem to have been slight. Nevertheless, as one interned general later noted, “the entire upper stratum of German military life found itself behind barbed wire; even generals at the age of 82, who had retired from active service long before 1933.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> W.B. Smith to ANCXF, et al, 29 Apr 45, NA, RG 331, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of German Military Staff.

<sup>9</sup> Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 604.

<sup>10</sup> Smith to ANCXF, et al, 29 Apr 45, NA, RG 331.

<sup>11</sup> F.E. Morgan to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, 16 Apr 45, NA, RG 331, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of German Military Staff. SHAEF had already stipulated that officers who had been members of the general staff at any time in their lives were to be excluded from important government and civil posts. SHAEF to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 24 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 3, F: AG 014.1 Military Government of Germany, Interim Directive for.

<sup>12</sup> Alfred Toppe, “The Story of a Project: The Writing of Military History at Allendorf and Neustadt,” in *World War II German Military Studies*, ed. Donald S. Detwiler, Vol. I (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), 16. It should be noted, however, that of more than 1,100 general staff officers (including those identified as members of the navy and air force) in U.S. custody in May 1946, just one was over 80 years old, just four were in their 70s (including Admiral Erich Raeder), and just a few others were in their late 60s. The vast majority of the men had been born in the 1880s and 1890s. “List of Senior Officers of the German General Staff Presently in U.S. Custody,” 1 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Bipartite Control Office [hereafter BICO], Box 490, F: Prisoners of War German Generals, Report of Activities of.

Life in American captivity, meanwhile, was an unwelcome new experience for the elite officers. Early on, the combined effects of a severe food shortage in Europe and the enormous quantity of POWs in American custody negatively affected their care, with hatred, disdain, and indifference on the part of U.S. camp commandants and guards also sometimes contributing to their suffering.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the Americans periodically shifted officers from one camp to another, transporting them to interrogation centers for questioning, sending them to Nuremberg to testify in war crimes trials, or simply moving them from enclosure to enclosure in keeping with changing logistical decisions. Gersdorff recalled that during his 31 months of captivity he spent time in no less than 15 different camps and prisons.<sup>14</sup> Modes of transport, moreover, varied greatly.<sup>15</sup> In early fall 1945, officers moved from a camp in France to a camp in Germany were herded into cattle cars, some without windows, some partially filled with manure, and spent nine days in transit, with all of the doors locked at night. One general afterward complained of harassment from military police en route and reported that the Americans had used rifle butts to hurry along officers who climbed into the cars too slowly. Another “shook with sobs” as he later told “how an American private had ripped off his iron cross in front of an unprotesting American officer.” To this German general, an American major later commented, “this meant more than if he had been physically tortured for hours.”<sup>16</sup>

Varying from facility to facility, officers’ accommodations could be extremely primitive, even degrading, and included temporary outdoor compounds, rough barracks built for war plant workers, and, with special purpose on the part of the Allies, former concentration camps such as Dachau.<sup>17</sup> In October 1945, according to the report of an American master sergeant employed by the U.S. Army’s Historical Section, 10 percent of the officers held temporarily at Neustadt were sleeping on the floor and three generals “had been shot

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<sup>13</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 291-296; Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 605; James F. Tent, “Food Shortages in Germany and Europe,” in *Eisenhower and the German POWs: Facts Against Falsehood*, ed. Günter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 101-109; Kenneth W. Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill: The 1945 Background on Interrogation of German Commanders,” in Detwiler, *World War II German Military Studies*, 23-24, 135-139, 162-163.

<sup>14</sup> Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 188. See also Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 351-384; Hans von Donat to Herr Oberstleutnant i.G. a.D. R., 23 Sep 48, BA-MA N571 No. 506.

<sup>15</sup> Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 354-355.

<sup>16</sup> Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 162-164.

<sup>17</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 27; Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 12; Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 604; Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 144-145, 163.

[at?—KJN], for reaching through the wire fence to gather weeds they might smoke as tobacco.” At Hersfeld, “twenty to thirty PWs were quartered in one room in triple decker beds, with enough room between the beds for a man to go through sideways.” The master sergeant found “even more striking . . . the camp order that every PW must run . . . to the latrine at night and the instructions to guards to shoot freely ‘to give them a hard time.’”<sup>18</sup> When in late November 1945 the Americans delivered several hundred officers to a former munitions plant facility at Allendorf, near Marburg, the camp comprised 17 one-story stone barracks with tar paper roofs. Former Generalmajor Alfred Toppe later reported that during the first winter at the facility

the heating problem was just barely solved by small deliveries of firewood which, at the most, provided some warmth once a day for from two to three hours. The food was very tasty but not at all in sufficient quantity. Consequently inmates had to get as much rest as possible if they wanted to conserve their strength. Medical care was rendered in the camp itself by captured medical officers who were hampered in their efforts by a lack of medicines, dressing, and other supplies. . . . None of the inmates had any means of communicating with their next of kin. . . . They were not permitted to send or receive any mail.<sup>19</sup>

By contrast, in early fall 1945 the Seventh Army Interrogation Center was “honeycombed with corruption,” but the generals there were, according to one American visitor, “reasonably happy with the rest of their treatment, their food, and the fact they could get home occasionally.”<sup>20</sup> Conditions also eventually improved for most other officers, while still leaving much to be desired, at least from their perspective. At Allendorf, for example, the internees received American clothing, increased rations, and the right to send mail, though only one letter and one postcard per month.<sup>21</sup>

Captivity could be psychologically as well as physically jarring, especially for men used to issuing orders. U.S. soldiers stripped former officers of watches and other valuables, sometimes derided them, and might threaten them with violence during interrogations.<sup>22</sup> “It has to be borne in mind that nearly all of these generals and general staff officers had either held positions of command—in some instances for many years—or had served as senior advisors and assistants of their military commanders,” Toppe argued, in discussing how different officers responded to their confinement: some developing a “form of psychosis,” others serving as a

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<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 162-163.

<sup>19</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 12-13.

<sup>20</sup> Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 136.

<sup>21</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 191; Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 17; Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 353-357, 373.



source of strength to their fellow internees. “The sudden termination of an independent job of great responsibility as well as the loss of their personal freedom constituted a blow of such magnitude, that it could not fail to produce a certain reaction.”<sup>23</sup>

Miserable conditions, a sense of humiliation, and anger at their American captors could be compounded by anxieties concerning families outside of the camp.<sup>24</sup> Toppe also pointed to yet another problem associated with captivity, namely, the condition of Germany. “For five and one-half years the German soldier had fought in good faith for his fatherland,” Toppe reminded.

Now it was dismembered and bleeding from many wounds, helplessly exposed to an unknown fate. The propaganda that was expounded in the newspapers and on their radio seemed to justify the worst fears. Malicious and dishonest elements proclaimed themselves the rightful representatives of the German people, and had the impunity of trying to impress on everybody a feeling of collective guilt. All those circumstances were indeed disheartening, and could lead to symptoms of mental depression.<sup>25</sup>

For men in a profession traditionally characterized by an ethos of national service, sitting on the sidelines was hard enough;<sup>26</sup> watching Germany evolve in an unwelcome direction made it that much more difficult for some.

Whether the officers interned at Allendorf spent much time contemplating the suffering of the laborers who had previously occupied their barracks, or brooded over the fate of those displaced, starved, frozen, demeaned, orphaned, or executed as a consequence of their military operations, Toppe does not say. Major Ulrich de Maiziere, held captive by the British, later indicated that at least some officers were forced to ponder their culpability for the carnage left by the Third Reich as a result of the initial Nuremberg war crimes trial, if not before.<sup>27</sup> But on the whole, evidence suggests former German officers were not particularly inclined to rigorously evaluate their own pasts.<sup>28</sup>

By contrast, American interrogators were very interested in learning more about the officers’ wartime activities, asking about their military decisions and about their relations with the Nazi regime.<sup>29</sup> Some were

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<sup>23</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> Westphal, *Erinnerungen*, 352; de Maiziere, *In der Pflicht*, 121; Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 17.

<sup>25</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 17.

<sup>26</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 63-73, 83-87.

<sup>27</sup> De Maiziere, *In der Pflicht*, 122-123.

<sup>28</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 82-92.

<sup>29</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 27-28.

concerned about other issues as well. Gersdorff remembered that his interrogators were “astonishingly well informed” about each person interviewed and knew about his own resistance activities.<sup>30</sup> Yet they were not especially curious about either the German resistance or military matters. “Mainly, they took pains to clarify the historical background of political developments in Germany,” he recalled. “The question thus turned up again and again, whether one was a Prussian or even a Prussian Junker.” Apparently, he added, “the Prussians and Prussian Junkers were more dangerous in their eyes than the Nazis themselves.”<sup>31</sup>

If those interned shared many experiences, camp life was not always harmonious. What an officer had to endure might be determined in part by how his views of the past compared with those of the dominant faction in his camp, which might be strongly Nazi or centered around men who held in contempt those who had been associated with the resistance. Petty arguments, stealing, disagreements over the Nuremberg trials, and criticism (sometimes accompanied by threats) of fellow internees’ actions in the field or their conduct following the July 20, 1944, attempt on Hitler’s life could all disrupt communal life and illuminate or deepen existing rifts within the officers corps.<sup>32</sup>

A unique relationship with their occupiers also quickly set apart a group of former officers who agreed to assist the Americans in drafting historical accounts of the Wehrmacht’s wartime activities. Already during the summer of 1945, U.S. Army historians preparing a history of the European war had solicited information from senior German officers regarding operations on the Western Front, and useful early returns eventually led to the creation of a full-scale program.<sup>33</sup> Evidently putting aside previous concerns about facilitating the intellectual endeavors of accused militarists, the Americans by June 1946 had recruited an impressive group of several hundred Wehrmacht officers, including the former chief of the German General Staff, Generaloberst Franz Halder, and two recipients of the Knight’s Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords, and Diamonds, Germany’s

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<sup>30</sup> Gersdorff had intended to commit suicide while killing Hitler with grenades. This March 1943 assassination attempt failed when Hitler’s schedule did not unfold as anticipated and Gersdorff therefore did not have time to carry out his plans.

<sup>31</sup> Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 193.

<sup>32</sup> De Maiziere, *In der Pflicht*, 123; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 26-27; Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 606-607.

<sup>33</sup> For several contemporary accounts of the emergence and activities of the Operational History (German) Section, see Donald S. Detwiler, ed., *World War II German Military Studies*, Vol. I (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979). For a recent assessment of the work of the section, see James A. Wood, “Captive Historians, Captivated Audience: The German Military History Program, 1945-1961,” *Journal of Military History* 69, No. 1 (2005): 123-147.

highest military honor. The Americans seemed to take great pleasure in having the latter in custody, Gersdorff noted later, quipping: “They collected highly decorated German soldiers like other people collect postage stamps.”<sup>34</sup>

Choosing to participate in the program could be a difficult decision, and some of the former colleagues of the men involved resented their cooperation with the enemy.<sup>35</sup> According to Gersdorff, he and others ultimately decided that working for the Americans represented their only chance to contribute to the writing of the history of World War II.<sup>36</sup> Military historian James Wood offers a somewhat less charitable view of their efforts—which, for some, extended into the early stages of the Cold War and through the 1950s—arguing that they “stemmed from the continuance of strongly anticommunist views . . . and a desire to overcome the tarnished reputation of the Wehrmacht, which the authors sought to disassociate from German leader Adolf Hitler, Nazism, and the SS.” Cooperating with the United States, he writes, “facilitated their success in producing a significant, influential, and arguably self-serving view of the war.”<sup>37</sup>

If present-day historians have pointed to the long-term achievements of these interned officers, their short-term gains were impressive as well. The new “Operational History (German) Section” eventually found a home at Allendorf, with a shuffling of internees ensuring that only those engaged in writing were housed there. Eager to obtain information regarding German strategy and operations and convinced that the former officers would be cooperative, forthcoming, and productive only if treated well, U.S. Army Historical Section personnel intentionally handled the men with respect, did favors for them, and upgraded their living conditions.<sup>38</sup> Special privileges included relaxed mail restrictions, the right to receive visitors, guarded weekly excursions outside the

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<sup>34</sup> Theodore W. Bauer, Oliver J. Frederiksen, and Ellinor F. Anspacher, “The Army Historical Program in the European Theater and Command, 8 May 1945-31 December 1950,” in Detwiler, *World War II German Military Studies*, 52-53; Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 200. Some in the Historical Section at least initially opposed the idea of gleaning information from German generals. Major Kenneth Hechler, who was a driving force behind the program during the summer and fall of 1945, recalled colleagues who criticized his friendly approach to General Walter Warlimont, calling the officer “a filthy Nazi who cannot be trusted farther than you can throw a piano.” Another who resisted the idea of interviewing Wehrmacht generals, commented: “Do you think this is a football game we have been through? Are we supposed to shake hands and just treat them like good sports?” Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 89, 105.

<sup>35</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 18; Meyer, “Soldaten ohne Armeem,” 697; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 26-27.

<sup>36</sup> Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 194-195.

<sup>37</sup> Wood, “Captive Historians,” 125.

<sup>38</sup> Hechler, “The Enemy Side of the Hill,” 110-111, 142-151, 161-165.

camp, and 14-day leaves. For officers who passed through the camp, the deluxe accommodations could serve as an incentive to write slowly.<sup>39</sup>

Appreciating the improved treatment, some German officers—perhaps predictably under the circumstances—also approved of the Americans with whom they worked. Gersdorff pointed out that among the many U.S. officers he had come across after the war, he had encountered the “best type” at Allendorf. The “frictionless and almost friendly collaboration” that characterized the work there, he noted, resulted above all from the fact that the Americans were “without exception . . . excellent soldiers and gentlemen” characterized by correct behavior, broad education, and amiability. “Some of them,” he added, “were active soldiers who had been educated at West Point and could have come out of guard regiments of the British or Prussian army.”<sup>40</sup> Complimenting a captain who had helped to administer the program and address German complaints, Toppe similarly described the man as “an exponent and shining example of the American officers’ corps whose professional outlook and moral code were like our own.”<sup>41</sup> While comparisons with Prussian and Wehrmacht soldiers may have pleased some Americans, others certainly would have shuddered at the association. Official U.S. policy, after all, presumed an elemental difference between the German officer corps and its American counterpart, a presumption reflected in the very fact that the former were interned. German officers (and some Americans, as well) missed this point, chose to overlook it, or simply dismissed it as invalid—a position encapsulated in an aphorism making the rounds of the POW camps: “A militarist is a professional soldier who has lost a war.”<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the sympathetic Americans overseeing the program at Allendorf, the interned German officers had certain advocates at USFET, the headquarters of U.S. Forces, European Theater, which operated the internment camps. In April 1946, USFET officials prepared a staff study proposing that many of the general staff officers be released. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recently had agreed to the release of all Germans in

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<sup>39</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 22-23, 28-29. For a more detailed, if somewhat anecdotal, account of the internment experiences and relationships of the men involved the U.S. history program, see P.A. Spayd, *Bayerlein: From Afrikakorps to Panzer Lehr. The Life of Rommel’s Chief-of-Staff Generalleutnant Fritz Bayerlein* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 2003), Chapter 8.

<sup>40</sup> Gersdorff, *Soldat im Untergang*, 195.

<sup>41</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 18.

<sup>42</sup> Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 615n81.

“automatic arrest” categories not indicted at Nuremberg.<sup>43</sup> Since prosecutors had not indicted the entire general staff corps, USFET officials suggested that the remainder should be let go. They supported this proposal, further, by arguing that demilitarization in Germany had progressed to such an extent that there were no security objections to impede the move. The interned officers, moreover, were highly capable men whose abilities were needed in Germany, but “sterilized by internment.” At the same time, their minds were being “poisoned against the occupying Power by an apparent injustice.”<sup>44</sup>

OMGUS officials shot down this idea, however. The staff of OMGUS’s Armed Forces Division maintained that the general staff officers were, of course, not a *current* security threat, but rather a *future* one, due to their training and skills. Colonel H. G. Sheen, head of OMGUS’s counterintelligence operations, was even more emphatic. The general staff had kept alive “German military tradition” even before Nazism came along. Its continued interest in and study of military matters had helped Germany maintain a skilled Reichswehr and staff the Wehrmacht’s highly competent officer corps. Arrest, he stressed, now prevented general staff officers from circulating in German society and exercising “such influence as their education and previous prestige would naturally command.” They were indeed capable men, but their capabilities lay in the area of military affairs and were “not those which are most needed in Germany today.” In fact, he argued, their abilities were “today the very thing which, under the Potsdam Agreement and the general aims of the occupation, we are trying to prevent from being exercised.” Therefore, the longer these were “sterilized,” the better the chances for a successful occupation would be. Far from worrying about “poisoning” their minds, he believed that the “alienation of this small group cannot be considered any more harmful than many Military Government regulations or even the acts of American occupying forces toward producing an unfavorable mental attitude on the part of a much larger element of the population.” After all, he added, “it can hardly be expected that the Germans will be pleased with all of the necessary directives of the occupying powers.” To release the unindicted general staff officers was essentially to ignore the lessons of history and to court danger. The chairman of OMGUS’s Intelligence Coordinating Committee, meanwhile, suggested that implementing the staff study “would result in serious and widespread political repercussions in the United States and other

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<sup>43</sup> Plischke, “Denazification Law and Procedure,” 812; Thos. B. Whitted, Jr., to C/S, 20 Apr 46, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 799, F: German General Staff Corps; de Maiziere, *In der Pflicht*, 122. The official indictment named only the highest levels of the general staff and military commands.

<sup>44</sup> Whitted, Jr., to C/S, 20 Apr 46, and attachments, NA, RG 260.

countries.” The OMGUS organizations also reminded that quadripartite talks were still underway concerning Germany’s general staff officers and urged that the U.S. not act unilaterally, but instead wait until the Allies as a group had decided what to do with the men.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to forming a bridge between the Americans who had physical control of Germany’s former officers and the men involved in deciding their fate within the Allied Control Authority, the OMGUS responses draw attention to an irony of the evolving—or conflicted—U.S. position regarding Germany’s former military elites. SHAEF instructions had insisted that general staff officers should be not only taken into preventative custody, but also denied access to their files, in order to deter any study of the recent war and any planning for a future one.<sup>46</sup> A year later, many MG officials were clearly still worried that these elite officers might become the organizers and brains of a future German army. Yet because of the U.S. Army history program, a sizeable number of the presumed militarists in American captivity were actually being invited to become students of the last war and would eventually turn into advisors for the next one. The Allendorf initiative thus sheds at least some doubt on American professions of a commitment to containing the threat posed by former German officers, although prolonged captivity and close monitoring can be cited as expressions of continuing concern.

Appraising the internment program as a whole, historians have picked up on de Maiziere’s observation that German officers deepened their personal relationships and established new networks while in the camps,<sup>47</sup> developments which actually worked against Allied efforts to prevent veterans from setting up subversive organizations or making contacts for dubious purposes after their release. In addition, scholars have noted that humiliating treatment, confinement of uncertain duration, and sometimes dreadful living conditions in the camps stimulated hostile feelings toward the Allies which later complicated efforts to secure the former officers’ support for German rearmament. Viewed retrospectively, both are valid criticisms of Allied measures; yet they consider events through the lens of later events—the founding of soldiers’ organizations and right-leaning political coalitions and the rearmament initiatives of the early 1950s. In 1945 and 1946, by contrast, U.S. officials were not necessarily troubled by in-camp networking. Nor were all of them worried about

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> T.N. Grazebrook to Captain H.D. Owen, 11 Feb 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff.

<sup>47</sup> De Maiziere, *In der Pflicht*, 129; Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 52-53; Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 577.

provoking German resentment. There were no plans to rearm Germany. In addition, for at least a year after the end of the war, there was no guarantee that the interned officers would ever *be* released, in which case any bonding or bitterness fostered by the camps would be of little importance.

### **The Allies and the Fate of the Officer Corps**

For many months, then, Germany's former elite officers remained in limbo and chafing at their lengthy internment and uncertain status while American administrators and quadripartite committees considered their future. Here, Allied perceptions of the German officer corps as a vital force in perpetuating German militarism again directly affected their fate. The passing months also eventually brought relief, however. For they saw a gradual evolution of Allied policy proposals that ultimately worked to the former officers' advantage, slowly improving their prospects for the future and finally resulting in the outright release of all but a comparatively small number of them still in Soviet captivity or convicted of war crimes.

#### *American Recommendations for Controlling Germany's Military Elites*

In late spring 1945, SHAEF officials had dutifully issued instructions to round up Germany's military elites for internment. Yet at the time no one really knew what would eventually become of the men. No Allied government had announced an official opinion on the subject and a quadripartite control authority was still being organized.<sup>48</sup> The earliest months of the occupation therefore saw the preparation of a number of proposals for handling the officers.

Certain SHAEF planners, for instance, identified "an unprecedented opportunity of utterly destroying the root of German militarism – the German General Staff Corps – and of neutralizing the potential danger of

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<sup>48</sup> An early tripartite discussion of the possible fate of Germany's officers was also the most sensational. During the Teheran Conference in late 1943, Josef Stalin, over dinner, observed to Winston Churchill and Roosevelt that the German General Staff needed to be eradicated and proposed the execution of 50,000 German officers. Arieh Kochavi describes what happened next as follows: "Churchill responded sharply . . . saying that Parliament and the British public would never countenance mass killings like that. Roosevelt broke into the conversation and facetiously suggested a compromise: 49,000. At this point the president's son Elliot expressed enthusiastic support of Stalin's plan and conjectured that the U.S. Army would support it. Furious, Churchill left the room. Stalin, accompanied by Molotov, ran after the British prime minister to calm him down. Despite their explanation that they had only been joking, Churchill later wrote in his memoirs: 'Although I was not then, and am not now, fully convinced that all was chaff and there was no serious intent lurking behind, I consented to return, and the rest of the evening passed pleasantly.'" Kochavi points out that it is impossible to know whether Stalin was serious, but speculates, on the basis of Stalin's "low view of the value of human life," his track record, and German treatment of the Soviets during the war, that the dictator "was indeed expressing his true feelings." *Prelude to Nuremberg*, 63-64.

the General Officers of the German Army” and advocated exiling and imprisoning them for life.<sup>49</sup> Some of their colleagues argued that this tactic would be unacceptable to the British and American governments.<sup>50</sup> And, in the end, SHAEF officials conceded that the decision was not theirs to make anyway, but a quadripartite matter.<sup>51</sup>

In the meantime, American military authorities had begun to discuss Germany’s officers as a variegated collection of men warranting different kinds of treatment. A late June 1945 study produced by the staff of the USGCC’s Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC)<sup>52</sup> departed noticeably from many ideas then in circulation. In typical fashion, the JIC staff first dissected Germany’s history, tracking the influence of former military officers in multiple facets of German life during the Weimar Republic. Free Corps radicalism, early conversion to Nazism by some, destabilization of the republican government, and unwavering commitment to re-establishing a large German army which would help them to reclaim their own status were among the more damaging achievements attributed to officers who had emerged from World War I “humiliated and embittered,” threatened by social and political forces inimical to their own interests, and often forced into “pursuits that did not carry with them the dignity to which these men, as officers, were accustomed.”<sup>53</sup>

Significant was the report’s partial reliance—to the point of lifting entire phrases—on the October 1943 study on Prussian militarism Herbert Marcuse and Felix Gilbert had written for the Office of Strategic Services.<sup>54</sup> The JIC staff’s appraisal of the officer corps was thus comparatively nuanced, tracing the gradual decline of “Prussian noble” influence within the German armed forces during the Third Reich and the related

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<sup>49</sup> K.W.D. Strong to Chief of Staff, 27 Apr 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 30, F: 387.4/1 Armistice, Control & Disposal of German Armed Forces, Vol. II.

<sup>50</sup> H.E. Kessinger to G-3, G-5, 2 May 45, *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> John Counsell to Chief, Future Plans, 6 May 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 92, F: 388.4-1 Disposal of the German Military Staff; “Disposal of Officers of German General Staff and Other Officers of the Grade of General,” 5 Jun 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 26, Box 30, F: 387.4/1 Armistice, Control & Disposal of German Armed Forces, Vol. III.

<sup>52</sup> The Joint Intelligence Committee was made up of the “Director of Intelligence, as Chairman, the Chief of the OSS Mission to Germany, and the Chiefs of the Intelligence Branches of the Army (Ground), Air, Naval, Political, Economics, and Finance Divisions.” According to its charter, it “constitute[d] the senior U.S. positive intelligence authority in Germany.” Betts to Deputy Military Governor, 6 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 295, F: USGCC Joint Intell. Committee Meetings, 1945.

<sup>53</sup> JIS(UsGpCC)2, 25 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, Executive Office, Control Office, Box 295, F: USGCC Joint Intell Committee Report ‘German Officer Corps’ (25 Jun 45).

<sup>54</sup> See Chapter 2. This was perhaps not entirely surprising given the fact that the Chief of the OSS Mission to Germany was one of the committee’s members.



broadening social base of the officer corps and more Nazified outlook of many of the younger officers. Most startling was the penultimate paragraph of the report's historical section. "The success of the Nazis in all three services is evident," it observed.

Incidents where officers and men alike fought with a fanaticism almost comparable to that of the Japanese are numerous. Blinded by Nazi propaganda, they carried on long after their cause was hopelessly lost. In the late stages of the war they built mobile courts in true SS style to try and execute stragglers on the spot. All this took place while the traditional Prussian noble was forced to stand by and watch the German war machine, Prussia and Germany being pulverized. The failure of the attempt to assassinate Hitler in the summer of 1944 weakened his position still more, and he was unable to engineer any activity that could have brought the war to a quicker end.

In addition to acquitting Prussian nobles of Nazi sentiments, this rather remarkable assessment introduced a Prussian Junker who was not only no longer a contemptible, all-powerful influence, but who had ended the war as a bewildered bystander to Germany's glorious collapse into death and destruction.<sup>55</sup>

In keeping with this evaluation, the JIC staff argued that the officer corps comprised three types of men: reserve officers, traditional Prussian nobles "whose position already has been weakened by events," and younger officers "likely to have been profoundly influenced by the Nazi party." The last group was particularly worrisome as "Nazi characteristics added to those of the Prussian tradition" would likely "intensify the lack of scruples in the fanatical pursuit of objectives." And it was the latter two groups who elicited the most concern: "These officers know only the art of war. Their prestige will be broken, and at best they can only become a dissatisfied and potentially dangerous element in Germany."<sup>56</sup>

Ultimately, the JIC staff concluded that "the entire German officer corps, by training, disposition, and ability, is characterized by leadership qualities which can most seriously jeopardize the total demilitarization of Germany." However, the JIC staff also contended that German officers had "qualities which must be available to Germany if Germany is ever to be rehabilitated and reorganized along democratic lines," adding that "much, therefore, depends on background and ability to fit into a normal society." The officer's "usefulness in rebuilding Germany" had to be "balanced against security." The JIC staff accordingly divided regular and reserve officers into five general categories and recommended specific measures for each. It supported exile for general staff officers and control measures for all other officers, including fingerprinting, weekly or monthly reporting to Allied authorities, and the obligation to remain in Germany. Key criteria for differentiating between

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<sup>55</sup> JIS(UsGpCC)2, 25 Jun 45, NA, RG 260.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

categories were whether an individual had less or more than five years experience as a civilian employee and whether the Allies had banned his former work.<sup>57</sup> Thus, rather than relying exclusively on arbitrary categories of rank to separate “the sheep from the goats,” as the report’s writers once put it, they offered a rather practical approach that asked whether an officer might reasonably be expected to be satisfied as a civilian employee in a job that did not threaten world peace.

While the JIC report apparently exerted little direct impact on U.S. policy,<sup>58</sup> the USGCC’s Army (Ground) Division circulated a more influential staff study a month later. Like their JIC counterparts, the study’s authors differentiated between types of German officers, though their methodology was different and their assumptions more traditional. Specifically, they proposed development of “a sound, simple method” to decide who might be dangerous, a task made difficult by the fact that dangerous officers were “scattered throughout the German services” and posed a threat not because of their positions but because of their “personal potentialities.” To meet this challenge, the study’s authors presented a “set of ‘specifications’” to use in placing each individual.<sup>59</sup>

Despite a desire to evaluate each case on its own merits, the study’s authors went on to describe two groups defined partially by rank. “Group I” encompassed officers

considered to be the most potentially dangerous for the next 15 years in that they are the men who if not controlled, are so imbued with German militarism that they will plot and plan for the re-establishment of German military power and who have the capabilities of putting such plans into effect. They will be the choosers of future leaders, the planners of future strategy, the teachers of future tactics, and the potential commanders. They are the officers of all ages who have been the most successful in their age groups and who therefore enjoy the most prestige. These officers are to be found in all components and all services.

In particular, this meant all generals and general staff officers, their air force and navy equivalents, and “Other Officers of Marked Potential Danger.” The latter category included the “most active and promising officers” in the German military who would have been indoctrinated early into German military tradition “usually as a

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. The head of the USGCC’s Army (Ground) Division indicated at one point that the topic was “not a matter for JIC.” The analysis of the officer corps presented in the study did reappear in condensed form in a JIC paper prepared in September 1945 recommending that the USGCC’s Division of Public Safety prepare a plan for the control of “German Personnel with Qualifications of Future War Potential”. See JIC(USGpCC)8/2, 25 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 15, F: AG 334 Joint Intelligence Committee Combined Intelligence Objective Sub-Committee. For more on the Division of Public Safety’s recommendations, see below.

<sup>59</sup> R.W. Barker to The Deputy Military Governor, 9 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism.

result of birth and position” and would generally have had “military training since early youth.” Their activities prior to September 1939 would constitute “a valuable indication,” while their wartime “assignments, rapidity of promotion, decorations, and other indications of zeal and of outstanding performance in their age groups” would give evidence of their promise. Age or rank would not be determinative, the study’s authors cautioned, though many would be between 25 and 35 years old.<sup>60</sup>

Alternatively, Group II comprised officers whose “military capabilities and tendencies” made them potentially dangerous, but less so than those in Group I. Here, the report writers pointed to career officers, including pensioners; mid-rank officers and above who had served on army staffs “at Wehrkreis, army or higher headquarters” level or in similar positions in the air force or navy “unless, after investigation, they are determined not to be potentially dangerous;” and other officers whom zone commanders thought should be controlled in some fashion.<sup>61</sup>

Considering disposition, the authors discussed three alternatives: establishing groups or colonies of officers in isolated locations outside of Germany (“exile of the ‘St. Helena’ nature”); dispersing the officers, either as individuals or in groups, and monitoring them carefully in territory under Allied control; or permitting the officers to remain in Germany, but subject to severe restrictions and careful surveillance. Although SHAEF officials had for months promoted the idea of exile, the Army (Ground) Division staffers dismissed not only the idea of exile but that of dispersal as well.<sup>62</sup>

Exile, they argued, would successfully cut the officers off from any accomplices, but the immense “political difficulties” involved in making the necessary arrangements raised doubts about the plan’s feasibility. They wondered whether the western powers would commit to such a long range policy and worried that the case of the officers would become a “cause celebre” in Allied countries. The situation, they suggested, might actually hurt the whole demilitarization program. Removing “the outstanding figures of German militarism” might also enable American isolationists to press for the reduction or “untimely withdrawal” of Allied occupation forces with the argument that Germany had been made militarily harmless. As importantly, exile would “almost inevitably” make the officers “heroes and martyrs” in German eyes. “Just as Napoleon at St.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

Helena came to be, for France, a symbol of her vanished glory and the focal point of hopes for future greatness, so might the hope of all Germany be turned to these men ‘suffering martyrdom for their loyal service to the Reich.’” Moreover, if the Allies later changed their policy, “the Germans would have won a political and moral victory.”<sup>63</sup>

The writers of the study concluded that the disadvantages of exile also applied to the idea of dispersal, though to a lesser extent. Less likely to create martyrs, the policy also probably conflicted with present immigration laws, at least in the United States. The authors speculated, further, that the program would gradually break down in the face of “the political and social assaults to be expected” and that it would be “most difficult” to prevent the officers’ eventual return to Germany.<sup>64</sup>

Given this thinking, the staff recommended that Group I, “the ‘elite’ of the militarists” be held in Germany, but forbidden to leave the country, change their domicile without permission, hold elective or appointed office, or assume positions “on the public payroll . . . above that of laborer.” Additionally, they should be compelled to report periodically to local occupation officials, with their homes subject to unannounced searches, their communications censored, their activities closely monitored, and their occupations approved by military government authorities—a provision designed to prevent officers from securing jobs with “the larger firms” that would enable them “to build up covertly military staffs, conduct research or otherwise prepare for a military resurgence in Germany.” Officers falling in Group II might also return home, where they would be closely monitored, forbidden to hold public office, limited in their occupational options, and required to report regularly to local military government officials.<sup>65</sup> Provided these restrictions received extensive publicity, the study’s authors believed Allied public opinion would be happy to “solv[e] German problems in Germany rather than distributing them all over the world” and that the plan would afford “a fitting disposition” of the officers “before the eyes of other Germans.” The plan also had the best chance of “withstanding assault by proponents of a softer policy” because it would not be as visible and did not “lend itself to attack on moral and social grounds.” The writers concluded by suggesting that the Allies not release Group I officers until the Wehrmacht’s demobilization had been “essentially completed,” while the more numerous Group II members

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

still in custody might be let go in the course of the demobilization program to help ease demands on food and housing.<sup>66</sup>

Circulated within the USGCC, the study met with certain objections. Most significantly, officials from the Office of the Director of Intelligence cited an insufficient supply of surveillance personnel and argued that clandestine activities would be “inevitable.” The German officers would be able to track new scientific and technical developments and, after U.S. troops withdrew in a few years, would be able to carry out their secret plans. “It is a trait of German character to pay homage to a military clique,” the intelligence staff maintained. “Their memories are short when it comes to defeats suffered and they can readily be expected to fall into line behind any powerful minority which typifies a rebirth of the military spirit.” Conversely, removing these potential leaders would greatly reduce the possibility of a revival of German militarism. Intelligence officials therefore called for “banishment of the St. Helena type.” Officers should be permitted to take their families along, but should not be released until age 70, with no officer released before 1960.<sup>67</sup>

Taking a considerably different tack, the staff of the Office of the Director of Political Affairs—consistent with an approach to denazification that put the needs of reconstruction ahead of demands for a thorough cleansing of Nazis—argued that potentially dangerous men with no useful occupation would undoubtedly “attempt subrosa propagation of militarism” and undermine Allied control or that of a new German government. A “program of rehabilitation to useful pursuits” should thus accompany restrictions “to provide an insurance policy for the period following Allied military occupation.” Legal Division director Charles Fahy, meanwhile, wanted to ensure that, per American policies stated in JCS 1067 and the Potsdam agreement, plans for the general staff were intended to accomplish the Allied goal of permanently eliminating German militarism and not “as a punishment for acts committed during the war.” Officers who had “committed offences against the laws of war” he assumed would be “tried and punished in due course.”<sup>68</sup>

While agreeing to incorporate a reference to a rehabilitation program, the director of the Army (Ground) Division countered the Intelligence Division’s objections by asserting that the proposed control system would make any clandestine activities “innocuous.” He suggested, too, that economic and political

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

changes made during the occupation would reduce the security threat the officers posed after the Americans left.<sup>69</sup>

In the end, this staff study came to serve as the starting point for embryonic American talks with the other occupation powers regarding German officers. In early September, the United States submitted a streamlined version of its recommendations to the Allied Control Authority's Military Directorate for quadripartite consideration.<sup>70</sup>

#### *A Quadripartite Policy for Potentially Dangerous Officers*

American staffers expected that they would more easily get their allies to agree to a policy of strict control and surveillance than to one of exile or dispersal.<sup>71</sup> But they were wrong. As the American delegate later reported, during the Military Directorate's first discussion of the U.S. proposal, the British, French, and Soviets voiced "a strong objection" to potentially dangerous officers being held *in* Germany. The British instead recommended that all generals and admirals, all general staff officers (from the army, navy, and air force), and "any other officers who, as a result of investigation are militarily dangerous in any way" be held outside of Germany for "a number of years." The Soviets and French had "welcomed" this initiative.<sup>72</sup>

Despite the original U.S. position, Clay subsequently told the American delegate that he would be willing to consider and to forward to Washington "a sane and practicable" exile plan.<sup>73</sup> And for the next few months, the directorate pursued just this course, attempting to refine categories, define treatment, and determine what an exile program might look like in practical terms. In these negotiations, U.S. delegates stressed that isolation of the officers should be a preventative, not punitive action. The directorate should devise only those control measures necessary to avert a resurgence of militarism and should not recommend punishments. Thus, for example, the individuals affected should be able to bring their wives and children along, and their standard

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> DMIL/P(45)6, 5 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 435, F: DMIL/P(45)1-29.

<sup>71</sup> Barker to The Deputy Military Governor, 9 Aug 45, NA, RG 260.

<sup>72</sup> Vincent Meyer to Chief of Staff, 18 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 6, F: AG 091.711 Army & Navy (German). He also reported that although the British put the total number of people to be affected at about 3,000, American estimates put the figure at possibly twice this.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

of living should not be below that of average workers in their country of residence. Penalties for war crimes would be meted out elsewhere and would take precedence over or modify any exile program.<sup>74</sup> Clay himself evidently questioned this emphasis at one point. "I fear we are being a little too conservative," he commented to an American negotiator, adding that he was "not worried about such a careful distinction between control and punishment."<sup>75</sup> Whether the delegate managed to convince Clay that the difference was important or U.S. officials simply proceeded without his explicit endorsement is not clear. American MG officers nevertheless continued to make the distinction.

On the whole, Clay's willingness to consider a feasible exile plan for some of Germany's officers was in line with the thinking of the State Department and Secretary of State James Byrnes, who also told Clay's political advisor that any restrictions on other former officers who remained in Germany and any rehabilitation efforts should ultimately produce "a stable situation" that could be maintained by a future German government.<sup>76</sup> But some U.S. officials in Germany were more skeptical of the tenor of current Allied plans. In a paper describing a system for controlling "persons qualified to rebuild Germany's military capacity" who did not fall in arrest categories, including not just military officers but also members of aircraft crews, Germans with doctorates in technical and scientific fields, those who had assisted Germany's guided missile program, and "more than nominal Nazis," OMGUS Public Safety Division officials resurrected the arguments of the original Army (Ground) Division study regarding the political obstacles confronting an exile policy. Desiring efficacious control measures that were also "reasonable, just and realistic," they proposed that the most dangerous officers be prohibited from voting or holding public office; excluded from all employment other than "ordinary labor"; permitted to entertain no more than five persons in their homes at one time; required to submit periodic reports on their activities; and subject to a curfew, mail censorship, residence and travel restrictions, and regular visits from monitors.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> DMIL/Committee(45)2, 20 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46); DMIL/Committee(45)9, 5 Oct 45, *ibid.*; DMIL/P(45)18, 13 Oct 1945, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 426, F: DMIL/Papers 1945.

<sup>75</sup> DMIL/P(45)18, 13 Oct 1945, NA, RG 260.

<sup>76</sup> Secretary of State to Murphy, 19 Oct 45, *FRUS, 1945* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1968), 4:987-988.

<sup>77</sup> "Control of German Personnel," n.d. [received by Legal Division 7 Nov 45], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 448, F: Control Program of Armed Forces Personnel. By March 1946, this proposal was "dead," presumably because of the new denazification law. See P.E. to Mr. Rockwell, 2 Mar [46], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Legal Division, Box 52, F: LA 26.1 Denazification Board.

Clay's political advisor, State Department official Robert Murphy, no doubt thought even the Public Safety Division went too far. Contributing to a broader contemporary debate concerning the impact of denazification on the German economy, Murphy maintained that measures to control Germany's war-making capacity "should be as simple and inexpensive of energy as will be compatible with effectiveness." He advocated "undertak[ing] no controls not readily defensible as absolutely essential, as economically enforceable, and as compatible with peacetime justice." Among other things, he thus advised that general staff officers continue to be held "pending further study," but that "no special restrictions" be placed on other former officers, save possibly exclusion from police forces.<sup>78</sup>

In late October 1945, a Military Directorate subcommittee wrapped up two months of work by agreeing to a concrete plan for handling potentially dangerous Germans.<sup>79</sup> Containing more categories than the original American staff study, the subcommittee's proposal also relied more on rank and position as determining factors. Category I thus encompassed primarily high-ranking officers, including the German General Staff, all general officers, and officers who had commanded a division or something equivalent. Included, too, were officers who had served in the Air Ministry and "all officers known to be, or who may later be known as particularly dangerous, in particular the principal officers of the Intelligence Services." Because the directorate had temporarily been assigned responsibility for also deciding the fate of members of Germany's paramilitary organizations (it would be divested of this soon thereafter) Category I also contained high-ranking officers from the SS, Hitler Youth, and other paramilitary groups. Assigned to Category II were mid-level paramilitary organization officers. Category III included "all regular officers of Land, Air and Naval Forces not affected by the measures in Category I" and, unless they were deemed "not particularly dangerous," "all reserve officers who have served at any time, with the rank of Major or above on the General Staffs of the Wehrkreis, of the Army or above" and their equivalents in the navy and air force, as well as air force *Beamten* (civilian officials), officers and NCOs of air crews, and low-ranking officers and high-ranking NCOs of paramilitary organizations. All officers and air force *Beamten* not assigned to another category who had "served at any time

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<sup>78</sup> Murphy to the Secretary of State, 12 Oct 45, *FRUS, 1945*, 4:979-980. Murphy's office, in fact, called for very few restrictions on any of the types of individuals under discussion as possible contributors to Germany's future capacity to make war. It is worth noting that only in the case of military officers did Byrnes call for a substantial modification of Murphy's recommendations.

<sup>79</sup> DMIL/Committee(45)16, 31 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46).



since 1936, except in the case of persons recognized as innocuous through age or incapacity,” would fall into Category IV, along with “regular NCOs of the Land, Air and Naval Forces, considered particularly dangerous” and low-ranking paramilitary NCOs.<sup>80</sup>

The study also proposed four types of treatment. Persons assigned to Category I would be exiled for “an indefinite period” and permitted to return to Germany only when they turned 70 and then only after 1960. The men would live in isolated locations under guard, but in places where they could do “productive work,” with their living conditions—including not only clothing and housing, but medical attention, religious activities, and recreation—“on a footing equivalent to that of the average working man of the detaining power.” Their “principal occupation” was to be “manual labor” and they might not teach or write books. However, their wives and minor children would be allowed to accompany them, with the latter given the chance to receive a democratic education. Men in Category II would be interned inside Germany. Individuals assigned to Categories III and IV could face restraints such as the loss of voting rights, limits on freedom of movement, and reporting requirements. In addition, they would be barred from occupying important public positions, serving as teachers or professors, organizing any clubs, societies, or associations, or becoming members of any of those groups.<sup>81</sup>

The subcommittee’s final product, therefore, envisioned an extensive, relatively severe set of measures reaching deep into the officer corps and, beyond this, to non-commissioned officers. Realistic in its recognition that the Wehrmacht’s senior ranks would not have a monopoly on a desire for revenge, or even on military skills, the breadth of the measures was nonetheless extraordinary. Certain to require watchful eyes in nearly every sizeable German community, the challenges and costs of implementation and enforcement would have been enormous. Moreover, its impact on the attitudes of those affected, and probably many of their neighbors as well, could hardly have been positive. Remarkable, too, is the fact that Allied military officers were actively involved in formulating such a plan for their German counterparts.<sup>82</sup> It is impossible to know if exasperation,

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<sup>80</sup> DMIL/Committee(45)17, 2 Nov 45, *ibid*.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>82</sup> Clay was a career military officer, as was the head of OMGUS’s Armed Forces Division, General Robert Harper, a 45-year-old West Point graduate. On the latter, see “Lieutenant General Robert W. Harper,” Biography Database, U.S. Air Force Library, <http://www.af.mil/bios/bio.asp?bioID=5716>. The American representative at the meetings of the subcommittee that developed the plan was Colonel Thomas B. Whitted, Jr., while Colonel F. M. Albrecht typically served as the official U.S. delegate to the directorate meetings during the fall of 1945. As of August 1945, Albrecht was heading the

fear, a desire for revenge, or the weight of public opinion most influenced their decisions—most likely some combination of all four—but the depth of feeling on the part of at least some Allied officers six months after the war’s end seems obvious. If there was any additional evidence needed that German officers were no longer considered members in good standing of a “fraternity of arms,” this document fulfills that purpose.

In the months that followed, however, its tough and expansive provisions were rapidly watered down. In late October, Major General Robert Harper, head of the Armed Forces Division of OMGUS (the USGCC’s successor) sent information to Clay regarding the exile plan likely to be approved by the directorate, so that Clay might discuss it with officials in Washington. In doing so, Harper also reported that the British delegate had now informed him informally that he did not think his government would endorse the principle of exile. Harper added, nevertheless, that “it appears desirable to us to go ahead with this program.”<sup>83</sup>

Washington’s policymakers—most likely the JCS, above all—had different ideas.<sup>84</sup> Clay therefore subsequently instructed American officials in Berlin to seek quadripartite agreement on interning the most dangerous Germans in Germany.<sup>85</sup> In mid November, the American Military Directorate delegate accordingly announced that the United States would not exile “those persons for whom it was responsible,” although the other powers might do so if they wished.<sup>86</sup> But the British were now backing away from their earlier position, and, by late December, the French were as well.<sup>87</sup>

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Armed Forces Division’s Demobilization Branch, a position Whitted had assumed by early 1946. Given the branch’s responsibilities, it seems unlikely that either man would *not* have been a professional officer.

<sup>83</sup> Robert W. Harper to The Deputy Military Governor, 30 Oct 45, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Demob. Br Files Reading File November and December 1945 1 of 2.

<sup>84</sup> Who in Washington made this decision and why is not entirely clear. In early October, Murphy informed Byrnes that an exile plan was being developed and that Clay “intends that Joint Chiefs of Staff should examine any project of this nature prior to Control Council approval.” USFET officials also expected such a plan to be submitted to the JCS for approval. But the State Department, War Department, JCS, and SWNCC files most likely to include evidence of such a review do not contain any references to the November plan. Since Clay hand carried the plan to Washington and issued new instructions to U.S. Military Directorate officials just two weeks later, it may well be that the decision was made informally—although the volume of paper typically associated with any major Washington decision also makes this seem unlikely. Murphy to Secretary of State, 10 Oct 45, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1945-1949, Box 3661; CG, US Forces, European Theater, Main, to War Department, 17 Oct 45, NA, RG 218, Entry UD2, Box 62, F: CCS 321 Germany (5-30-45); Thos. B. Witted Jr. to Commanding General, U.S. Forces, Austria, 10 Apr 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Reading File, 1 Jan 1946 – 22 April 1946, 1 of 3.

<sup>85</sup> Whitted to Commanding General, U.S. Forces, Austria, 10 Apr 46, NA, RG 466.

<sup>86</sup> DMIL/M(45)11, 14 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(45) 1 thru 14.

<sup>87</sup> DMIL/Committee(45)21, 31 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46). The Soviets apparently continued to reserve the right to exile their group of officers. The question as to whether the affected officers would be equally distributed among the four powers, as the U.S. preferred, or whether each power would retain control of those

With exile now mostly off the table, the directorate approved a revised paper in mid January 1946 containing just two disposition categories, both subject to annual review by the Allied Control Authority (ACA). In this, the usual high-ranking officers were joined in Category I by “all officers of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and above who served in the Naval, Army and Air High Commands, and are considered by Zone Commanders to be particularly dangerous.” Category II included all Wehrmacht officers not expressly determined to be harmless by zone commanders; air force *Beamten*; NCOs of all branches “considered particularly dangerous”; and “members of German air crews and all technical NCO members of ground crews if considered dangerous.” Notably, it listed in both categories “individuals of the former German Armed Forces”—presumably not just officers—whom the ACA or zone commanders considered to be dangerous.<sup>88</sup>

The revised paper called for all Category I personnel to be “interned inside or outside Germany at the discretion of the Power concerned” in special camps “isolated from the population, surrounded by barbed wire, and guarded by armed guards.” Seventy remained the age of release and the other conditions laid out in the exile plan also remained substantially the same, although the new proposal stated that “democratic education” would be made available to internees and left policies regarding family visits or joint residence to the holding power. Among other measures, Category II personnel faced the usual restrictions on voting, political activity, organizing, teaching, and movement. Their property was to be subject to seizure or supervision “or otherwise being taken into control” by the ACA, with property transactions forbidden unless authorized by the Allies. In addition, Category II men were to be prohibited from “engaging, by way of employment or otherwise, in any policy making or supervisory capacity in any private or corporate industrial, commercial or financial business, or Governmental establishment involving authority over more than ten persons.”<sup>89</sup>

Before this paper’s future could be resolved, however, plans for the German officer corps were sent spinning into a rather different trajectory. Naval Directorate delegates objected in varying degrees to the

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already in their own custody, as the USSR preferred, remained unresolved. This difference of opinion may simply have been a matter of numbers. In April 1946, for example, the Americans had custody of some 1,000 German generals, while the British held 400 and the Soviets approximately 50-80. On the latter point, see MIL/Committee(45)17, 2 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46); H.T. Marsh to Director of Intelligence, 9 Apr 45, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Reading File 1 Jan 1946 – 22 April 1946 1 of 3.

<sup>88</sup> DMIL/M(46)2, 18 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; DMIL/P(46)1 Revise, 22 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46) 1-53.

<sup>89</sup> DMIL/P(46)1 Revise, 22 Jan 46, NA, RG 260.

proposal's blanket categories,<sup>90</sup> but the real impetus for fundamental changes came from elsewhere.

Conversations underway in the American Zone regarding the handling of "Nazis and militarists" now collided with the Military Directorate's deliberations. Specifically, Clay instructed the U.S. delegate not to approve any paper that required internment of an individual without a trial and asked American officials to prepare a new proposal based on the March 1946 denazification law, which represented official U.S. policy on the subject.<sup>91</sup>

Accordingly, the Americans in early April submitted a plan to the Military Directorate that not only drew on the template of past directorate proposals, but also integrated ideas pulled from the denazification law. The first paragraph described the Allies' intent in familiar terms—"to prevent a resurgence of German militarism and to control the potentially dangerous personnel of the former German Armed Forces"—but went on to state that the zone commanders would assign individuals to classes based on individual investigation, with each assignment subject to rebuttal. The zone commanders were also to set up or designate tribunals to consider these cases and were to establish the operational principles and procedures of the tribunals.<sup>92</sup> In other words, as Fahy informed Clay approvingly, the U.S. could use the denazification tribunals being created in its zone to assist in classifying military officers.<sup>93</sup>

The new American plan both narrowed and expanded the categories of individuals cited in the directorate's most recent proposal so that they were effectively identical to the Class I and Class II categories defined in the "German Armed Forces and Militarists" section of the March 1946 law's appendix (see Appendix B). The sole change of substance was a provision adding any Wehrmacht members whom zone commanders, or, in the case of Class I, the ACC, thought to be particularly dangerous. As in past Military Directorate proposals, Class I members would be subject to a range of restrictions and barred from preaching, teaching, or becoming an author, editor, or radio commentator for at least a decade. Instead of long-term internment, however, Class I personnel now faced the possibility of assignment to a labor camp for two to 10 years "in order to perform reparations and reconstruction work." In addition, aside from what was needed for a "bare existence," their property would be confiscated for reparations purposes. Similarly, persons in Class II might be

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<sup>90</sup> DMIL/Misc(46)33, 25 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/Misc(46) 1-122.

<sup>91</sup> Whitted to Commanding General, U.S. Forces, Austria, 10 Apr 46, NA, RG 466.

<sup>92</sup> DMIL/P(46)23, 9 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46) 1-53.

<sup>93</sup> Charles Fahy, Memorandum for General Clay, 8 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Legal Division, Box 52, F: LA 26.1 Denazification Board.

interned in a labor camp for up to five years. “In appropriate cases,” zone commanders could demand “lesser measures for control of domicile, occupation, censorship” and other restrictions such as loss of voting rights, membership constraints, and limitations on employment.<sup>94</sup>

Rather suddenly, then, American officials merged long-discussed measures aimed at isolating dangerous military personnel with zonal denazification legislation that was about to transform the meaning of “denazification” from a program of removal and societal cleansing into a means of punishment and personal rehabilitation. Hence the new U.S. plan ensured the evaluation of each case on its own merits, and in this regard was an improvement over the essentially arbitrary categorizing of previous proposals, but it also effectively demolished the distinction between preventing behavior that threatened Allied security and punishing German officers for past activities. To be sure, the line between deterrence and retribution, as the Allies conceived of it, had always been thin. Periodic statements underlining the preventative nature of contemplated measures perhaps hinted at Allied recognition of this—or at least recognition of the potentially ambiguous appearance and effect of the measures. Furthermore, German officers sitting behind barbed wire could hardly have been expected to appreciate the niceties of the distinction between restraint and retribution. Yet in the fall of 1945, the western Allies, at least, had remained mindful of the difference in quadripartite talks.<sup>95</sup> References to democratic education, recreational activities, and living accommodations for officer families spoke to this, as did the fact that, although potentially harsh, virtually all measures discussed could legitimately be justified as having surveillance and control functions.

By spring 1946, however, the situation had apparently changed. For one thing, OMGUS officials tasked with developing a new denazification program were insistent that any effort to control dangerous German personnel be coordinated with their plans. Individual screening also made the assessing of penalties more acceptable.<sup>96</sup> In addition, the influence of staff members who thought it necessary to punish Nazis and militarists for their past activities and beliefs, whether criminal or not, was in all probability felt here as well as

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<sup>94</sup> DMIL/P(46)23, 9 Apr 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>95</sup> See also the French statement to this effect in DMIL/Committee(45)21, 31 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 427, F: DMIL/C/(45)(46).

<sup>96</sup> Report of the Denazification Policy Board to the Deputy Military Governor, 15 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 16, F: AG 014.13 Relationship of Military Gov’t pers. Thru AG 104.3 Denaz. (Policy) Law of Liberation 45-46; To the I. A. and C. and Armed Forces Division, n.d., and attachment, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 448, F: Control Program of Armed Forces Personnel.

in the denazification arena.<sup>97</sup> Clearly, too, even Clay had not always worried about the distinction between prevention and punishment. But some MG officials also seem simply to have lost sight of their original ideas.

In any event, by late April 1946, even as some of his OMGUS colleagues were fending off the USFET proposal to release certain general staff officers by stressing the importance of controlling potentially dangerous officers,<sup>98</sup> Colonel Frank Emery, Jr., deputy director of OMGUS's Armed Forces Division, was contemplating how to secure Allied approval of the new American plan. The other Military Directorate delegates had been somewhat perplexed by the sudden appearance of a completely revamped U.S. plan and had insisted on continuing to revise the directorate's existing proposal.<sup>99</sup> Comparing the two papers, Emery recommended that the American delegate accept the original plan provided it contained language ensuring an individual investigation and possibility of rebuttal for each person, as well as a reduction in the internment period from a maximum of fifteen years (upon which the other powers had recently agreed) to a maximum of ten years. Additionally, he suggested that the Americans try to modify the Category II stipulations to eliminate the property seizure paragraph and restore voting privileges. In his remarks, Emery noted that although the original paper provided "punitive measures (internment) for a certain group of individuals and control measures for the larger group of less potentially dangerous ones," the American initiative was "punitive only" and its proposed measures generally "more stringent." He did not seem overly concerned by this detail, however.<sup>100</sup>

In the end, the American negotiators essentially obtained what Emery had asked for, though the paper approved by the directorate retained the categories originally defined in the directorate's January draft, as well as its provisions for handling former officers. Overall, the proposal had evolved to a point where, depending upon its interpretation, the conditions of internment might be either reasonably generous or relatively grim. Family visits or joint internment were left to the zone commander's discretion and living conditions

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<sup>97</sup> Lutz Niethammer attributes this conviction especially to OMGUS's Legal Division. And in developing the U.S. Zone's denazification program, the Legal Division's staff sought to ensure that any plans for controlling militarists were consistent with the new program and expected that the Armed Forces and Internal Affairs and Communications Divisions would "look primarily to us for guidance in ironing out the points of conflict." Niethammer, *Entnazifizierung in Bayern*, 300-305; Philip Elman, Memorandum for Mr. Fahy, 16 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Denazification Policy Board.

<sup>98</sup> Thos. B. Whitted, Jr., to C/S, and attachments, 20 Apr 45, NA, RG 260.

<sup>99</sup> DMIL/M(46)11 Revise, 17 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30.

<sup>100</sup> Frank E. Emery, Jr., to C/S, OMGUS, 23 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 799, F: German General Staff Corps.

approximating those of an average German working man had become living conditions “to be not above those” of a working man. But promises of religious activities and democratic education remained, “useful physical labor” had become “useful work,” and there were no references to labor camps or reparations.<sup>101</sup>

The new American stance nevertheless continued to affect Allied deliberations. Sent to the Internal Affairs and Communications (IAC) Directorate as the Military Directorate’s final offering, the proposal’s key ideas were incorporated into a larger draft directive covering “The Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis and Militarists, and the Internment, Control and Surveillance of Potentially Dangerous Germans.” Consistent with its collage of a title, the new document bore distinct signs of glue. The new draft closely followed the U.S. Zone’s March 1946 law, mandating placement of individuals into five groups, listing sanctions pulled directly from the existing law, and attaching the ubiquitous lists of personnel who required careful scrutiny. Pasted into this basic framework were bits and pieces of language from the Military Directorate. A new entry in the “major offenders” category referenced “any member of the High Command of the German Armed Forces,” while “militarists” now included persons “whose past training and activities” the zone commanders believed had “contributed towards the promotion of militarism” and considered “likely to endanger Allied purposes.” Former soldiers received explicit mention in the discussion of possible “lesser offenders,” and, in a strange semantic twist, a “follower” might now also be any veteran who the zone commander thought “liable by his qualification to endanger allied purposes.”<sup>102</sup>

Discussing sanctions, the directive cited as its goals both the exclusion of Nazis and militarists and reparations for damage caused. Sanctions for followers and lesser offenders now included possible reporting requirements and travel restrictions, offenders could be interned up to fifteen years “in order to perform reparation and reconstruction work,” and major offenders were to be “imprisoned, or interned” up to fifteen years.<sup>103</sup> General instructions in the appendix stated that the individuals specified there would, because of their

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<sup>101</sup> DMIL/M(46)13, 10 May 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; DIAC/P(46)170, 30 May 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 244, F: DIAC/P(46) 151-173. The living conditions language originated in the Air Directorate. The Navy Directorate requested the “useful work” change “as this would seem to be more capable of application and slightly less punitive.” See DMIL/M(46)11 Revise, 17 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; DMIL/Misc(46)33, 25 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/Misc(46) 1-122.

<sup>102</sup> DIAC/P(46)275, 26 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 245, F: DIAC/P(46) 271-300.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

positions and their alleged crimes, be carefully investigated and, if appropriate, must be brought to trial and “punished if found guilty.”<sup>104</sup>

At the beginning of the directive, the IAC Directorate listed three objectives: punishing “war criminals, Nazis, Militarists, and industrialists who encouraged and supported the Nazi Regime,” achieving the “complete and lasting destruction of Nazism and Militarism by imprisoning and restricting the activities of important participants or adherents to these creeds,” and “the internment of Germans, who, though not guilty of specific crimes are considered to be dangerous to Allied purposes, and the control and surveillance of others considered potentially dangerous.” It stressed, as well, that a “distinction should be made between imprisonment of war criminals and similar offenders for criminal conduct and internment of potentially dangerous persons who may be confined because their freedom would constitute a danger to the Allied Cause.”<sup>105</sup> However, the net effect of creating a basket directive intended to nab every possible threat and punish every offender was to blur the distinction between deterrence and retribution and to bury beneath a mound of Nazis and criminals the “dangerous” officers the Military Directorate had been discussing for a year.

Just this weakness drew the attention of the French delegate to the Coordinating Committee shortly after it had tentatively approved the IAC Directorate’s proposal in September 1946. Under the new directive, individuals should be subject to measures either for personal crimes or because they were potentially dangerous, he observed, but the IAC Directorate text “presented continual confusion between the guilty person and the person not guilty but potentially dangerous.” He therefore proposed amendments emphasizing that tribunals should take action against three types of people: “War criminals, persons who had taken part in the planning and execution of guilty enterprises, and persons dangerous to Allied objectives.”<sup>106</sup> But by this time the other delegates were eager to issue a directive that already had quadripartite approval, particularly since the recent Nuremberg trial decision would make instructions for handling the many persons it covered that much more

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<sup>104</sup> CORC/M(46)51, 27 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, U.S. Inter-Allied Organizations, Coordinating Committee [hereafter CORC], Box 143, F: Eighty-First Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>105</sup> DIAC/P(46)275, 26 Aug 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>106</sup> CORC/M(46)42, 3 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 143, F: Eighty-Second Meeting Coordinating Committee; CORC/M(46)53, 8 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 143, F: Eighty-Third Meeting Coordinating Committee. When the Nuremberg court affirmed that the “General Staff and High Command” and SA were not criminal organizations, the development prompted the French delegate to suggest that the committee would need to rethink the directive, since the decision ensured that members of organizations absolved by the tribunal could not be prosecuted simply for membership. He believed that the “confusion would not have involved any serious inconvenience if the German organizations . . . had not been declared ‘Not Guilty.’”



critical. The French eventually conceded the importance of moving quickly and decided that questions of interpretation could be decided by consulting committee minutes. Accordingly, Control Council Directive No. 38 took effect on October 14, 1946.<sup>107</sup>

The Americans took action to apply the new directive almost immediately. With the directive giving zone commanders wide latitude in establishing tribunals to classify and try any possible offenders, specifying only that zonal laws be in “general conformity with the principles” of the directive, an OMGUS official on October 19, 1946, informed the directors of the various Land MG offices that in the U.S. Zone the March 1946 law was “an implementation of Control Council Directive No. 38.”<sup>108</sup>

During the course of months of Allied deliberations, American pressure in many ways had helped to produce a more reasonable policy toward former German officers, even as it eased their long-term situation. Evaluating each case on its own merits and granting each individual the right to respond to any decision was undoubtedly a more just method of handling former officers than was segregating or restricting them based on rank or position. In fact, it might be argued that the idea of isolating the elites of Germany’s officer corps—not to mention the logic that led to the development of this policy—had been inherently flawed from the start. In any case, for German officers, there would now be no lengthy internment or reporting requirements without individual investigations which, in the U.S. Zone, would be conducted primarily by the officers’ fellow Germans rather than by their former enemies.

On the other hand, both the methodology selected for handling former officers in the American Zone and the directive itself were problematic. Using the March 1946 law to implement Directive No. 38, the United States could shunt “the ‘elite’ of the militarists” into the existing denazification apparatus. A reasonable choice from the perspective of expediency, efficiency, and uniformity, it nevertheless also meant that former officers would be appraised according to the same criteria applied to everyone else. In the U.S. Zone, there was therefore virtually no chance that former officers would be pronounced security threats—rather than judged to have been militarists or Nazis during the Third Reich—and subjected to pertinent controls and restraints. Tribunals assessed sanctions based on past behavior and personal character, not on possible future conduct.

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<sup>107</sup> CORC/M(46)42, 3 Oct 46, NA, RG 260; CORC/M(46)54, 14 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 143, F: Eighty-Fourth Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>108</sup> G.H. Garde to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 19 Oct 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 28, F: C-38 Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis & Militarists [etc].

And while theoretically certain sanctions could keep individuals out of influential positions or locked up temporarily, generally their location, movements, and relationships would not be affected. Equally important, the American system turned the assessment process over to the officers' fellow citizens, who ultimately showed little interest in sanctioning their country's former military elites.<sup>109</sup>

Noteworthy, too, were the psychological and interpretive byproducts of this decision. Former officers in the U.S. Zone would have been "denazified" even without Directive No. 38. But the composition of the directive did tend to obscure the primary grounds for continuing Allied concerns about military officers. If only in its use of the terms "trial" and "guilt," the overall smell conveyed was one of immorality, if not criminality. Furthermore, denazification operations in the zone were becoming an arena of punishment and penance. In an environment where Allied courts were also attacking German officers as war criminals, it was an easy step for ex-officers to claim that former professional soldiers, as an undifferentiated group, were being painted with guilt for any number of German sins and treated as criminals simply by virtue of their former profession.<sup>110</sup> Complaints would also later arise when tribunal exoneration did not relieve them of other Allied security measures they viewed as punitive.

There had always been those within American circles who opposed any type of extended internment or segregation for Germany's officers. And, in some respects, Directive No. 38 was right in keeping with early U.S. proposals recommending treatment based on more than rank and allowing for rehabilitation. But it resulted only in sending officers into a denazification machine staffed by civilians which essentially cleaned people off and spit them out again. In doing so, it did not really address the concerns expressed repeatedly by American officials regarding the war-planning and war-making talents and desires of Germany's military elites. In helping to develop the new Allied directive after crafting its own zonal denazification legislation, the United States effectively abandoned its early insistence on not confusing punishment with security and, more significantly, simultaneously dropped its original plans to closely control and monitor the activities of all high-ranking and influential former German officers. Punitive treatment of ex-officers may have been a fitting

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<sup>109</sup> See Chapter 4.

<sup>110</sup> See, for example, General Field Marshal von Kuechler to Chief Commander of the US Military Forces in Europe General McNarney, 11 Jan 47, attached to H. O. Beeth to Commanding General, Office of Military Government for Germany (US), 28 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 444, F: German Comments and Proposals on Denazification.

response to the Wehrmacht's recent wartime conduct, but there is little indication that this realization figured into Allied decision-making or that the Americans even gave the shift in philosophy any meaningful attention. The operative influences were apparently a loss of policy memory or commitment over time, the need for uniformity and efficiency in zonal operations, and the influence of OMGUS personnel who advocated punishment for former Nazis and militarists for their past activities regardless of any actual crimes they may have committed, perhaps accompanied by a weakening fear of German military potential. The overarching American approach to dealing with the "hard centre of German militarism," however, had changed perceptibly by 1947.

### *The Push for More Restrictions*

Although it was in many ways little more than an add-on to denazification in the U.S. Zone, Directive No. 38's impact on former German officers was not insignificant. Mostly relieved of the threat of long-term confinement, they were also conceded the right to defend themselves. In addition, the directive ultimately functioned as something of a shield, which the Americans and the British wielded regularly during the months that followed, protecting former officers from the yoke of further restrictions on their activities.

After the new directive was issued, the French and the Soviets immediately began pushing for more restraints on veterans. The French, in fact, had been asking for limits on the employment of former officers in Germany's fire services and police forces for a number of months.<sup>111</sup> In Allied negotiations, these initiatives now became a key focus of their efforts to control Germany's ex-officers. In this, moreover, they usually had the full support of the Soviets, who frequently pressed for even more stringent measures.

French and Soviet arguments generally fell into certain patterns. The majority of former German officers, they asserted, did not fall under the provisions of either ACC Directive No. 24 or ACC Directive No. 38. The former was about denazification. The latter covered the arrest and punishment of war criminals, Nazis, and militarists, while limiting the activities of certain military men. But the French and Soviets were interested in demilitarization, not denazification. Practical security measures were still lacking, they insisted. And here it was critical to keep former German officers out of organizations which, as the French once put it, "by their

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<sup>111</sup> DMIL/P(46)22, 5 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46) 1-53; J.L. McGraw to Colonel Wilson, 23 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2504 Liquidation and Demilitarization of German Police.

structures, their discipline, their cohesion, their uniforms, and in certain measure, their armament, resemble military formations and would be capable of supplying ultimately the framework for an eventual remilitarization.” The French and Soviets were not ready to ignore the lessons of Germany’s post-Versailles defiance.<sup>112</sup>

Similar concerns shaped their views regarding restrictions on the admission of former officers to institutions of higher learning. Statistics from the summer of 1946 showed a total of 29,265 students enrolled in German institutions in the U.S. Zone, 19.1 percent of whom were former officers. The British and French reported, respectively, 23,183 students with 23.8 percent ex-officers and 7,645 students with 16.5 percent ex-officers. Indicating that reserve officers (only) constituted just 3.1 percent of the 8,823 students in their zone, the Soviets vehemently condemned the number of former officers in German institutions and proposed that no former regular officers be admitted and that former reserve officers be enrolled only with special permission. The present situation went against the overriding principles of the occupation, namely demilitarization and democratization, the Soviets maintained, and represented a “significant war potential.” Not against integrating former officers into civilian positions, they believed military men should nevertheless be denied university educations that would enable them to become leaders in agriculture, science, and particularly in the “economic field.” Justifying his stance, one Soviet official observed “that German officers were more militaristic in character than officers of other nations, and the world had suffered for it.”<sup>113</sup>

The French stressed the risks involved in not limiting their fields of study. One French representative, for example, suggested that former officers should be barred from studying subjects that prepared students “for the higher sections of administrative work, for political science, law, teaching, historical studies, and such sciences as mathematics, physics, chemistry, ballistics, optics, and electricity.” Conversely, they should be allowed to pursue fields of study such as “architecture, town planning, agronomics, rivers and forestry, medicine, dentistry, vet surgery, and commercial business.” In these careers, they would pose less of a danger,

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<sup>112</sup> DMIL/P(46)47, 20 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46) 1-53; DMIL/M(46)28, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; M.W. Hubble to Secretary, U.S. Element, Internal Affairs and Communications Directorate, 3 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2505 ACA Papers re: Demilitarization of Police and Fire Services; DOCS/SEC(47)168, 22 Aug 47, NA, RG 260, U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Combined Services Directorate [hereafter DOCS], Box 158, F: DOCS/SEC(47) 151-200; DOCS/M(47)2, 11 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DOCS, Box 156, F: DOCS/M(47) 1-15.

<sup>113</sup> DMIL/Misc (46)103, 10 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/Misc(46) 1-122; DIAC/AEC/M(46)9, 21 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M/(45)(46); DIAC/AEC/M(46)10, 23 Sep 46, *ibid*.

but might still contribute to Germany's reconstruction.<sup>114</sup> "I would feel very annoyed if I could see any officer studying mechanics or ballistics," explained another French delegate. "But I would not feel very annoyed [if] I would see such an officer studying, for instance, botany."<sup>115</sup>

The United States adopted a markedly different position. In internal communications, particularly early in the occupation, some OMGUS officials expressed a willingness to limit ex-officer activities. But they also stressed, for example, that the fire departments in the U.S. Zone had been demilitarized to such an extent—in appearance, training, and hierarchy, as well as employee composition—that additional restrictions were unnecessary.<sup>116</sup> And, overall, official U.S. policy statements were far less flexible than these internal exchanges. American delegates to the various Allied deliberative bodies repeatedly insisted that existing legislation was sufficient to control Germany's ex-officers and seemed determined to negotiate quadripartite policies compatible with those already in place in their zone or to adopt none at all. Initially, they affirmed the sufficiency of ACC Directive No. 24 and related legislation—including the March 1946 law—which covered employment removals and restrictions.<sup>117</sup> Later they cited Directive No. 38. In discussion after discussion, American officials—more often than not with British support—refused to negotiate any comprehensive prohibition or limitation on the admission of former officers to Germany's fire services, police forces, or universities.

Interestingly, the United States stuck to this position even though internally at least a few American officials were also raising questions about possible weaknesses in current regulations. By using the March 1946 law to implement Directive No. 38, the U.S. had effectively discarded the restraints once envisioned for lower-

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<sup>114</sup> DMIL/M(46)23, 17 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30.

<sup>115</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Forty-Sixth Meeting, DIAC, 25 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/M(46) 23-31.

<sup>116</sup> DMIL/P(46)22 Revise, 11 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/Misc(46) 1-122; J.L. McGraw to Colonel Wilson, 23 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2504 Liquidation and Demilitarization of German Police; "Brief on: Limitation of the Number of Firemen in Germany. No. DMIL/P(46)22," 9 Apr 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Reading File 1 Jan 1946 – 22 April 1946 1 of 3; E.E. Ludwig to Chief, Public Safety Branch, 12 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2505 Limitation and Demilitarization of Fire Services; "Brief on: Limitation of the Admission of Officers of the Former German Armed Forces as Students to German Institutions of Higher Education," 14 Sep 46, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Demil. Branch Reading File 1 August 1946 – 28 October 1946 2 of 2.

<sup>117</sup> CORC/M(46)31, 24 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 142, F: Sixty-First Mtg. Coordinating Committee.

ranking officers and those not likely to be convicted as major offenders or offenders.<sup>118</sup> Writing to a MG colleague in late December 1946, Colonel W. W. Holler, deputy director of OMGUS's Armed Forces Division, pointed out that the March law was not the same as the new directive. His division was against imprisonment as a sanction for soldiers, he reported, but was convinced nonetheless that the activities of professional soldiers "whose former position, training, and experience provide them with the ability to plan and to carry into effect a resurgence of German militarism" had to be controlled. To ensure that they could be "accounted for" and "prevented from planning or from instructing others in the art of war," the division believed that "certain checks" on these men were essential."<sup>119</sup>

That the U.S. was not being particularly vigilant in this regard was suggested by correspondence exchanged within OMGUS during the spring of 1947. In late March, Holler requested information from OMGUS's Internal Affairs staff regarding the outcome of denazification tribunal proceedings involving former Wehrmacht members, asking specifically for the number of individuals initially charged in each category; the results of proceedings involving those assigned to each group, i.e., how each individual was ultimately classified; and the sanctions imposed on those not exonerated. American delegates in Allied meetings regularly argued that existing legislation adequately controlled former soldiers, Holler noted, and he wanted this information "that we may assure ourselves that this is indeed the case." In response, Internal Affairs reported that German denazification authorities were not required to compile the desired information. This reply elicited a second request, this time from Armed Forces Division director Harper, who in a number of quadripartite meetings had advocated letting Directive No. 38 do its job. "As the German Officer Corps comprises a comparatively small group within the scope of Directive No. 38," he declared, "and further that they, above all others, are best qualified through education, training, and experience to plan and to execute a resurgence of militarism, it appears desirable to have some record as to where they are and what they are doing. Information is again requested if it would not be possible to provide the data desired." The division's inquiries, in fact, led OMGUS Public Safety officials to pull together a proposal for a registration system that would track the place

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<sup>118</sup> For an early evaluation of the March 1946 law's potential impact—or lack thereof—on former officers and the need for additional surveillance, see Thos. B. Whitted, Jr., to C/S, 20 Apr 46, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 799, F: German General Staff Corps.

<sup>119</sup> W. W. Holler to IA&C Div, Public Safety Branch, 20 Dec 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 25, F: Demil. Branch Reading File, 29 Oct 46 – Dec 30 1946.

of residence and current employer of each former officer in the U.S. Zone, although their internal communications hint at a certain amount of annoyance relating to the task.<sup>120</sup>

In short, while the French and Soviets were reporting that former officers in their respective zones were required to check in with authorities regularly,<sup>121</sup> the Americans were not even sure where each of their former officers lived, much less what each was doing for a living. New general statistics soon arrived from the denazification tribunals, but the United States never introduced additional registration procedures. The activities of former officers instead apparently fell only under the jurisdiction of U.S. counterintelligence officials conducting surveillance of the Germans generally, usually in the form of telephone and mail monitoring.<sup>122</sup>

The Americans nevertheless continued to resist French and Soviet initiatives to tighten Allied restrictions, believing that their own approach would achieve the best results in the long term. Defending their refusal to limit the number of former officers in German police and fire services, the Americans argued that introducing new legislation would lead to confusion and that to discriminate broadly against former officers would be counterproductive. “If we publish too many directives about the former members of the Wehrmacht,” explained one U.S. representative, “we unnecessarily antagonize them and drive their activities into illegal channels.” The Americans also began to stress that it was undemocratic to sanction members of a specific group collectively without a fair trial for each; it went against U.S. policy. Overall, they contended, it was important to continue to study the impact of Directive No. 38, to investigate individual appointments to police and fire departments conscientiously, and to maintain careful surveillance of former German officers as part of a general vigilance against a resurgence of German militarism, but additional controls were both unnecessary and undesirable at present.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> See Theo E. Hall to AD, 27 Jun 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 347, F: 214 Restrictions on Employment of Ex-Members of the German Wehrmacht; William P. Pence to Chief of Staff, 20 Jun 47, and attachments, *ibid*.

<sup>121</sup> CONL/P(47)11, 27 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 395, F: Section I – Demilitarization.

<sup>122</sup> See, for example, Civil Censorship Division reports in NA, RG 466, UD3, Box 30, F: US Civil Censorship Submissions – Orders & Laws 1 of 3 B-25-b-31 to B-43-d-8.

<sup>123</sup> M.W. Hubble to Secretary, U.S. Element, Internal Affairs and Communications Directorate, 3 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2505 ACA Papers re: Demilitarization of Police and Fire Services; DMIL/M(46)28, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; Verbatim Minutes of Sixty-Third Meeting, DIAC, 26 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/47 1-7; DOCS/M(47)7, 28 Mar 47, NA, RG

Their concerns in rejecting restrictions on university admissions for former officers were similar. Preventing ex-officers from obtaining an education risked creating a group of resentful men,<sup>124</sup> the Americans argued, while permitting them to learn offered a way to channel their intelligence and abilities into healthier pursuits. It was better to allow former officers “to be converted into useful citizens through education,” one American maintained, “than to generally leave them out on the streets.” The U.S. shared the goals of its allies; the principal bone of contention was how to accomplish them.<sup>125</sup> And as far as the Americans were concerned, existing legislation was sufficient to control admissions and adequate to ensure that those who showed signs of militarism or Nazism would be expelled. Blanket restrictions on former officers who were not Nazis were, conversely, a bad idea.<sup>126</sup> At one point in late 1946, an American delegate reminded his Coordinating Committee colleagues that Directive No. 38 did not classify all former officers as militarists. To bar their admission to universities thus essentially meant reversing the committee’s own position.<sup>127</sup> Individualized assessments rooted in the directive’s categories became a foundational principle of the American stance.<sup>128</sup>

By late fall 1947, the United States was nevertheless feeling some pressure concerning what was proving to be a fairly controversial issue.<sup>129</sup> Heated exchanges between U.S. and Soviet representatives hinted at broader tensions between the two national delegations. However, in a December 1947 Coordinating Committee meeting U.S. Deputy Military Governor Major General George Hays found himself opposing all of

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260, DOCS, Box 156, F: DOCS/M(47) 1-15; DOCS/M(47)22, 31 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, DOCS, Box 156, F: DOCS/M(47) 16-25. The difference of opinion between the Americans (and British) and the French with respect to German police forces was probably also influenced by their differing approaches to the police apparatus in their respective zones. While the Americans and British took pains to decentralize police organizations, avoiding zone- or Land-wide control by any German authority, police operations in the French Zone were more centralized—and thus theoretically more easily controlled and presumably more easily used for nefarious purposes. On the differing organizational systems, see Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung*, 106-109.

<sup>124</sup> DIAC/AEC/M(46)10, 23 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M(45)(46).

<sup>125</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Forty-Sixth Meeting, DIAC, 25 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/M(46) 23-31.

<sup>126</sup> DMIL/M(46)23, 17 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 242, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30; Verbatim Minutes of Forty-Sixth Meeting, DIAC, 25 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/M(46) 23-31; DIAC/AEC/M(47)5, 25 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M(47)(48).

<sup>127</sup> CORC/M(46)60, 18 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 144, F: Ninetieth Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>128</sup> DIAC/AEC/M(47)5, 25 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M(47)(48).

<sup>129</sup> At one mid October 1947 meeting, the Combined Services Directorate delegates discussed possible restrictions on former military personnel for two-and-a-half hours without coming to an agreement. DOCS Journal, 11 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, DOCS, Box 156, F: DOCS Journals 1947.



his erstwhile allies. The British generally agreed that existing measures effectively kept undesirables out of German police departments, fire services, and institutions of higher learning. But they also tended to be more flexible in trying to reach common ground with their allies, at least in terms of defining the letter of the law, if not always in planning for its implementation.<sup>130</sup> Along with the French and Soviets, they now endorsed a proposal that would limit to 3 percent the percentage of former regular officers allowed to be officers in police, fire, public transit, and similar organizations, with a cap on the percentage of officers among the total strength of each organization set at 1.5 percent. The men would also be barred from “technical studies leading to highly specialized scientific careers.”<sup>131</sup>

Both percentage ceilings, even Hays had to admit, were higher than the current percentages of former officers employed in the U.S. Zone, at least by the rail system and police forces. Still, he refused to budge. Existing laws were sufficient, if enforced, and further restrictions would “infringe on zone commanders’ prerogatives.” The Americans were enforcing the laws and would continue to do so. Besides, he had received no reports of problems to date. The British quickly accepted the American position and the French cautiously agreed to drop any mention of percentages if the four powers would agree to enforce them anyway. But an overall agreement remained elusive and the Coordinating Committee sent the matter up to the Control Council itself for resolution.<sup>132</sup>

In this forum, Clay sought a compromise by calling for both removing percentage restrictions and strengthening the proposal’s language—instructing zone commanders to limit the activity of former soldiers, especially officers, in various potentially dangerous organizations and to restrict their numbers in any particular activity to preclude their gaining control. He also suggested that the ACC arrange inspections to enforce these objectives. Responding to the Soviet military governor’s complaint that his proposal was too broad and deprived the directive of its meaning, Clay granted that his version was less precise. But he thought the council was “defeating its own purpose” in setting an “arbitrary limit” on ex-officer employment in these organizations.

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<sup>130</sup> DIAC/P(46)322, 7 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 245, F: DIAC/P(46) 301-330.

<sup>131</sup> CORC/P(47)239, 1 Dec 47, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 148, F: 145 Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>132</sup> CORC/M(47)49, 8-9 Dec 47, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 148, F: 146 Meeting Coordinating Committee; CORC/M(47)50, 15 Dec 47, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 148, F: 147 Meeting Coordinating Committee. Following the Control Council decision, the Allied Education Committee chose language for a directive on admissions principles for institutions of higher learning that left admissions policies to the discretion of the zone commanders. Sent to the Coordinating Committee in early March, this document also died on the vine. DIAC/AEC/M(48)2, 3 Feb 48, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M(47)(48); DIAC/Memo(48)28, 6 Mar 48, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 198, F: DIAC/Memo(48) 1-30.

He agreed that the activities of officers should be restricted and their numbers monitored, but he also “pointed out that long-term legislation was being proposed and he doubted very much if an anti-militarist spirit could be created in Germany by making outcasts, over a long period of time, of those of its ex-officers who were not necessarily militarists in spirit. Such measures were almost certain to drive them to conspiracy and sabotage.”<sup>133</sup> Shortly thereafter, the four powers signed off on Clay’s recommendations and agreed to require the submission of periodic reports on the percentage of ex-regular officers employed in the various organizations of concern.<sup>134</sup>

Yet ultimately the point was moot, for the entire Allied Control Authority was on the verge of disintegration. In late March 1948, the Soviet Military Governor walked out of a Control Council meeting and the council never met again. As a result, thousands of former officers in the American Zone were secure in their jobs and university positions and those who had only just recently returned home might seek the same.

All in all, the Americans had come a long way from considering permanent exile for elite officers and widespread restrictions and surveillance for other officers to requiring all of the men to undergo a Spruchkammer examination en route to virtually full participation in German society. If the Spruchkammer requirement suggests a willingness to punish rather than to exclude and control, other American arguments and decisions reveal a determination not to alienate all former officers permanently and thus to drive them to more worrisome activities. Over time, individual evaluation, integration, and, to a lesser extent, reeducation became the defining characteristics of American plans for most former German officers on both the grassroots and zonal policy level.

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<sup>133</sup> CONL/M(48)1, 20 Jan 48, NA, RG 260, U.S. Elements of Inter-Allied Organizations, Control Council [hereafter CONL], Box 108, F: CONL/M (48) 1-5.

<sup>134</sup> CONL/M(48)2, 31 Jan 48, CONL, Box 108, F: CONL/M (48) 1-5; CONL/P(47)66/1, 27 Jan 48, NA, RG 260, CONL, Box 108, F: Master File CONL/P(47) 51-67. Although it might be tempting to ascribe American intransigence in discussions concerning former professional soldiers to a growing awareness that changing geopolitical conditions would require a closer political, and military, relationship with a new Germany in the future, documents circulated internally do not appear to support this idea. Instead, in late fall 1947, they attribute the American position vis-à-vis their wartime allies to a commitment to the democratic principle that sanctions should be enacted against no group or individual without a fair trial. A November 1947 report also noted that “spot checks have been made of the present activities of ex-officers . . . and, although not sufficiently extensive to be conclusive, these surveys indicate that at present there is no danger from this particular group.” AD to CAD, 17 Nov 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 799, F: CFM, London (Fall 47). See also “Demilitarization,” n.d. [post-Nov 47], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 281, F: 2505 ACA Papers re: Demilitarization of Police and Fire Services.

## **The Return of Germany's Military Elites**

Together with the Nuremberg verdict, ACC Directive No. 38 settled the fate of most general officers and general staff officers still held by the Americans. Neither completely eliminated all of the questions regarding the future of the men, but subsequent developments in Allied conference rooms did not impede a gradual release program. Once freed, the officers' experiences varied considerably depending upon their disposition, location, age, and former rank. Shared by many, however, was a resentment of Allied measures, anger at their fellow citizens for perceived defamation, and frustration due to changed circumstances. And from some, these conditions incited a vocal response.

### *The Release of Elite Officers*

In late December 1946, the vast majority of former German general officers and general staff officers in the U.S. Zone were still in American hands. Most general staff officers ranging in rank from captain to colonel had recently been officially discharged from POW status and moved to American-operated civilian internment enclosures. And the commander of U.S. forces in Germany now ordered the discharge of all remaining officers from POW status, with alleged war criminals and witnesses to be sent to Dachau and Nuremberg and persons of interest to U.S. intelligence officials and those in automatic arrest categories transferred to civilian internment enclosures. Exceptions to these instructions were officers working for the Historical Section, who would not be discharged, but rather "paroled in place, retaining their mil[itary] status, with a minimum of restriction" unless they fell into one of the other categories (not including membership in the general staff corps).<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Henry Parkman to The Chief of Staff, 6 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 461, F: Transfer of Former General Staff Corps Officers of German Armed Forces to German Authorities; Dr. Hans Laternser to Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Public Safety Branch, 8 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 444, F: German Comments and Proposal on Denazification; Harry J. Lemley, Jr., to Director, Armed Forces Division, 20 Dec 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 25, F: Demil. Branch Reading File, 29 Oct 46 – Dec 30 1946; USFET signed McNarney to TUSA, 23 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 454, F: Arrests & Internment – A) Automatic Arrests. When an officer became a civilian internee, he "lost his military status, his pay, and five hundred calories of food daily." U.S. history program officials thus worried that their writers would be unwilling to work voluntarily as civilian internees. Bauer, et al, "The Army Historical Program," 55.

Consequently, the American army began sending German generals and admirals home, where they eventually faced scrutiny from local denazification tribunals.<sup>136</sup> Wehrmacht general staff officers once again proved problematic, however. Their close association in Allied minds with German militarism, their place on the original automatic arrest list, and the Nuremberg indictment of the “General Staff and High Command” made their status more complicated. In early 1947, American policy stated that general staff officers in U.S. custody should be turned over to German-run civilian internment enclosures for eventual processing by denazification tribunals. But certain USFET officials were now suggesting—perhaps prompted by complaints from lower-ranking general staff officers—that because the Nuremberg judges had declared the general staff “not guilty,” these men should be “released outright.” OMGUS officials, in turn, rejected this proposal, noting that Clay wanted the former officers transferred to German custody to be “tried” by German tribunals prior to release.<sup>137</sup> OMGUS’s Legal Division, moreover, stressed that the Nuremberg judges had *not* declared the general staff “not guilty,” but rather merely had declared that the “General Staff and High Command” was not a criminal organization. In fact, the court had made very clear that the Wehrmacht had sullied itself through crimes and its individual members should not be considered exonerated.<sup>138</sup> American military officials thus turned over to the Germans all former general staff officers not working at Allendorf.<sup>139</sup>

Among these were approximately 140 general staff officers newly assigned to Internment Hospital No. 2 in Karlsruhe—appropriately housed in the former “Grenadier Kaserne” (infantry barracks)—and not happy about it. Although the Germans had appointed as camp director a former Wehrmacht colonel whom an

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<sup>136</sup> Hans von Donat to Herr Oberstleutnant i.G. a.D. R., 23 Sep 48, BA-MA N571 No. 506; Spruch gegen Hans von Donat, 9 Jul 48, BA-MA N571 No. 553; Gen.d.Fl. G., “Kurzer Lebenslauf,” n.d., StAL EL 902/201 Az. 37/18/30067; Einstellungs-Beschluss, 11 Aug 48, *ibid*.

<sup>137</sup> Henry Parkman to The Chief of Staff, 6 Jan 47, NA, RG 260; Dr. Hans Latenser to Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Public Safety Branch, 8 Jan 47, NA, RG 260.

<sup>138</sup> Alvin J. Rockwell, “Non-Concurrence by Legal Division to Staff Study on the Transfer of Former General Staff Corps Officers of the German Armed Forces to German Authorities,” 10 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 461, F: Transfer of Former General Staff Corps Officers of German Armed Forces to German Authorities. In the United States, the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee was reaching a similar conclusion, preparing a message for the commanding general of U.S. Army forces in Germany indicating that he should release no individuals from groups originally indicted at Nuremberg before first determining that they were not war criminals or major offenders. See War from Joint Chiefs of Staff to USFET, 8 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 435, F: Arrest & Detention; SWNCC 346, 8 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, BICO, Box 490, F: Prisoners of War German Generals, Report of Activities of.

<sup>139</sup> C.R. Huebner to Brigadier General Charles K. Gailey, 24 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 461, F: Transfer of Former General Staff Corps Officers of German Armed Forces to German Authorities; USFET signed McNarney to OMGUS for Public Safety, 7 Feb 47, *ibid*.

OMGUS Public Safety Branch investigator reported with dissatisfaction had allegedly welcomed the new internees with the greeting “Gentleman, consider yourself under honorable confinement,” the facilities did not permit the physical separation of the 1,700 individuals of various origins awaiting denazification and the more than 350 others who had been sent there by tribunal judgments.<sup>140</sup> Galled by their circumstances, the ex-officers protested their internment with alleged war criminals and members of criminal organizations. Writing to the head of Württemberg-Baden’s Denazification Ministry, their ombudsman complained that, aside from losing their freedom, being interned in such a fashion hurt their standing in the eyes of the public, which assumed that professional soldiers would be held as civilian internees only if they were personally guilty in some way. In support of their case, he referred to the 23 SD and 48 Gestapo members, 818 high-ranking SS members, and 860 former political leaders who shared the officers’ accommodations. Ultimately, the soldiers’ situation did not change. But local tribunals gradually processed their cases and they could finally go home.<sup>141</sup>

In late June 1947, meanwhile, all history project officers finally received their discharges, with 150 continuing to work as part of a smaller historical program. Some became paid employees of the Americans, but all general staff officers and potential war criminals remained officially in U.S. custody as civilian internees.<sup>142</sup> In August 1947, new U.S. regulations at last permitted the release of all individuals in automatic arrest categories other than war criminals or security detainees, although denazification officials from each Land had 30 days to issue arrest warrants for the men or to ask for an extension. In the wake of this, Württemberg-Baden officials agreed to the release of all but one of the roughly two dozen general staff officers from their Land. A special German denazification tribunal considered their cases during the spring of 1948.<sup>143</sup>

In the end, as discussed previously,<sup>144</sup> this Spruchkammer and other German denazification tribunals declared the vast majority of former general officers and general staff officers to be “not incriminated” or “not affected” by the March 1946 law. Notable, too, is the fact that, whatever hopes the Americans may have entertained regarding the impact of these proceedings, in reaching these verdicts the tribunals evaluated only the

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<sup>140</sup> Arthur Klingenstein to Major W.J. Garlock, Chief, Denazification Division, 2 Apr 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 300, F: K-47 SK/LK Karlsruhe.

<sup>141</sup> Borgstedt, *Entnazifizierung in Karlsruhe 1946 bis 1951*, 75, 75n.

<sup>142</sup> Topper, “The Story of a Project,” 31, 34-36.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-47, 56-58; Bauer, et al, “The Army Historical Program,” 68-71.

<sup>144</sup> See Chapter 4.

officers' past conduct and, to a lesser extent, their past attitudes, primarily asking to what degree these men had supported the Nazi dictatorship and its criminal activities. They did not examine the officers' present skills, assess their attitudes toward the Allies, question whether their work in military training schools during the 1930s or at the War Academy during World War II made them likely candidates to assist in the underground establishment of a new German army, or evaluate whether the fact that the Wehrmacht's leadership had commanded them to general staff training—due solely, as they all claimed, to their military capabilities—in any way meant they were dangerous. Future Allied security considerations essentially played no role in the tribunal judgments.

### *Aftermath of Captivity*

Some two years after Germany surrendered, men whose appearance had previously reinforced their aura of power now began turning up at their new living quarters not in chauffeur-driven staff cars with flags waving, but alone. Thinner, perhaps with more gray hair and weathered and worn faces, perhaps injured or ill, in sometimes saggy uniforms without medals or in unexceptional civilian clothing, they greeted their old or new neighbors. During the years that followed, they attempted to adapt to their new economic and social position, with mixed success.

Sharing many challenges with lower-ranking colleagues who had returned earlier, their experiences also differed in certain respects. Economic conditions had worsened, increasing the difficulty of obtaining work. And former senior officers were more often older men forced to launch new careers at an advanced age while possessing few civilian skills. The generals also faced lingering prejudices directed especially at high-ranking officers. Thus, they might find themselves, like Donat, scrambling to make ends meet while coping with illness or an unsuccessful job search, their difficulties compounded by deliberate discrimination on the part of potential employers.<sup>145</sup>

On the other hand, the passage of time had no doubt tempered the discriminatory impulses of some Germans, particularly since many former officers could eventually flash their denazification tribunal decisions to deflect accusations of militarism. There were firms that took no notice of the past activities of their

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<sup>145</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 40; Weekly Intelligence Report, 23 Feb 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: [2]; Donat to S., 21 Jul 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324.

employees, including certain enterprises that employed more than a few former officers. Prewar and wartime military connections could facilitate the hunt for new positions, and some generals had contacts in business circles which cushioned their transition to a civilian existence. Some officers reluctantly wound up in jobs as unskilled workers, but others secured leadership posts in corporations.<sup>146</sup> Though Donat would later blame his past profession for his difficulties finding a job, in July 1947 he viewed the world more optimistically. In a letter to an acquaintance in which he referred to some fifty former generals living in Stuttgart, Donat reported that it was “not so completely hopeless” for generals to find work in his area. “If I were healthy,” he declared, “I would probably already have something.”<sup>147</sup>

Even for those who found work, the return to a satisfactory economic standing could be slow and painful. In the meantime, there were other troubles to be dealt with as well. Meeting their fellow Germans face to face for the first time since the war’s end was not always a pleasant event. For one thing, the former officers sometimes resented what had occurred during their absence. While interned, the men had heard tales of what they considered to be the slandering of their profession and the related mistreatment of their families. In part because the U.S. government had blocked most of their assets,<sup>148</sup> at least some officers had been unable to personally support their families financially. Despite this, complained General Toppe in 1948, “nobody provided for them or even troubled about them, they were ignored by everybody, and many cursed them.” The reason for this, to him, was clear: “Such were the effects of hatred and revenge. Wife and child had been deprived of all protection.”<sup>149</sup> While his assessment no doubt contained a grain of truth, *New York Times* reporter Drew Middleton’s description of an “upper middle class” officer’s wife living in “elegant poverty” in Wiesbaden provides an interesting counterweight to Toppe’s assertions. The woman, wrote Middleton in September 1945,

uses her position as an excuse to act as a sort of advocate for the disgruntled housewives in her neighborhood. She is frigidly polite, ignorant of almost everything that has happened in the world since 1933 and has an unawareness of social changes which would be appalling even in a Hottentot. . . . [S]he is contemptuous of everyone who is not “well born.” . . . She believes that Hitler and his gang

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<sup>146</sup> Meyer, “Soldaten Ohne Armeem,” 692-693; Hans Speier, *From the Ashes of Disgrace: A Journal from Germany, 1945-1955* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 112, 161.

<sup>147</sup> Donat to S., 22 Jul 47, BA-MA N571 No. 324; Hans von Donat to Herr Dipl.Ing. Kurt S., 10 Aug 48, BA-MA N571 No. 506.

<sup>148</sup> Plischke, “Denazification Law and Procedure,” 818-819.

<sup>149</sup> Toppe, “The Story of a Project,” 17.

started toward defeat when they broke with the old German officer caste, of which her husband is a member; she sees no reason why the Americans should not restore this caste to power. She has an almost pathological feeling for Grafs [Counts] and Ritters [Knights], and she has informed me nine times that the commander of her husband's division, Graf von something or other, was a "most knightly soldier."<sup>150</sup>

Furthermore, given the day-to-day struggles confronting all Germans, it was hardly surprising that they had had little time or desire to look after the unhappy relatives of interned generals. Watching from behind barbed wire, however, the officers had not always seen or conceded this point.

Once home, the men also entered a society that not only was most likely to attach the "militarist" label to high-ranking professional officers, but which had read reports of the Nuremberg trials and often viewed the Wehrmacht's leadership as deeply implicated in the ruinous choices and misdeeds of a discredited Nazi dictatorship. Many Germans thus condemned their senior military leaders for a range of sins. For such ungrateful souls, some officers groused, they had selflessly served and risked their lives.<sup>151</sup>

Perhaps not surprisingly, many ex-officers, of all ranks, felt abused, convinced they were being "defamed" and discriminated against by their fellow citizens and unfairly singled out for punishment by the Allies. In part, their views resulted from their immediate postwar suffering; in part, they were a product of their experiences during the Third Reich. At that time, war preparations had thrown wide the doors of the barracks to new recruits who could expect not only a comfortable future, but elite status in a society enamored with all things military. Experienced NCOs had found their services required as commissioned officers in the larger Wehrmacht. And all current officers had seen their chances of promotion dramatically improved, with concomitant financial rewards and social standing. Life was good. But the price paid for the good life was sworn allegiance to a man who some veteran officers disdained and, ultimately, a pragmatic or ideologically committed devotion to and (later regrettable) public identification with a murderous regime.<sup>152</sup> Being forced to establish a new life in the wreckage of the Fatherland, their social status now significantly eroded, was yet another cost.

As Bert-Oliver Manig has stressed, however, most former professional officers were incapable of recognizing—or unwilling to admit—that their present suffering and social degradation were in truth

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<sup>150</sup> Drew Middleton, "Germans Today: Doleful and Angry," *NYTM*, 18 Sep 45.

<sup>151</sup> Hans von Donat to Radio Stuttgart, 14 Aug 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324.

<sup>152</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 35-43, 73; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 68-72.



consequences of the war and developments affecting many other Germans, too, rather than merely a punishment uniquely inflicted upon them. Although he dismisses their outraged claims of discrimination a bit too cavalierly, Manig appears to be correct in arguing that such claims were a skewed and exaggerated interpretation of contemporary circumstances.<sup>153</sup> American speeches and regulations combined with new or long-standing anti-military attitudes in certain quarters of German society to produce real discrimination against military men. Moreover, postwar rhetoric did loudly indict former officers as potentially dangerous militarists and lumped them together with an array of political offenders. On the other hand, both the Americans and the Germans saw a need to evaluate individuals as individuals and specifically sought out former officers for jobs on occasion. The failure of former officers to obtain employment or admission to universities surely most often resulted from a scramble for a limited number of openings. Furthermore, German denazification tribunals in the U.S. Zone regularly refused to take advantage of the chance to investigate, condemn, and punish former officers as militarists—or Nazis—even when they may have had cause to do so.<sup>154</sup>

Germany's former professional officers nevertheless angrily decried their treatment, lambasting the Allies and German officials alike. In the end, moreover, their resentment congealed into protests and activism directed especially at one particular Allied law: ACC Law No. 34 and its termination of military pensions.

#### *The Beginnings of Officer Activism*<sup>155</sup>

Virtually since it was first conceived, JCS 1067 had included a clause barring the payment of military pensions except in cases of employment-impeding physical disability.<sup>156</sup> And American MG officers almost

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<sup>153</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 77-78.

<sup>154</sup> On these points, see also Chapter 4.

<sup>155</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, and Manig, *Die Politik die Ehre*, especially, discuss in detail the evolution of Allied and German regulations pertaining to military disability and long-service pensions and the political maneuvering they provoked into the 1950s among Allied authorities, veterans, private organizations, German government officials, and the new political parties. For a brief account of events in Württemberg-Baden, see Sauer, *Demokratische Neubeginn*, 268-274. In light of these works, pension issues are dealt with only summarily here.

<sup>156</sup> Interim Draft Directive to SCAEF Regarding the Military Government of Germany in the Period Immediately Following the Cessation of Organized Resistance, 8 Sep 44, NA, RG 56, OASIA, Acc. 69-A-4707, Box 84, F: Germany: Policy Toward Vol. I.

immediately suspended these payments upon entering Germany.<sup>157</sup> City finance officials in Heidelberg, for instance, received instructions to this effect just seven days after American troops first appeared.<sup>158</sup>

In targeting military pensions in this fashion, the Americans and their allies hoped not only to prevent pension offices from assisting in some future secret remobilization of German troops, as had occurred after World War I,<sup>159</sup> but also, as one American report from early 1947 explained, to “discredit the military class in Germany, to reduce their influence in society and to impress upon the public that a military career bears neither honor, profit nor security.”<sup>160</sup> This meant that even disability payments should be discontinued, as the Allies believed that giving the war-disabled special treatment served to glorify the military and war, while also permitting Germans to avoid experiencing war’s true costs. On a pragmatic level, concerns about Germany’s precarious financial situation also played into U.S. thinking.<sup>161</sup>

When in August 1946, the ACC issued a law officially dissolving the German Wehrmacht, general staff, and officer corps, it therefore confirmed these pension provisions on a quadripartite level while also reiterating certain other restrictions on military men. Specifically, the new ACC Law No. 34 repealed all laws, decrees, and regulations pertaining to the “legal status and privileges of military and ex-military personnel and members of quasi-military organizations and their families” and made illegal all veterans organizations, all other military and “quasi-military” groups, and “all clubs and associations which serve to keep alive the military tradition in Germany.”<sup>162</sup>

When formulating the law, the Allies expected to address the financial needs of disabled and elderly soldiers through a new uniform social insurance system.<sup>163</sup> In fact, Allied experts had already agreed to general guidelines for integrating the war-disabled into Germany’s other social security programs. However, there was still no consensus on a replacement system when the law effectively shut down the existing disability allowance

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<sup>157</sup> Sauer, *Demokratische Neubeginn*, 268.

<sup>158</sup> Anweisung Nr. 1 an deutsche Beamte betr. Öffentliche Einnahmen und Ausgaben, 5 Apr 45, StAH AA 21b/2 No. 12.

<sup>159</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 59-60; Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 58.

<sup>160</sup> Quoted in Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 73.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 60, 73.

<sup>162</sup> Control Council Law No. 34, 20 Aug 45, in Beate Ruhm von Oppen, ed., *Documents on Germany Under Occupation*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), 151-152.

<sup>163</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 58.

system. Only in December 1947 did Allied officials finally reach an agreement, but the collapse of quadripartite governance the following spring prevented implementation of their compromise. Disability benefits thus remained a zonal matter. And in the U.S. Zone, this meant dismantling the pension infrastructure and shifting the needy war-disabled onto the general welfare rolls.<sup>164</sup>

For the hundreds of thousands of war-disabled, their families, and the survivors of men killed in action, the various U.S. measures produced truly difficult circumstances and provoked feelings of shame and anger. These developments aroused the pity of other Germans and, concomitantly, fostered support for demands for better treatment. Along with the strain placed on local welfare agencies, they also prompted German authorities to urge U.S. officials to rectify the situation and permit them to provide the hurting with the support they were due.<sup>165</sup>

Although the United States was slow to alter its stance and to take action to alleviate the suffering caused by its pension policies, at least some American MG officers had begun to recognize the problem developing in both human and political terms even before the issuance of Law No. 34.<sup>166</sup> As the 1947 MG report put it, it was one thing to attempt to undermine the standing of the military in German society, but another “to leave a large category of disabled, aged, and survivors without any means to care for their needs [other] than public relief, especially when large numbers were unwilling draftees.” Doing so “would run the danger of creating a revengeful, self-conscious, under-privileged class detrimental to successful democratic development in Germany.” Key, then, was ending “all privileges heretofore accorded for military service without creating a resentful class dangerous to democracy and without promoting obvious injustice.”<sup>167</sup>

In early 1947, the Americans took steps in this direction. Following many months of negotiations with German authorities, MG officials authorized a system that integrated war-disability benefits into the German industrial accident disability insurance program, with payments starting on the basis of a 40 percent disability. Although the new approach met the Allied goal of ending the special status of military men and their

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<sup>164</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 74-75.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 75; Sauer, *Demokratischer Neubeginn*, 268-269.

<sup>166</sup> Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 24 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2]; E.J. Drinkert to Office of Military Government for Germany (US), Finance Division, Public Finance Branch, 12 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1, F: Letters Correspondence 1946 [3].

<sup>167</sup> Quoted in Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 76.

dependents and offered an improvement over the existing situation, it granted war victims fewer benefits than they had received during the Third Reich and also raised worries among those entitled to funding from the already financially endangered systems (individuals who had actually contributed substantially to them) that their own pensions might be reduced to cover disbursements to new beneficiaries. The new provisions thus eased the most immediate suffering, but remained a point of contention for the war-disabled and the surviving dependents of deceased soldiers. German officials accordingly continued to push for further concessions from MG authorities.<sup>168</sup>

The war-disabled themselves were hobbled in their lobbying efforts by Law No. 34's restrictions on veterans' organizations. In due course, local groups formed to provide mutual assistance and to work for improvements in the legal situation, and a Land-level organization eventually appeared in Württemberg-Baden. On the other hand, MG officials would only authorize groups that acted on behalf of all of those receiving pensions, rather than just the war-disabled and their survivors. And "this 'demilitarization' of the war victims' movement, which paralleled the efforts to 'civilianize' the war-disability pension system, was greatly resented by the war victims and their leaders," writes historian James Diehl. Over time, the levels of benefits for the disabled and survivors gradually crept upward, but major changes in the system had to wait for the founding of the new West German state.<sup>169</sup>

If the war-disabled began receiving at least some financial assistance less than a year after the issuance of the ACC law, long-service military pensions remained unpaid. Moreover, the disbursement of monies to even the neediest former recipients of these payments did not begin until well into 1948. As a result, the pension issue continued to fester and quickly came to serve as a powerful catalyst to activism by former officers.

In his recent study exploring the political maneuvering of ex-officers after the war, Manig helpfully reexamines the roots of this activism. Significantly, he notes that far from severely injuring all former officers financially, as contemporary and historical accounts tend to imply, the suspension of long-service pensions produced untenable circumstances for only a portion of the men. Those harmed most included permanently disabled veterans and elderly men and widows who had started receiving pension benefits already before 1939,

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid, 76-78; Sauer, *Demokratischer Neubeginn*, 268-274.

<sup>169</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 78, 81-86.

but who now had to turn to their savings, personal possessions, and, in particularly dismal cases, public welfare for support, with their financial position hurt further by the 1948 currency reform. Altogether, however, they constituted just over 10 percent of those entitled to military pensions in 1950, numbering approximately 23,000. Older officers born before 1900 who were eligible for a military, but not a civilian, pension, along with a set of widows and some recently pensioned men, comprised another severely affected group of some 18,600. But the majority of former soldiers fell into other categories. These included roughly 25,000 pension-eligible younger officers who could expect just a small pension; NCOs who had become officers and some 70,000 NCOs themselves; and very young officers who had no pension claims unless they were disabled. The financial outlook and needs of former officers therefore varied a great deal. And many could not expect a pension to substantially affect their economic position. Furthermore, by the early 1950s, even most of those significantly harmed by the law and the residue of war were well on the road to financial recovery.<sup>170</sup>

Despite differences in circumstance and the law's generally limited economic impact, former officers rallied to the pension cause, drawn by psychological as well as financial reasons. Ignoring or failing to recognize the Allied goal of eventually integrating former soldiers into a uniform social insurance system that would eliminate their special status and reduce the attractiveness of a military career, ex-officers classified the law as a punitive attack on their profession. Ironically, Manig contends, the law actually proved to be something of a godsend for them. Vilified as a revocation of their legal entitlements and condemned for its impact on the disabled and elderly, the law could be brandished by activist officers as concrete proof of discrimination and of their unwarranted status as scapegoats for the German people. The men could also avoid searching their own pasts for any contribution they may have made to their own suffering by attributing their current situation to the arbitrary political actions of their occupiers and cooperative German officials.<sup>171</sup> In the end, their campaign for the reinstatement of their benefits became more than simply a struggle to obtain financial relief. It became, even more, a campaign to achieve the restoration of the reputation and social standing of the officer class generally.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 67-85, 143-145.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-66, 87-88.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 9. In seeking "rehabilitation," Manig states, the officers sought "benefits appropriate to their social position [*standesgemäss Versorgung*], the end of their 'defamation' through legal processes against German soldiers and military-critical public discourse, as well as public recognition of their service for the nation."

The Allies, Manig observes, could hardly have anticipated the indignation and activism Law No. 34 provoked. Pension restrictions of one sort or another had, after all, been in place since early in the occupation without generating excessive comment.<sup>173</sup> Early on, some military men had recognized that continued payment of high military pensions would be untenable given Germany's financial state, not to mention contemporary public attitudes toward soldiers as former social elites. In addition, the Allies had not all immediately dismantled the pension infrastructure in their zones, nor completely stopped pension payments to the old and disabled. But the new law now went further than previous measures and also crushed any hopes of an eventual resumption of payments. The timing of its issuance—shortly before the Nuremberg judgment and just as the American Zone's new denazification system was beginning to operate—influenced its reception as well. Former officers believed they were the objects of a singular Allied revenge campaign, and even their fellow Germans began to take a sympathetic interest in their plight.<sup>174</sup> The gradual return during 1947 of Germany's military elites, many of whom might have expected healthy pensions, may also have heightened emotions within military circles.

Regardless of the immediate stimulus to action, in late 1946 ex-officers began mobilizing their scattered numbers and marshalling their arguments to press American and German officials for a change in policy. Here, the weaknesses of the Allies' pension policy came back to haunt its designers. Most importantly, by cutting off all long-service pensions, the Allies caused genuine hardship for military widows, invalids, and old and infirm men who hardly posed a rearmament threat and who could not seek civilian jobs, thus giving the policy unintended punitive overtones. In addition to creating injustices that opponents of plans for a uniform social insurance system could use for their own purposes, the cessation of benefits disproportionately affected men who were politically unobjectionable, had ties to German political leaders, had few other commitments, and who, feeling that their honor had been attacked, were motivated to protest. While hardly typical of former German officers, they nevertheless became the driving force and face of the movement during the late 1940s.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> There were exceptions to this general rule. See, for example, Schr.d.Kanzleidir. to Herr Major a.D. E., 30 Nov 45, and attachments, HStA EA 1/161 Bü 707; E. P. to Herr Ministerpräsident, 28 Jan 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 698.

<sup>174</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 57-59, 88.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 65, 68-70, 93-95. Aside from desiring a uniform social insurance system, U.S. policymakers may also have been influenced by their inaccurate assumptions about the German officer corps. While local occupation officials could recognize the hardship caused by the U.S. pension policy, many American planners closely associated the German officer corps with Prussian land-holding elites. Such individuals, it might be assumed, would not be harmed financially by a

Although Law No. 34 prohibited veterans from creating formal associations and former officers remained unhappily aware of how quickly the Americans could quash their activities if they acted too boldly or organized without permission,<sup>176</sup> they nevertheless developed loose correspondence networks and set up informal local groups that provided immediate relief to needy individuals while also advocating the rights of soldiers. The leading champion of their interests was retired Admiral Gottfried Hansen, who worked out of the British Zone. And it was in this zone that former officers were most organized when the Federal Republic was founded.<sup>177</sup> But ex-officers in the American Zone were not idle. Around Stuttgart, an informal group arose under the leadership of former General der Panzertruppe Rudolf Veiel. Upon returning from captivity, Donat quickly became a vigorous veterans' advocate and ultimately played a dynamic role in mobilizing the "Veiel Circle." Securing a position as a traveling salesman, he used his journeys to establish contacts with other ex-officers whom he eventually recruited as members. "Secret instructions, secret talks," Donat later wrote in describing the organization of the circle starting in the fall of 1948. Within a short period of time, there were some 30 subgroups active in the area stretching from Stuttgart to Ellwangen to Mannheim to Karlsruhe.<sup>178</sup>

In letters to Allied and German authorities, as well as in internal communications, these and other former officers expressed a deeply felt sense of victimhood. "I, too, am among the victims of POSTWAR CRIMES," opened a letter to Donat from General Erich Dommenget.<sup>179</sup> Complaining to an acquaintance about the termination of his 84-year-old mother's widow's pension, Donat similarly suggested that depriving such an old woman of a pension was akin to the cruelties of Hitler. "Perhaps he was even better," fumed Donat, "since he paid pensions to the elderly."<sup>180</sup> Others, too, compared the suffering of former officers and their families to

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sudden stop in pension payments. The State Department's planners gave voice to this type of thinking when they responded to a recommendation that officer pension payments be halted by arguing that "the withholding of their pensions would not only be a proscription easily evaded, but would involve little economic penalty, since most German officers are drawn from the economically privileged landed nobility and upper middle classes." See "Comment on the Proposals Advanced by the Hon. Gerard Swope on the Treatment of Germany," n.d., attached to F.D.R. Memorandum for Hon. Cordell Hull, 7 Sep 43, NA, RG 59, Decimal File 1940-1944, Box 2941.

<sup>176</sup> Werner S. to Herr Generalleutnant a.D. Hans von Donat, 5 Aug 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324.

<sup>177</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 93, 177-178; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 142; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 62-63.

<sup>178</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 142; Meyer, "Soldaten Ohne Armee," 726; Hans von Donat, "Kurzgefasste Lebensgeschichte und Dienstlaufbahn des Generalleutnant a.D. Hans von Donat," n.d., BA-MA N571 No. 553.

<sup>179</sup> E. Dommenget to Donat, 20 Oct 48, BA-MA N571 No. 228b.

<sup>180</sup> Donat to S., 4 Aug 47, BA-MA N571 No. 324.

that of victims of National Socialism.<sup>181</sup> Shrewdly emphasizing their most potent argument, they particularly stressed the misery of those genuinely hurt by the pension prohibition, citing, for example, the former general turned pool attendant and passing on stories regarding an alarming number of suicides among ex-officers and their wives, especially following the currency reform of 1948.<sup>182</sup> Circulating newsletters eventually documented cases of excessive need and distress.<sup>183</sup>

Denouncing the denial of their legal rights, they also complained that the Allies treated proven Nazis better than loyal soldiers with clean political records.<sup>184</sup> Here, the already sometimes distorted perceptions of men inclined to dismiss evidence that contradicted their sense of unique victimhood were reinforced by two factors: the Americans' insistence on making further opportunities in German society dependent upon favorable tribunal judgments and their decision only to compel former officers to present their cases to denazification tribunals, rather than also (or alternatively) barring the men specifically and visibly from educational and influence-wielding activities, which may have made the Allies' deep concerns about the officers' special abilities and social clout more apparent. As Donat saw the situation, numerous former party members were back at work and receiving their full pensions despite having been declared followers and assessed penalties. Conversely, "the people's courts" had pronounced most soldiers not affected by the law or not incriminated. Not unreasonably, Donat argued that these legal decisions meant there were "no grounds whatsoever to withhold the rights and steal the just compensation of those found innocent."<sup>185</sup> This singular treatment, asserted his colleagues in a letter to Württemberg-Baden's minister-president, could "only be seen as the result of a politics of hate against former members of the Wehrmacht."<sup>186</sup>

Former officers also challenged their accusers. Soldiers could not vote during the Weimar Republic, reminded Donat in two letters to Radio Stuttgart. Rather, the German people had delivered them to Hitler to do

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<sup>181</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 63.

<sup>182</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 136-147.

<sup>183</sup> BA-MA N571 No. 228a.

<sup>184</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 62. Württemberg-Baden officials noticed this seeming inconsistency as well. Monatsbericht des Arbeitsministerium für April 1946, 7 May 46, HStA EA 1/920 Bü 129.

<sup>185</sup> Hans von Donat to Management of Radio Stuttgart, 5 Aug 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324; Donat to S., 21 Jul 48, *ibid*; Donat to Segger, 2 Aug 48, *ibid*.

<sup>186</sup> Schrag, et al, to Herr Minister Präsidenten von Württemberg-Baden, Apr 48, HStA EA 1/016 Bü 384.



his bidding. “If the Wehrmacht had been asked,” he sniffed, “they would never have elected a corporal as commander in chief.”<sup>187</sup> Singing familiar refrains, they also stressed that German officers had simply lived up to their oath to Hitler during the war and were now being punished for doing their duty as any officer in any military was expected to do. They had been in no position to avert a war or alter its course, some asserted. Furthermore, the Wehrmacht had actually been a refuge from National Socialism; the events of July 20, 1944, showed that there had been more resistance to the Nazis in the Wehrmacht than elsewhere in German society.<sup>188</sup> Nuremberg provided still more evidence in their favor. Ignoring the judges’ labeling of the Wehrmacht leadership as a “ruthless military caste” and a “disgrace to the honourable profession of arms,” they pointed to the acquittal of the “General Staff and High Command” and claimed exoneration. This decision, some officer activists contended, provided grounds for rescinding Law No. 34.<sup>189</sup>

Some former officers also resisted the charge that undergirded all of the Allied measures. “The soldier is merely the executive organ of the power-political will; the carrier of this will is the militarist,” wrote Hansen in 1946. Later he suggested that militarism was “a political lesson,” while “soldierdom” was “a conception of duty, of absolute human virtues like love of country and loyalty, obedience, and bravery.”<sup>190</sup>

This fundamental dichotomy was emphasized by other former soldiers as well. Generaloberst Johannes Friessner, a prominent activist officer from Bavaria, offered a much deeper, instructive analysis of the differences—and essentially critiqued the American demilitarization program in the process—in a September 1950 speech at one of the German Protestant Church’s Evangelical Academies.<sup>191</sup> “Soldierdom,” he maintained, was “the tradition of intellectual and ethical values of the soldierly profession which has been proven and tested for over one hundred years.” For soldiers, it was “the embodiment of a readiness to accept the highest mission of preserving the eternal values of life, such as culture and custom.” Militarism was its opposite: a “soulless, unspiritual, mechanical form which degrades the military profession to a ‘military caste’ that is intent on action as an end in itself and does not see an ethical-moral duty as the ultimate reason for

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<sup>187</sup> Hans von Donat to Management of Radio Stuttgart, 5 Aug 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324; Hans von Donat to Radio Stuttgart, 14 Aug 48, *ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 61-63.

<sup>189</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 14-15.

<sup>190</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>191</sup> On the Evangelical Academies and their ties to former soldiers, see *ibid.*, 128-130.

military deployment.” It was “almost a political position that shaped the mindset of a people in a warlike way and destroyed its moral character.” Influencing young people to desire revenge, giving and tolerating speeches during peacetime that agitated for war, singing military marching songs in peacetime, and an obsession with imitating military nomenclature and manners should be viewed as militaristic, he asserted. “We professional soldiers,” he added, “have always found such imitating to be laughable and repudiated it.”<sup>192</sup>

If Friessner willingly assigned some German cultural practices to the category of “militaristic,” he also drew clear lines. It was most certainly not militarism when the Germans enjoyed and applauded troop parades or when they delighted in “our famous, beautiful military marches.” He explained: “Our people love these; other people are crazy about jazz music.” Friessner similarly found little to criticize in a preference for the appearance and manner of German soldiers over that of foreign soldiers. “These are matters of taste—other people—other customs!” he concluded. “They have absolutely nothing to do with militarism.”<sup>193</sup>

Friessner then wandered into territory that would hardly have reassured many Americans that “soldierdom” presented a healthy alternative to militarism. History taught, Friessner contended, that even in the present age there were “warlike and unwarlike people”—those for whom “soldierdom” was in the “flesh and blood” and those who more or less rejected it. “The difference in the appraisal of soldierdom cannot be explained solely by the different nature of peoples,” he asserted,

rather it is above all to be found in completely different geographical and political conditions.

Thus, we Germans always—above all because of our location—belonged to the warlike peoples. We approve “soldierdom” and esteem and foster it in a long, glorious tradition.

The ethical-moral duties and responsibilities endow soldierdom with its high value and entitle it correspondingly to appropriate respect. This also explains why we soldiers place especial value on our sense of honor, . . .

. . . the tasks and responsibilities of the soldierly profession lie at a particularly high level, if they are understood correctly. They serve not only their own needs, but provide for the collective good of a whole people. . . .

If one educates their soldiers in this spirit, and prepares them for the mission of their lives, for this highest good, only then may one expect that they will fight wisely and not carry out their military service only as a conqueror or as an adventurer.

We German officers have always sought to prepare our soldiers in this spirit. They demonstrated the success of these preparations in peace as well as in war, also in the Second World War, especially in the East. They knew exactly why and for what they fought.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Johannes Friessner, “Soldatentum oder Militarismus,” 1 Sep 50, BA-MA N528 No. 22.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid. (Emphasis in original.)

The general went on to defend the value for military performance and for German society of German military training, with its emphasis on order and discipline, and to affirm the importance of obedience. He advocated education at home, in schools, and by the church that familiarized youth with order and discipline and encouraged them to be reliable, clean, orderly, and punctual and to do their schoolwork, help the weak, and respect their teachers and elders. The soldiers' opponents called this militarism, noted Friessner, but he believed such an education facilitated later military training and ultimately decreased the spilling of blood in wartime. While he admitted that a few officers had let the others down during and especially after the last war, Friessner attributed deplorable wartime conduct largely to the Wehrmacht's rapid expansion, which lowered the quality of training and caliber of men, and to National Socialism's negative influence on the honorable practices and customs of the German military.<sup>195</sup>

#### *Reactions to Officer Activism*

Certain aspects of Friessen's analysis of militarism clearly coincided with the thinking of American policymakers. But many Americans were not yet ready to accept the vaunted qualities of German "soldierdom" as entirely admirable and benign. On the other hand, in the late 1940s this basic sense of dichotomy was clearly shared by some German "opinion leaders." Licensed German newspapers, surveys on militarism conducted by American information control officials, and the decisions turned out by German denazification tribunals all revealed a readiness to distinguish between dangerous or condemnable militarism and commendable devotion to soldierly duties.<sup>196</sup>

This willingness to differentiate between a negative militarism and a positive "soldierdom" likely also influenced the way German "opinion leaders" responded to former officers in other venues. In the late 1940s, church leaders and journalists helped to publicize the plight of suffering former officers by circulating stories (and rumors) about extreme cases of hardship and misery. Beginning already during the summer of 1946, moreover, prominent CDU and SPD politicians spoke out on behalf of disabled veterans, contending that Allied

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid. Friessner would run into trouble the following autumn when he assumed leadership of a prominent veterans' organization and at a subsequent press conference, in the words of James Diehl, "poured out a series of resentment-laden and ill-considered statements that may have sounded commonplace, indeed even moderate, within his normal milieu but that caused a sensation when expressed publicly." Criticized roundly by West German politicians, the German and foreign press, and even other veterans who condemned his remarks for reasons of substance and especially appearance, Friessner resigned. Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 211-221; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 45-49.

<sup>196</sup> See Chapter 4.

measures were unjust and that soldiers should not be unfairly punished for doing their duty.<sup>197</sup> Manig documents the substantial informal influence former officers had in political circles in the British Zone, in particular,<sup>198</sup> but political activism on behalf of former officers and their dependents was also apparent in the U.S. Zone. In October 1947, for example, the DVP's Theodor Heuss sternly criticized American policies on the floor of Württemberg-Baden's legislature, asking whether one really weakened German militarism by suddenly halting pension payments to the eighty-something widow of a former major in the medical corps.<sup>199</sup>

In their willingness to speak out on behalf of former soldiers, Germany's new leaders were undoubtedly motivated by sympathy, but also by legal arguments and pragmatism. The troubles of the old and infirm touched them. Some also viewed pensions as the legal entitlement of former officers. And some shared the opinion that most soldiers, even officers, were themselves the victims of National Socialism. German leaders also knew that restoring officer pensions could reduce the dissatisfaction of an overwhelmingly young—most publicized cases to the contrary—and disgruntled group of citizens whose predecessors had contributed greatly to the instability of the Weimar Republic. But beyond this, ex-officers represented a not insignificant voting block. If they were the natural constituents of the bourgeois parties, the Social Democrats were unwilling to completely relinquish former officers to their political opponents, though typically they were also not ready to agree to officer benefits larger than those dispensed to civilians. German politicians recognized, too, that they could reap substantial political capital by challenging the occupation authorities with large demands, and often at little cost to themselves, as they knew that the Allies would be unlikely to give in and would bear the largest share of criticism for any rejected overtures.<sup>200</sup>

Within the wider population, meanwhile, views regarding officer pensions varied. Issued in anticipation of a debate to be broadcast in mid 1948, a request from Radio Stuttgart for opinions on the subject

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<sup>197</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 90-92, 117-118; Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 24 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].

<sup>198</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 90-135.

<sup>199</sup> Sauer, *Demokratische Neubeginn*, 271.

<sup>200</sup> Theodor Heuss, "Pensionen für Offiziere?" *RNZ*, 4 Mar 48; Manig, *Die Politik die Ehre*, 90-103, 157-160; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 63-64. Manig points out that approximately 80 percent of those eligible for military pensions were less than 40 years old when the war ended and most were married, with a correspondingly high incidence of children needing support. Most of the widows were also young. Because those eligible for a pension were relatively young, getting other Germans to accept their claims was more difficult. But it also made the satisfaction of their claims much more politically pressing, Manig suggests. "Those affected were numerous, young, potentially active, and they belonged to the age group which would supply the next generation of social and political elites" (78-79).

reportedly elicited 198 letters supporting the officers' position and seven opposing it.<sup>201</sup> But the pages of Württemberg-Baden's leading newspapers painted a multihued picture. Assorted colors of the public debate were evident, for example, in a set of articles carried by Heidelberg's *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* in early 1948. Alluding to recent political discussions regarding a possible reinstatement of officer pensions, one writer called for a new law that would permanently eliminate all such pensions. It was incomprehensible to him that at a time when millions of Germans had lost everything, there were still people ready to support efforts to make officer assistance a priority—and this via taxes paid by everyone else. Contending that the officers' guilt or lack thereof was not important, he nevertheless blamed the "Prussian officer caste" in part for Germany's fate during recent decades and suggested that large pensions had contributed to the problem. "Are 'the people' the only ones who have lost this war, too?" he asked. Former officers should have to learn what it meant to earn their daily bread with their own hands, just like other Germans, and just like the many conscripts forced to start over after years of service. Old and disabled officers incapable of working were entitled to no more than other Germans in their situation. And government officials should be most concerned with the cripples, refugees, widows, and others who, though innocent, often lacked even life's basic necessities.<sup>202</sup>

The writer's assertions prompted a response from none other than Heuss, who stressed that this was not a case of politicians supporting the interests of a particular group or dispensing donations to soldiers even as the rest of Germany suffered. Rather, it was a question of legal rights; pensions were not discretionary funding, but payments withheld from a soldier's compensation. Those who saw the issue as a legal matter, as he did, paid no heed to accusations that they were reactionaries or "militarists." Heuss conceded, however, that not all of the former officers' claims could be satisfied. German leaders needed to keep in mind the state's financial capabilities and to handle pre-1933 officers differently than high-ranking officers who had benefited from the liberal promotion policies of the Third Reich. For Heuss, paying pensions was not about handing out special privileges, but about recognizing a special injustice. He warned, too, that one should not "defame" the entire officer class just because one happened to be thinking about an overbearing lieutenant or colonel. Every profession included a range of personalities. Heuss suggested, finally, that the issue at stake was whether a new

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<sup>201</sup> Hans von Donat to Herr Stabsintendant a.D. Werner S., 6 Sep 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324. It should be noted that the number of ex-officers and widows among the respondents is unknown.

<sup>202</sup> "Pensionen für Offiziere?" *RNZ*, 28 Feb 48.

German state would begin with a “broken sense of legality” and with former public servants and their dependents treated as pariahs—men, he added, who were members of a profession that was just as honorable as that of teachers or judges.<sup>203</sup>

Several days later, an attorney suggested that from a legal perspective, the soldiers’ position was problematic, as neither a Wehrmacht financial administration nor a successor organization existed upon which they could press their claims. He went on to assert that the highest echelons of the officer corps had wanted, planned, and prepared for war, often only for personal gain. Most officers, too, had participated in prolonging the war and contributed to the destruction of their own homeland and countless unnecessary deaths. These “uncontestable premises” had to be considered when preparing pension legislation. They made clear, for instance, that those who had become active officers after 1933, who had “consciously bet on rearmament and a war of aggression,” should be categorically denied pensions. In all cases, the feasibility of making a living in another way should be carefully examined before granting pension claims, while the amount dispensed should depend upon what Germany could afford.<sup>204</sup>

Letters sent to Karlsruhe’s *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* similarly denigrated the past service of military officers and complained about their apparent demands for special treatment.<sup>205</sup> One writer pointed out that Germany had attacked and destroyed France in 1870, 1914, and 1940 and that “Hitler with his military” had invaded and decimated almost all of the states bordering Germany. “And for this,” he observed, “these ‘destroyers’ still want pensions.” That would be an insult to those who had suffered and also to the German people.<sup>206</sup> A local medical doctor responded by invoking the conquests of Napoleon, contending that Napoleon III’s “provocative conduct” was the true cause of the Franco-Prussian War, and citing American historians who refused to blame Germany for instigating World War I. However, other letters printed alongside of his were less ready to contest interpretations of Germany’s past. One advocated benefits for suffering soldier widows, so

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<sup>203</sup> Theodor Heuss, “Pensionen für Offiziere?” *RNZ*, 4 Mar 48.

<sup>204</sup> “Pensionen für Offiziere?” *RNZ*, 9 Mar 48.

<sup>205</sup> For a collection of letters that almost all express views favorable toward the officers, often adopting positions similar to that of Heuss, see “Wir diskutieren heute: Wehrmachtspension als Sozialfürsorge?” *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, 1 Jul 49, StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4413. At least three of the twelve writers here were actively involved in the pension restoration movement, though their letters gave no indication of this. On the latter point, see Notgemeinschaft ehem.berufsmässiger Wehrmacht angehöriger (Berufssoldaten, Wehrmachtbeamte) und ihrer Hinterbliebenen für das Land Württemberg-Baden to Innenministerium von Württemberg-Baden, 23 Mar 50, HStA EA2/301 Bü 299.

<sup>206</sup> Das freie Wort, *BNN*, 16 Mar 48.

long as their husbands had not been among the “war-mongering golden pheasants,” that is, highly decorated Nazis. Another referred to contemporary arguments that Germany’s war-disabled needed to be retrained and asked when these “lords” would begin thinking about retraining themselves, as there were still mountains of rubble to be removed. Furthermore, if these “lords” were entitled to pensions, what was a penniless, terminally ill returnee entitled to? “What did militarism cost us in goods and blood, in privation and distress, during the last 100 years?” the writer asked in conclusion. “It therefore simply isn’t enough to say: ‘Never again war.’ No. ‘Never again militarism.’”<sup>207</sup>

Confronting the pleas of German officials and others on behalf of former officers, as well as those of the former officers themselves, the Allies initially refused to make concessions.<sup>208</sup> Yet they also came to realize that the regulations were causing real distress and began to recognize both the potentially radicalizing effect of their policies and the ways in which German political parties were instrumentalizing the grievances of ex-officers for their own purposes. As a result, in March 1948, with the looming currency reform promising devastating effects for those already in poor financial straits, the British and Americans finally partially relented on the matter of pensions.<sup>209</sup> The Germans might now pay small “maintenance grants” to those who were already pensionable prior to August 1946, though payments might be made only to minor children, to those whose earning capacity was reduced due to injuries, to men older than 65, and to women older than 60 or unemployable because they cared for minor children. In a probably useless stipulation, the Americans specified that the grants should be “administered under conditions designed to eliminate as far as possible any military character from the payments and to indicate that the payment is in recognition of public, rather than military, service.”<sup>210</sup> It took some time before the required German legislation was finally put in place in the

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<sup>207</sup> Das freie Wort, *BNN*, 10 Apr 48.

<sup>208</sup> In this regard, the French Zone was an exception, where officials essentially disregarded Allied decisions concerning the payment of military pensions.

<sup>209</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 100-101, 110-116. Already in late 1947, Württemberg-Baden’s Labor Ministry had issued a decree permitting small “social assistance” payments comparable to those for the disabled to previously pensionable individuals who were “needy and incapable of working,” including elderly soldiers, widows, and orphans. “Unterstützungen anstelle von Militärpensionen,” *Heidelberger Amtsblatt*, February 21, 1947, StAH F11; “Ausschnitt aus dem Staatsanzeiger für Württemberg-Baden vom 17.1.1948,” StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4413; “Entwicklung der Versorgung der ehemaligen Berufssoldaten und ihrer Hinterbliebenen in Württemberg-Baden,” n.d., BA-MA N571 No. 228a.

<sup>210</sup> Chester B. Lewis to Minister President for Wuerttemberg-Baden, Dr. Reinhold Maier, 12 Mar 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 4, F: Letters to Minister President 1948. The age limit for recipients was later lowered to 60, then 50. Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 70.

Württemberg-Baden, with some lawmakers arguing that the victims of Nazism should receive compensation first,<sup>211</sup> but by the founding of the Federal Republic in 1949, needy veterans and their dependents in the Land were receiving maintenance grants.<sup>212</sup>

*A Look Ahead: Former Officers in the Early Federal Republic*

Former officers clearly had some success in achieving recognition of their grievances during the occupation years. But small maintenance grants did not fully address their complaints either financially or in terms of perceived injustices. The campaign for their rightful entitlements and the restoration of their honor therefore continued into the 1950s, when decisions regarding pensions were left entirely to German leaders.

German federal officials ultimately chose to handle officer pensions within the context of a new law dealing primarily with former civil servants from the territories Germany had lost. Meanwhile, a relaxing of Allied restrictions on veterans' organizations in December 1949 helpfully permitted the official creation of interest groups that did their utmost to influence the government's decisions, while also lobbying against the "defamation" of Germany's professional soldiers and protesting the continued internment of convicted war criminals. Thus already by the end of 1951, former officers who had served ten years and NCOs with at least 18 years of service had again secured pension rights. Although German government officials recognized only a limited number of promotions, allotted no pensions to officers recruited during the late 1930s or to NCOs with fewer than 18 years of service, and awarded benefits that were not as generous as former officers believed they deserved, the pensions implicitly acknowledged the service of former soldiers, helped to encourage the respect of ex-officers for the new German state, and would increase in both scope and size during the 1950s. By the 1960s, former officers were voicing few complaints on this count.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Alfred Schrag, et al, to the Minister-President of Württemberg-Baden Herrn Dr. Reinhold Maier, 30 Jul 48, BA-MA N571 No. 324.

<sup>212</sup> "Entwicklung der Versorgung der ehemaligen Berufssoldaten und ihrer Hinterbliebenen in Württemberg-Baden," n.d., BA-MA N571 No. 228a.

<sup>213</sup> Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, Chapter 6; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 18-19; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 144-145; Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 172-173. Only organizations that required all of their members to be war veterans remained prohibited. The western Allies continued to keep tabs on the activities of organizations that included veterans, though generally refrained from actively restraining or reprimanding them. Mattias Glaser, *Das Militärische Sicherheitsamt der Westalliierten von 1949-1955* (Witterschlick/Bonn: Verlag M. Wehle, 1992), 80-88; Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 156-157.



The question of soldierly honor was another matter, however. If restored pension payments conceded a legal right and might acknowledge most former officers as victims of National Socialism, they were not necessarily symptomatic of a charitable public perspective or a restored public standing for former officers.

Numerous scholarly studies have documented the situation of ex-officers during the 1950s, analyzing, especially, their relationship with the new German state and its leadership.<sup>214</sup> They show that German veterans successfully lobbied for the satisfaction of many of their demands, including not only pension benefits, but the early release of many of their compatriots convicted of war crimes. In the early 1950s, they also listened to both Eisenhower and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer confirm that the Wehrmacht's honor had not been compromised during the war, with any criminal activities representing the rare actions of a reprehensible few. The recent studies of Manig and historian Alaric Searle, in particular, draw attention to the impact veterans had on the Federal Republic's political culture, as well, demonstrating how former officers influenced federal decision-making processes both directly and indirectly. While veterans' organizations lobbied for changes in German social legislation, some former generals helped to plan for West Germany's rearmament, even as others spoke out on the subject in informal or public forums. The government, meanwhile, kept a watchful eye on the activities of new "tradition associations" comprised of former soldiers and their families who had belonged to particular military formations. Particularly during the early 1950s, it took steps to keep German veterans in line and content, using both informal means and legislative measures. Federal officials desired and needed the support of former officers not only to help solidify their new democracy, but also to achieve their foreign policy goals—namely, rearmament and western integration. Former officers would help to staff any new army. Furthermore, West Germany was not yet fully sovereign, and the possibility of a German military contribution to the defense of western Europe had emerged as a potentially powerful tool for obtaining increased autonomy. But both new military forces and German sovereignty were partly contingent upon keeping the western Allies convinced that German veterans were not a dangerous wellspring of nationalist sentiment and posed no threat to the political stability of West Germany or to the security of Europe. Former officers thus could not be ignored.

Scholars have also highlighted the extent to which former officers were reintegrated into German society and obtained respectable and even influential jobs. Casting a glance at the postwar experiences of all former professional officers, historian Jay Lockenour cites the findings of a 1950 survey indicating that 31,001

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<sup>214</sup> See note 2.

of some 167,000 former career soldiers (including NCOs) who responded had obtained civil service positions. State and community level posts accounted for the largest number of jobs (9,421 and 12,867, respectively), with the railroad (4,832) and the post office also boasting their share (1,292). Thus, concludes Lockenour, “while positions of national prominence were often denied to former officers (the significant exception being a number of later Bundestag representatives, including former General Hasso von Manteuffel), many of them found comfortable positions in local or state government offices, making them influential members of the local community.”<sup>215</sup>

More anecdotally, American émigré sociologist Hans Speier later recounted a late 1951 conversation with General Toppe who, now the editor of a journal on military affairs, informed him that all former general staff officers had found employment. A large number were in executive positions in industry, while many younger ones had learned trades and were quite successful. With some pride, Toppe had argued “that a German general staff officer can do anything he puts his mind to” and challenged, “I’ll give you ten marks for every former staff officer you can name who today has no job.”<sup>216</sup>

Examining the fate of certain former naval officers during the 1950s and considering other developments in the Federal Republic’s early years, Manig similarly points out that even when ex-officers started their postwar lives in reduced circumstances and in positions seemingly beneath their former social standing, this situation did not necessarily last. Aided by the “economic miracle” of the 1950s, many were comfortably ensconced in the republic’s upper classes by the end of the decade.<sup>217</sup> In certain spheres, then, former officers reclaimed a measure of respect and social influence.

On the other hand, Searle raises important questions about the position of these former elites within West German society. Notably, he shows how some German generals had begun to earn a modicum of public respect for their professional expertise amidst ongoing discussions of rearmament in the early 1950s, but also documents a weakening of the influence of veterans’ organizations and a reversal in budding positive views of the German generals over the course of the decade. He contends, for example, that publicity surrounding trials of several former high-ranking officers reveals a “trend toward a more critical and condemnatory view of

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<sup>215</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 21. Lockenour does not cite the source of these statistics.

<sup>216</sup> Speier, *From the Ashes of Disgrace*, 112.

<sup>217</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 80-85.

Wehrmacht generals.”<sup>218</sup> Alluding to Searle’s study, historian Kristin van Lingen rightfully argues that it “was the aim of the former military elite to recapture the social standing which the German military had enjoyed up to 1945, despite military defeat, and to regain political power” and that “this aim was not fully achieved.”<sup>219</sup>

Former Wehrmacht officers clearly assumed new, sometimes influential roles in German society and political life during the 1950s, even as the Wehrmacht enjoyed a reputation for mostly exemplary conduct during World War II and a new German army made its appearance. By the end the twentieth century, however, scholars were again darkening the Wehrmacht’s luster by analyzing the depth of its National Socialist ideological indoctrination and its extensive participation in the racial and war crimes of the Third Reich. Germany’s military officers, moreover, had never entirely regained their former positions as particularly glorified social elites with unusual ability—whether through sins of commission or omission—to shape the course of German public affairs.

### Conclusions

Setting up operations in Germany in 1945, American policymakers had several interrelated objectives when it came to former German officers: restraining them from mobilizing the German people against their occupiers, reducing their social and political influence, and preventing them from preparing for and launching another war. Ultimately, a range of measures introduced to realize these goals brought mixed results, with their impact sometimes determined by social forces over which the Allies had little control. And when the Federal Republic assumed primary control of the American Zone, the final outcome of the two long-term projects was still in question and would remain a concern into the 1950s.

Interning Germany’s military elites during the earliest days of the occupation, the Americans hoped captivity would prevent the men from stirring up trouble in the immediate postwar period and beyond. In the end, this action incited fervent resentment and also facilitated undesirable networking. The historical studies initiated at Allendorf, moreover, were hardly compatible with stated American objectives.

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<sup>218</sup> Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals*, 171-173, 193-194, 221-222, 266. On the trials, see Chapter 7.

<sup>219</sup> Kerstin von Lingen, “Soldiers Into Citizens: ‘Wehrmacht’ Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany (1945-1960),” *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute London* 27, No. 2 (2005): 66.

But animosities and fault lines developed in the camps as well. More importantly, well-connected and capable high-ranking officers and general staff members remained excluded from German society for several years. They were thus not only incapable of menacing Allied security, but also unable to participate fully in conversations regarding their own status or Germany's future. That former officers might eagerly have done so is suggested by their later actions. Many, Lockenour emphasizes, were eager to serve their country after being released.<sup>220</sup> And there were those, like Donat, who within weeks of arriving home were discussing with their former colleagues what could be done to improve their situation and to undo the damage to their reputations caused by the war and Allied occupation. It is difficult to believe that their response to the occupation would have been substantially less energetic had they returned just months after Germany capitulated.

In the meantime, American and German reeducation initiatives worked on the minds of the German people and a dialogue on German history, the war, and the Wehrmacht unfolded free of the voices of many of those most passionately accused. Although still in flux into the early 1950s, political leadership patterns were also being established during the period these officers were absent. Manig helpfully reminds that former officers did not encounter a rigid existing political structure when they became politically active, but instead helped to shape political life in postwar Germany.<sup>221</sup> However, by the time most high-ranking officers returned, they were also not dealing with the wide open political scene of 1945 and were therefore unable to detrimentally influence German political developments to the extent they had in the past.

If captivity was an important first step, the Americans also had to develop a policy for the long-term treatment of Germany's former officers. And here the delays caused by a lack of Allied unity essentially worked to the officers' advantage. The opinions of American officials regarding how best to handle these men were never entirely unified, but, broadly speaking, the prevailing American approach did evolve over time and this influenced quadripartite deliberations as well. Specifically, a commitment to constraints and surveillance shifted to an endorsement of extended isolation for some officers, which subsequently gave way to support for individual evaluation, punishment, and, effectively, full reintegration into German society for virtually all former officers not convicted of war crimes.

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<sup>220</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 84-85.

<sup>221</sup> Manig, *Die Politik der Ehre*, 28.

Although the Americans' assessment of the German officer corps was not without grounds, they were clearly misguided in considering all of Germany's military elites to be potential security threats. Eventually committing to evaluate each case individually was therefore a step forward. The mechanism chosen for this purpose was ineffectual, however. Theoretically expected to control potentially dangerous officers as well as assess their level of responsibility for events during the Third Reich, the American Zone's March 1946 law had not been written in a way that would force German tribunals to judge ex-officers on both counts. As implemented, the law produced few concrete results, other than bitterness, and served as little more than a speed bump on the officers' road to rebuilding their lives.

Still, in retrospect, this leniency, combined with the Americans' adamant refusal to impose firm restrictions on all former officers at any point during their occupation, may well have avoided creating a pool of aggrieved outsiders and thus best served American interests in the long run, as some MG officials clearly hoped it would. German veterans, rightly or wrongly, already felt defamed and discriminated against, and the extent of pension activism suggests that deeper-cutting measures might have stimulated even more dangerous resentment and agitation.

If tribunal processing failed to identify and restrain real security threats, the Allied pension policy obviously mobilized former officers in a way that undermined U.S. objectives. Terminating the pensions of elderly soldiers, disabled veterans, frail old women, and orphans, regardless of plans to integrate them into other social insurance programs, caused real distress, hurt the standing of the occupation powers, encouraged sympathy for former military men and their dependents, and gave ex-officers a tool to use in demanding restitution and respect. By and large, the policy came to be viewed as a measure designed to single out former officers for special punishment, rather than as an educational initiative designed to deny former officers special treatment. Motivating military men, it provoked outrage, support, and pragmatic tactical moves from church officials, politicians, and other leaders in German society. In the end, too, the policy's negative byproducts spurred the Americans to permit the payment of maintenance grants to former soldiers and their dependents—thus reestablishing military families in a separate category. During the Federal Republic, the distinction was once again institutionalized in federal legislation. Furthermore, while the pension lobbying effort helped to integrate former officers into the new democratic state, it also—along with rearmament initiatives—assured them at least limited influence in government circles.

The Allies obviously did not consider carefully enough the possible effect of their pension decisions on the financial well-being of those most affected—or, in some cases, probably did not care. But their policies also encountered unanticipated cross-currents. In discussing the fate of German officers, the Allies were essentially operating with old categories of analysis. They assumed the problems of World War II could be solved very much like they should have been solved following World War I. Despite the concurrent proceedings in Nuremberg, they—not surprisingly, perhaps—failed to recognize a fundamental difference in character between the two wars. If German militarism had, in fact, evolved into something inherently criminal, this was lost on them. Quadripartite policymakers crafted a pension policy and introduced other measures that were rooted in anxieties about the social influence and technical abilities of the German officer corps and their link to a possible future war. But in postwar Germany, exposed atrocities were coloring and complicating views of the Wehrmacht. And its officers were being chastised and denigrated by their own people for their recent conduct. Allied pension restrictions, along with other Allied policies (including extended captivity for Germany’s military elites), effectively became caught up in an array of accusations buffeting former German officers. The problem of military threat and the need for security became entangled with allegations regarding support for the destructive policies of the Nazi regime and responsibility for war crimes. This development was not just a product of conversations among the Germans and perhaps some guilty consciences. It can also be attributed in part to the Nuremberg tribunal’s assumption that aggressive war was a crime, the ongoing supplementary war crimes trials, the American Zone’s denazification law, ACC Directive No. 38, and no doubt other factors. Put concisely, in the minds of ex-officers and other Germans, alleged political and criminal offenses resulted in punitive Allied policies for former German officers. Even some Allied leaders seemed to forget the original intent of the pension measure during the later years of the occupation.<sup>222</sup>

Although common, defenses grounded in references to soldierly duty, retained honor, or the limited involvement of German officers in war crimes did not really touch the heart of Allied concerns. In fact, former German officers were not being treated as more guilty of Nazi crimes than other Germans, even including the crime of launching an aggressive war. Courts tried high-ranking officers for this crime, but they tried civilians as well. There may have been a lingering underlying assumption that these men bore special culpability for helping the Nazis to power, but explicit references to this were rare in Allied policy discussions. Rather, the

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<sup>222</sup> “Weekly Hansard, London Nr. 87, Unterhausdebatte am 21. April 1948,” HStA EA 1/016 Bü 384.

Allies treated German officers differently because they believed that these men had the training, skills, desire, and influence to plan and wage a future war. Their involvement with National Socialism, war crimes, and crimes against humanity was another issue entirely.

A stronger emphasis on the true purpose of the pension law and other measures in Allied public rhetoric might, theoretically, have helped to soothe the indignation of the officers and their sympathizers. But it seems more likely that even pointed declarations would have failed to penetrate the myopia of former professional soldiers or to overcome any tendencies to deliberately misconstrue Allied policies, particularly when protests against injustices became a vehicle for demanding increased respect more generally. Elite officers, moreover, did not consider equalizing measures themselves to be inoffensive. Nor were charges of militarism and accusations of having contributed to the launching of an aggressive war accepted as valid.

On the other hand, if the Allies wanted to diminish the status of officers in German society, the pension law did not entirely backfire. Public debates on the question provided a forum for Germans to lash out at former officers. In addition, although officer activists may have won new converts to their cause, they obviously also stimulated, rekindled, or confirmed the belief that they were arrogant elitists. Furthermore, achieving recognition of their special status, or earning influence through force of presence, could not have been easy for former officers who were regularly complaining about going hungry and periodically spreading stories of colleagues who had committed suicide when they could no longer cope with the weight of the world. Purportedly struggling to survive and made the suffering victims of Allied policies and German malice, former generals could hardly have struck all Germans as larger than life and worthy of excessive social respect. Thus, Allied policies, confused as they were at times, ultimately did contribute to permanently altering perceptions of the German officer corps.

## Chapter 6

### GETTING THE UNIFORM OUT OF THE GERMAN

The day after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, American military officers were required to report to their desks in Washington in full uniform. In his history-memoir *Washington Goes to War*, American journalist David Brinkley recalled the challenges this presented, as normal dress had “generally run to outfits like brown tweed jackets and gray trousers,” with higher-ranking officers donning uniforms only for ceremonial occasions.

And so on Monday morning the corridors of the army and navy buildings were filled with officers who looked a mess. Some wore uniforms and parts of uniforms dating to 1918, many of them now two sizes too small. Majors were in outfits they had bought when they were second lieutenants. Others were dressed in clothes partly military and partly civilian. There were wool leg wrappings from the 1918 war and other outfits equally outlandish and topped with garrison caps (leather bills), field caps (the ‘overseas’ cap folding open like an envelope) and campaign hats (wide brimmed, as worn by forest rangers and Boy Scouts). It was a rummage sale gone to war.<sup>1</sup>

This somewhat comical turn of events was in part the product of an earlier order instructing military officers posted in Washington to wear civilian clothes, a measure designed “to reduce their visibility.”<sup>2</sup> In a country with only a small (if rapidly expanding) military, strong isolationist sentiments, and a long-running suspicion of standing armies and professional soldiers, active duty soldiers were scarce and a highly conspicuous officer corps was not necessarily desirable. The United States had “a multitude of serious problems” shortly before becoming involved in World War II, observed one historian, “but the impact of the military on American life was not among them.”<sup>3</sup>

Just days after many middle-aged American officers struggled into musty uniforms, however, the United States found itself at war with a nation that presented a different picture. If already in the nineteenth century Americans had marked a German predilection for shiny buttons, braid, and tailored military wear, the Third Reich had pushed this tendency to new heights. State ceremonies and local rituals flaunted row upon row

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<sup>1</sup> David Brinkley, *Washington Goes to War* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1988), 90.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen F. Ambrose, “The Military and American Society: An Overview,” in *The Military and American Society: Essays and Readings*, ed. Stephen F. Ambrose and James A. Barber, Jr. (NY: The Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1972), 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



of uniformed men and boys, with thousands of girls and young women in matching outfits. The Germans of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* comprised tight rows of subdued hues, adorned with badges, belts, and insignia speaking a complex language of belonging, conformity, and grades of authority.

For the Americans, the German passion for uniforms spoke volumes about the Germans' militaristic propensities and the danger these posed to the world. Soon after the occupation began, they therefore set aside their concerns about the adequacy of German clothing supplies and joined their allies in issuing an order demanding that German military uniforms and insignia disappear from public view. Although this produced a real hardship for the German people, the Americans were willing only to delay, rather than discontinue, its enforcement.

In general, scholars have been inclined to dismiss the uniform ban as inconsequential or excessive. Yet a closer consideration of its implementation and results suggests that it was not completely without effect. Certainly, with their communities now lying in shambles, many Germans were already eager to abandon their uniforms. And some German commentators needed no Allied prodding to condemn the harmful role uniforms had played in Germany's past. But other Germans resented American attacks on their uniforms. In addition, severe clothing shortages not only led to vocal criticism of the uniform prohibition for the added suffering it caused, but ensured that the Germans could not discard their uniforms even when they wanted to do so. Ultimately, despite the resentment it caused, the ban effectively bolstered prevailing native sentiments while helping to make certain that any uniforms that remained lost much of their visual dignity and thus their influence. Introduced into a poor postwar economy and traumatized society, it helped to recast the connotations of "the uniform."

### **Making Policy**

"Appearance and discourse are two distinct dimensions of the social transaction," sociologist Gregory P. Stone first argued years ago, and appearance is "more basic." Individuals express their identity through dress and behavior, while others make assumptions about a person on the same basis, even before either has spoken.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Gregory P. Stone, "Appearance and the Self," in *Dress and Identity*, ed. Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher, and Kim K. P. Johnson (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1995), 19-28, quote from 21. Stone's article was originally published in Arnold M. Rose, ed. *Human Behavior and the Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 86-116.

Clothing, therefore, can serve as a form of language.<sup>5</sup> Sociologist Nathan Joseph has suggested that uniforms can be seen as a type of “sign” whose abstractness enables others to read them at multiple levels of meaning.<sup>6</sup> While Stone notes that observers do not always interpret someone’s dress the way the person intends,<sup>7</sup> Joseph has stressed that the same clothing can mean different things to different people depending upon governing social structures, personal experience, and other factors.<sup>8</sup> In short, scholars have pointed not only to the very real functional and symbolic value of uniforms, but also to the simultaneity of diverging, overlapping, and conflicting meanings for both wearers and observers.

Recognizing this multifaceted communicative character of uniforms is helpful both for comprehending the role uniforms played in German society and for understanding American policies. For German uniforms sent multiple messages to other Germans and to American observers as well. These messages, moreover, not only incited the promulgation of the uniform ban, they also helped to determine its impact.

### *Reading German Uniforms*

In the years following World War I, uniforms remained a highly visible element of the German social landscape. Despite defeat, former officers readily donned their old uniforms for assorted gatherings.<sup>9</sup> The World War I “front soldier” was increasingly idolized, seen by some as a role model for German youth and for German society as a whole.<sup>10</sup> And uniformed paramilitary groups became conspicuous across the political spectrum—with even the Social Democrats sponsoring a uniformed organization. In the chaos of 1918, spontaneous attacks on military elites who were closely identified with the monarchy had often involved ripping off epaulettes, and Social Democratic leaders in the 1920s had likewise criticized the traditional ornamental

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<sup>5</sup> For an explicit, if somewhat superficial, analysis of this concept, see Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes* (New York: Random House, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 26-27.

<sup>7</sup> Stone, “Appearance and the Self,” 22.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 9-13.

<sup>9</sup> Gustav-Adolf Caspar, “Die militärische Tradition in der Reichswehr und in der Wehrmacht 1919-1945,” in *Tradition in deutschen Streitkräften bis 1945*, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Herford: Verlag E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1986), 240-241.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 222-224; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 24-25.

“frillery” of the German armed forces.<sup>11</sup> However, although the SPD’s paramilitary *Reichsbanner* now echoed these concerns in “frowning upon” the wearing of military decorations from World War I,<sup>12</sup> even it did not eschew uniforms.

In taking a position somewhere between militarism and pacifism, historian George Mosse suggested, the SPD was in part conceding “the attraction of the war experience even for Republican youth.”<sup>13</sup> According to historian Richard Bessel, “It was almost as if, in the absence of opportunities to sign up for the army, young men in Weimar Germany looked to various paramilitary organizations and uniformed squads to express their admiration for military values and to have an outlet for violence.”<sup>14</sup> If so, uniforms were not merely a trapping, but enhanced the pseudo-military experience offered by paramilitary groups. At the same time, a uniformed group could provide the disaffected with overt signs of belonging, while also giving individuals the chance to express their political beliefs visibly in an environment of increasingly polarized politics.<sup>15</sup>

The uniform trend gained additional momentum in the Third Reich. Hitler’s desire to turn all Germans into soldiers marching in step with his ideological objectives received outward expression in a proliferation of uniforms, which could simultaneously encourage discipline and allegiance and intimidate Germany’s neighbors.<sup>16</sup> How even small-scale displays could evoke emotional excitement and loyalty among Germans is suggested by a Helene S. in describing her childhood in a town near Ludwigshafen. “When on certain holidays, early in the morning, the uniformed groups marched through the streets and sang marching songs, that awoke an uplifting feeling in me, too, as had already been encouraged in school,” she remembered. “We were so lucky to be German, German was good, yes, German was the best in the whole world. We had the greatest man, Adolf Hitler, who led us, who brought all the Germans outside of our land home into the Reich, whether they wanted

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<sup>11</sup> Hans-Peter Stein, “Symbole,” in *Symbole und Zeremoniell in deutschen Streitkräften vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Herford: Verlag E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1984), 115; Caspar, “Die militärische Tradition,” 236.

<sup>12</sup> George Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 122.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Bessel, *Nazism and War*, 20-21.

<sup>15</sup> On the meaning of uniforms for individuals within an organization and the effect of “massed” uniforms, see Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 50, 74, 82-83.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 82-83; Jennifer Craik, *Uniforms Exposed: From Conformity to Transgression* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 39; Caspar, “Die militärische Tradition,” 266.

that or not, and why shouldn't they want that, when they were offered so much." Her father had reluctantly joined the SA in order to get a job, she recalled, but upon achieving his goal had put his uniform away. Secretly, she lamented the fact that he was not marching and that "the uniform in the closet lived out a useless existence." This, she added, had made her even more eagerly await the day when she could join the Hitler Youth and proudly wear her own—admittedly home-made—uniform.<sup>17</sup>

Uniforms also contributed to prevailing conceptions of manliness. Nazi Germany, scholars have observed, was characterized by a "militarized masculinity."<sup>18</sup> For men, the Nazis' increased emphasis on military ideals meant military training in school, youth groups, and the army; to be a man was to be a soldier in uniform.<sup>19</sup> The Nazi emphasis on physical appearance, moreover, meant that uniforms could serve another, related function. Mosse has described "heroism, death, and sacrifice on behalf of a higher purpose in life" as "attributes of manliness" in the early twentieth century, but also stressed the importance of conceptions of the perfect male form. If idealization of (Aryan) male beauty reached its apex in fascist Germany,<sup>20</sup> uniforms not only accentuated key elements of this beauty—narrow hips and broad shoulders—but could lend the illusion of such features even where they were absent.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, though the Nazis preferred to stress the asexual nature of a perfect body, a uniform could also confer sex appeal.<sup>22</sup>

But uniforms carried very concrete messages, too. According to cultural analyst Jennifer Craik, military uniforms have historically "convey[ed] symbols of authority, status and power by constructing clean lines and a handsome silhouette."<sup>23</sup> And, in the words of a historian of Nazi women's fashions, "Nowhere did a weapon and the right type of uniform evince power so convincingly as in the Third Reich."<sup>24</sup> Insignia, medals,

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<sup>17</sup> *Was vom Leben bleibt*, 39-40, Deutsches Tagebucharchiv, Emmendingen [hereafter DTA], No. 85/II. On the significance of Hitler Youth uniforms to their wearers, see also Alexander von Plato, "The Hitler Youth generation and its role in the two post-war German states," in *Generations in Conflict: Youth revolt and generation formation in Germany 1770-1967*, ed. Mark Roseman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 213, 216.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Moeller, "The 'Remasculinization' of Germany," 106.

<sup>19</sup> Frevert, *Nation in Barracks*, 247-250.

<sup>20</sup> Mosse, *Image of Man*, 51, 168-169.

<sup>21</sup> Fussell, *Uniforms*, 11-15.

<sup>22</sup> Inge Marszolek, "'Ich möchte Dich zu gern mal in Uniform sehen': Geschlechterkonstruktionen in Feldpostbriefen," *WerkstattGeschichte* 22, No. 8 (1999): 57.

<sup>23</sup> Craik, *Uniforms Exposed*, 38.

<sup>24</sup> Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 131.

and badges, meanwhile, allowed observers to categorize a uniform wearer based on a complex system of colors, shapes, and emblems.<sup>25</sup> As Joseph has observed, there is no uncertainty when one confronts a person in uniform, their “group membership, and perhaps rank, seniority, and prior achievements are proclaimed by their apparel.” Reading their clothes, one also receives clues as to how they should be treated.<sup>26</sup> True for all soldiers, this was perhaps most important for Wehrmacht officers, whose appearance immediately distinguished them as powerful elites.

A uniform could thus identify a German man as a noble soldier or simply associate him with highly regarded military values or skills. At the same time, it could confirm his abilities, status, and manhood, both to himself and to those around him. Not everyone put on a uniform with great enthusiasm, but for many, it could be an elevating experience. Recalling his wartime service, one soldier later wrote, “How many times . . . had I thought myself invulnerable, filled with the pride we all felt, admiring our shoulder straps and helmets and magnificent uniforms, and the sound of our footsteps, which I loved, and love still, despite everything.”<sup>27</sup>

Not unlike Adolf Hitler, Americans in the 1930s associated the proliferation of German uniforms with an increased potential for war.<sup>28</sup> When seen marching in precise formation, uniforms also provided visual evidence for their belief that the German people had willingly surrendered their individuality and rights to their militaristic leaders, becoming what historian Benjamin Alpers has termed a “regimented crowd,” a mass of obedient automatons.<sup>29</sup> U.S. Army training films used the National Socialists’ own film footage to draw attention to this aspect of the Third Reich. Along with images portraying a militaristic and aggressive people who had embraced the Nazis, “shots of the current regimentation of the German people through compulsion, force, and indoctrination yielded a picture of a country completely oriented to military conquest and world

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<sup>25</sup> For detailed examinations of German uniforms and insignia, see Brian L. Davis, *German Army Uniforms and Insignia, 1933-1945* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1972); Brian L. Davis, *Badges and Insignia of the Third Reich, 1933-1945* (Poole: Blandford Press, 1983).

<sup>26</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 66, 71-72.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Fritz, *Frontsoldaten*, 72.

<sup>28</sup> William E. Dodd to Judge Moore, 5 Nov 34, FDRL, PSF, Safe File, Diplomatic Correspondence, Box 32, F: Germany: Dodd, William E., 1933-1935.

<sup>29</sup> Alpers, *Dictators, Democracy, and American Public Culture*, 94-99; Hönicke, “American Wartime Images,” 272-276.

domination.”<sup>30</sup> Americans believed, too, that on an interpersonal level, uniforms served as symbols of authority for most Germans.<sup>31</sup>

Not surprisingly, American wartime planners often focused on policy-related aspects of the problem.<sup>32</sup> They saw German paramilitary groups as partially responsible for the failure of the Weimar Republic and worried about the role such organizations and their accoutrements played in grounding a strong military system.<sup>33</sup> Roosevelt linked the German fondness for uniforms with the growth of German militarism in the twentieth century and believed that prohibiting uniforms would help to convince the Germans of their total defeat, a step necessary to transforming their militaristic outlook.<sup>34</sup>

Even beyond the presumed unique function of uniforms in German society, Allied military officers clearly recognized the power of a uniform—they needed to look no further than their own experiences. General Patton once confided to his diary that he sometimes depended upon his uniform to help sustain his courage. He also firmly believed that his own appearance—distinctive and occasionally flashy (he liked to wield an ivory-handled pistol)—could help motivate his men and keep their spirits up (Figure 1). General Eisenhower chose to acknowledge the special contribution of officers leading combat troops by introducing a dark green band to their uniform shoulder loops, thus setting them apart from officers who were not serving on the dangerous front lines.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, high-ranking British officers had traditionally expressed their elite status by ignoring strict uniform regulations<sup>36</sup> and often favored corduroys during World War II. Field Marshal Sir Bernard J. Montgomery once used his preference for eccentric casual dress (not to mention his understanding of the language of clothing) to make a point in dealing with the Germans, deliberately donning a sweater and faded,

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<sup>30</sup> Hönicke, “American Wartime Images,” 276.

<sup>31</sup> J. R. Lewis to Brigadier General C. W. Wickersham, 17 Sep 44, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 18, F: AG 371.1 Service of Information (Information Control Policy).

<sup>32</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>33</sup> CAC-34, 17 Dec 43, NA, RG 59, T1221, Roll 1; “Comments: Directive on ‘Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training in Germany,’” 3 Jan 4[5], NA, RG 260, Records Received by USGCC, Box 11, F: Directive No. 13 134.14 Military Training.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Murphy, Memorandum of Conversation with President Roosevelt, 9 Sep 44, *FRUS, Conference at Quebec*, 144; Hammond, “Directives for the Occupation of Germany,” 363-366.

<sup>35</sup> Paul Fussell, *Uniforms: Why We Are What We Wear* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), 38-43.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 11-12.

limp corduroys to receive a quartet of surrendering German officers, men who, even in defeat, struck Montgomery's assistant as "overpoweringly sinister in their jackboots and long black leather overcoats."<sup>37</sup>

The military uniform, in many respects, had a standing all its own. An officer's guide from the early 1940s captured this idea in reminding U.S. officers that "millions of American citizens have worn the uniform of the Army during wars and other times of trial and sacrifice, bringing honor to themselves and a heritage to be observed and upheld by those who follow." Officers should thus "present a fine appearance," carefully maintain their clothing, and dress neatly according to regulations. This meant, too, that, as leaders, they were to "impress upon all in the military service that the dignity of the uniform and the respect due it are best preserved when its wearers so conduct themselves as to never cast discredit upon it."<sup>38</sup>

### *Dealing with the Germans*

Although Roosevelt's influence on policymaking was frequently decisive, the initial American policies for occupied Germany did not incorporate his desired uniform prohibition. High-ranking U.S. officials and their British counterparts in SHAEF were not keen on leaving the Germans in uniform, but agreed that clothing shortages would make a ban difficult to enforce. They decided, accordingly, to allow discharged German soldiers to retain one full uniform.<sup>39</sup> SHAEF policies did stipulate, however, that all badges of rank, *Reichskokarde* (circular insignia of black, red, and white adorning most German headgear), *Hoheitsabzeichen* (the national insignia of a spread eagle over a swastika), and any other emblems, medals, or decorations "of a Nazi nature" should be confiscated before a soldier's release, though he might be permitted to keep and wear any "medals or decorations awarded for merit or long service, or for particular campaigns," so long as any Nazi markings on them had been removed or "obliterated."<sup>40</sup>

The fact that as a result many discharged soldiers were soon moving about freely and behaving like civilians while still dressed in uniform proved galling to French military observers. In late May 1945, a general

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<sup>37</sup> Fussell, *Uniforms*, 46-47.

<sup>38</sup> *The Officer's Guide*, 8th ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Military Service Publishing Company, 1942), 123-124. Not an official military publication, this guide drew information from assorted official military regulations and had the input of high-ranking American officers.

<sup>39</sup> Group Meeting on Disarmament of Germany, 4 Sep 44, *Morgenthau Diary (Germany)*, 485; Eclipse Memorandum No. 17, enclosed in Newman to Distribution, 30 Mar 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 388.4 Militarism.

<sup>40</sup> R.E. Lewis to Commanding Generals, 4 Jul 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 198, Box 223, F: 431.4 Insignia.

from the French First Army, a body officially attached to the U.S. Sixth Army Group and temporarily controlling Stuttgart and Karlsruhe, went so far as to write a memo on the subject. He called for the death of Prussian militarism through reeducation, “first by crushing all outward signs.”

Above all, and at once, suppress the uniforms, commencing, naturally, with the soldiers, but also the civilians (police, public employees, etc. . .). Kill the German cult of the ‘Mütze’ (cap) (a German who wears a ‘Mütze’ on his head thinks Prussian and Nazi.) No longer offer for the admiration of the urchins, the policeman, the Beamte (civil servant), the soldier, booted, polished, belted, helmeted, arrogant. Attempt to bring back the taste of ‘Gemutlichkeit’ with the long trousers, the jacket, the hat. It will be sufficient to distinguish the branches of the Public Services by easily visible insignias, hat-bands, arm-bands, colored sleeves, scarves, badge, etc. . . .<sup>41</sup>

France’s Lieutenant General Louis Marie Koeltz echoed many of his colleague’s complaints in an official request to SHAEF asking for a policy change. “In order to obtain the moral disarmament of German minds and the destruction of German militarism,” he wrote, “it seems absolutely necessary to force the German people to lose its respect and its passionate love of the uniform.” With a silent reference to the aftermath of World War I, he maintained that a soldier who returned home “with a neat military equipment” would “not fail to tell people that he has been discharged ‘with honour and dignity’, and this might constitute the first step towards the building up of a new legend of the ‘unvanquished German soldier’, as well as an encouragement to new dreams of restoring the Great Reich.” Furthermore, European plundering had provided most of the German clothing and leather, while the inhabitants of Holland, Belgium, and France presently lacked clothes and shoes. More offensive still, German civilians were “as a rule, correctly clothed and in possession of good shoes.” He therefore recommended that German soldiers be forced to remove all “insignias of a military appearance” and, if they had to wear uniforms traveling home, they should be required to turn them in within 48 hours of arriving. He had little sympathy for those for whom this might represent a hardship. “Should certain German soldiers still be incompletely or badly clothed,” he concluded, “they should not be pitied more than any other population of liberated Europe which have suffered through this war. And it may happen that these soldiers and their fellow countrymen will come to the conclusion that war does not pay, which would be another step towards the moral disarmament which is our common aim.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> General de Larminat, Memo on the wearing of uniforms by the Germans, [31 May 45], appended to “Historical Report, G-5 Section, 6th Army Group, for Period 1 June Through 16 July 1945,” NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 54, Box 170, F: 17.18 Historical Report Sixth Army Group June-July 1945. All punctuation is retained from the original SHAEF translation.

<sup>42</sup> Letter signed Koeltz, 16 Jun 45, attached to EACS Main to G-1 Policy & Plans, 6 Jul 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 6, Box 31, F: 387.4/1 Armistice, Control & Disposal of German Armed Forces, Vol. III.



A SHAEF official rejected Koeltz's appeal in early July, referencing existing regulations regarding military insignia and reiterating the reasoning behind SHAEF's original uniform policy. Practical experience had shown the decision to be sound, he added, "not only because of the administrative difficulties involved, but also because Allied air bombardment has robbed the Germans of any material gains which they may have acquired . . . leaving the vast majority of the German Forces without civilian clothing." Discharged soldiers provided clear evidence of the latter point by continuing to wear their uniforms "in spite of the fact that they have long since ceased to have anything approaching a neat military appearance."<sup>43</sup>

But SHAEF's opinion soon did not matter, as in July 1945 it was officially dissolved. In the U.S. Zone, American policies now took effect, to be supplemented by any instructions from the ACC, which began operating in August. And the new policies included the long-discussed law on "military training," which specifically barred "the use of military or Nazi uniforms" and insignia except by soldiers not yet demobilized.<sup>44</sup> Before U.S. officials could issue implementing instructions, however, the ACC approved its own directive.

The French had not abandoned their hopes of clearing German streets of military uniforms. Thus, in early August, Koeltz, now deputy military governor of the French Zone, had circulated a memorandum on uniforms for consideration at a meeting of the deputy military governors of the four occupation zones—a group soon to comprise the Allied Coordinating Committee responsible for recommending policies to the ACC. Expressing a wish to signal clearly the Allies' desire to eliminate militarism, the memo recommended that the ACC forbid the wearing of all military clothing, even freed of its insignia and badges, and require the Germans to turn in all uniforms.<sup>45</sup> The four officials all "agreed in principle to the desirability of the French proposals," but they also acknowledged the problem of German veterans who had no replacement clothing. In the end, they decided that uniforms could be dyed to produce acceptable civilian clothing.<sup>46</sup> An early draft of an appropriate order accordingly prohibited the wearing of all military and paramilitary uniforms in their "present color" after October 1, 1945.<sup>47</sup> Submitted to the ACC, the draft elicited protests from the British who argued that it would

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<sup>43</sup> EACS Main to G-1 Policy & Plans, 6 Jul 45, NA, RG 331.

<sup>44</sup> Law No. 154, 14 Jul 45, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: B-8 Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training.

<sup>45</sup> CONL/P(45)10, 8 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 138, F: First Meeting Coordinating Committee – Mr. Heath.

<sup>46</sup> Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Deputies, 7 Aug 45, *ibid*.

<sup>47</sup> CORC/M(45)2, 17 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 138, F: Second Meeting Coordinating Committee – Mr. Heath.

not allow enough time to complete all of the dyeing operations required to meet the needs of some two million former soldiers in their zone. The Soviets, on the other hand, could not understand the fuss, claiming to have already essentially achieved the directive's goals in theirs.<sup>48</sup> After a delay to determine a reasonable time frame for implementation, the ACC on August 30 approved an order banning the wearing of all insignia, medals, and badges as well as all uniforms in their original color after December 1.<sup>49</sup>

With the new order in hand, U.S. officials in September issued an ordinance that permitted Germans to wear military and paramilitary uniforms and "any police uniforms similar thereto" only if they had dyed or altered them to resemble civilian clothing. Boots might be worn, but no headgear. Violators would be subject "to any lawful punishment, other than death." German officials, meanwhile, were to devise programs for dyeing and retailoring uniforms and collecting clothing for the needy. A letter of instruction to American commanders advised that they could turn to welfare agencies for assistance in converting and replacing uniforms and indicated that U.S. officials would release captured stocks of German uniforms to German government agencies for dyeing, retailoring, and eventual distribution by German welfare agencies.<sup>50</sup>

Subsequent ACC issuances would confirm the Allies' intent to erase uniforms from the visual map of Germany. ACC Law No. 8 outlawed all military training and related activities, stating, as had the earlier U.S. law, that no one might wear military or Nazi uniforms, insignia, or decorations.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, ACC Law No. 34, along with its many other provisions, repealed all legislative measures pertaining to uniforms and decorations.<sup>52</sup>

## **The Official Response**

### *The Procurement Problem*

Allied concerns about German clothing supplies were well-founded. The Germans had begun rationing clothing already in 1939 and, as the war progressed, stores had been unable to satisfy even these

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<sup>48</sup> Murphy to the Secretary of State, 20 Aug 45, *FRUS, 1945*, 3:832.

<sup>49</sup> "Council for Reich Delays Decisions," *NYT*, 21 Aug 45; US Group Control Council German signed Clay to USFET Main, 3 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 421 Uniforms.

<sup>50</sup> R.B. Lovett to Commanding Generals, 22 Sep 1945, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 22, F: AG 421 Uniforms.

<sup>51</sup> T.W. Guphill to Commanding Generals, 12 Dec 45, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: B-8 Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training.

<sup>52</sup> Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany Under Occupation*, 151.

limited demands. Used clothing grew expensive. And even as supplies dwindled, the Nazis had collected winter clothes for troops on the Eastern Front and other items for Germany's poor. When civilian production stopped completely, German women already had learned to stitch together fabric scraps to make skirts, to create lingerie from fallen parachutes, and to knit socks from unraveled grain sacks.<sup>53</sup> Once hostilities ceased, destroyed factories, raw material shortages, plundering, transportation deficiencies, and Allied requisitioning all impeded the production and shipping of new supplies.<sup>54</sup> Making worse an already bad situation, destitute refugees and concentration camp survivors were soon joining bombed out families and millions of displaced persons (DPs) in Germany. During the summer of 1945, the influx of returning soldiers exacerbated the problem, as many had lost all their possessions or simply outgrown their civilian clothes.<sup>55</sup>

Certain areas of Württemberg-Baden found their stocks of clothing reduced still further by French actions. In Karlsruhe and Stuttgart, the French required each German family to turn over to local authorities one man's suit, one shirt, one necktie, two handkerchiefs, and one pair each of underwear, socks, and shoes—all in excellent condition—for use by French deportees and the homeless in France. Protests from local officials met with little sympathy.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the volume of goods amassed was substantial. In late June, for instance, one of Karlsruhe's 16 administrative districts reported having collected some 2,200 shirts, 1,900 pairs of pants, and 1,900 pairs of underwear.<sup>57</sup>

Incapable of altering the larger supply picture, German authorities had little choice but to continue to ration often unavailable goods and solicit or demand donations from their fellow citizens.<sup>58</sup> In this regard, the French collection effort ultimately proved to be something of a boon. Withdrawing in mid July, the French left

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<sup>53</sup> Irene V. Guenther, "Nazi 'Chic'?: German Politics and Women's Fashions, 1915-1945," *Fashion Theory* 1, No. 1 (1997): 45-50.

<sup>54</sup> Fachgruppenleiter to Wirtschaftsgruppe Einzelhandel, 25 May 45, GLA 356 No. 4368; To the Wirtschaftsgruppe Einzelhandel, Bezirkstelle Heidelberg, 26 May 45, *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> To 1st Lt. K.C. Plessner, 14 Jun 45, GLA 356 No. 4368; Karl Gross to the Stadtverwaltung, Stuttgart, 13 Jul 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 71; Bezirk Mühlburg, Tätigkeitsbericht Nr. 16, 19 Jul 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 28.

<sup>56</sup> Rundschreiben Nr. 35, 22 Jun 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 30; Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart*, 42. Vietzen notes, apparently with some annoyance, that French officers in Stuttgart regularly referred German officials to what Germans had done or allegedly had done in the countries they occupied (40).

<sup>57</sup> Bezirksverwaltung West, Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 18.–30.Juni 1945, 5 Jul 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 5.

<sup>58</sup> "Spenden für die Opfer des Naziterrors," *AU*, 18 Aug 45; Rundschreiben Nr. 221, 19 Sep 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 30.

behind a portion of the goods they had assembled. The Americans had no need of the clothing and distributed it to indigent individuals and eventually to local officials for dispensing to the German people.<sup>59</sup> Interestingly, the responsible MG officer in Karlsruhe advised city authorities to give priority in distributing clothing first to concentration camp survivors, but then to discharged soldiers, as he wanted the uniform jackets of the latter to “vanish from the street scene” (though the wearing of uniform pants and boots was still permitted and full uniforms might be worn at work sites).<sup>60</sup>

By the time the ACC debated the uniform question, American MG officers on site were very aware of the difficult clothing conditions. Already on the day Germany surrendered, the Landrat of Landkreis Heidelberg, Hermann Specht, had reported that retailers had “no stocks worth mentioning of clothing, footwear or textiles,” few people were more than “barely supplied with these articles,” and retailers could not expect new supplies any time soon.<sup>61</sup> He repeated these thoughts again and again over the succeeding weeks and months, noting, in fact, that supplies were diminishing while applications for purchase permits were increasing.<sup>62</sup> In late August, the American captain overseeing Landkreis Karlsruhe reported to his superiors on a meeting with a local mayor, indicating that “clothing is a big problem” and that he had suggested to the German official that “uniforms of returning soldiers be altered and dyed to look like civilian clothes.”<sup>63</sup> A week later, one of his men met with the Landkreis *Wirtschaftsamt* (Commercial Office) staff regarding the use of German uniforms, subsequently recording in his daily report that he would “make up model of conversion for display at burgermeister’s meeting.”<sup>64</sup>

In early fall 1945, American officials nevertheless banned uniform wearing. Local newspapers now explained that uniforms might only be worn if they were not immediately recognizable as such and that

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<sup>59</sup> Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart*, 43.

<sup>60</sup> Städt. Bezirkshauptverwaltung, Protokoll der Sitzung vom 27. Juli 1945 mit den Bezirksvorstehern, 27 Jul 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 114; Städt. Wirtschafts- und Beschaffungsamt, Verfahren für die Abgabe von Bekleidungs- usw. Stücken aus der Sammlung, 22 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 2.

<sup>61</sup> Der Landrat, Heidelberg, to Military Government, 8 May 45, GLA 356 No. 4368.

<sup>62</sup> See, for example, Specht to Military Government, 31 May 45, *ibid.*; Der Landrat, Heidelberg, to 1st Lt. K.C. Plessner, 20 Jun 45, *ibid.*; Der Landrat, Heidelberg, to Military Government Det. I18G 3, 11 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Capt. Green, Daily Report, 30 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 521, F: Daily Reports Det I10G3 August 1945.

<sup>64</sup> Lt. Embry, [Daily Report], 7 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 524, F: Daily Reports Det G-45.

uniforms must be dyed a color other than blue, black, or olive green<sup>65</sup>—colors reserved for American troops and certain categories of individuals outfitted in dyed American uniforms, such as DPs.<sup>66</sup> Posing the greatest challenge for returning soldiers, the ordinance affected others as well. Years of deprivation had made almost any free item of clothing desirable. Thus, as historian Irene Guenther writes, following Germany's surrender many women "were spotted wearing dirtied and torn military jackets, which German soldiers and officers had hastily abandoned in their retreat."<sup>67</sup> In the Stuttgart area, as elsewhere, Germans had looted Wehrmacht supply trains during the final days of the war.<sup>68</sup> The previous emphasis on war production also meant that Wehrmacht uniform and fabric stocks represented one of the only sources of replacement clothing.

In the face of a deadline, ongoing efforts to deal with the clothing situation took on new urgency. Heidelberg officials were among those who investigated the possibility of dyeing surplus uniforms. When the Americans arrived in April 1945, Heidelberg's Schädla Laundry and Dry Cleaning Plant had had in its possession a large stock of uniforms and other supplies left by the Wehrmacht for cleaning. Facing their possible confiscation, the firm had given the items to the city, which had, in turn, begun distributing the clothing to returning soldiers who had nothing else to wear. The Wehrmacht supplies now needed to be dyed. But Heidelberg encountered a serious obstacle in the U.S. Army, whose Seventh Army had established its headquarters in the city and requisitioned the city's various dyeing works. In late September, the Americans relinquished three small dyers for city use, but it soon became clear that the available equipment would satisfy only a portion of the demand.<sup>69</sup>

In early November, Heidelberg mayor Dr. Ernst Walz outlined the situation for local MG officials. A survey of five dyeing works had shown that most lacked dyestuffs. One had indicated that it was understaffed, since the city labor office had assigned some of its employees to help with bridge construction. Another was

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<sup>65</sup> "Aus den Besatzungszonen," *SZ*, 26 Sep 45; "Das Tragen von Uniformen," *SZ*, 7 Nov 45; "Verbot des Tragens deutscher militärischer Uniformen und Uniformstücke," *AU*, 22 Nov 45.

<sup>66</sup> George L. Simonson to Herr Landrat, Kreis Waiblingen, 18 Oct 45, StAL FL 20/19 Bü 1381; Dean G. Ostrum to Distribution, 8 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 460, F: Police Directorate I.

<sup>67</sup> Guenther, *Nazi Chic*, 263.

<sup>68</sup> Sonja Hosseinzadeh, *Nur Trümmerfrauen und Amiliebchen? Stuttgarterinnen in der Nachkriegszeit* (Stuttgart: Silberburg-Verlag), 73.

<sup>69</sup> Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Ernährungs- und Wirtschaftsausschusses am 10. Juli 1946, StAH AA 48 No. 42; Report on civilian supplies and rationing in the City of Heidelberg in the month of September, 1945, 3 Oct 45, StAH AA 239k/1 No. 5; Minutes, Stadtratsitzung am 19. Oktober 1945, n.d., StAH Stadtratsitzungen 1945.

busy providing dry cleaning and laundry services and presently had no expert on staff to handle the dyeing. A third had already accepted several thousand articles of clothing from individuals. Not only would they be unable to finish this work by December 1, but taking on city orders would require them to postpone the private work for weeks. Altogether, Walz reported, four of the firms could together dye, daily, 180 Wehrmacht coats, 350 Wehrmacht jackets or blouses, *or* 360 Wehrmacht trousers. But the largest of the five facilities was still requisitioned.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the Schädla plant, Heidelberg's largest dyeing works, could dye roughly 500 uniform pieces daily and had the materials to dye some 12,000 uniform parts, but this plant remained in American hands as well.<sup>71</sup>

The local MG commander immediately asked Seventh Army officials whether the army could release one of the two requisitioned plants or permit the city to use the plants at night, noting that his request had been delayed while securing detailed information on the facilities.<sup>72</sup> The Seventh Army rejected his petition unequivocally. The Schädla plant was handling dry cleaning services for all U.S. troops in the area, was already behind schedule in part because it had been without electricity for a time, and was about to begin a night shift. Its dyeing department was already operating around the clock dyeing American uniforms for DPs and repatriated Allied personnel. The second plant was engaged in similar dyeing operations, while its dry cleaners was tied up cleaning uniforms for reissuing. The responding Army official ended his November 21 reply by observing, "If the burgermeister continues to delay starting the dyeing program until the last minute he will naturally not be able to complete it in the allotted time with the equipment available to him."<sup>73</sup> City officials thus had little choice but to turn to the few available facilities to dye small consignments of uniforms or particularly essential items, such as winter coats, while also exploring other options.<sup>74</sup>

In Stuttgart, there were no facilities available for dyeing uniforms as of early November. A large firm some distance away was operating, but buried under U.S. Army orders, while two other facilities lacked

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<sup>70</sup> Walz to Military Government Heidelberg, 2 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 460, F: Police Directorate I.

<sup>71</sup> Walz to Military Government Heidelberg, 3 Nov 45, *ibid*.

<sup>72</sup> Golden P. Kratz to Commanding General, Seventh Army, 9 Nov 45, *ibid*.

<sup>73</sup> Informal Routing Slip attached to Headquarters, Seventh Army/Western Military District, to Director, Office of Mil Govt for Stadtkreis Heidelberg, 27 Nov 45, *ibid*.

<sup>74</sup> Report on civilian supply and rationing in the City of Heidelberg for the month of November, 1945, 4 Dec 45, StAH AA 239k/1 No. 5.

sufficient coal to do the work.<sup>75</sup> Worried about the situation of former soldiers, Stuttgart Wirtschaftsamt officials made arrangements for the two firms to disinfect, dry clean, and dye a small cache of Wehrmacht uniforms. However, not until mid November, when the military government turned over some 20 freight cars of coal to the city, were they able to allocate two truckloads of fuel to one of the firms so it could begin dyeing uniforms.<sup>76</sup> The Wirtschaftsamt then set up a station where individuals could, for a small fee, exchange their uniforms for uniforms of approximately the same quality dyed dark green, brown, or slate gray (depending upon the dyestuffs available). The *Stuttgarter Zeitung* announced the program on November 21, specifying that individuals who were both Stuttgart residents and had no other clothing besides their uniform would be served first. All uniforms turned in would, in turn, be dyed for future exchange.<sup>77</sup>

Like the people of Heidelberg, many individuals in the Karlsruhe area made their own arrangements with dyers. Taking stock of the local situation in mid December at the request of local MG authorities, Karlsruhe mayor Hermann Veit reported that there were just two dyeing works. At the time, one firm had 10,000 kilograms of uniforms on hand, with an output of approximately 500 kilograms per day, or roughly 200-300 uniforms. The second currently had 3,000 kilograms of uniforms on hand and had indicated that it would need five to six months to complete all of its orders. So far as local officials had been able to ascertain, the two dyeing works were the only firms available in all of North Baden (clearly a mistaken assumption). Veit therefore believed they should assume “that approximately 4-500 000 uniforms and overcoats will be turned in for dyeing.” In his closing remarks, he estimated it would take “at least 1 year to dye all the uniforms on hand, even if the work will be forced,” noting, too, that zonal divisions were hindering shipment of necessary raw materials.<sup>78</sup>

With less than three months to complete their dyeing activities, the Germans’ troubles were obviously increased by American demands. The Americans had begun dispensing army stocks to poorly clothed refugees

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<sup>75</sup> “Ich bitte um Mitteilung. . .” *SZ*, 10 Nov 45.

<sup>76</sup> Wochenbericht des Wirtschaftsamtes vom 28.10.-3.11.1945, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 276; Wirtschaftsamt, Abt. Kohle, Wochenbericht vom 12. – 17.11.1945, 17 Nov 45, *ibid.*; Der Oberbürgermeister to the Military Government, Stuttgart, 19 Nov 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 1. In December, the city reported distributing a recent allocation of coal from the military government to bakeries, butchers, restaurants, hospitals, schools, particularly needy individuals, and “laundries and dye houses.” Der Oberbürgermeister to the Military Government – Town – Stuttgart, 17 Dec 45, *ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> “Uniformen werden umgetauscht,” *SZ*, 21 Nov 45.

<sup>78</sup> Veit to Military Government, Karlsruhe, 18 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 528, F: Miscellaneous.

crowding Germany, but these had to be dyed first lest American GIs be blamed for criminal conduct.<sup>79</sup> Eventually the U.S. also started dyeing American uniforms issued to German POWs, and, as of December 1945, required that German uniforms worn by prisoners be dyed before their discharge.<sup>80</sup> The latter measure relieved some pressure on local authorities. Yet the combined American efforts still meant that the U.S. government was procuring literally tons of dyestuffs. Overall demand for dyes was therefore enormous at a time when dyestuff supplies were inadequate, German factories could produce only a certain amount, and coal shortages impeded production.<sup>81</sup>

With dyeing not the sole answer, German officials sought other ways to address the clothing problem. In Ulm, a notice published by the mayor in late November urged local tailors to immediately set aside all other work to alter uniforms.<sup>82</sup> Military government officials later noted, however, that tailors did not always like doing alterations “for fear of doing it all over again when the modifications will not be sufficient.”<sup>83</sup> About the same time, the Heilbronn MG office supplied city and Landkreis authorities with an allotment of men’s suits made up from Wehrmacht fabric supplies to be distributed primarily to discharged soldiers. To receive one of the suits, an applicant needed to obtain a coupon from the local Wirtschaftsamt, at which time he was to sign a statement indicating that he possessed no suit other than the one in which he had been discharged and was currently wearing. When picking up the new suit at a designated local business, he was to pay 55 marks and turn in either a uniform or another suit in wearable (*tragfähig*) condition. Local welfare authorities intended to use these to clothe refugees.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Office of the Chief Historian, Headquarters, European Command, U.S. Army, *Disarmament and Disbandment of the German Armed Forces* (Frankfurt am Main: Office of the Chief Historian, European Command, 1947), 38.

<sup>80</sup> Disbandment Directive No. 26, 29 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 528, F: Prisoners of War; Change 1 to Disbandment Directive No. 26, 17 Dec 45, *ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> W. H. Draper, Jr., to Deputy Military Government, 5 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 99, F: 421 Uniforms - Military Personnel, Civilians, German; USFET Main to OMGUS, 28 Oct 1945, *ibid.*; Industry Branch, Economics Division to Deputy Military Governor, 29 Oct 45, *ibid.*; USFET Main to OMGUS, et al, 11 Nov 1945, *ibid.*; Albert B. Newman Memo to Lt. Gen. Lucius D. Clay, 12 Jan 1946, *ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> “An das Ulmer Schneider- und Mützenmacher-Handwerk,” *AU*, 22 Nov 45.

<sup>83</sup> Regional Military Government Office Wuerttemberg-Baden, Information Control Division, Ulm Outpost, to Chief, Information Control Division, 6 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities, Ulm 1946 [1].

<sup>84</sup> Der Landrat, Wirtschaftsamt, to the Herren Bürgermeister des Landkreises Heilbronn, 29 Nov 45, StAL FL 20/9 Bü 119.



German officials also continued to issue purchase permits for limited goods and, along with welfare agencies, solicited clothing donations.<sup>85</sup> But these measures could not entirely alleviate the problem either. In mid October, a Karlsruhe Wirtschaftsamt official reported to a gathering of district administrators that retail stores had few clothes left and donated clothing stocks were shrinking. His staff could no longer supply every applicant with a decent suit (*Paradeanzug*) and there was “understandably dissatisfaction among the former soldiers regarding the quality of the clothing distributed.” One district head noted, too, that the clothes that remained were in many instances “little more than rags.”<sup>86</sup> Additional clothing drives followed.<sup>87</sup> Several districts also established sewing rooms, sometimes periodically staffed by a tailor or dressmaker, where women could alter clothes and sew items from fabric scraps.<sup>88</sup>

Small towns tried similar methods of coping. Landrat Specht reported in early December that procuring clothing for returning POWs “at such a short notice” was still a problem. In mid November, he had informed the mayors of communities within his jurisdiction that they would need to conduct clothing drives. Some of these initiatives had been “relatively successful, whereas in others hardly any clothing was obtained owing to the poverty of the population.” He indicated that he would soon order the mayors to “do what they can in order to achieve more satisfactory results,” adding, “It is to be hoped that some result will be forthcoming in spite of the extremely difficult conditions.”<sup>89</sup> Specht had earlier alerted the Americans to a number of other apparent problems as well. He pointed out that most German males had only Wehrmacht field caps to wear as headgear, due to the scarcity of hats in recent years. Arguing that “particularly for the coming winter, these caps will be most useful for all the numerous persons who have to work out-of-doors,” he asked that they be permitted to wear the caps “after eliminating the raised point at the front.” Specht also stressed that sewing materials, particularly thread, were in very short supply, with limited stocks precluding even purchase ticket

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<sup>85</sup> Bezirksverwaltung Knielingen to Bezirkshauptverwaltung, Karlsruhe, 10 Nov 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 9; “Freiwillige Kleider- und Hausratspende,” *RNZ*, 10 Nov 45; OMGWB, Public Welfare Branch History, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 243, F: Historical Reports OMG Wuerttemberg-Baden.

<sup>86</sup> Städt. Bezirkshauptverwaltung to Oberbürgermeister Veit, 11 Oct 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 36.

<sup>87</sup> Bezirksverwaltung West, Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 1.-15. November 1945, 17 Nov 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No.5; Protokoll über die Bezirksvorstehersitzung vom 7.2.46, 8 Feb 46, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 36.

<sup>88</sup> Protokoll über die Bezirksvorstehersitzung vom 22.11.1945, 22 Nov 45, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 36; Städt. Hauptverwaltung, Innenstadt-Ost to Städt. Hauptverwaltung, Bezirksverwaltungsamt, 31 Jan 46, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 28.

<sup>89</sup> Der Landrat, Heidelberg, to Det. G 43 1st Mil.Govt.Bn.(Sep), 3 Dec 45, GLA 356 No. 4368.

recipients from immediately obtaining needed materials. “In view of this state of affairs it seems quite impossible to provide the sewing materials required for remodeling the uniforms,” he concluded.<sup>90</sup>

There were some successes. In early December, Heidelberg’s *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* praised those whose generous donations had enabled the majority of local veterans to meet the uniform ordinance’s deadline.<sup>91</sup> But American MG officials also realized that most German compliance efforts were falling short, even accounting for a certain amount of exaggeration and foot-dragging on the part of German authorities. On November 30, Major Maxwell Pullen, head of the MG in Karlsruhe, reported to his men on a meeting he had attended that day with his counterparts from other offices. Citing the December 1 deadline, he noted that “this is the order from higher H[ead]Q[uarters], but it has not been accomplished yet, because of lack of dye and dyeing facilities.” Pullen reported that Colonel Clifton Lisle, the officer responsible for military government in all of North Baden, had “written up stating the situation and asking for an extension” but so far had received no answer. “The Police,” he added, “should be instructed to take it lazy on arrests until we get an answer.”<sup>92</sup>

Later that same day, Lisle learned that U.S. zonal authorities had decided to delay enforcement of the ordinance.<sup>93</sup> Newspapers now carried word that dyestuff and clothing shortages had led to a temporary reprieve.<sup>94</sup> The shift in American requirements apparently caused a certain amount of confusion, however. Military government authorities in Karlsruhe, Ulm, and other areas disregarded the ordinance until spring.<sup>95</sup> In Heidelberg, an initial notice in the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* announcing a withdrawal of the ordinance was followed by one clarifying that soldiers who owned only a uniform might wear it until they were able to obtain replacement clothing from the city, which was in turn followed by a announcement—made at the express

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<sup>90</sup> Der Landrat, Heidelberg, to Det. G 44 1st Military Government Bat. (Sep), 15 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 460, F: Police Directorate I.

<sup>91</sup> “Gutes Werk hat guten Erfolg!” *RNZ*, 5 Dec 45. It should be noted that Heidelberg, unlike many other cities in Württemberg-Baden, had survived the war largely intact.

<sup>92</sup> Major Maxwell S. Pullen to All Officers, Det. G-47, 30 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 528, F: Miscellaneous.

<sup>93</sup> Clifton Lisle to Director, Office of Military Government for LK Sinsheim, 30 Nov 45, *ibid*.

<sup>94</sup> “Trageverbot für Uniformen aufgehoben,” *SDZ*, 5 Dec 45.

<sup>95</sup> “Umfärben von Uniformen und Uniformtüchern,” *AU*, 28 Feb 46; Amt der Militärregierung Stadt- Landkreis Karlsruhe to Oberbürgermeister SK Karlsruhe and Landrat LK Karlsruhe, 11 Apr 46, GLA 357 No. 34.769; Earl W. Nichols to Landrat, Kreis Buchen, 12 Apr 46, GLA 345 G No. 1.736.

request of the local MG office—that the ordinance was not only still in effect but would be enforced.<sup>96</sup>

Officials in Stuttgart felt compelled to clarify in late December that individuals wearing uniforms would still be arrested unless they could prove that they had no civilian clothing and had to date been unable to have their uniform altered or dyed.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, in early January, officials at the U.S. Zone’s headquarters were acting on the assumption that strict enforcement had been suspended.<sup>98</sup>

As the Americans continued working to procure sufficient coal supplies and dyestuffs to push forward the broader dyeing program—a challenge that also received the attention of Clay himself<sup>99</sup>—the Germans continued their attempts to comply with the ordinance. Dyers accepted new orders and local authorities organized additional clothing drives and dispensed ration tickets.<sup>100</sup> In February 1946, Ulm’s refugee commissioner announced the impending opening of a workshop for mending and reworking clothing where refugees and former POWs would receive priority service.<sup>101</sup> In Karlsruhe, an evangelical welfare organization distributed clothes donated by a church in Basel, Switzerland.<sup>102</sup> Heilbronn, meanwhile, received a new shipment of clothing made from confiscated Wehrmacht stocks.<sup>103</sup>

Regardless of how local officials had viewed the status of the original ordinance during the winter, American leniency soon ended. In April 1946, with the harsh winter months now past, local MG officers

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<sup>96</sup> “Uniformverbot aufgehoben,” *RNZ*, 5 Dec 45; “Zum Uniform-Verbot,” *RNZ*, 15 Dec 45; Raymond L. Gordon to Police Director, 18 Dec 45, StAH AA 239k/1 No. 11; “Uniformverbot,” *RNZ*, 28 Dec 45, *ibid*. It appears that the confusion in Heidelberg resulted from a directive issued by the Headquarters, U.S. Forces, European Theater, on December 10, 1945, which, in conveying instructions regarding the dyeing of German and American uniforms prior to the release of German POWs, referenced the applicable regulations regarding uniforms. See Gordon memo referenced above and T.W. Guptill to Commanding Generals, 10 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 528, F: Miscellaneous.

<sup>97</sup> “Uniformverbot besteht weiter,” *Nachrichtenblatt*, 13 Dec 45, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 336.

<sup>98</sup> W. H. Draper, Jr., to Deputy Military Government, 5 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 99, F: 421 Uniforms - Military Personnel, Civilians, German.

<sup>99</sup> Industry Branch to Deputy Military Governor through Director, Economics Division, 25 Jan 46. *ibid*.

<sup>100</sup> C.F. Ploucquet to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Ulm, 13 Feb 46, StAU B 060/70 No. 4; Protokoll über die Bezirksvorstehersitzung vom 7.2.46, 8 Feb 46, StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 36; Der Landrat, Wirtschaftsamt, to Herr Landrat, 21 Jan 46, StAL FL 20/9 No. 426.

<sup>101</sup> “Instandsetzung von Bekleidungsstücken für Flüchtlinge und entlassene Kriegsgefangene,” *AU*, 28 Feb 46.

<sup>102</sup> Hilfswerk der Evang. Kirche, Bezirk Karlsruhe Stadt, “Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 1. Januar 1946 bis 31. März 1947,” StAK 1/H-Reg No. 5329.

<sup>103</sup> Der Landrat, Wirtschaftsamt, to Herr Landrat, 4 Mar 46, StAL FL 20/9 No. 426.

informed German officials that they should now enforce the original ordinance.<sup>104</sup> The head of Ulm's police accordingly announced that his men would immediately arrest anyone who violated the ordinance.<sup>105</sup> U.S. occupation troops received similar instructions.<sup>106</sup>

Scattered reports from the first half of 1946 suggest, moreover, that at least some American soldiers vigilantly followed their orders. Already in February, local military police in Heidelberg had arrested and expelled from the city a number of uniformed former German sailors visiting from the British Zone. Protesting the incident to local MG officials, Heidelberg's mayor urged the Americans to inform the British of the rules in the American Zone, suggesting that such incidents would hurt the good relationship between the Americans and the local population. Conceding that the Americans had been doing their duty, he nevertheless pleaded for attention to the feelings of the sailors—who had only done what was permitted them by the British—as well as their families in the area.<sup>107</sup>

Several months later, in mid May, a mayor in Landkreis Karlsruhe reported to the Landrat that U.S. police had stopped several members of his community. When he asked whether he might issue certificates stating that they had no other clothing, the Landrat warned against it, citing both the new regulations and the fact that the Americans would soon be conducting raids to locate persons illegally wearing uniforms (the major newspapers had carried warnings to this effect).<sup>108</sup> The Landrat also notified all the mayors within his jurisdiction that, starting immediately, anyone caught in a uniform would, without exception, be arrested. They should inform local residents, post notices to this effect, and report back to him when they had done so.<sup>109</sup> During the summer, he continued to pester those communities that had not responded to his request, asking for

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<sup>104</sup> Amt der Militärregierung Stadt- Landkreis Karlsruhe to Oberbürgermeister SK Karlsruhe and Landrat LK Karlsruhe, 11 Apr 46, GLA 357 No. 34.769.

<sup>105</sup> "Verbot des Tragens deutscher militärischer Uniformen," *AU*, 3 May 46.

<sup>106</sup> OMGUS to Director OMG for Bavaria, et al, 7 May 46, NA, RG 260, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 99, R: 421 Uniforms – Military Personnel, Civilians, German.

<sup>107</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister to Militärregierung, Heidelberg, 18 Feb 46, StAH AA 239k/1 No. 2.

<sup>108</sup> Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Kleinsteinbach to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 14 May 46, GLA 357 No. 34.800; Beschluss, 16 May 46, *ibid*; "Gegen das Tragen verbotener Uniformen," *BNN*, 30 Apr 46; "Tragen verbotener Uniformen," *SZ*, 7 May 46; "Razzia gegen Uniformträger," *SDZ*, 8 May 46.

<sup>109</sup> Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltungen des Kreises Karlsruhe, 17 May 46, GLA 357 No. 34.800.

notification of action taken.<sup>110</sup> One mayor was undoubtedly not alone in soon finding himself facing distressed residents who had seen the newly posted notices and objected that they had nothing else to wear. He had no ration tickets to issue, the mayor complained, the dyers were taking no new orders, and, even if they did, the soldiers had nothing to wear while their uniforms were being dyed.<sup>111</sup>

Once again, American occupation officials looked with some sympathy upon the German predicament. Recognizing the culpability of clothing shortages for continuing violations of the uniform ban, they told German authorities in early June that, at the very least, insignia, military buttons, and the like should be removed from uniforms and suggested that the German police must, above all, “be instructive,” taking stronger action against repeat offenders.<sup>112</sup>

Providing for discharged soldiers would continue to be a challenge for German officials.<sup>113</sup> But the problem of military uniforms seems to have faded gradually, perhaps because of the changing nature of veterans’ clothing. The Americans began releasing their POWs in dyed uniforms and other soldiers were returning in prison camp garb. Additionally, responsible administrators increasingly used words like “torn,” “primitive,” and “tattered” to describe POW clothing—descriptions which reinforced their assertions that these clothes urgently needed to be replaced, presumably whether they violated American regulations or not.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, as of early 1947, the Wehrmacht clothing stocks confiscated by the Americans had been completely exhausted.<sup>115</sup>

In January 1947, *New York Times* reporter Kathleen McLaughlin observed that one still occasionally saw former soldiers “in full uniform” in Germany—especially in the British Zone. In fact, she asserted that

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<sup>110</sup> Beschluss, 25 Jul 46, attached to Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltungen des Kreises Karlsruhe, 17 May 46, *ibid*.

<sup>111</sup> Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Forchheim to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 23 May 46, *ibid*.

<sup>112</sup> The President of the Landesbezirk Baden, Dep. Interior Administration, The Land Police Director, to Land Police-Commissariates, 3 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 604, F: LB Directorates Interior [2].

<sup>113</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister to Herr Wirtschaftsreferent, 26 Jun 46, StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4523; Glockner to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 16 Jul 46, *ibid*; [Robert] Scholl, [Wochenbericht des Oberbürgermeisters an die Militärregierung über die Stimmung in der Bevölkerung], 8 Aug 46, StAU B 160/21 No. 3; Stadt. Hauptverwaltung, Bezirksverwaltung Innenstadt-Ost to Städt.Hauptverwaltung, Bezirksverwaltungsamt, 31 Oct 46, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 28.

<sup>114</sup> Kath. Dekanatamt, “Report of the Charitable activities of Catholic Parishes,” 11 Nov 46, StAU B 160/21 No. 4; Bürgermeisteramt, Heilbronn, to Innenministerium, Württemberg-Baden, 7 Jan 48, HStA EA 2/007 No. 2069; Bürgermeisteramt, Heilbronn, to Innenministerium, Württemberg-Baden, 13 May 48, *ibid*.; “Auszug aus der Tagesordnung der 60. Tagung des Direktoriums des Länderrats in Stuttgart am 29.4.1948,” n.d. HStA EA 1/014 No. 602.

<sup>115</sup> U.S. Military Government of Germany, *Monthly Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 1-31 May 47, 40.

American and British instructions regarding uniforms “were widely ignored for months,” a response she intimated had much to do with clothing shortages, though she also criticized the Germans for their insensitivity to Nazi victims in their insistence on wearing even offensive—if denuded—uniforms like those of Nazi camp guards. Among several additional reasons for German noncompliance, she blamed the “rapid demobilization and decimation of Allied occupation forces” which limited surveillance capabilities.<sup>116</sup> A reiteration of the uniform ordinance by Heidelberg officials in January 1948 likewise suggested that problems persisted.<sup>117</sup> But McLaughlin also asserted that “on a mass basis, the program of ‘denazifying’ clothing” had been relatively successful.<sup>118</sup>

#### *Demilitarizing the Appearance of Organized Groups*

If the Americans could point to noticeable success in their efforts to eliminate Wehrmacht uniforms from German streets, they were also enforcing uniform restrictions in other arenas. In particular, they were monitoring the German police and various youth and sports groups.

During their first months in Germany, amidst continuing hostilities, the Allies’ concerns regarding German police attire had centered especially on distinguishing police officers from Wehrmacht soldiers. Reports indicated that some had been mistakenly carted off to POW cages and Allied officials worried others might be inadvertently shot.<sup>119</sup> In March 1945, SHAEF authorities had directed Allied commanders to make German civilian officials responsible—subject to military government approval—for re-outfitting local police in “distinct” clothing that did not resemble either Wehrmacht uniforms or Allied dress. In the meantime, German police were to wear civilian clothing and identifying armllets.<sup>120</sup> The September 1945 uniform ordinance outlawing the wearing of police uniforms similar to military clothing thus did little more than reword existing U.S. policy.

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<sup>116</sup> Kathleen McLaughlin, “Swastikas on the Scrap Heap,” *NYTM*, 12 Jan 47.

<sup>117</sup> “Gesetzwidriges Tragen von deutschen Uniformen,” *Heidelberger Amtsblatt*, 10 Jan 48, StAH F11.

<sup>118</sup> McLaughlin, “Swastikas on the Scrap Heap.”

<sup>119</sup> S.E. Senior to Commanding General, Twelfth Army Group, 23 Dec 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 198, Box 223, F: 421 Uniforms [2].

<sup>120</sup> “Historical Report, G-5, 12th Army Group,” Mar 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 54, Box 165, F: 17.16 12th Army Group Historical Report March 1945 Part I.

The Allied approach, which at first resulted in police officers who could be distinguished only by their armbands, raised interesting issues. One military government report got to the heart of the matter when it suggested in early June 1945 that “the efficiency and authority of the German police would be enhanced by putting them into uniform.”<sup>121</sup> (The fact that many policemen were new, minimally trained recruits armed only with wooden truncheons certainly also contributed to the problem.) Landkreis Karlsruhe MG officers similarly reported that the “Vehicle Patrol” in their area was experiencing difficulties because drivers did not recognize them as police officers, “with the white Mil Gov armband being their only badge of authority.”<sup>122</sup> Occupation officials were thus forced to straddle a rather blurry line. On one hand, they required uniforms as a means of identification and a sign of delegated authority to maintain order. On the other, they tried to get rid of the German police officer’s traditional military look, his semi-military status, and the not unrelated privileges and power—both real and assumed—he often had enjoyed in the past.

With the security situation not particularly threatening during the early months of the occupation, “the most pressing concern of [American] public safety officers was often with getting the German police out of their traditional nineteenth-century Prussian drill sergeant uniforms and into American styles, usually modeled on the uniforms of the New York City police,” writes historian Earl Ziemke.<sup>123</sup> German officials were ultimately responsible for providing new police uniforms, but they were operating within the larger context of clothing and dye shortages.<sup>124</sup> American MG authorities therefore frequently had to press them to act, as well as assist them in procuring the necessary materials. In late summer 1945, for instance, the public safety officer assigned to Landkreis Karlsruhe was using his American contacts to try to track down old Wehrmacht uniforms or fabric for local police departments.<sup>125</sup> A local public safety officer similarly spent part of his time during the first winter of the occupation running interference for the city of Heidelberg, which had ordered new uniforms

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<sup>121</sup> Military Government-Germany, Headquarters Detachment ELC+, Consolidated 11 Sep Report for Land Wuerttemberg, Covering Week of 26 May to 2 June 45 Inclusive, 2 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45.

<sup>122</sup> Summary Report on Military Government Activities, Landkreis Karlsruhe, 11 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 546, F: Instructions, [etc].

<sup>123</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation*, 355.

<sup>124</sup> Der Chef der deutschen Polizei der Stadt Stuttgart to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 15 Jun 45, StAS HA Gruppe 1 Abl. 16.12.70 No. 110-2; Stadtratsitzung am 27. Juli 1945, n.d., StAH Stadtratsitzungen 1945.

<sup>125</sup> Lt. Hutchins, Daily Report, 3 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 521, F: Daily Reports Det I10G3 August 1945; Lt. Hutchins, Daily Report, 17 Aug 45, *ibid.*; Lt. Hutchins, Daily Report, 20 Aug 45, *ibid.*

from a manufacturer in Worms but had not yet received all of them due to complications created by the French Military Government.<sup>126</sup>

The transition from old to new was thus typically not one of simply exchanging passable uniforms of one sort for those of another sort. In Karlsruhe, whose police force was partially composed of young men recruited from the non-functioning streetcar system, early police attire included both elements of streetcar uniforms and dyed party and Wehrmacht uniforms.<sup>127</sup> The latter had posed certain problems, a Karlsruhe official later noted, as the original blue dye had not held and the clothing had had to be re-dyed. The dye also had turned the uniform-wearer's underclothing blue—not a good development, he added, when underclothing was the personal property of the wearer.<sup>128</sup> Meanwhile, Heidelberg's procurement activities resulted in a quarrel with the German North Baden office responsible for commerce regarding the distribution of scarce clothing and shoes. Reporting to the mayor in February 1946 on his department's allegedly nefarious activities, the city's police director not only pointed to the unresponsiveness of North Baden officials, but indicated that some 230 of 440 city policemen were still without an overcoat and 170 had no uniform at all. The police department had repeatedly asked American officials whether its men might wear old Wehrmacht field coats, but these overtures had been rejected every time.<sup>129</sup>

In Stuttgart, police officials received MG approval for their gray-green uniforms, only to have the Americans demand in April 1946 that the uniforms be changed to dark blue—a demand apparently provoked by a recent violent altercation between local police and Jewish DPs. Though city authorities decided the switch would be expensive, wasteful, and difficult to carry out, the head of MG in Stuttgart made it very clear that he expected obedience, not an expression of opinion, and the uniforms were changed. At the same time, the police

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<sup>126</sup> Raymond L. Gordon, Jr., to Headquarters Seventh Army, 27 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 460, F: Police Directorate I; The Police Director to Military Government Detachment Heidelberg, 10 Jan 46, *ibid*; Raymond L. Gordon, Jr., to whom it may concern, 8 Feb 46, *ibid*.

<sup>127</sup> Werner, *Karlsruhe 1945*, 132; Städtisches Amt für Oeffentliche Ordnung u. Sicherheit, Allg. Verwaltung, to Stadtverwaltung, H.Abt.I, 1 Aug 52, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 7459.

<sup>128</sup> Der Polizeipräsident, Karlsruhe, Innere Verwaltung, to Herr Landesdirektor Dr. Kaufmann, 1 Jun 46, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 7459.

<sup>129</sup> Der badische Landesdirektor für Wirtschaft, Ernährung und Verkehr to Military Government Baden, 17 Jan 46, StAH AA 252a I; Polizeidirektion der Stadt Heidelberg to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 16 Feb 46, *ibid*.



replaced their traditional shakos with eight-cornered caps similar to those worn by some American police forces and began wearing badges displaying their service numbers.<sup>130</sup>

On the other hand, as late as November 1946, one small town in Landkreis Karlsruhe had not even bothered to replace the white armbands of its six policemen with real uniforms. Chalking this up to a lack of initiative, an American public safety officer complained, “They sit and wait for someone from higher headquarters to furnish them equipment or tell them what to do. It is understandable the difficulty a department of several hundred would have securing material or uniforms, but not six!”<sup>131</sup>

Despite obstacles, however, a transformation gradually occurred. An American MG officer observed in late June 1946, for example, that the appearance of the Karlsruhe police had “improved considerably” in recent months. “It has lost its ‘Wehrmacht’ appearance; no more shiny boots etc.,” he explained. “The traffic police is decked out in white blouses and dark blue trousers and white ‘Bobby-type’ head-gear.” The “one military tendency” he had seen was “in the case of the guard detachment” where “men guarding billets snap to attention, accompanied by resounding heel-clicking, and render the German military salute when one of their superiors passes.”<sup>132</sup>

Even with most police forces newly attired, the Americans continued to monitor the situation. In late 1946 and early 1947, public safety officers from the Land MG inspected police departments throughout Württemberg-Baden, checking compliance with MG regulations pertaining specifically to “Public Safety” that included provisions barring the use of military-like uniforms, insignia, and ranks. In addition to recording weapons-related infractions, they occasionally censured communities for unacceptable uniforms or caps, or for the use of military or “semi-military” rank insignia, with their highly specific comments attesting to American

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<sup>130</sup> Charles L. Jackson to Oberbürgermeister Dr. Klett, 15 Apr 46, StAS HA Gruppe 1 Abl. 16.12.70 No. 110-2; To Herrn Oberbürgermeister, 24 Apr 46, *ibid.*; Stadt Stuttgart, Der Oberbürgermeister, to the Military Government – City – Stuttgart, 20 Apr 46, attached to note from J. Hall, 24 Apr 46, *ibid.*; “Neue Uniformen der Polizei,” *SZ*, 11 May 46; Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart*, 246. These documents—all of German origin—do not specify exactly what the connection was between the incident and the change. It may simply be that the image of German police in gray-green uniforms fighting with Jews was something military government officials wanted to avoid in the future.

<sup>131</sup> Lt. Col White to Lt. Col. Perry, 22 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 822, F: Deficiencies of Rural Police; Phillip R. Smith to Director, OMB Wuerttemberg-Baden, 20 Nov 46, *ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> G.K. Guennel to Chief, Information Control Division, 29 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 87, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Karlsruhe 1946 [2].

watchfulness but also confirming that most German police departments were generally compliant. Each community so censured had to report back once they had corrected any problems.<sup>133</sup>

A Stuttgart precinct chief was thus cited for “wearing an old German police coat similar to the Wehrmacht uniform blouse, with military insignia still attached,”<sup>134</sup> while a lengthy internal MG report criticized Mannheim for using chevrons to indicate rank.<sup>135</sup> A similar report on Heilbronn indicated that its police were “wearing green uniforms with semi-military insignia of rank.”<sup>136</sup> Two months later, Heilbronn officials notified Land authorities that all of their police officers would soon be wearing blue, the new cap would be octagonal, the old insignia of rank were gone, and these would soon be replaced with insignia similar to those of Stuttgart’s police.<sup>137</sup> Authorities from Blaubeuren similarly reported that their chevrons had disappeared, in keeping with MG criticism, although they also reminded that MG officials in nearby Ulm had previously verbally approved the emblems.<sup>138</sup> In Heidelberg, meanwhile, a police official reporting on the inspectors’ visit noted that they had objected to the new cap of the city’s criminal police, describing it as very “soldierly.” Admitting that the current caps did not actually violate MG regulations, the Americans had nevertheless repeatedly stated that they really wished Heidelberg had introduced an octagonal cap.<sup>139</sup>

American concerns regarding uniforms and insignia also extended into the arena of sports organizations and youth groups. In mid 1947, for instance, the American youth activities officer for Württemberg-Baden approved a large number of emblems for sports clubs, later reminding German officials that American MG authorities did not object to the wearing of membership emblems or badges, so long as they were “not reminiscent of or an indication of a nationalsocialistic [*sic*] or militaristic spirit.”<sup>140</sup> In mid 1948,

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<sup>133</sup> See inspection reports and responses in NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 821, F: Land Police [2] and HStA EA 2/301 No. 271.

<sup>134</sup> J. Ward Starr to Minister of Interior, Land Württemberg-Baden, 18 Feb 47, StAS HA Gruppe 1 Abl. 16.12.70 No. 110-2.

<sup>135</sup> Joel B. White to Chief, Public Safety Branch, 22 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 821, F: Land Police.

<sup>136</sup> Joel B. White to Chief, Public Safety Branch, 10 Feb 47, *ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Innenministerium to U.S. Military Government, Württemberg/Baden, Interior Division, 5 Apr 47, *ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> Protokoll über die Sitzung des Polizeiausschusses vom 6. Febr. 1947, n.d., StAH AA 252c No. 1; Die Stadtverwaltung, Referat III, to Die Stadtverwaltung, Zentralverwaltung, 8 Feb 47, StAH AA 252a II.

<sup>140</sup> Aksel G. Nielsen to Wuerttemberg, Land Youth Committee, 7 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 973, F: [File 1]; Aksel G. Nielsen to Landesjugendausschuss, 5 Nov 47, *ibid.*; Aksel G. Nielsen to Baden Land Youth Committee, 6 Apr 48, *ibid.* That MG personnel actually took the time to carefully examine the requests and emblems forwarded to them

moreover, military police apprehended several members of the reconstituted Boy Scouts for wearing uniforms, prompting John Steiner, director of the Land MG's Education and Cultural Relations Division, to remind youth group administrators that no youth organization might wear uniforms without American authorization. That the Boy Scouts represented a particularly touchy problem was suggested by an internal MG memo from November 1948 wherein Leon Shelnutt, who oversaw group activities for the Land MG government, discussed the reasons why the Americans had not previously granted the Boy Scouts such an authorization. Not wanting to reinforce divisions between various Boy Scout groups in Germany, they had also avoided this move because "to a large degree Scouting is considered militaristic by the German people" and permitting them to wear uniforms "would help to aggravate this feeling." The Scouts, he added, had undoubtedly been "rather militaristic in pre-war Germany." Steiner's letter to youth officials also hinted at the Scouts' precarious position, suggesting that the German Scouts were essentially on probation with the international movement. "Foreign Boy Scout leaders will observe the activities of the German Boy Scouts very carefully during the next few years," cautioned Steiner. "They will want to know whether character-building will be emphasized or uniforms, marching, and other external characteristics." <sup>141</sup>

Interestingly, the Boy Scouts' right-wing reputation had led left-wing youth groups such as the socialist Falcons to attack the new organization, both overtly and covertly.<sup>142</sup> Yet American officials had also noted that a large gathering of the Falcons in Stuttgart in September 1947 had generated protests from observers in part because of the Falcons' own flag-carrying, marching, and uniforms.<sup>143</sup> Keeping German youth out of any type of uniform apparently had at least some popular support.

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for approval by a Württemberg-Baden youth official (often physical specimens, many of which are still filed with the requests), but were not overly harsh in their oversight role is suggested by the final line of Nielson's October 7, 1947, authorization letter: "We suggest that the Fussbal [sic] Verein 1911 Plochingen discontinue the use of stationary bearing the swastika emblem."

<sup>141</sup> Württembergischer Landesjugendausschuss to Städt. Wohlfahrts- u. Jugendamt, Abt. Jugendreferat, 25 Sep 48, StAU E320 Band 16; John P. Steiner to Land-, Kreis- und Stadt-Jugendausschüsse in Württemberg-Baden, 9 Sep 48, StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4651-9 Ring deutscher Pfadfinder; Leon A. Shelnutt to Dep. Director, 8 Nov 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 973, F: Youth Activities [4]. In his letter, Steiner indicated that "any clothing or piece of clothing . . . that identifies a person or group of persons as belonging to a certain youth group or association" would be considered a uniform.

<sup>142</sup> Shelnutt to Dep. Director, 8 Nov 48.

<sup>143</sup> Education and Religious Affairs Division weekly report, 12 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports – E&CR 1947.

Overall, then, German officials could not take the American uniform regulations lightly. Magnifying an already distressing material situation, the restrictions forced the Germans to expend valuable clothing and fuel in meeting Allied requirements. The Americans, on the other hand, found that local economic conditions hampered enforcement. But while they showed some understanding for German problems, they stuck to their original demands. In fact, in September 1949, as discussions of possible German rearmament heated up, a new Allied High Commission law reaffirmed the ban on wearing medals, insignia, and uniforms. Violators could be imprisoned for up to five years or fined up to 25,000 DM or both.<sup>144</sup> No doubt intended in part to soothe concerns about Allied intentions, the law was not just for show. In November 1949, a 19-year-old from Landkreis Sinsheim was sentenced to six months in prison for leading a church procession while astride a horse adorned with Nazi insignia and dressed in his father's old Nazi *Ortsgruppenleiter* uniform.<sup>145</sup>

### **Views From Outside of the Bureaucracy**

Although Allied wartime policymakers occasionally proved woefully ignorant of actual conditions in Nazi Germany, their assessment of the uniform issue was not far from the mark. Beginning even before the Nazi seizure of power, uniforms had served an increasingly important function in German lives, honoring military ideals, confirming masculinity, and indicating status. Perhaps not surprisingly, the collapse of the Third Reich into defeat and ruin altered the perceptions of many Germans. In a radically changed environment, many now willingly abandoned their uniforms. The condemnation and banishment of the uniform, meanwhile, elicited a mix of sometimes strong reactions, both positive and negative.

#### *Getting Out of Uniform*

Destruction, defeat, and the arrival of the Allies had a dramatic effect. As the war collapsed into retreat, chaos, and capitulation, some soldiers abandoned their uniforms to evade capture. One member of the Waffen SS later recalled tearing off all of his insignia while hiding in the countryside, then deciding his clothing still looked too much like a uniform and sneaking back into an American-occupied city to procure civilian

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<sup>144</sup> "Allierte Gesetze über Wehrmachtsuniformen und Besatzungs-Skrips," *BNN*, 27 Sep 49.

<sup>145</sup> "Hoch zu RoB als Ortsgruppenleiter," *Badische Zeitung*, 17 Nov 49, HStA EA 1/106 No. 1113.

clothes.<sup>146</sup> Some men went so far as to outfit themselves in women's apparel, complete with borrowed identification cards, in attempting to pass unnoticed through military roadblocks.<sup>147</sup> Others saw discarding the uniform as a more symbolic gesture. One soldier later remembered being released from British captivity in July 1945: "Quickly I change my clothes and leave the camp, looking like a civilian on the outside, too, clothed in a jacket and pants of a plain blue navy uniform. It is a wonderful feeling, to no longer be a soldier. I obtained this marvelous piece of clothing, in which I feel like a civilian, in the chaos at the end of the war. . . ."<sup>148</sup>

In fact, many soldiers were eager to abandon their uniforms. If not literally worn out, uniforms often bore unmistakable marks of defeat, and, for some, the psychological residue of a war they wanted to forget (Figures 6 and 8). Complaining to the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* about the difficulties he had experienced in obtaining civilian clothes, one former soldier explained, "I had no yearning for tails, a tuxedo, no, only for—finally, after six years—getting out of the uniform and putting on something civilian-like."<sup>149</sup> Another veteran painted a vivid picture in a November 1945 letter to the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* lamenting the local clothing situation.

Three months ago we returned from captivity. The uniform, formerly covered in decorations, now empty, filthy, tattered from a thousand dives into the muddy ground, into which swarms of enemy airplanes repeatedly chased us. Now we returned home, inside hollow and burned out and full of anxious worry; outwardly small, ragged, in the garments of a beggar. . . . Now we were still missing one thing: clothing. . . . We had nothing other than a tattered uniform on our body. With it we unloaded lime, hauled mortar, oiled machines, mined and went walking on Sundays. Purchase permits? The *Wirtschaftsamt* gave them to us, a whole bag full, we could have constructed suits out of them! Now we have been home a quarter of a year, working on the reconstruction of the *Heimat*, our uniform is disintegrating on our body in the process and our purchase permits have become useless.<sup>150</sup>

Explaining why Heidelberg officials were charging a fee to cover costs when distributing donated clothes, the newspaper later reported that "many a private was so happy to obtain clothing that he voluntarily added five marks to the amount required, to show his thanks to the city."<sup>151</sup>

The impatience of many to change into civilian clothes can also be explained by the fact that, as draftees, their identity was not tied to their uniform. Many had another career to return to, while those who did

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<sup>146</sup> Gerhard Hessel, *Auf Jahr und Tag*, Part 2, *Krieg und Nachkrieg, 1942-1952* (1982), 67, Kempowski Archiv No. 277/2.

<sup>147</sup> Weekly Intelligence Summary No. 45, 18 Jun 45, NA, RG 498, European Theater Operations Historical Division, Program Files, 12th Army Group, Box 7.

<sup>148</sup> "Durchs zwanzigste Jahrhundert," DTA No. 845.

<sup>149</sup> "Der gescheiterte Zivilist," *SZ*, 19 Jan 46.

<sup>150</sup> "Zuschriften aus dem Leserkreis," *RNZ*, 10 Nov 45.

<sup>151</sup> "Das Heidelberger Kleideropfer . . .," *RNZ*, 12 Dec 45.

not were often eager to begin one.<sup>152</sup> In fact, for some former soldiers, a uniform merely signified confinement. The uniform, Alison Lurie reminds, “is the costume totally determined by others. . . . To put on such livery is to give up one’s right to act as an individual. . . . What one does, as well as what one wears, will be determined by external authorities.”<sup>153</sup> Reporting on their difficulties recruiting border control policemen, MG officials in Landkreis Karlsruhe hinted at this issue, noting that local public opinion attributed their troubles partly to “a natural desire of returning soldiers to shed uniformed service and the regularity and discipline of police life after serving a number of years in the Army.”<sup>154</sup>

The mixed reception of returning soldiers may also have fueled a readiness to cast off the outward signs of military service. Public discussions of veterans would eventually adopt a more sympathetic tone, but immediately after World War II, many Germans greeted returning soldiers with indifference, even hostility.<sup>155</sup> One veteran alluded to the entire scope of problems facing returning veterans in a commentary in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* criticizing those who appeared to be unaware that Germany had lost a war. Identifying himself as among those who had nothing to wear but a “tattered uniform,” he recalled recently walking past a well-dressed man who had commented to a companion, “There comes another one who can’t bear to part with his uniform.” A similar encounter with two females in furs had ended with the younger remarking loudly to her mother, “Mama, [I can’t believe] that there are still men who can continue to wear this uniform!” It should be made clear to such people, the writer argued, that many other German closets were empty.<sup>156</sup>

For these veterans, the uniform ordinance was less a psychological burden than a material one. In November 1945, the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* reported receiving numerous letters from worried veterans who could

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<sup>152</sup> Fritz, *Frontsoldaten*, 229.

<sup>153</sup> Lurie, *Language of Clothes*, 17.

<sup>154</sup> Summary Report on Military Government Activities, Landkreis Karlsruhe, 2 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 546, F: Instructions, [etc]. As with returning soldiers, some young people were more than happy to get rid of the constraints of a uniform. Remembering his postwar experiences, one later recalled, “We, the young, felt an unfamiliar freedom from restraint. No more marching, no more uniforms, and most of all, few orders from the adults, who were too busy with day-to-day survival to perform their pedagogical duties.” Rosner and Tubach, *An Uncommon Friendship*, 164.

<sup>155</sup> Smith, *Heimkehr aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 33-34; Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 24-27; Echternkamp, “Wut auf die Wehrmacht,” 1060-1080. On changing attitudes toward German soldiers, see also Frank Biess, *Homecomings*; Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>156</sup> Was sagen Sie dazu? *SZ*, 5 Jan 46.

not locate a tailor or dyeing works.<sup>157</sup> Six months later, city police informed the Americans that virtually all returning POWs complained about the harshness of the prohibition.<sup>158</sup>

On the other hand, divesting a uniform of its decorations and insignia was less troublesome. Allied soldiers began this process for German POWs. And some veterans lost little sleep over bidding good-bye to their uniform ornamentation. Remembering his immediate postwar experiences, one later recalled having stripped his uniform of its insignia of rank and “the *Hoheitsadler* [Nazi eagle] or *Pleitegeier* [bankruptcy vulture], as we sarcastically called it.”<sup>159</sup> Some former soldiers expressed their sense of the present value of their once highly coveted decorations by simply tossing them into roadside ditches, while others used them as currency, trading them for precious commodities such as bread, chocolate, and cigarettes.<sup>160</sup> For the Allies, German medals and decorations became prized souvenirs—and not just for occupation troops. James K. Pollock, an American university professor integrally involved in re-establishing a functioning German political system, sent German medals—including an iron cross—home to his family.<sup>161</sup>

If many men were happy to put their war service behind them, not all soldiers were eager to re-establish themselves as civilians. Unlike draftees, many officers considered soldiering their profession, not a temporary occupation. They also had a decidedly different postwar experience, facing restrictions on organizing, the loss of profession and pensions, and, in some cases, extended captivity. Decrying the “defamation” of the German soldier, professional officers frequently retained a strong sense of group identity.<sup>162</sup> As officers, moreover, this group identity had been established partially on the basis of special privileges and an elite social position. Both were now gone.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> “Ich bitte um Mitteilung . . .,” SZ, 10 Nov 45.

<sup>158</sup> Polizeipräsidium Stuttgart to Dienststelle des CIC, 11 Jun 46, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 49.

<sup>159</sup> Jürgen Kleindienst, *Und weiter geht es doch: Deutschland 1945-1950. 45 Geschichten und Berichte von Zeitzeugen* (Berlin: JKL Publikationen, 1999), 122.

<sup>160</sup> Adelbert Weinstein, *Armee Ohne Pathos: Die deutsche Wiederbewaffnung im Urteil ehemaligen Soldaten* (Bonn: Köllen Verlag, 1951), 99-100; Walter Schneier, *Coburg im Spiegel der Geschichte. Von der Urzeit bis in die Gegenwart. Auf den Spuren von Fürsten, Bürgern und Bauern* (Coburg: Druck- und Verlagsanstalt Neue Presse, 1985), Kempowski Archiv No. 5814.

<sup>161</sup> James K. Pollock, *Besatzung und Staatsaufbau nach 1945: Occupation Diary and Private Correspondence, 1945-1948*, ed. Ingrid Krüger-Bulcke (München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1994), 81.

<sup>162</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>163</sup> Meyer, “Zur Situation der deutschen militärischen Führungsschicht,” 652-653.

Evidence of these former officers' views of the American uniform ordinance is thin. However, a glance at the founding of the Bundeswehr in the mid 1950s is instructive. A new military necessarily meant new uniforms and here two general perspectives emerged which reflected broader reformist and traditionalist views of the Bundeswehr.<sup>164</sup> In choosing a uniform, former officers working with West German government officials intentionally steered clear of anything resembling Wehrmacht attire, selecting designs, in dark gray, that more nearly resembled the less formal patterns of the American uniform, with new branch insignia and badges of rank. Recognizing that modern warfare required sober, functional clothes, they also wanted to break with the past, keeping in mind, too, the potential reaction of ordinary Germans (many of whom had vocalized their "*ohne mich*" sentiments), skeptical politicians, and Germany's former enemies. Postwar developments had made clear that outsiders associated the uniforms of the Third Reich with militarism, National Socialism, and war. The outward appearance of the Bundeswehr thus needed to convey a reassuring message consistent with the military's new self-conception as a force of "citizens in uniform."<sup>165</sup> Conversely, for the Germans, the uniform should now be viewed as "work clothing."<sup>166</sup>

Not surprisingly, not all officers favored breaking with past tradition. Many interpreted the reform movement as a criticism of the Wehrmacht, an institution they believed had performed both well and honorably; accordingly, they favored field gray uniforms and the *Stahlhelm* (steel helmet).<sup>167</sup> Beyond this, they criticized the new uniforms, finding them, as did many Germans, to be laughable (certain observers compared the jackets to those of mailmen).<sup>168</sup> But some officers also had deeper concerns. Former General Johannes Friessner suggested that the uniforms did "not suit a German soldier and appeared unsoldierly," adding that the design would do little to attract recruits. "Anyone who knows something about the psychological effect of soldiers'

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<sup>164</sup> For contemporary expressions of each point of view, see Werner Hahlweg, "Die neue Silhouette des deutschen Soldaten," *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* 6, No. 3 (1956): 142-150, and W. Straub, "Die neue Ausgeh-Uniform," *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* 6, No. 7 (1956): 391-394.

<sup>165</sup> On general trends in planning for the new Bundeswehr as they relate to German military tradition, see Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*, 66-154. On uniforms, see 82-83, 102-104, 132, 153.

<sup>166</sup> Hans-Jürgen Rautenberg, "Zur Standortbestimmung für künftige deutsche Streitkräfte," in Foerster, et al, *Von der Kapitulation bis zum Plevan-Plan*, 832.

<sup>167</sup> Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*, 67; Large, *Germans to the Front*, 189-193.

<sup>168</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 118; Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*, 153.



uniforms—even in our unromantic age—will confirm that,” he concluded.<sup>169</sup> Earlier, another former general had argued “that the new army must have well-tailored and striking uniforms; otherwise a heroic death on the battlefield would not be possible.”<sup>170</sup> “If one makes the uniform into overalls,” he maintained, “then death on the battlefield becomes an industrial accident.”<sup>171</sup>

For these officers, the uniform was intimately tied to what it meant to be a soldier. A uniform announced his status, his worth, and, arguably, his heroic manliness. Elite soldiers did not die in industrial accidents. Stuttgart’s General Hans von Donat made the connection between the uniform and his soldierly identity explicit. Highly active in the veterans’ movement of the 1950s, Donat maintained a “defamation” file in which he kept copies of newspaper articles and other items that, in his eyes, demonstrated the maltreatment of professional soldiers. The collection included many cartoons, snipped from the pages of the *Neue Illustrierte*, *Münchner Illustrierte*, and other publications, which ridiculed the frippery and foibles of military officers, most of whom were outfitted in Prussian military splendor. Arranging the cartoons in sets with cover sheets summarizing their themes, Donat also often added captions that provided additional thoughts on a cartoon’s meaning. With spiked helmets puncturing limousine roofs, epaulettes serving as cigar holders, and starfish coveted as chest decorations, many, Donat rightly observed, mocked the Prussian officer’s love for medals and the absurdity of his over-garnished uniform. Read one cover sheet: “12 helmet spike cartoons. These are supposed to show that soldiers are dumb, conceited, proud, and narrow-minded (*borniert*).” Another stated: “Officers are dumb, cowardly, and presumptuous.” Under several cartoons in the latter packet, he typed “Disparagement [*Herabsetzung*] of the Appearance of the Uniform.”<sup>172</sup> For Donat, ridiculing the uniform meant denigrating the soldier.<sup>173</sup> One can only speculate on what he thought of the ban.

Along with the question of military uniforms, discussions concerning potential rearmament raised the issue of Wehrmacht medals. And, in fact, support for the right of soldiers to again wear their decorations from World War II proved substantial. Not all soldiers had tossed aside their decorations at the war’s conclusion and

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<sup>169</sup> Johannes Friessner, “Zum Geburtstag der neuen deutschen Wehr,” BA-MA N528 No. 70.

<sup>170</sup> Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 122.

<sup>171</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> BA-MA N571 No. 37a. For Donat’s “defamation” file, see Nos. 37-40.

<sup>173</sup> Given the controversy generated by German rearmament, the cartoonists may very well have shared his perspective. Conversely, an amusing drawing did not have to be a political statement.

some now wanted to wear them again. The question generated considerable debate during the 1950s, with one camp arguing that no Wehrmacht medals should be worn, another contending that they should be worn as awarded, and still another suggesting that medals should be permitted but without the swastika—recognizing service for Germany, rather than the Nazi regime. In the end, the latter approach won out.<sup>174</sup> A 1951 survey nevertheless offered an interesting commentary on popular views of Wehrmacht decorations two years after the Allies formally ended their occupation. Of 2,000 people interviewed, approximately half of the men indicated that they still had medals or decorations from the Third Reich. Moreover, some 53 percent of the men and 50 percent of the women thought that Germans should be allowed to wear their medals and decorations. Only 28 percent of the men and 25 percent of the women viewed the omnipresent swastika emblem as an obstacle to granting this permission.<sup>175</sup> Medals and decorations recognized courage, not politics, respondents argued. Soldiers had earned them, and the right to wear them.<sup>176</sup>

If contemporary voices are muted, Stuttgart's General Erich Dommenget hinted at his opinion of all of the actions taken by the Allies with respect to uniforms and decorations in a note submitted to Württemberg-Baden officials in 1947. When early in the year the Allies demanded the declaration of all war materiel, including uniforms and medals, a local announcement led a number of individuals to report their personal belongings to German authorities.<sup>177</sup> In this context, the 62-year-old general wrote:

I am informing you with this, that I have in my possession my custom-tailored general's uniform with the bravery decorations [*Tapferkeitsauszeichnungen*] awarded to me during my 42 years of service. The *Hoheitsabzeichen* of the Third Reich were removed from these. Also, several medals were taken from me by members of the American army after the ending of the hostilities. I am not in possession of other pieces of equipment or weapons. Because the uniform and medals are my private possessions and the former, after being dyed, will serve to supplement my civilian clothing, in my opinion, we are not dealing with war materiel.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*, 103; Stein, "Symbole," 62.

<sup>175</sup> Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, eds., *Jahrbuch der Oeffentlichen Meinung, 1947-1955* (Allensbach: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956), 379.

<sup>176</sup> Michael Geyer, "Cold War Angst: The Case of West-German Opposition to Rearmament and Nuclear Weapons," in Schissler, *Miracle Years*, 384.

<sup>177</sup> "Anmeldung von Kriegsmaterial," *Amtsblatt für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart [ASkS]*, n.d., StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 224; Wirtschaftsministerium, Württemberg-Baden, to Oberbürgermeister der Städte Stuttgart, Heilbronn, Ulm a.D., et al, 13 Mar 47, *ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> Erich Dommenget to Wirtschaftsministerium, 6 Mar 47, *ibid.* Emphasis in original.

While it is possible to infer certain attitudes from comments made later by professional officers, it is difficult to assess the extent of any outright resistance to the American ordinance. American regulations prevented German media sources from directly criticizing Allied policies, effectively denying opposing voices a forum. That such views existed, however, cannot be doubted. Opinion pieces in local newspapers periodically condemned the Germans' long-standing admiration for "the uniform"<sup>179</sup>—suggesting that there were those who still revered it. Scattered evidence supports this theory as well. In 1946, for example, American officials intercepted a letter in which a Bavarian referenced his decision not to have his field coat dyed. "I was filled with an uncontrollable defiance!" he wrote. "Just for spite, no! And I am still wearing that coat now..with the same pride with which I formerly wore my uniform."<sup>180</sup> Several years later, after a long visit to Germany, an Englishman warned of the dangers posed by older university students, many of whom were former officers. "They have known responsibility, power, and the prestige which went with splendid uniforms and batmen," he contended, adding,

They cannot be other than malcontents in their present abject condition. As I saw them they were indescribably bitter and almost choking with self-pity. One of them made this very clear when he took me to the garret where he slept on an iron bed and studied early German folklore. He was hungry-looking and thin; a wretched fellow without hope or affection. But from under his bed he pulled a tin packing case and carefully unfolded his beloved uniform. "I commanded a tank squadron at Tula," he boasted. "Now, I am a neurotic student, rotting in a miserable Germany. I cannot bear it forever."<sup>181</sup>

For some, then, undyed, unaltered uniforms could be the focus of defiant, even seemingly revanchist, views. But Allied regulations denied them the right to wear uniforms in public. At the same time, most Germans could not afford to preserve unused uniforms under their beds for some glorious day yet to come; instead, they had to put them on each morning, even if that meant first dyeing them brown or eventually patching their sleeves. Postwar economic conditions ensured that resentment simply could not metastasize around the uniform.

### *Occupiers in Uniform*

Clearly, getting the Germans out of military uniforms remained a consistent objective of the American demilitarization program. In part this resulted from concerns about the qualities and behavior uniforms

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<sup>179</sup> For more on this point, see below.

<sup>180</sup> U.S. Civil Censorship Submission, 20 Dec 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 30, F: US Civil Censorship Submissions – Directives C-18-b-1 to C-39-b-11 1 of 2.

<sup>181</sup> Eldon W. Griffiths, "Retrospect on Germany," *Yale Review* 39 (Sep 1949): 101-102.

encouraged in their wearers, but the Americans also worried about the response uniforms inspired from others. American measures were thus also intended to weaken automatic respect and adulation for the uniform.

However, there were problems associated with this approach. Although the Americans wanted to change German attitudes toward military uniforms, they also counted on using those attitudes to achieve their short-term objectives during the occupation. American military officials had worried about the response U.S. troops might elicit from German soldiers if they were not carefully dressed, disciplined, and sufficiently firm in handling POWs. And American wartime policymakers had assumed that the occupiers could use the German respect for uniforms to secure deference and obedience, as well as convince the Germans of their defeat. As late as the summer of 1946, when the U.S. moved to civilianize a larger portion of its military government staff, the personnel assigned to the 192 liaison and security offices dispersed throughout the American zone remained military, according to Earl Ziemke, “for the psychological effect of the uniform.”<sup>182</sup>

Perhaps predictably, given these conflicting intentions, the uniformed Americans did not always generate the response they had hoped for in dealing with the Germans, though their uniforms nevertheless played a role in the reeducation process. Even as some Germans criticized American troops for their inadequacies, others evaluated them positively precisely because they lacked the correctness and rigid attention to hierarchy characteristic of their German equivalents.

Certainly, most Germans obeyed the Americans. The absence of major incidents of resistance or violence and the daily execution of American orders by German officials suggested a widespread respect for American military authority. What is more difficult to assess is what role, if any, American uniforms played in this process. A soldier’s identity as a member of the U.S. armed forces, his role as a representative of the victorious military power, his authority by virtue of this status, and his uniform were so tightly interconnected as to be almost indistinguishable. The uniform *was* an indicator of a certain association. American officials acknowledged this in their stringent enforcement of regulations issued in 1945 forbidding anyone but authorized Americans to wear undyed U.S. Army clothing.<sup>183</sup> And the uniform obviously served as an indicator of

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<sup>182</sup> Ziemke, *U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany*, 440.

<sup>183</sup> U.S. Army, *Disarmament and Disbandment of the German Armed Forces*, 38. In mid August 1947, the U.S. military government announced that, starting ten days later, individuals wearing American uniform pieces would have the offending articles confiscated at once. U.S. military police subsequently ordered any violators they encountered to immediately remove and turn over the offending uniform pieces. “Hemd ausziehen!” *SZ*, Sep 47.

authority. But its potency was derived from its relationship to the authoritative American position as a whole. In this instance, speaking English may have served as an equally effective spur to obedience

Some contemporary German observers nevertheless did maintain that German respect for “the uniform” played a role in the ready submission of their fellow citizens to the commands of their occupiers.<sup>184</sup> And Brigadier General Edwin L. Sibert, assistant chief of staff for army intelligence, U.S. Forces, European Theater, offered a comparable assessment of the Germans in early 1946. Noting that they regularly turned up at various military government headquarters to report accidents, lodge complaints, or recommend improvements, he asserted, “None of them would think of going to their own police or to their own Buergermeister; instead they go to the men with power, the men in uniform who carry guns and must, therefore, be right about everything.”<sup>185</sup>

More easily identified than motives for obedience or deference were German perspectives concerning the outward appearance of American troops. Here, many saw military dress as closely linked with military conduct. And just as American analyses of German reactions to U.S. troops reveal certain presuppositions about the nature of their enemies, German appraisals of American uniforms could simultaneously shed light on their views of their own armed forces.

As U.S. military officials had worried, some Germans were scornful of the appearance of American troops or sneered at American pretensions to soldiering. Retired James M. Gavin, who as a major general commanded the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division while still in his late 30s, later described an incident that occurred in Germany during the final days of the war. “I was standing near the curb of a main street intersection, wearing a parachute jumpsuit faded from three years of war, carrying an M-1 rifle over my shoulder, looking like any other GI in the 82nd, except for the two stars on my collar and helmet,” he remembered. At that point, he was informed him that a German general was trying to find the American general in charge. Recalled Gavin:

He arrived, rather haughtily I thought, and a bit threadbare, but otherwise impeccably attired in the field gray uniform of the Wehrmacht. It was set off by the red collar tabs and insignia of a general and an Iron Cross dangled at his throat. When told that I was the American general, he looked at me with some disdain, saying that I couldn't be; I was too young and did not look like a general to him.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Jörg Echternkamp, *Nach dem Krieg. Alltagsnot, Neuorientierung und die Last der Vergangenheit* (Zürich: Pendo Verlag, 2003), 25.

<sup>185</sup> Brigadier General Edwin L. Siebert, “The German Mind: Our Greatest Problem,” *NYTM*, 17 Feb 46.

<sup>186</sup> James M. Gavin, *On to Berlin: Battles of an Airborne Commander, 1943-1945* (New York: Viking Press, 1978), 286.

Considering the issue of American troops more generally, Julian Bach, a journalist who had spent more than two years with the U.S. Army in Europe, wrote in early 1946 of two types of German attitudes. Those Germans “with strong Nazi traits, convinced that Germany lost the war only because of inferiority in numbers and equipment, take vicarious pleasure in stressing the ‘sloppiness’ and ‘poor discipline’ of American troops,” he reported. To Bach, this made sense. “Since the ideal soldier of these Germans would naturally goosestep, or at least strut, the American, slouching along with his hands in pockets and his field jacket undone, confirms in their minds the excellence of the German soldier.”<sup>187</sup> A young woman working as a MG interpreter in Karlsruhe during the summer of 1945 seemed to exemplify this perspective. Critical of the way American soldiers treated German women—as if all of them were as loose as those who gave themselves freely to the occupying troops—she had compared their behavior negatively with that of German soldiers. According to local U.S. officials, she had argued that “we know that man for man there is no better soldier in the world” and insisted that the Germans had simply been defeated by superior equipment and numbers. While American men insulted German women, German troops wherever they were located had been “courageous, respectful, well mannered . . . and much better disciplined.”<sup>188</sup>

Bach also identified a contrasting viewpoint, however, one that similarly factored the appearance of American uniforms into an appraisal of the U.S. armed forces. “Older Germans, with more elasticity of thought, tend to gloss over the ‘sloppiness’ and emphasize the good-naturedness of Americans and the informality (to a German) of relationships between American officers and men,” Bach indicated. “They are impressed with the fact that privates rarely come to attention when speaking to officers, that men receive the same medical care as officers (which was not the case in the Wehrmacht), that the officers’ field uniform is identical with that of the men, and finally that the U.S. Army uniform is cut on the lines of a regular civilian

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<sup>187</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 251. Regarding Bach’s book, historian Rudy Koshar has commented, “No friend of Germany, Bach nonetheless strove for accuracy and fair-mindedness, and although critics saw his book as ‘neither very well written nor very profound,’ its observations on the middle and lower echelons of military government and on the attitudes of American servicemen were regarded (by no less an authority than [Marxist economist] Paul Sweezy) as ‘on the whole sound and useful.’” “‘Germany Has Been a Melting Pot’: American and German Intercultures, 1945-1955,” in *The German-American Encounter: Conflict and Cooperation between Two Cultures, 1800-2000*, ed. Frank Trommler and Elliott Shore (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), 163.

<sup>188</sup> Headquarters 106th Infantry Division, Weekly Intelligence Report, 18 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMBWB, Box 547, F: Weekly Int Report.

suit.”<sup>189</sup> Sociologist Nathan Joseph has noted that “in the dress of officers, especially those of high rank who have greater leeway, either of two tendencies may be given primacy—status emphasis and separation, or identification and integration.”<sup>190</sup> While most Germans were used to the former, the Americans generally exhibited the latter.

Germans might thus receive the Americans as figures of authority, identifying them as members of the victorious occupying army, but American military uniforms did not necessarily lead them to equate American GIs with their own soldiers—nor would American soldiers necessarily generate the same emotional or behavioral response (Figures 1-8). In fact, at least one observer suggested U.S. troops were not even wearing uniforms. Writing of the Americans he encountered in Munich, Victor Klemperer concluded that in their dress and conduct, they bore little resemblance to the military men familiar to many Germans.

Apart from [their tendency to race through the rubble-strewn streets of the city in cars while all Germans are forced to walk], the Americans make neither a vindictive nor an arrogant impression. They are not soldiers in the Prussian sense at all. They do not wear uniforms, but overalls or overall-like combinations of high trousers and blouse all in gray-green; they do not carry a bayonet, only a short rifle or a long revolver ready at hand; the steel helmet is worn as comfortably as a hat, pushed forward or back, as it suits them. . . . I have not seen even the smallest group marching; they all drive. . . .<sup>191</sup>

Heinrich Köhler, former Center Party Reichstag representative, (briefly) Minister of Finance in the Weimar Republic, and later president of the Landesbezirk Baden, similarly recorded his early impressions of U.S. soldiers, writing in late April 1945 in a small village in Baden. Overall, they gave a very good impression, he admitted. “Certainly, one saw little of Prussian militarism and the amalgamation of courage, perfect posture, and spit-and-polish associated with it that has become second nature to us,”<sup>192</sup> he observed. “There was no heel-clicking in front of Herr Non-Commissioned Officer, no snappy salute or similar; in fact, one really had to

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<sup>189</sup> Bach, *America's Germany*, 251-252.

<sup>190</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms*, 77.

<sup>191</sup> Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1942-1945*, trans. Martin Chalmers (New York: Random House, 1998), 488. Other Germans remarked on the quality of the American uniforms. “The soldiers looked stunning, healthy, and well-fed, dressed in uniforms of the finest cloth and their boots were made of the best leather,” recalled one. Quoted in Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 26.

<sup>192</sup> “Gewiss, vom preussischen Militarismus und seinem uns ins Blut übergegangenen ‘Schneid’ merkte man wenig.”

take pains to distinguish between superior and subordinate in their conduct. These were civilians who waged war and attached no great importance to denying this.”<sup>193</sup>

Köhler’s perception of American soldiers as civilians waging war was echoed by others. In April 1946, a Dr. Gerhard Starke explored this idea explicitly in the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*. He began by quoting a recent speech of Secretary of State James Byrnes in which Byrnes had argued that Americans were a nation of “freedom-loving citizens, not soldiers,” emphasizing that despite their resounding victories in Germany and Japan, American soldiers remained civilians at heart. Starke then went on to note that Germans previously had known little about American soldiers, and what the Nazis had shown them of U.S. troops made the Americans appear much like German soldiers—uniforms, standing at attention, marching. But the differences became clear once they arrived in Germany. “And now this discovery. . . . In spite of everything, they had remained civilians and did not want to ever be anything else. Here were young men who viewed being a soldier [*Soldatentum*] differently than we had been taught, without appearing as weaklings because of this.” Asked Starke:

Before, could we connect the idea of being a soldier [*Soldatsein*] with an absolute requirement for respect for the individual, with no restrictions on having one’s own opinion, born of knowledge and deliberation, with overall critical intellect [*Verstand*] and cool soberness? An understanding slowly dawned of that which was at first incomprehensible: how the young men from over there could forthrightly declare how gladly they take off the uniform, how wistfully they await their return home, their profession, their studies—in short, await doing something useful [*etwas Vernünftiges*]. No enthusiastic praise for the craft of war, which, in their eyes, is only a bitter necessity to ensure a future for themselves in civilian clothes. . . .

Pondering why German and American youth had turned out so differently, Starke laid the blame on Germany’s historical evolution—the unsettled political conditions and other obstacles which had turned youthful idealism and willingness to act in the wrong direction. Byrnes’ words, he concluded, illuminated something that, in the months American soldiers had occupied Germany, the Germans had already clearly felt.<sup>194</sup>

This “feeling” on the part of the Germans had a notable consequence as well, in that the American military’s desire to improve the discipline, polish, and overall presentation of its occupation forces could

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<sup>193</sup> Heinrich Köhler, *Lebenserinnerungen des Politikers und Staatsmannes, 1878-1949*, ed. Josef Becker, with the assistance of Franz Zilken (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1964), 350. Without explicitly contrasting their movements with German heel-clicking deference, Helene S. nevertheless remembered the rubber-soled footwear of the Americans, as well as the related quiet, “cat-like” liteness of the first U.S. soldier she encountered. *Was vom Leben bleibt*, 109, 114, DTA No. 85/II.

<sup>194</sup> Dr. Gerhard Starke, “Zivilisten,” *RNZ*, 13 Apr 46.



actually work against its fundamental objectives. In July 1945, American information control authorities in Heidelberg commented that it had been one of the U.S. army's "strongest assets . . . in the eyes of the observant public that it is truly an 'Army of civilians.'" The German people, "for the most part tired of German militarism, thought very highly of the unstrained relations between American officers and men, between the various enlisted ranks, and of the genial, at times even lax manners in which the American soldier performs his duties." The recent arrival of the headquarters of the U.S. Seventh Army had thus given rise to comment. "A certain 'militarism' which was imposed on American soldiers in the Heidelberg area . . . did not escape the watchful eyes of the public," they reported. "Strict enforcement of the exchange of the salute regulations, signs at various places of entertainment 'For Officers Only' and the like, have caused many people to remark: 'Well, we thought it was different in the American Army, but apparently all armies are alike. I always pitied the poor Landser [private]!'"<sup>195</sup>

Starke's article some nine months later hinted that this reprobation was not necessarily a lingering one. The report nevertheless underscored both the ambiguity of the American position and the challenges of employing military uniforms and proper military behavior as tools of reeducation when not all Germans interpreted uniforms and military conduct the same. The fact that the dress and behavior of American troops led some Germans to consider the possibility of a different type of relationship between a uniform, the soldier wearing it, and his overall role in a military hierarchy was no doubt welcomed by many American officials. Their assessment of the means by which this was sometimes accomplished was probably less enthusiastic.

### *Interpreting the Uniform*

Perhaps predictably, given these conflicting If some Germans concluded that, despite their uniforms, American soldiers were quite unlike Wehrmacht troops, there were also Germans who perceived their own soldiers differently in the absence of medals and uniforms. Helene S., then sixteen, was among them. Shortly after her town fell to the Americans, she was already struggling to make sense of her feelings regarding the end of the war and the collapse of her beloved Reich, when her friend Alfons, an "almost gentle" young man who

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<sup>195</sup> Irving M. Rowe to Commanding Officers, 6871st DISCC, 31 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [2].

previously had manned a nearby anti-aircraft artillery position, appeared at her home. Pleased to see him again, she was also unsettled.

He smiled and shook our hands, as if everything was as it had been before. If it had not been for those clothes he wore. A pair of pants and jacket that were at least two sizes too large, and with nothing on his head. It was the latter, probably, the sight of his bareheadedness, that produced a surge of pity in me.

. . . I was glad and relieved to see him standing before me so healthy. “Alfons without cap,” went through my head, “exposed, debased, perhaps somewhat shamefacedly helpless” [*etwas schamhaft hilflos*]. At that moment I believed I saw him suffering from this.

Alfons always liked to wear his high soldier’s cap, probably because it was very attractive on him, or made him look so manly, or only because of his thinning hair. Uniforms lend a certain dignity [*Würde*] and often command respect.

And there he now stood before me, so “without” in this miserable clothing, a pitiful figure bereft of this dignity. . . .

She subsequently learned that after Alfons’s best friend had died at his side, he had turned tail and run until he found shelter and civilian clothing on a nearby farm. A later visit revealed that Alfons, formerly an enthusiastic soldier, no longer believed in German victory. “With the discarding of the uniform, the fighting spirit and the whole devotion to the Fatherland must also have left him,” she concluded. “He had become a civilian. It appeared as if the discarded clothing had allowed another person to become visible, as if a magic spell had become powerless.”<sup>196</sup>

If Helene S. saw in the removal of a uniform the end of counterfeit masculinity, misplaced self-assurance, and unwarranted faith in victory, newspapers illuminated the diminution of once formidable men in covering the initial Nuremberg war crimes trial. The *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung*’s Kurt Fried, for example, summed up General Alfred Jodl in a sentence: “Without decorations, at most a staff sergeant.”<sup>197</sup> “Horrific is the impression one receives from [Field Marshal Wilhelm] Keitel,” wrote Walter Schwerdtfeger,<sup>198</sup> publisher of the *Badische Neueste Nachrichten*, in a similar vein. “Now, without the glamour of the uniform and medals, without the always lieutenant-like, slightly tilted cap, without the accustomed arrogant expression, which has been replaced by sullen rage, he appears staggeringly empty. It is incomprehensible that this man of

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<sup>196</sup> *Was vom Leben bleibt*, 84, 120-123, DTA No. 85/II.

<sup>197</sup> Kurt Fried, “Auf dem Nürnberger Prozess,” *SDZ*, 2 Feb 46.

<sup>198</sup> Schwerdtfeger had worked as a journalist for more than 10 years before being imprisoned for life by the Nazis in 1936. He was liberated by the French in April 1945. A February 1946 American report described him as a member of the SPD who was nevertheless “against any stubborn party politics.” Werner H. Gumpertz to Chief, Publications Section, 23 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 593, F: Intelligence.

unintellectual physiognomy could year after year be the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht.”<sup>199</sup>

Schwerdtfeger’s newspaper later emphasized the visual deceptiveness of uniforms using a graphic depicting a small-shouldered man with a slightly protruding stomach, long arms, and big hands, wearing non-descript pants and shirt, standing next to a clothes stand bearing an officer’s cap and uniform jacket, the latter bedecked with arm bands, collar patches, lanyard, iron cross, ribbons, and medals. Below it stood a poem: “Ach, a good many of these ‘greats’/one sees them in underwear/they were not at all heroes/so passes away the fame of the world!”<sup>200</sup>

By the late 1940s, the dominant image of the German uniform was the ragged, naked version worn by veterans (Figures 7-8). Far from exuding power and manliness, uniforms now undoubtedly contributed to contemporary perceptions of masculine weakness and impotence that have led scholars to identify a “crisis of masculinity” in the immediate postwar years.<sup>201</sup> Once dressed in tight-fitting, smartly decorated attire, soldiers were now trapped in dyed fabric that hung loosely on undernourished bodies.<sup>202</sup> Uniforms became textiles, divested of their power through transformation into work clothes, house-cleaning attire, and gardening outfits.<sup>203</sup> Field gray lost its belligerence, no longer the color of military authority but of skirts embroidered with flowers,<sup>204</sup> dolls for DP children, and slippers with floppy bunny ears. One reason uniforms could still be seen in Germany in 1947, suggested the *New York Times*’ McLaughlin, was a “recognition of the loss of prestige these faded trappings have undergone with the civilian population” which made their presence less worrisome.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Walter Schwerdtfeger, “Ist’s auch gleich Wahnsinn, hat es doch Methode,” *BNN*, 22 Mar 46. Picking up on a comment made by Albert Speer, Paul Fussell suggests that Hitler’s close advisor came to a similar conclusion in observing his former colleagues. Writes Fussell: “As he entered the courtroom at Nuremberg, Albert Speer saw his twenty war crimes co-defendants for the first time as a group and for the first time brought low. ‘For years,’ he wrote, ‘I had been accustomed to seeing all these defendants in magnificent uniforms, either unapproachable or jovially expansive.’ What a different a uniform makes. Now they were simply shabby old men prepared to lie their way out, like tramps brought before a hick magistrate.” Fussell, *Uniforms*, 27.

<sup>200</sup> *BNN*, 2 Oct 46. “Ach, so mancher dieser ‘Grossen’/Sieht man ihn in Unterhosen/War ja alles, bloss kein Held/so vergeht der Ruhm der Welt!”

<sup>201</sup> Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany*, 95. See also Biess, “Men of Reconstruction,” 342; Moeller, ““The Last Soldiers of the Great War,”” 141.

<sup>202</sup> Wolfe, “Revival of Democratic Culture,” 27; “Schattenzug,” *SDZ*, 11 Jun 47.

<sup>203</sup> Paul R. to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 10 Mar 47, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 224.

<sup>204</sup> Guenther, *Nazi Chic*, 263-264.

<sup>205</sup> McLaughlin, “Swastikas on the Scrap Heap.”

Significantly, the Americans clearly were not alone in identifying and actively working to destroy the power of the uniform. In a September 1945 memo to local MG officials arguing against early elections, one Landrat criticized the Germans as “a people adoring the uniform by prime instinct, to whom war and conquest mean its main substance of life.”<sup>206</sup> Public complaints regarding German youngsters wearing even non-military uniforms suggested some sensitivity on the issue as well. Moreover, in letters and commentaries, prominent newspapers intermittently condemned the Germans’ traditional uniform worship, shared stories revealing the silliness of automatic obedience to uniformed authority, and pointed to the destructive role the uniform had played in German society.<sup>207</sup>

In the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, one veteran argued at the end of a series of critical articles on his wartime experiences that clothes did *not* make the man. “Get away from the external trinkets and fuss,” he implored,

we finally want to see men! Men who don’t lose their breath when confronted with braid and lacings and who don’t get wrapped up in performing bows. The system that we buried under the salvo of enemy guns taught us, . . . that the salute, the greeting, on the execution of which so much importance was placed, was meant not for the person, the wearer of the uniform, but for the uniform itself. That spoke—subjectively and objectively—volumes about the estimation [*Einschätzung*] of the person.<sup>208</sup>

Writing in September 1946, the former soldier clearly was not certain the Germans had learned this lesson yet. And even while sometimes agreeing with McLaughlin that the uniform no longer enjoyed its former prestige, observers would continue to express this concern during the years that followed.<sup>209</sup>

That present conditions might nevertheless go a long way toward permanently changing attitudes was suggested in a June 1946 commentary in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*. After recounting his experiences in Russian and British custody, a veteran recalled reading about a Munich merchant who had created women’s belts from non-commissioned officer’s braiding and shopping bags that “looked like corporals with officer’s caps” using military stripes on the bags and cording for handles. The writer had been reminded of being overcome by an overwhelming sense of freedom upon seeing, in a POW camp, soldiers cooking soup in *Stahlhelme* laid across

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<sup>206</sup> Fritz Strauss to Military Government, Capt. Green, 3 Sep 45, attached to Summary Report on Military Government Activities, Landkreis Karlsruhe, 11 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 546, F: Instructions, [etc].

<sup>207</sup> Briefe an die Herausgeber, *SZ*, 8 Dec 45; “Kleinigkeiten vom Alltag,” *SDZ*, 20 Jul 46; “Buntes Allerlei,” *SDZ*, 31 Jul 49; “Die Uniform,” *SZ*, 7 Jun 47; “Als Polizist und brav,” *BNN*, 18 Sep 48.

<sup>208</sup> Heid ver Elberg, “Der Ungefreite. Oder: Ich war auch Soldat,” Part 7, *RNZ*, 10 Sep 46.

<sup>209</sup> “Als Polizist und brav.”

grills constructed from carbine barrels. “The false gods were fallen,” he had marveled, “the sinister, irresponsible, cruel, impersonal power over life and death lay shattered on the ground, the regalia, with which they celebrated their bloody festivals, again had profane duties, were once again metal, in the form of pots and grills, and those they had revealed were again men, no longer the submissive [*willenlos*] and glassy-eyed [*starr*] servants of that power.” Steel helmets now had mundane duties, and women filled be-ribboned shopping bags with radishes, lettuce, and bread, without once standing at attention—and this, when formerly soldiers might be punished for smoking while wearing their helmet and a uniform had had its own independent powers, quite apart from the person who wore it. “Millions of graves cover the earth of Europe,” he concluded,

and it appears that millions of those gold and silver braids and stars are still here. But now they are used for shopping bags and women’s belts. Perhaps it is better this way, better than that an all-encompassing “away with them!” removed them from our eyes. It is good to see them still another couple of years and to think about them. *Sic transit Gloria mundi. Gloria? Sic transit vanitatum vanitas.*<sup>210</sup>

### Conclusions

In listing the uniform ordinance among the assorted Allied measures designed to psychologically disarm the German people, historians often recall the words of a British journalist who quipped: “It’s dye or die.” Implying that the Allies threatened the Germans with death for violating a dress code, use of the quote often suggests disapproval or incredulity at excessive Allied zeal.<sup>211</sup> Pithy and clever, the quip was also essentially inaccurate, however, at least for the American Zone. Although several laws addressed uniforms, and thus former officers who wore uniforms within the context of a paramilitary group meeting might have suffered severely, the well-publicized, operative military government ordinance concerning uniforms specifically excluded violators from punishment by death. The Americans, furthermore, were committed, but also lenient.

Perhaps more pertinent, then, is the question of the excessiveness of the ordinance, which also ultimately revolves around the issue of its necessity. The uniform regulation, more than any other American demilitarization measure, had the potential to touch every German. Adding to everyday anxieties, it increased the burdens of local officials who had to divert scarce coal supplies and expend valuable staff time addressing a now even more worrisome clothing situation. Clothing shortages, moreover, were already forcing a change in

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<sup>210</sup> Hellmut Holthaus, “So vergehn die Tressen dieser Welt,” *SZ*, 18 Jun 46. “Thus passes away the glory of the world. Glory? Thus passes away the vanity of vanities.” Thank you to Josh Westgaard for this translation.

<sup>211</sup> Wettig, *Entmilitarisierung und Wiederbewaffnung*, 106; Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland*, 55; Large, *Germans to the Front*, 26.

the outward appearance and, thus, the connotations of “the uniform.” In fact, they were one among a variety of influences contributing to its condemnation, quite apart from American initiatives. Soldiers, officers, newspaper commentators, and ordinary people were ready to set aside uniforms for what they stood for—whether unwanted discipline, a war that never had or no longer seemed glorious, defeat and humiliation, Germany’s fateful militarism, Allied condemnation, or false courage, discredited values, and tragic docility and submission. For most soldiers, a forced exodus from their uniform was considered liberation, rather than humiliation.

Yet evidence also suggests that others were less accepting of the ordinance, and there were those for whom a uniform retained a great deal of meaning. Even German observers understood that ornamented uniforms shaped perceptions of military men. And uniforms and medals had negatively influenced Germany in the past, newspaper commentators reminded—this was a lesson that needed to be learned. Permanently.

Given prevailing economic conditions, it seems unlikely that even German officials critical of German militarism and uniform worship would have channeled their sentiments into dress restrictions. Instead, it was left to the Americans to insist that military braid assume a new functional, rather than symbolic, role and to help ensure that field gray evolved into new shapes and that ragged uniforms with wilted collars changed color, even as American soldiers modeled a new kind of relationship between a soldier and his uniform.

The American measures thus nurtured a strong indigenous process. At the same time, the severe clothing shortages actually magnified the ordinance’s effectiveness in attaining its ultimate objectives. Added to the dismal economic conditions and the emotional battering many Germans had recently suffered, the uniform order helped change the visual landscape of Germany and the connotations of “the uniform.”



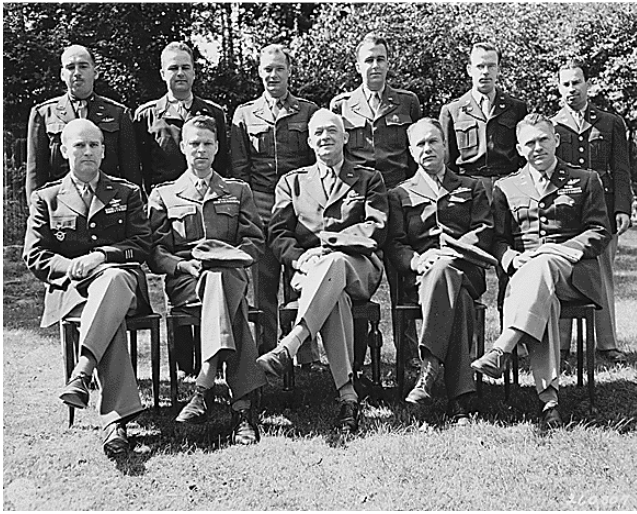
**Fig. 1 – Lt. General George Patton, U.S. Third Army commander, pins the Silver Star on an American private, France, October 1944.**  
(Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 2 – Captured German general, France.**  
(Credit: U.S. National Archives, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)



**Fig. 3 – Captured German officers, Paris, France, August 1944.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 4 – General Henry “Hap” Arnold, Commanding General, U.S. Army Air Forces, with his staff at the Potsdam Conference, July 1945.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives, Harry S. Truman Library)



**Fig. 5 – American GIs with Nazi flag, France, August 1944.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 6 – An American GI with captured German soldiers, Germany, April 1945.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)





**Fig. 7 – German troops parade through Warsaw, Poland, September 1939.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 8 – Captured German troops, Aachen, Germany, October 1944.** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)

## Chapter 7

### EXPURGATION

Writing to colleagues in late 1945, General Robert Harper, director of OMGUS's Armed Forces Division, assessed the scope of the American demilitarization program. "The task of demilitarizing the Germans reaches into every field of human endeavor," he argued. Referring specifically to the "field of spiritual and intellectual demilitarization," Harper added that "literature, symbolism, perpetuation of traditions and every kind of military study and training" were "all factors in the problem of uprooting militarism in Germany."<sup>1</sup> Even for Harper, a career military officer, "demilitarization" involved much more than destroying Germany's military infrastructure, shutting down its war industries, shunting its soldiers into new careers, and negating the influence of militarists who had pressed for the Wehrmacht's expansion, glorification, and use. From the outset, American policymakers had maintained that permanently demilitarizing Germany and thereby ensuring world security would require "striking at the roots of German militarism," as the *New York Times* put it, in German culture.<sup>2</sup>

While eventually encouraging new ideas and practices, American efforts to eradicate the sources and manifestations of militarism in German culture began with prohibitions, removals, and confiscations. Banning the wearing of uniforms was a key step in this process. But the Americans did not hesitate to cut even deeper, targeting rituals, material culture, and intellectual life. Specifically, they banned saluting, flags, and parades; demanded changes in street signs, monuments, and museums; and ordered the removal of militaristic books from bookshops and libraries.

Producing discernible results, these exercises in excision nevertheless suffered from some of the same ailments plaguing other American initiatives. If uniformed occupiers sometimes had trouble demystifying the German uniform, the parading conquerors' ban on German marching similarly highlighted the very thin line

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<sup>1</sup> Robert W. Harper to Deputy Military Governor, Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), 28 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 96, F: 388.4 Dissolution German Armed Forces.

<sup>2</sup> "Allies Outlaw Training of Germans for Military," *NYT*, 1 Dec 45.

between demilitarization and remilitarization. And if identifying “militarists” was problematic, determining what made a monument “militaristic” could be equally perplexing.

But these measures also brought with them entirely new challenges. Central to the cultural dimension of the demilitarization program was the problem of drawing boundaries. What, specifically, was harmful in the German cultural environment? Certain types of objects? Their messages? How they were used? Their dates of origin? Their national character? More fundamental, still, was a question that was virtually impossible to answer: How could one be sure removals and confiscations would not do more harm than good? In some cases ignoring or failing to perceive the complexity and potential hazards of their demilitarization agenda, the Americans also disagreed on how to proceed. In addition, policymakers could not always count on the vigilant support of those who carried out and enforced their decisions.

Differences of opinion evident within the occupation administration, moreover, were more than matched by divisions among the Germans. American cultural excision initiatives thus not only claimed valuable German resources and time, but also influenced an internal German conversation concerning the scope of environmental cleansing required to help propel postwar Germany in a new direction.

### **Flags, Salutes, and Marching**

“A baseball diamond has been cut in the turf of the great stadium where Nazi party minions used to strut before their Fuehrer,” wrote Raymond Daniell in the *New York Times* in late June 1945, describing conditions in Nuremberg, the Franconian city that had once been home to Nazi Party gatherings staged on a monumental scale. American ordnance officers, Daniell continued, were using another enormous stadium “where Adolf Hitler was wont to rail and rant against the inequities of Versailles” to store “captured remnants of the broken war machine.” The American army had also converted into a supply dump an esplanade alongside a nearby lake “where the SS in their black uniforms, with skull and crossbones on their hats, marched at party rallies in the heyday of nazism.”<sup>3</sup> The vast spaces and immense architecture so integral to Nazi Party pageantry, the imposing backdrop to blocks of “Sieg Heil”-ing spectators and the relentless advancing rows of uniformed men, he made clear, had now been reduced to venues for American sporting events and storage

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<sup>3</sup> Raymond Daniell, “Nazi Shrine in Nuremberg Stadium Now Serves as a Ball Field for GI’s,” *NYT*, 28 Jun 45.

facilities for the detritus of the Third Reich. Juxtaposing images of Nazi Germany's ascendancy with images of American domination, Daniell underscored the magnitude of Germany's defeat.

That American policymakers also considered German saluting, flags, and parades to be offensive and threatening is hardly a surprise. Nor is the fact that they chose to deal with the problem through a layering of directives and laws that inverted the meaning of some practices and attempted to eliminate others. Where JCS 1067 prohibited the public display of national and Nazi flags and banned all types of parades, SHAEF military courtesy regulations prohibited most salutes and demanded that respect be shown toward Allied flags.<sup>4</sup> The July 1945 omnibus U.S. military government law addressing military training soon banned "the use of military or Nazi . . . flags, banners or tokens and the employment of distinctive Nazi or military salutes, gestures or greetings" and also outlawed "all civil or military parades and all military formations of any character . . . except in so far as expressly permitted by authority of the Military Government."<sup>5</sup> And in late November 1945, at the impetus of the Americans, the ACC issued Law No. 8, which contained language on saluting, flags, and parades nearly identical to the U.S. law.<sup>6</sup>

Overall, the American approach to flags in Germany was two-pronged. On one hand, regulations specifically required German men to remove their hats and to come to attention when they were passed by a flag belonging to any of the Allies (and to remove their hats even when merely passing these flags) or when the American national anthem, or equivalent Allied music, was played during ceremonies. On the other, they barred the display of German military and Nazi flags and the playing of German military music and anthems.<sup>7</sup>

During the earliest days of the occupation, the Americans distributed posters informing the Germans of the conduct expected of them toward U.S. flags and anthems.<sup>8</sup> How conscientious they were in holding the Germans to this standard is difficult to assess, however. One MG official later reported that when the Americans took over Karlsruhe from the French in mid July 1945, city residents had appreciated their more

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<sup>4</sup> On American and Allied wartime planning regarding German saluting, flags, and parades, see Chapter 3.

<sup>5</sup> Military Government – Germany, United States Zone, Law No. 154, "Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training," n.d. [effective 14 Jul 45], NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: B-8 Elimination and Prohibition of Military Training.

<sup>6</sup> T.W. Guptill to Commanding Generals, 12 Dec 45, *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> H.H. Newman to All concerned, 13 May 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 4, F: AG 014.13 Relationship of Military Government Personnel with Germans (Fraternization).

<sup>8</sup> "Military Government – Germany, Supreme Commander's Area of Control, Rules Governing Military Courtesy to be Observed by Germans in Occupied Germany," poster, n.d., StAU B 060/70 No. 4.

relaxed approach, including the fact that they did not require civilians to remove their hats when passing the flag of the occupying country.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, in late June 1945, U.S. Army instructions urged caution in publicizing the SHAEF regulations. The requirements were not to be unduly emphasized or “too rigid an enforcement threatened” where the terms could not be easily policed. Although the instructions suggested that German policemen might be enlisted to help enforce the rules, in stating that German civilians could be prosecuted by a military government court for “provocative or concerted action . . . in public in disregard of the rules,” they also implied that most violations should not be severely penalized.<sup>10</sup>

Still, repeated notices in German publications show that the Americans, if not religiously monitoring German behavior, continued to formally insist on adherence to the rules. They also confirm that some Germans either ignored those rules or defiantly refused to obey them.<sup>11</sup> In June 1947, Heidelberg city officials noted that most of the male spectators at a recent parade had greeted the approach of the U.S. flag and military pennants respectfully.<sup>12</sup> But the Americans could not count on such conduct. In March 1946, a front-page notice in Ulm’s official gazette reprimanded local men for not responding as the MG had instructed when American flags were raised or lowered or carried in parades. Reminding that this conduct showed deference to the flag and honored the fallen, it warned that henceforth those who disobeyed would face legal action.<sup>13</sup> Some six weeks later, newspapers in Heidelberg and Ulm carried a statement from American MG headquarters which, citing widespread noncompliance, stressed that the Germans needed to show due respect to the U.S. flag and national

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<sup>9</sup> “History of Military Government in StadtKreis Karlsruhe under Detachment H1E2 for the period 14 July – 31 July 1945,” n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 546, F: [No title].

<sup>10</sup> R.G. Lovett to Commanding General, 12<sup>th</sup> Army Group, 20 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 217, F: 370.2/4/WB/CA MG Optns in Land WB = Civil Administration, 1945-1946.

<sup>11</sup> A May 1946 Information Control Division report described an informal survey in Frankfurt which had asked 13 Germans about their reaction to a recent U.S. Army directive (discussed below) ordering the Germans to “pay proper respect to the U.S. flag.” From these interviews, the report stated, “the impression was gained that nazi and military minded Germans appeared to accept the order as justified. Non-Nazis, on the other hand, tended to complain against the order—many of them justifying their view by pointing to the rough behavior of American soldiers.” One “simple woman” had criticized the Americans for wasting food and reported that she turned her back when she saw a U.S. flag. Daily Intelligence Digest No. 173, 24 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 281, F: (Film) Intelligence Reports on.

<sup>12</sup> Wochenbericht für die Zeit vom 31.Mai bis 7.Juni 1947, StAH AA 239m No. 1.

<sup>13</sup> “Bekanntmachungen der Militärregierung,” *AU*, 28 Mar 46.

anthem just as American civilians did.<sup>14</sup> In May 1947 and again a year later, Heidelberg's official gazette reminded its readers, once more, of the behavior expected of them.<sup>15</sup>

Pressed to show respect to the stars and stripes, the German people could not display their own military or Nazi flags (which, at the time, included the official German national flag). While some Germans perhaps hid or destroyed their flags, others, as with military uniforms, treated them as textiles, using the fabric for red tailored skirts or, later, for flags representing their new democratic government.<sup>16</sup> Allied soldiers also eagerly appropriated them as souvenirs. Most German flags, the *New York Times*' Kathleen McLaughlin suggested in January 1947, "long since have been carried out of Germany in the luggage of homebound soldiers of various nations and now decorate dens and bedrooms across the world." She added that at U.S. Army headquarters in Frankfurt, which normally assumed custody of such items, "nobody cares." It was "one less headache for the staff to handle, and the official attitude is that in American Legion clubrooms and their equivalents in England, France and Australia they probably look good." Brigadier General Robert McClure, head of OMGUS's Information Control Division, had still another use for a Nazi flag. Visitors to his conference room found themselves offered seats on a sofa with an unusual covering: "a huge scarlet swastika flag,"<sup>17</sup> McClure thus effectively turned upside down regulations describing the respect U.S. officers were to accord the American flag, which was "under no circumstances" to be draped across chairs or benches or to have anything placed upon it.<sup>18</sup>

Some Germans asked local MG officers for authorization to use flags and banners for specific purposes. Clubs, for example, requested permission to carry banners in funeral processions, as was traditional

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<sup>14</sup> "Ehrenbezeugung gegenüber der amerikanischen Flagge," *RNZ*, 11 May 46; "Amerikanischer Flagge und Nationalhymne müssen Ehrenbezeugungen erwiesen werden," *SDZ*, 15 May 46.

<sup>15</sup> "Ehrenbezeugung gegenüber der Nationalflagge und Nationalhymne der USA," *Heidelberger Amtsblatt für den Stadtkreis und den Landkreis*, 10 May 47, StAH F11; "Ehrenbezeugung bei amerikanischen Flaggenparaden," *Heidelberger Amtsblatt*, 8 May 48, *ibid.* American officials may have been unusually vigilant—and violations may have been especially conspicuous—in Heidelberg, as the city had a large U.S. military presence, serving as the headquarters, successively, of the U.S. Third Army Group, U.S. Seventh Army, U.S. Third Army, U.S. Constabulary, and, finally, the U.S. European Command. United States Army Europe Military History Office, "Campbell Barracks: The Story of a Caserne," [http://www.history.hqusa.army.mil/campbell\\_barracks.htm](http://www.history.hqusa.army.mil/campbell_barracks.htm).

<sup>16</sup> Rosner and Tubach, *An Uncommon Friendship*, 143; Stadthauptamt to das Domänenamt Heidelberg, 11 May 48, StAH AA 239 No. 5b.

<sup>17</sup> "Swastikas on the Scrap Heap," *NYTM*, 12 Jan 47. See also "Soldier Displays Nazi Flag and Pup," *NYT*, 10 Jun 45.

<sup>18</sup> *Officer's Guide*, 201.

for them.<sup>19</sup> The Americans apparently allowed this, at least occasionally,<sup>20</sup> although as late as March 1948, the *Badischer Sängerbund* (Badenese Singing League) was informing its members that, per military government orders, they might not march to burial sites with banners unfurled. Flags and banners should instead only be displayed at the cemetery.<sup>21</sup> In mid 1947, Land MG officials also reported receiving a growing number of requests from youth groups that wanted to “march and carry banners,” usually “in their sports uniforms with some form of flag or pennant being carried by their leaders.”<sup>22</sup> By then, education officials were stipulating that youth groups might “display distinctive banners or flags known to be part of their established paraphernalia” when the group was licensed by the MG, but that any new banners or flags introduced later required specific American approval.<sup>23</sup> More significantly, in late 1946 the Land MG authorized the Germans to fly the red, black, and gold flag specified in the recently approved Württemberg-Baden constitution as the Land’s new official flag.<sup>24</sup> “For the people of Stuttgart,” reported the city MG office in late November, “the most important event of the week was to see their flag flying from the Tagblatt-Building on Monday morning. It was noted that considerable pride was expressed by the population and they seriously feel they have earned this privilege.”<sup>25</sup>

If American rules concerning flags were not particularly popular, they apparently caused little controversy in official circles. The same could not be said for Allied regulations on saluting. Here, uncertainty regarding official MG policy caused confusion locally, while at OMGUS headquarters, American officials disagreed not only with the practices of some local MG officers, but with those of their allies as well.

Developments in Heidelberg, in particular, shed light on problems associated with the saluting regulations. In mid September 1946, the city’s top MG officer complained to lord mayor Dr. Hugo Swart about

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<sup>19</sup> Landratsamt Waiblingen to Military Government, Waiblingen, 2 Mar 46, StAL FL 201/19 Bü 1327; Daily Report, Group Activities Branch, 17 Nov 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 20 Oct 1948 to 26 Nov 1948.

<sup>20</sup> Daily Report, Group Activities Branch, 17 Nov 48, NA, RG 260.

<sup>21</sup> *Mitteilungsblatt des Badischen Sängerbundes 1947*, Mar 48, StAK 8/StS 20 No. 27

<sup>22</sup> Education and Religious Affairs Division Weekly Report, 27 Jun 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR 1947.

<sup>23</sup> L. D. Gresh to Director, Office of Military Government for Hesse, 9 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 128, F: Youth Activities 1946 & 1947.

<sup>24</sup> “Schwarz-Rot-Gold,” *SZ*, 27 Nov 46; “Bevölkerung darf flaggen,” *SZ*, 11 Dec 46. The Germans were not permitted to fly their flag near any American flag.

<sup>25</sup> Weekly Activity Report, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 817, F: Intelligence Reports, 1947.

the behavior of special policemen posted outside of his residence, demanding, among other things, that the men stop saluting. Allied Control Council regulations specifically barred the use of “any type of military hand salute,” he pointed out, and then suggested that Swart “have this practice stopped immediately in all organizations within the city administration.”<sup>26</sup> The American officer’s letter raised some questions about the exact scope of the ban on saluting, however. Notifying Swart that city police officials had been instructed not to salute Allied military personnel, Heidelberg’s police director added that he did not think the American’s directive pertained to the salute city policemen employed amongst themselves.<sup>27</sup> The director also met with the local MG public safety officer and subsequently reported that this officer did not object to Heidelberg policemen greeting one another with salutes that involved placing their right hands on their service caps, as was currently standard practice. The public safety officer merely refused to let them salute members of the occupation forces in this fashion.<sup>28</sup>

But Swart was still concerned, his doubts fed by a recent newspaper article regarding the Hessian city of Kassel that described a MG ban on the use by its police of any kind of military salute and the new greeting—a “slight bow”—introduced by local officials as a replacement. A week later, Swart contacted the lord mayors of Stuttgart and Karlsruhe, asking about police greeting practices in their cities and whether they knew of any specific instructions from the Land Interior Ministry on the issue. Heidelberg officials did not, he noted, though he had not yet approached the ministry itself.<sup>29</sup>

Officials from both cities reported that their police forces currently used the hand salute with the blessing of local MG public safety officers. The head of Stuttgart’s police explained that an American official had, in fact, issued a directive forbidding the police to use military salutes. However, the German opinion that the salute being used was not a military salute was “silently tolerated and thus allowed” by the Americans. The Stuttgart official added that in referring to a “military salute” he believed the occupiers really were referring to the standing at attention and the “so-called snappy style” (*sogenannte zackige Ausführung*) of the salute. The “civil servant type” (*beamtemässig*) of salute currently employed was both practical and appropriate to

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<sup>26</sup> Charles L. Jackson to Herr Oberbürgermeister Dr. Swart, 14 Sep 46, StAH AA 252a II.

<sup>27</sup> Polizeidirektion der Stadt Heidelberg to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Heidelberg, 17 Sep 46, *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Polizeidirektion der Stadt Heidelberg to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Heidelberg, 17 Sep 46, *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> “Militärischer Gruss abgeschafft,” *RNZ*, 29 Aug 46; Dr. Swart to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Karlsruhe, 24 Sep 46, StAH AA 252a II.



enhancing the discipline of a “uniformed troop.” A greeting involving a “slight nodding of the head” was “neither practical nor desirable,” he maintained, and suggested that the MG authorities may have conceded this point as well. He also advised against raising the issue of the police greeting officially.<sup>30</sup>

Karlsruhe’s lord mayor Hermann Veit indicated that his city had likewise received no specific instructions. Military government regulations governing the German police prohibited military salutes, he noted, but the MG public safety officers posted to Karlsruhe—and there had been several—had held diverse views on the issue. And all had “let themselves be convinced . . . that it was indispensable to the preservation of discipline to demand a salute from police officials.” Conversely, they had banned the saluting of American officers. “Equally objectionable,” he added, “is a flamboyant [*auffällig*] coming to attention.” According to Veit, Karlsruhe’s top police official had specified that, when standing, the city’s policemen should greet their superiors by standing up straight and looking at them. When moving, they were to greet their superiors by standing upright, looking at them, and raising their right hand to their cap, “in a civilian way briefly and casually.” In both cases, it was also permitted to slightly nod the head and offer a greeting—“Good morning, Herr Kommissar . . .”—as was typical in civilian life.<sup>31</sup>

At this point, Swart evidently let the matter rest until, in mid 1947, Land police officials complicated the situation by asking Land MG public safety authorities whether there were any concerns about German policemen employing a hand salute. When the MG officials objected, indicating that they did not want German policemen to use military gestures and wished to avoid any appearance of militarism, the Land’s Interior Ministry spread the word.<sup>32</sup> This led Swart to complain to North Baden officials that the new instructions directly contradicted those of the local MG which permitted city policemen to greet civilians with salutes that, in Heidelberg, were “in no way carried out in a military or militaristic style.” Swart asked, too, how the police were now to show respect—a requirement, he added, that, to his knowledge, had not yet been abolished. “Shall

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<sup>30</sup> Polizeipräsidium Stuttgart to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Heidelberg, 16 Oct 46, StAH AA 252a II.

<sup>31</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Karlsruhe to der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Heidelberg Herrn Dr. Swart, 7 Oct 46, *ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Innenministerium to sämtliche Landratsämter, et al, 6 Aug 47, *ibid.*

the police take off their caps or greet local residents and their superiors with a polite bow and a friendly smile?” Or were they to do something else?<sup>33</sup>

In January 1948, North Baden officials notified Swart that representatives from the Interior Ministry had spoken with the MG about the matter more than once, but that the Americans would not relent.<sup>34</sup> In response to further prompting from Swart regarding a substitute greeting, they reported in May that the ministry was working to achieve a uniform regulation for the entire U.S. Zone.<sup>35</sup> No further references to the issue appeared in the Heidelberg police files. However, in December, OMGUS’s chief of public safety complained to the heads of all of the American Land MGs that some German police organizations apparently wrongly believed that MG restrictions on saluting had been relaxed or rescinded. This, he stated, was not true, and they should be so informed.<sup>36</sup>

In fact, at the very time Swart was seeking clarification of American saluting regulations, OMGUS officials in Berlin had been confirming their policy in a conflict with their allies. In August 1946, the Armed Forces Division staff had grown concerned about German police in the U.S. sector of Berlin who were saluting Allied officers and, upon investigation, discovered that American officials had authorized this conduct because members of the police served in all four sectors and the other three powers all permitted saluting.<sup>37</sup> Considering military salutes a violation of both ACC Law No. 8, which banned the “employment of distinctive Nazi or military salutes or greetings,” and an ACC proclamation outlawing “military training, military propaganda, and

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<sup>33</sup> Dr. Swart to Herr Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, 20 Sep 47, StAH AA 252a IV.

<sup>34</sup> Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, to Stadtverwaltung von Heidelberg, 21 Jan 48, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Oberbürgermeister Swart to Herr Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, 26 Jan 48, *ibid.*; Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, to Stadtverwaltung von Heidelberg, 24 May 48, *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> James L. McCraw to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 1 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 282, F: 014 125 Police. It appears that officials in North Baden reintroduced the hand salute to Land police procedures in early 1950 with instructions that called for a casual salute on most occasions when an official was wearing a cap. The instructions nevertheless included these cautionary remarks: “The public sees in the greeting of an official not only an act of courtesy, but an expression of an internal attitude and of his professional approach. The placing of the hand on the cap must therefore also never give the impression of an outdated military show of respect. The [Land police]-official will rather, in this, avoid everything which could lead to a misinterpretation of his democratic outlook [*demokratischen Staatsgesinnung*].” Württemberg-Badischer Städteverband, Der Geschäftsführer, to Mitglieder des Polizei-Ausschusses des Städteverbandes, et al, 4 Feb 50, StAH AA 252a IV.

<sup>37</sup> Robert W. Harper to DMG, 15 Aug 46, and attachments, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 25, F: Demil. Branch Reading File, 1 August 1946 – 28 October 1946 2 of 2.

military activities of whatever nature,” they sparked a discussion of the issue within the ACA’s Internal Affairs and Communications (IAC) Directorate.<sup>38</sup>

The Americans, these talks showed, had a unique perspective. To the British, French, and Soviets, the hand salute was not a military gesture but a deferential greeting. The British, one of their delegates noted, believed that the German police should be “compelled to show some mark of respect to allied officers and their superiors” and the only suitable gesture was a hand salute. This did not mean the British were not committed to demilitarization. “I would stress,” said the delegate, “that the English policeman, who is the most peaceful creature and wears the most ordinary unmilitary type of clothes and carries no weapons, does on occasion adopt the hand salute.” The delegate was also convinced that if the Allies tried to outlaw the practice they would be criticized for “going beyond the bounds of common sense in imposing demilitarization measures upon the German people.” The French, too, insisted that saluting was absolutely necessary as a sign of respect. Recruiting choices were more important for demilitarizing the police, suggested one French representative,<sup>39</sup> while a Soviet argued that it was more critical to refuse to arm the police.<sup>40</sup> The bottom line, all three powers agreed, was that demilitarization did not require the abolition of saluting.

In opposition, the Americans called the salute a military gesture and pointed to Allied regulations. Explained one delegate: “The purpose, the very specific purpose of the occupation is to destroy all military attitude in the German population.” For this reason, saluting should be prohibited.<sup>41</sup> “I am still utterly incapable of conceiving what a non-military salute is,” professed another, adding later: “I would hate to have the German police raise their hats to me when I go home or to work, or shake hands with me—that, to me, is a form of greeting, but I still cannot imagine any combination of placing the hands that does not constitute a military salute of some kind.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Brief on CORC/P(47)29, 2 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 145, F: 110 Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>39</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Fiftieth Meeting, DIAC, 10 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/M(46) 32-36.

<sup>40</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Fifty-Fifth Meeting, DIAC, 20 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/47 1-7.

<sup>41</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Fiftieth Meeting, DIAC, 10 Dec 46, NA, RG 260.

<sup>42</sup> Verbatim Minutes of Forty-Third Meeting, DIAC, 26 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/M(46) 23-31.

Asked by the IAC Directorate to examine the matter, the Legal Directorate reported that existing Allied legislation banned military salutes but would permit a non-military salute.<sup>43</sup> Subsequently consulted for assistance, the Combined Services Directorate reported that it could not come up with a non-military salute to be used in place of the current hand salute.<sup>44</sup> Given these developments, the Americans insisted that salutes should be abolished, with their “Puritanism”—as one American official put it—resulting in this relatively minor question being forwarded to the Coordinating Committee.<sup>45</sup> In this forum, Clay, too, remained firm. In addition to highlighting the Allies’ sometimes differing opinions on how the Germans might best be demilitarized, his remarks made clear the meaningful role national cultural practices could play in shaping those views. According to the committee’s minutes, Clay told his colleagues

that in the United States a salute by the police would be very obnoxious to the people. In that country police were considered to be in the service of the people, who did not surround them with pomp and ceremony and formality. The U.S. delegation recognized that arrogance and the military spirit were a part of the German police system and one of the reasons for its failure. He saw no useful purpose in a salute by the German police.

Unable to agree, the committee members decided that rules on police saluting should be left to the commander of each zone.<sup>46</sup> And in the U.S. Zone, this meant that German policemen, officially, could not salute either Allied officers or their superiors.

If conflicts over the potential militarizing effect of hand salutes were essentially rooted in divergent interpretations of the gesture itself, interpretive problems of a different sort eventually came to light in the sphere of marching and parades. Here, as with flags, MG officers were responsible for both eliminating existing practices and authorizing exceptions. While preventing marching by a disbanded army and defunct paramilitary organizations was obviously essential and relatively simple, the reach of the Americans also stretched further. The *Badischer Sängerbund*, for example, warned its members in early 1948 that the previously often customary practice of walking through town in ordered columns en route to the cemetery was presently not allowed.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, as early as May 1945, MG authorities granted permission for towns

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<sup>43</sup> DIAC/P(46)410, 30 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 246, F: DIAC/P(46) 391-433.

<sup>44</sup> DOCS/M(47)2, 11 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DOCS, Box 156, F: DOCS/M(47) 1-15.

<sup>45</sup> DIAC Journal, 20 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 195, F: DIAC Journals (47).

<sup>46</sup> CORC/M(47)14, 5 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 145, F: 111 Meeting Coordinating Committee.

<sup>47</sup> *Mitteilungsblatt des Badischen Sängerbundes 1947*, Mar 48, StAK 8/StS 20 No. 27

to hold their annual Corpus Christi Day processions, and they repeatedly authorized these festivities thereafter.<sup>48</sup> They also explicitly sanctioned May Day parades.<sup>49</sup> Beyond this, youth and sports clubs were most likely to seek and obtain MG authorization to parade or process.<sup>50</sup>

American officials nevertheless remained both attentive and cautious. In August 1947, one MG report noted that a track and field meet in Ludwigsburg had “begun and ended by formal marching, with music, onto and off the sports field” and commented that “other activities during the meet such as standing at attention, formal presentation of awards, etc.,” showed that the *Turnverein* (a gymnastics club which also offered other athletic activities) had “the greatest tendency toward militarism of any of the sport organizations.”<sup>51</sup> In other cases, the Americans evidently tried to nip some of these problems in the bud. In July 1948, a sports group in Geradstetten asked for permission for some 150 athletes to process several blocks from a schoolyard to a nearby athletic field in connection with a sports competition the community was hosting. The point of the procession, the petition assured, was solely to attract attention and encourage people to attend—thus ensuring the financial success of the contest.<sup>52</sup> Granting conditional approval, an American official reminded that MG directives against marching were still valid. Therefore, the athletes might “walk through the streets as a group,” if they wished, but they might not walk in step, in formation, or to music.<sup>53</sup>

For their part, some Germans complained about what they perceived to be an American double standard. In October 1946, Herbert van der Berg reported that people in Ulm were criticizing “the military formations of the DP’s” and described a recent incident wherein a “group of Jewish DP children marched by the Military Government building in perfect military cadence, singing spirited songs.” Those watching, he

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<sup>48</sup> Consolidated Report for Land Wuerttemberg Covering Week of 18 May to 25 May 45 Inclusive, 26 May 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45; John F. Capell to Buergermeisteramt Dietenheim a.d.Iller, 3 May 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 841, F: Correspondence 1949.

<sup>49</sup> OMGUS to Dir OMG Bavaria, et al, n.d. [ca. spring 1946], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 434, F: 78. May Day Celebrations; Eugene P. Walters to All Liaison and Security Offices, 23 Apr 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 842, F: Letters 1948.

<sup>50</sup> Education and Religious Affairs Division Weekly Report, 27 Jun 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR 1947; Education and Religious Affairs Division Weekly Report, 12 Sep 47, *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Semi-Monthly Progress Report, 15 Aug 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 887, F: Semi-Monthly Progress Report (1947).

<sup>52</sup> Sportfreunde Geradstetten to Militärregierung in Stuttgart, 28 Jul 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 970, F: Equipment & Supplies – German Youth.

<sup>53</sup> Aksel G. Nielsen to Sportfreunde Geradstetten, 3 Aug 48, *ibid.*

observed, “were taken with surprise at this display of militarism and could not quite understand how such actions can be branded other than militaristic, merely because Germans are not represented.” In view of such groups, he added, the Germans would comment: “The DP’s, they are allowed to do all the marching they want, but any one of us doing the same thing would be brought before a Military Government court. I ask you where is all this democracy one hears about. What is good for them should also be good for us.”<sup>54</sup> Stuttgart officials reported a comparable phenomenon the following summer when a group of International Boy Scouts from DP camps pitched their tents in the woods near the city. This development had “caused much discussion among the German youth and youth leaders,” they pointed out. “The German youth leaders are asking why these boys are permitted to wear uniforms, take part in militaristic drills, and perform other functions which they are forbidden to do.”<sup>55</sup>

If these complaints revealed a lingering desire to participate in pseudo-military activities and perhaps some racial resentment as well, they were directed at displays by rather harmless children. Yet a more obvious double standard had been playing itself out on local streets since the occupation began. Victorious Allied troops periodically engaged in exactly those activities forbidden to the Germans. In some cases, these activities, such as drilling, were intended to enhance the discipline and performance of American soldiers (and, through this, German respect for American authority).<sup>56</sup> Others were examples of military rituals long performed by armies to celebrate important occasions, although they were without question at times staged with a clear awareness that the German people would be a key—and perhaps most unhappy—audience.

Shortly after their arrival, for example, the French held a victory parade in downtown Stuttgart, the first of a number of French ceremonies of this genre.<sup>57</sup> And beginning already in July 1945, the Americans annually staged Independence Day parades that sent U.S. troops accompanied by military bands marching past

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<sup>54</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 15 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3].

<sup>55</sup> Semi-Monthly Progress Report, 15 Aug 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 887, F: Semi-Monthly Progress Report (1947).

<sup>56</sup> Joseph T. McNarney to Director, Office of Military Government for Wuerttemberg-Baden, 25 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1, F: Letters Correspondence 1946 [2]; Headquarters Office of Military Government Land Wuerttemberg-Baden, Draft Administrative Instructions, 4 Jun 46, *ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Charles Lincoln, *Auf Befehl der Militärregierung*, trans. Hans and Elsbeth Herlin (Munich: Moderne Verlags-GmbH, 1965), 56, 62.

crowds of curious Germans and platforms filled with American and German officials.<sup>58</sup> Local soldiers also marched to honor particularly esteemed military or civilian visitors.<sup>59</sup> Late in the occupation, parades of troops and military hardware became occasions for the Americans to demonstrate their armed strength for yet another purpose, as the Germans became the protected and a former ally became the target.<sup>60</sup>

Regardless of their intent, these activities did not go unnoticed by the Germans. “The Ulmians comment on drill instruction which is given to Constabulary Troops on Ulm streets,” reported one American official, who also quoted a German remark: “At last the Americans believe Hitler died, because his spirit lives on in the American Army.”<sup>61</sup> American military parades, meanwhile, elicited both praise and condemnation. Describing German responses to the July 1945 Independence Day parades, a MG report concluded that “some were impressed by the sight of troops and armor, and enjoyed the display as a ‘show’,” but “others were observed to have been reminded by it of the utter defeat of the Wehrmacht and of their land.”<sup>62</sup> Later, introspection regarding Germany’s defeat seems to have waned. In 1947, Heidelberg officials reported on local reactions to several ceremonies, usually pointing out that many Germans had watched with interest and were impressed.<sup>63</sup> More than once they noted that German veterans had expressed their approval, as “experts.”<sup>64</sup> Sometimes positive comments from German spectators took a form that may have actually displeased their occupiers. At festivities to honor General Omar Bradley, one former professional sergeant indicated that the ceremony had “aroused in him old, happy memories of his time as a soldier, which remain unforgettable to him.” Heidelberg officials also observed that there were “not a few” in the crowd that day “who were delighted

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<sup>58</sup> Weekly Consolidated Report for Land Württemberg covering 30 June to 6 July 45 Inclusive, 7 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMBWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45; “Parade am amerikanische Unabhängigkeitstag,” *SZ*, 5 Jul 47; Weekly Report for the Time from 18 till 25 October 1947, StAH AA 239m No. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Wochenbericht für die Zeit vom 31.8. bis 5.9.1947, n.d., StAH AA 239m No.1; “Der Karlsruher Besuch General Clays,” *BNN*, 31 Mar 49.

<sup>60</sup> “Tag der US-Armee,” *SDZ*, 5 Apr 49.

<sup>61</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 23 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [3].

<sup>62</sup> Weekly Consolidated Report for Land Württemberg covering 30 June to 6 July 45 Inclusive, 7 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMBWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45.

<sup>63</sup> See, for example, Wochenbericht für die Zeit vom 31.Mai bis 7.Juni 1947, n.d., StAH AA 239m No. 1.

<sup>64</sup> See, for example, Weekly Report for the Time from 18 till 25 October 1947, n.d., *ibid*. The military parade described in this report failed to draw much attention from the Germans. Heidelberg authorities attributed this lack of interest to the fact that the occupation powers had just made an announcement regarding German factories that were to be dismantled, which “caused a deep depression in the mood of the population with regard to the Occupation Power.”

that also the American army keeps alive its military tradition in such excellent form.” Other Heidelbergers were more critical. Asked their opinions, three onlookers had reportedly declared: “We believed that the Prussian spirit and the Prussian drill were dead, but that appears not to be the case.”<sup>65</sup>

Comparisons between German and American military ceremonies could take a more explicit form as well. Clay’s March 1949 visit to Karlsruhe, for instance, stimulated a brief exchange of letters in the *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* that centered in part on the nature of Prussian militarism. Prior to visiting American troops stationed in the vicinity, Clay had traveled to the city’s center where he had accepted gifts from the lord mayor and, accompanied by military music, reviewed a unit of American soldiers. This ceremony, the newspaper reported, “was over quickly, executed in a nonchalant way that because of the crush of many curious people—including soldiers—had even more the tone of a happy, somewhat playful celebration.”<sup>66</sup> Several weeks later, a man from another town in Baden wrote to the paper regarding the event, citing, in particular, criticism he had overheard and using this to make several larger points regarding German attitudes. “The critics were unanimously of the opinion that the Germans (aka Prussian militarism) could have done the thing better,” the writer noted. He then commented:

Granted, the Germans would have perhaps blared a snappy march, they would have perhaps lined up a few hours earlier (one must, after all, also notice that a general is coming), they would have put up big barricades and one would have recognized the general better, because of his silver and gold collar patches and stars, than the inconspicuously clothed General Clay. But it is exactly that which distinguishes the military of other states from the simple Prussian blind obedience. What there is to say in this matter would be, above all things, that here once again the typical German arrogance was expressed. Only because it was new to us, it was termed inferior. So long as we don’t eventually learn to also appreciate the achievements of others and, above all things, to try to understand and respect the customs and traditions of other nations, there exists no prospect that we will come to a . . . better understanding with all of the other peoples of the world.<sup>67</sup>

This letter writer, responded a critic several weeks later, “had probably come running from his hometown so as not to miss out on the rare spectacle of a democratic parade.” Unburdened with a knowledge of history, he must have been “deeply indignant” to overhear the comments of Germans “who were still afflicted with militaristic trains of thought.” Then the critic added his own punch line. The letter writer, he asserted, “has probably never heard of this joke of world history, that it was precisely a representative of

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<sup>65</sup> Wochenbericht für die Zeit vom 31.8 bis 5.9.1947, n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> “Der Karlsruher Besuch General Clays,” *BNN*, 31 Mar 49.

<sup>67</sup> Das freie Wort, *BNN*, 20 Apr 49.



Prussian militarism, namely General Steuben, who during the American war of independence organized the militia troops of George Washington.”<sup>68</sup>

Although apparently often impressed by American military displays, the Germans clearly differed widely in how they evaluated them. Spectators might praise perceived understated military pageantry, or criticize the lack of pomp and bombast. They might condemn practices considered equivalent to the very things the U.S. was trying to eradicate from Germany, or admire American technique. In other words, some Germans drew “demilitarizing” lessons from American parades, while for others the ceremonies probably had the opposite effect.

In truth, some Germans raised legitimate questions about American policies. Why could DPs and American troops march in formation in Germany while the Germans could not? The easy answer, of course, was that German proclivities made this unsafe. But this easy answer was predicated on two other, more doubtful, assumptions: one, that only participation, not observation, was dangerous; and, two, that the Germans would recognize the color and style of the uniform and feel shame and defeat rather than exhilaration and excitement when watching American parades.

Overall, even where enforcement efforts succeeded, problems of interpretation made American policies with respect to flags, saluting, and marching questionable. As the Karlsruhe critic’s reference to George Washington reminded, German and Allied military practices and customs had common roots.<sup>69</sup> It was this shared heritage that made it possible for German officers to speak of established rules of military courtesy. And it was this shared heritage that enabled the Allies to presume that any message they chose to send through their treatment of German officers or through their directives regarding German police salutes would be clearly understood by those affected. Yet this shared heritage also meant that the German people might evaluate and interpret American rituals exactly as they had interpreted the rituals performed by their own troops. Moreover, many military practices and customs were themselves ambiguous. The French and British stressed the value of the salute as a sign of respect and, to all intents and purposes, submission. OMGUS officials interpreted it as a military gesture. Parades could emphasize Germany’s defeat. But they could also inspire future soldiers. In

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<sup>68</sup> Das freie Wort, *BNN*, 5 May 49.

<sup>69</sup> For a light contemporary discussion of the origins of modern Allied and German military traditions, see Mark M. Boatner, *Military Customs and Traditions* (New York: David McKay Company, 1956).

short, when it came to military practices and customs, the ultimate impact of American policies simply could not be predicted.

### Street Signs and Monuments

If Nazi flags were coveted souvenirs for the invading forces, they were not the only elements of Germany's cultural landscape that captured the interest of the Americans. German street signs and monuments received immediate attention as well. Furthermore, spontaneous removals and sporadic early orders from American officers soon gave way to official MG instructions and, eventually, to a broader Allied initiative that required the appraisal of thousands of street signs and memorials. Significantly, these various efforts enjoyed the enthusiastic support of at least some Germans, both inside and outside of local governments, who themselves were actively pushing for changes. The Americans, however, ultimately determined the scope of change. And in the final analysis, the results of the MG measures, though identifiable, did not substantially transform the backdrop of German street signs and monuments as a whole.<sup>70</sup>

#### *Early Efforts*

In the immediate aftermath of war, German street signs, buildings, and monuments were early targets of American soldiers, Allied occupation authorities, and sometimes the German people themselves. In the wake of Hitler's rise to power in 1933, Nazi officials and enthusiastic Germans had erected new monuments, redecorated old and constructed new buildings, and eagerly renamed and named German streets and plazas after Hitler, other National Socialist heroes, and momentous events and leaders from Germany's military past. Now, just as the Nazis had erased residues of the Weimar Republic from Germany's material culture, remnants of the Third Reich were discarded or destroyed.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Parts of the following section appeared previously in somewhat different form in Kathleen J. Nawyn, "Ausrottung des 'Kämpferischen Geistes!': Zur Beseitigung militaristischer Denkmäler in amerikanisch besetzten Württemberg-Baden, 1945-1947," in *Banal Militarism. Zur Veralltäglicung des Militärischen im Zivilen*, ed. Tanja Thomas and Fabian Virchow (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2006). I am grateful to Transcript for permitting me to use this material here.

<sup>71</sup> Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 156, 158-160, 184.

A mere ten days after Ulm fell to U.S. troops, American MG officers demanded that the city's Adolf-Hitler-Ring and Hermann-Göring-Strasse (Street) revert to their old names.<sup>72</sup> In nearby Langenau, Adolf-Hitler-Strasse temporarily became Lt.-Smith-Strasse, after the local MG commander.<sup>73</sup> And by the end of July, Heidelberg's Hindenburgbrücke (Hindenburg Bridge) was again Ernst-Walz-Brücke, and the city's center again had a Universitätsplatz (University Plaza), rather than a Langemarckplatz.<sup>74</sup> Soon after arriving, French officials likewise ordered local authorities in Karlsruhe and Stuttgart to eliminate street, square, and building names honoring Hitler and his cronies.<sup>75</sup>

While some American officers obviously were quick to instruct their new charges to take down offensive signs—a MG report later described these actions as “ad hoc” decisions<sup>76</sup>—in a number of places, the Germans had already done so even before Allied troops appeared.<sup>77</sup> Some local officials, moreover, were themselves engaged in discussions regarding what names should be removed, restored, or added.<sup>78</sup> Allied officials thus took the lead, but the exact impetus behind changes made during these early, chaotic days is not always entirely clear. Similarly, even prior to Germany's surrender, occupation troops and German officials had begun removing Nazi monuments, plaques, swastikas, and other symbols.<sup>79</sup> Some Germans had also occasionally taken this task into their own hands as Allied forces approached.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Helmut Sander, “Besetzung einer Ruinenstadt,” [unidentified newspaper clipping], 25 Apr 70, StAU B 151/10 No. 1.

<sup>73</sup> G. F. to Württ. Statistische Landesamt, 12 Oct 48, HStA J 170 No. 18.

<sup>74</sup> Niederschrift über die Stadtratsitzung am 12. Juli 1945, n.d., StAH Stadtratssitzungen 1945.

<sup>75</sup> I. Armee française Gouvernement Militaire Detachement de Bade, Dienstnota., 11 Jun 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 17; Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart*, 34, 46-47.

<sup>76</sup> U.S. Military Government of Germany, Denazification Supplement, in *Monthly Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 20 Aug 45, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Gemeindeverwaltung Berghaufen to Herr Landrat, 27 Nov 46, GLA 357 No. 30.024.

<sup>78</sup> See, for example, Bezirk West, Tätigkeitsbericht seit Inkrafttreten des Bezirkes am 23.4.1945, n.d., StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 28; Bezirksverwaltung Hagsfeld to Städt.Hauptverwaltung Innere Verwaltung, 11 May 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 15; Protokoll über die Beratung des Oberbürgermeisters mit den Beiräten am 15. Juni 1945, StAU B 005/5 S/IV 149 Band 307.

<sup>79</sup> Detachment E1C3 to Commanding General, Seventh Army, 16 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 219, F: Report, OMGWB No. 1 8 May 45 to No. 17, 26 Aug 45; Dr. Klett to Military Government, 10 Aug 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3751-1; Morlier and Eberle, Dienstnota., 11 Jun 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 17.

<sup>80</sup> “Das Nazidenkmal in Temmenhausen,” *SDZ*, 8 Dec 45.

In June 1945, a small committee of American officials finally began preparing more formal instructions for local occupation officers, producing a draft directive which stipulated that any street, park, institution, building, or “industrial concern” named after “any person or thing associated either with Naziism or German militarism” must “have its name removed from public display and use.” In addition, all movable monuments associated with Nazism or militarism were to be collected and all offending emblems and symbols on immovable structures removed. For the directive’s purposes, the term “German militarism” was to apply to “all persons, battles, campaigns, and institutions directly associated with German militarism subsequent to 1 January 1933.” As the committee’s chairman later explained, he and his colleagues had selected this date because they believed that “an attempt to eliminate militarism from German thought through the medium of obliterating names and symbols having a military connotation prior to this date will do more to make our occupation appear ridiculous than to eliminate militarism.” Nevertheless, the draft directive did list 11 luminaries of Germany’s pre-1933 military past—“Bismarck, Clausewitz, Gneisenau, Hindenburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Ludendorff, von Moltke (the elder), Richthofen, Scharnhorst, von Scheer, [and] Tirpitz”—who should also be considered subject to its provisions.<sup>81</sup> Including these 11 men in fact represented a compromise position, as staffers from the USGCC’s Political Division and Monuments and Fine Arts Branch had argued that the directive should *not* affect “purely militaristic figures” from the pre-1933 period, but rather “only military figures who were associated with the Nazi movement.”<sup>82</sup> And, in the end, their reasoning seems to have prevailed.<sup>83</sup> In August 1945, MG officers in Württemberg-Baden dutifully ordered local German authorities to eliminate street names, monuments, and symbols associated with post-1932 German militarism. They cited no exceptions to this rule.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> E. Plischke to Brig. Gen. F. C. Meade, 22 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 5, F: AG 014.3 Denazification of Individuals, etc.

<sup>82</sup> F. C. Meade to Assistant Deputy, 24 Jun 45, *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> R. B. Lovett to Commanding General, Western Military District, and Commanding General, Eastern Military District, 23 Jul 45, NA, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 799, F: Reports (Demilitarization) Demobilization.

<sup>84</sup> Charles L. Jackson to Dr. Klett, 6 Aug 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3751-1; Harold Freeman to Herr Landrat in Waiblingen, 7 Aug 45, StAL FL 20/19 Bü 594; U.S. Military Government of Germany, Denazification Supplement, in *Monthly Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 20 Aug 45, 4. According to the monthly report of the military governor, the American directive assigned MG detachments responsibility for enforcing the directive, but they were to have local officials develop plans for its implementation. Once approved, the plans would be issued as an order by local officials, with a deadline. Disobeying this order would be considered a violation of Military Government Ordinance No. 1 – “Crimes and Offenses.”

When it came to renaming, the new directive generally widened the scope of ongoing efforts. Thus, Heidelberg city and university officials made a few additional changes, in particular excising the name of Philipp Lenard, a Nobel-prize-winning physicist turned passionate Nazi, from a street, a university institute, and a local school. The city's Langemarckstrasse also acquired a new name, and a school named after Hindenburg, a World War I hero and the Weimar Republic's Hitler-abetting last president, again honored Friedrich Ebert, the republic's first president.<sup>85</sup> Stuttgart officials similarly expanded a renaming operation the French had instigated locally, although the total number of streets impacted was considerably greater.<sup>86</sup> As of late November 1945, they had changed more than 70 street names in Stuttgart proper and its various integrated suburbs. Included were no less than seven streets and plazas named after Adolf Hitler, four streets each named after the Nazi heroes Horst Wessel and Albert Schlageter, and many others honoring individuals uniquely associated with National Socialism. However, only a few names slated for purging had military themes, among them Langemarckstrasse, Ludendorffstrasse, Schlieffenstrasse, Clausewitzstrasse, and Yorckstrasse—almost all street names the Nazis had introduced.<sup>87</sup>

Perhaps most interesting were developments in Karlsruhe. Here, as elsewhere, the MG order pushed forward work already in progress. But certain city leaders also pressed for deeper cuts than those prescribed, thereby kindling discussions that illuminated a range of competing viewpoints and wealth of issues tied up with renaming.

Karlsruhe leaders had begun identifying and planning for the replacement of Nazi-related street signs already in mid April 1945. Charged with this task, in particular, were the newly appointed heads of 16 administrative districts,<sup>88</sup> a group of men untainted by National Socialism who during the summer of 1945 included 14 Social Democrats and two Communists.<sup>89</sup> Their work continued, with a marginally wider sweep, after Social Democratic lord mayor Hermann Veit asked the city office that supervised the districts, headed by

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<sup>85</sup> Niederschrift über die Stadtratsitzung am 6. September 1945, n.d., StAH Stadtratsitzungen 1945.

<sup>86</sup> Dr. Klett to Military Government, 10 Aug 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3751-1.

<sup>87</sup> "Verzeichnis der Strassen-Umbenennungen," *Nachrichtenblatt der Militärregierung*, 29 Nov 45, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 327. On the history behind and evolution of Stuttgart's street names, see Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, *Die Stuttgarter Strassennamen* (Tübingen: Silberburg-Verlag, 2003).

<sup>88</sup> Städt. Hauptverwaltung to Herr Bürgermeister, 16 Apr 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 17; Bezirksverwaltung Hagsfeld to Städt. Hauptverwaltung Innere Verwaltung, 11 May 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 15.

<sup>89</sup> Asche, et al., *Karlsruhe*, 535.

his party colleague August Furrer, Sr., to prepare a list of all official names changed in “the National Socialist spirit” or first applied since 1933, so that the city might comply with the new American directive.<sup>90</sup>

But city leaders were also soon considering changes that went beyond these. More than once during the summer, Furrer had called for replacing street names that honored Germany’s imperial history. “What should we do with a Hohenzollern-Strasse, Kaiser-Strasse? Away with them!” he had argued to a gathering of district leaders.<sup>91</sup> And several districts now submitted reports that contained not only the requested Nazi-related names, but also additional suggestions.<sup>92</sup> One district chief, for instance, called for eliminating Kaiserstrasse, Kaiser-Platz, Moltkestrasse, and Bismarckstrasse, as well as two streets each that invoked the Franco-Prussian War and recognized Badenese royalty. He argued that the city should instead honor men like Karl Marx, Karl Liebknecht, and those who had more recently battled fascism, reasoning that “these are all names which the working class reveres because they have shown the world that they have led an upright and honorable fight to realize democracy.”<sup>93</sup>

In late August, a circular from Furrer’s office suggested that it was now appropriate to ask what should happen to names from the imperial era. Specifically citing streets honoring various former ruling families who had “brought the German people enough calamity,” it added that the names of past German military leaders such as Hindenburg, Schlieffen, Scharnhorst, and Gneisenau deserved to be eliminated “so that also nothing more commemorates the reign of terror of militarism.” The circular directed the district heads to identify relevant local names and to prepare suggestions for replacements.<sup>94</sup> Two days later, however, Furrer’s office issued new instructions stating that Veit wanted them first to provide the city with information on old names

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<sup>90</sup> Stadtverwaltung Karlsruhe, Abt. S.Ob. to Bez.Verw.A., 20 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 17. Furrer had been a city councilman for four years during the 1920s and, starting in 1933, had been interned in a nearby concentration camp for a year. “August Furrer nahm Abschied vom Amt,” *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 Feb 55, StAK 8/ZGS Persönlichkeiten.

<sup>91</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung der Bezirksvorsteher vom 20.8.1945, 20 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 114; Protokoll der Sitzung der Bezirksvorsteher vom 13.8.1945, 13 Aug 45, *ibid.*; Protokoll über die Besprechung mit den Bez.Vorstehern am 14.5.1945, n.d., StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 36.

<sup>92</sup> Bezirksamt: Weststadt to Städt. Hauptverwaltung, 25 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 5.

<sup>93</sup> Bezirksverwaltung Innenstadt-West to Städt. Bezirkshauptverwaltung, 25 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 2. On the history behind and evolution of Karlsruhe’s various street names, see Stadt Karlsruhe, “Strassennamen in Karlsruhe,” <http://www1.karlsruhe.de/Stadt/VLW/vlastrn.htm>.

<sup>94</sup> Rundschreiben Nr. 161, 29 Aug 45, StAK 1/Bez.Verw.Amt No. 30.

they had restored to Nazi-named streets or, alternatively, with recommendations for new names for these streets.<sup>95</sup>

This did not mean that a more expansive assessment had been permanently shelved. Rather, Veit apparently was most concerned with first obeying the MG order. Soon thereafter, he sent the Americans details regarding Karlsruhe's 21 Nazi-named streets and indicated that he had also arranged for an appraisal of the city's remaining street names to ascertain whether there were others ("e.g., those of a militaristic nature") that appeared to warrant replacement. He subsequently gave the city's civil engineering office information on street names collected by Furrer's office and asked its staff to evaluate the city's street names themselves to determine which other streets should be renamed "due to the present political situation."<sup>96</sup>

Although the civil engineering staff may have completed this task, Karlsruhe officials had made no other major changes by late November 1945 when the city council took up the street name question. Prompted by a request from local Christian Democrats to name a street or square after Reinhold Frank, a lawyer executed by the Nazis for his participation in the events of July 1944, the councilmen quickly became embroiled in a much broader discussion on street renaming. In this context, Communist Karl Deck called for getting rid of all street names that recognized military personalities or which had a military character. One of his party colleagues wanted to rename Kaiserstrasse and Kaiserallee, arguing that it should be unbearable for good democrats to think that the name of the "grape-shot prince," who had bloodily put down the 1848 revolution, would continue to be immortalized. On the other hand, Professor Albert Kessler, head of the city's liberal party, spoke against removing names with historical significance—when he heard "Kaiserstrasse," he thought of the creation of the German Empire, not of Kaiser Wilhelm I, he reported. In addition, he believed the council should not overestimate the meaning of street names for local residents; there were some names whose origins the locals had forgotten.<sup>97</sup>

Several councilmen also pointed to the work involved. Social Democrat Fritz Töpfer argued for putting off a discussion on honoring victims of fascism until the spring because of the difficulties involved in renaming streets and the need for an overall plan specifying who should disappear and who should be honored.

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<sup>95</sup> Rundschreiben Nr. 171, 31 Aug 45, *ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Stadtverwaltung Abt. S.Ob. to Bez. Verw. A, 18 Sep 45, StAK 1/Bez. Verw. Amt No. 17.

<sup>97</sup> Niederschrift über die 4. Sitzung des Stadtrats, 30 Nov 45, StAK 3/B No. 1574.

Kessler agreed with this approach, pointing out that the city would have to change address and phone books as well as assorted lists and plans. He also advised that they should be careful to avoid introducing laughable names like the Nazis had. Another Social Democrat called for assigning the problem to a committee, though he expressed his support for both honoring the victims of fascism and getting rid of street names with a military character.<sup>98</sup>

Veit, meanwhile, focused particularly on the problem of renaming itself, noting not only the work involved—according to the civil engineering office, he reported, 50 “official acts” would be required for each change—but also the fact that he had always seen this issue as a “political explosive.” There had been some “most impossible” suggestions for new names, such as a proposal to rename the Marktplatz (Market Square) after Marx. Urging the council to proceed with moderation, Veit also argued that the more careful and stingier they were with renaming, the more meaningful the honor would be for those whose names graced the city’s streets. Ultimately, the council agreed to honor Reinhold Frank, as well as Social Democrat Ludwig Marum and Communist August Dosenbach. In addition, it named a commission to decide which streets should bear their names and to discuss renaming in general.<sup>99</sup>

In early February 1946, the council revisited the issue, this time wrangling at length over the question of which particular streets should be renamed and for whom and considering whether or not more than three victims of fascism should be recognized. Their comments, moreover, made clear that the present discussions were in part a continuation of politicking that had occurred during the intervening months. Rather out of the blue, Communist Fritz Aschinger also read a letter from the works council of Karlsruhe’s streetcar service complaining about how little had been done to date to denazify the city’s “street scene.” “Having been liberated by the United Nations from the brown pest and Prussian militarism,” the group argued, “it is no longer acceptable that in our so badly damaged city there are still so many Prussian generals remembered in street names.” Previously streets had honored the Weimar leaders Matthias Erzberger and Friedrich Ebert, but these

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. The council included five Social Democrats, four Christian Democrats, three Communists, and two members of the Democratic Party, which would soon become part of the DVP. Werner, *Karlsruhe 1945*, 169.



names, “for inconceivable reasons,” had not yet reappeared. The works council went on to point to names that should be changed and offered suggestions for replacements.<sup>100</sup>

After the councilmen had again discussed the work and expense associated with renaming, the desirability of exercising moderation, and the need to rename streets in such a way that the people would actually use the new names, they finally set up a committee to devise a solution. If these men could not reach a decision, the council agreed, it would postpone the project until after a new council was elected in May.<sup>101</sup> Thereafter, the issue of street renaming in Karlsruhe evidently languished, mostly unresolved, until the following autumn.

In Karlsruhe, then, the Americans’ July 1945 instructions regarding Nazi street names primarily accelerated a process that was already underway. And when the actual changes made are compared to the total number of city streets, the impact of these instructions appears small, a result due in large part to the very limited scope of the American initiative. Noticeably absent was any American call for the wide-ranging demilitarization of street names favored by some residents. In addition, while it is not unusual for new rulers to replace street names,<sup>102</sup> the Americans had no interest in putting their own imprint on the city. They wanted certain names gone; beyond this, they left it to the Germans to decide what new message, if any, their city streets would convey.

During the first year of the occupation, therefore, the demilitarization of street signs in Karlsruhe—and elsewhere—remained largely a local matter. But pleas for changes that went beyond rudimentary “denazification” failed to spur action. Although the divisions were not hard and fast, in many respects traditional German politics were at play in Karlsruhe. The left showed signs of anti-militarism, anti-

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<sup>100</sup> Niederschrift über die 5.Sitzung des Stadtrats, 8 Feb 46, StAK 3/B No. 1574.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Analyzing how street signs can be used to articulate distinctive, subjective accounts of the past that support a “ruling order,” Maoz Azaryahu explains that “through street names . . . the past becomes omnipresent—but on such levels of human and social activities where it is hardly noticed. The past is interwoven with daily life and thus gains the appearance of naturalness, a most desired effect in light of the past’s function as a legitimizing factor for the ruling order.” For this reason, street names and the like, “as an important component of official culture, are vulnerable to radical political reorientations of the ruling order.” He cites, for example, the renaming of streets and squares in Paris during and after the French Revolution. Azaryahu points, as well, to the “proclamatory value” of renaming, arguing that “it serves as a political declaration in its own right, displaying and asserting the fact that political changes have occurred and that the ‘ownership’ of the official culture and the media for its presentation has changed hands.” “Renaming the Past: Changes in ‘City Text’ in Germany and Austria, 1945-1947,” *History and Memory* 2, No. 2 (1990): 34. On the politics of renaming streets, see especially, Maoz Azaryahu, “The Purge of Bismarck and Saladin: The Renaming of Streets in East Berlin and Haifa, a Comparative Study in Culture-Planning,” *Poetics Today* 13, No. 2 (1992): 351.

monarchism, and anti-Prussianism; those leaning right defended Germany's national history or stressed the need to avoid aggravating local residents with sweeping changes. Consequently, choosing names for eradication was difficult, while selecting replacement names—and the location of the streets that should bear them—was equally controversial. In a heavily damaged city, worries about the labor and expense involved were necessarily pertinent as well, whether raised as genuine concerns or presented as convenient fig leaves for other motives. The result of this accumulation of forces was a stalemate.

As with Württemberg-Baden's street signs, the July 1945 military government instructions also led to additional monument removals. In Heidelberg, for example, municipal officials removed a Saarland memorial near the city hall and, at the university, a bronze eagle, a stone soldier's head, and an inscription at a memorial for World War I dead which read: "Germany must live, even when we must die."<sup>103</sup> However, as with Mannheim's now missing Albert Schlageter monument, Karlsruhe's Paul Billet memorial, and a Horst Wessel monument in the Stuttgart area, most objects affected by these and earlier measures were, like most street signs, examples of Nazi propaganda rather than suspected embodiments of a deep-seated German militarism.<sup>104</sup>

Although apparently less controversial than street renaming initiatives, not all of these monument changes occurred without comment. One politically clean professor pleaded the Heidelberg University eagle's case noting that he had never considered it a Nazi emblem—a view that had some credence, as the bird's creator had in fact refused to place a swastika in its claws.<sup>105</sup> Another observer argued in Heidelberg's *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* that the four-meter-high bird had actually been an oddity amidst the Third Reich's horde of eagles and described its upraised wings as symbolic of the upward-reaching spirit of free research. But the eagle did not survive.<sup>106</sup>

Other Germans thought even more should be done. The works council of Karlsruhe's street car service argued that the city's Kaiser Wilhelm I and Bismarck monuments should also disappear, and even offered to

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<sup>103</sup> Meinhold Lurz, "Oeffentliches Gedächtnis in den Jahren 1945 and 1946," in in Hess, Lehmann, and Sellin, *Heidelberg 1945*, 237-243.

<sup>104</sup> Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Württembergische Landesdenkmalamt, 30 Dec 46, Landesdenkmalamt, Aussenstelle Karlsruhe [hereafter LDAK], III/214; Stadt Karlsruhe and Stadtarchiv Karlsruhe, *Denkmäler, Brunnen und Freiplastiken in Karlsruhe, 1715-1945* (Karlsruhe: Badenia-Verlag, 1987), 656; Arbeitsausschuss Gross-Stuttgart, Zentrale, "6 Monate Arbeit," 21 Nov 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 71; Der Oberbürgermeister to Military Government, 10 Aug 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3751-1.

<sup>105</sup> Lurz, "Oeffentliches Gedächtnis," 240.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 241. See also "Die Universitäts-Adler wird entfernt . . .," *RNZ*, 21 Nov 45.

remove them at no cost<sup>107</sup>—although Karlsruhe officials never accepted this offer. Similarly, in May 1946, Ulm’s *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* ran a short editorial on the subject most likely written by the Social Democrat Johannes Weisser, who during the previous year had twice urged the city’s advisory council to remove militaristic street names, only to have his arguments deflected, at least temporarily, with references to the work, confusion, and possible ridicule such changes would generate.<sup>108</sup> Now Weisser presented his views publicly, contending that if the Germans were to become democrats, their skewed perspective of history first had to be set straight. Not only was this duty being overlooked, in some instances it was being intentionally sabotaged. In particular, Weisser referred to the “false gods of our militaristic-nationalistic past” still enthroned on their pedestals in both monuments and street names. Those who called these trivial matters, he accused of being either lax or reactionary. German reeducation should begin with the small things, he argued, so the offending signs and monuments had to go.<sup>109</sup>

#### *Directive No. 30*

By May 1946, the Allied Control Authority was also discussing street names and monuments. In February, the Military Directorate had considered a draft law proposed by the United States prohibiting the installation of any new monument, building, emblem, street name marker, or similar object and requiring the destruction of existing ones that tended to “perpetuate the German military tradition, to revive militarism or to commemorate the Nazi Party, or which is of such a nature as to glorify incidents of war.” Like the American regulations, it defined the terms “military” and “militarism” as referring to the period after January 1, 1933.<sup>110</sup> A similar French proposal had set no specific date range but exempted monuments honoring fallen members of regular military formations (as opposed to paramilitary organizations and the SS and Waffen SS).<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Niederschrift über die 5.Sitzung des Stadtrats, 8 Feb 46, StAK 3/B No. 1574, Stadtratsprotokolle 1945-1946.

<sup>108</sup> Protokoll über die Beratung des Oberbürgermeisters mit den Beiräten am 15. Juni 1945, n.d., StAU B 005/5 S/IV 149 Band 307; Protokoll über die Beratung des Oberbürgermeisters mit dem Beirat der Stadt Ulm am 11. Januar 1946, n.d., StAU B 005/5 S/IV 150 Band 308.

<sup>109</sup> “Bemerkungen,” *SDZ*, 4 May 46.

<sup>110</sup> DMIL/P(46)14, 5 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46)1-53.

<sup>111</sup> DMIL/P(46)12, 4 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 426, F: DMIL/Papers 1946 1-40.

The Military Directorate had subsequently inserted the French qualification into the American text, clarified that the law would not affect gravestones, and replaced the 1933 date with January 1, 1918. They also had added language prohibiting the opening or reopening of military museums and exhibitions and requiring the closing and liquidation of those still operating.<sup>112</sup> The directorate's final draft, meanwhile, had introduced an even earlier operative date, August 1, 1914 (the first day of World War I), as originally suggested in an Allied subcommittee by a Soviet, who had argued that this date best signified the start of the current conception of German militarism and would avoid encouraging the idea that World War I had been justly fought by the Germans. But the draft also allowed for the retention of artistically valuable objects and permitted publicly useful structures to be modified rather than destroyed.<sup>113</sup> In eventually approving this May 1946 draft as ACC Directive No. 30, the Coordinating Committee overruled a British preference for a January 1918 date and resisted a French overture for no date, with a British delegate suggesting that while many monuments from before August 1914 had an "undesirable character," he thought it "undesirable today to go too far into history."<sup>114</sup>

In making its final revisions, the Military Directorate had reworded the directive's clause regarding monuments honoring fallen soldiers. But Allied officials quickly revisited this phrasing, as it seemed to spare only battlefield graves, while they had intended to protect memorials for the fallen wherever they might be. Nearly every German village had a World War I monument, often with a table of names listing those who had died. Demolishing these memorials, the members of the Political Directorate contended, "would cause an unnecessary animosity against the Control Powers, who would gain nothing by such action."<sup>115</sup> In supporting a

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<sup>112</sup> DMIL/P(46)4, 11 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30.

<sup>113</sup> DIAC/AEC/M(46)4, 3 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M (45) (46); DMIL/MISC(46)15, 11 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 413, F: DPOL/P(46) 1-47; DPOL/M(46)11, 25 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 411, F: DPOL/M(46) 1-22. The Allied Education Committee of the Directorate of Internal Affairs and Communications viewed the January 1, 1918, date as "wholly arbitrary."

<sup>114</sup> CORC/P(46)161, 4 May 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 141, F: Fifty-Third Mtg. Coordinating Committee; CORC/M(46)24, 7 May 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 141, F: Fifty-Fourth Mtg. Coordinating Committee; Verbatim Minutes of the 53rd Meeting of the Coordinating Committee, 6 May 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 135, F: CORC/Verbatim Minutes/22-29 Meetings 1946. It is worth underscoring what this directive did and did *not* prohibit, as some scholarly works have asserted that the Allies outlawed the building of *all* war memorials in Germany until the early 1950s. This is not true. They prohibited only the construction of monuments which, as one MG official put it, "reflect ideologies generally construed as Nazi, Fascist or militaristic." Charles D. Winning to Herr Ulrich, Innenminister, Wuerttemberg-Baden, 22 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 4, F: Ltrs to Min. President 1946.

<sup>115</sup> DPOL/Memo(46)59, 30 May 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 412, F: POL/Memo(46) 1-78; DPOL/M(46)20, 25 May 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 411, F: DPOL/M(46) 1-22.

revision of the new directive, the British were in part responding to protests the directive had incited in Britain, due mostly, they believed, to misinterpretation. The British delegate to the Coordinating Committee thus went so far as to spell out his country's official interpretation, stating, according to meeting minutes, that commemorating those who lost their lives in war "was not of itself a glorification of war or liable to revive militarism or perpetuate the German military tradition." Therefore "only Nazi memorials or such memorials as by the nature of their design or the character of their inscriptions exceeded a purely commemorative purpose would be considered as coming within the terms of this Directive."<sup>116</sup> A revised directive resulting from this renewed dialogue exempted from destruction all monuments honoring the dead of regular military organizations, so long as they did not evoke militarism or remember the Nazi party, and permitted memorials to be modified rather than destroyed, where feasible.<sup>117</sup>

*Museums.* Directive No. 30 necessarily sparked yet another wave of MG instructions to German Land and local authorities, with the smallest effort provoked by these involving German museums containing military collections. In August 1947, American officials informed their allies that the directive's provisions regarding museums affected fewer than two dozen institutions in Württemberg-Baden. Most importantly, the Land's three military museums were no longer open. By that time, the modern arms from Mannheim's *Zeughaus* (armory) museum had been confiscated and its remaining holdings deposited in the building's basement. All of the contents from Stuttgart's Heeresmuseum were still in repositories where they had been sent during the war for safekeeping.<sup>118</sup> The third museum was Karlsruhe's Armeemuseum. "By all odds the most advanced of its kind in Europe," the Karlsruhe museum had opened in 1934 under the auspices of a local Nazi official and had, a contemporary American observer noted, also "naturally assumed a strong militaristic and Nazi coloration, and by its exhibit techniques demonstrated the force—for better or for worse—of a well-planned and equipped collection."<sup>119</sup> In 1946, however, many of its holdings were still stored in outlying repositories, some of which

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<sup>116</sup> CORC/M(46)29, 5 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 142, F: Fifty-ninth Mtg. Coordinating Committee.

<sup>117</sup> CORC/P(46)226 Final, 12 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 646, F: AG 010.6 Control Council Directive No. 30; G. H. Garde to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 22 Jul 46, *ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> DIAC/AEC/Memo(47)23, 18 Aug 47, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 28, F: C-30-a Existence of Military or Nazi Memorials and Museums.

<sup>119</sup> Frederick P. Todd, "The Military Museum in Europe," *Military Affairs* 12, No. 1 (1948): 41.

were in the French Zone and would remain difficult for museum officials to access for several years. Other pieces lay buried under the ruins of the bombed-out palace which had been the museum's home. To comply with the new directive, museum officials had nevertheless divided up the remaining salvageable materials, transferring models and other objects to the state museum, turning over archival materials to the state archives, and giving the state library some 150 books. The museum was not reconstituted until 1956, and then in the city of Rastatt.<sup>120</sup>

Ironically, even as the Americans were divesting the Land's museums of their military collections, some of these same institutions began receiving temporary transfusions of new weapons. One of the first orders Allied troops had issued to the Germans upon their arrival was to surrender all weapons. While U.S. occupation forces only rarely faced any organized resistance after that time, they continued to encounter armed individuals and occasionally discovered caches of weapons. In December 1946, for example, MG courts in Württemberg-Baden convicted more than 30 individuals of possessing or using firearms. American officials therefore declared a period of amnesty for the first ten days of February 1947 during which Germans could, without penalty, turn in or report previously undeclared weapons, ammunition, and explosives.<sup>121</sup> The language describing the applicable directive's scope left much to be desired, however, containing a blanket reference to "all other weapons of any kind." As a result, during the weeks that followed, Land public safety officials and the Land Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives (MFA&A) officer, Captain Edith Standen, were inundated with inquiries from local MG officers, who were themselves being questioned by the Germans, asking what they should do with antique, artistic, and historic weapons.<sup>122</sup>

In general, confusion reigned. OMGUS's Public Safety Branch in Berlin had not issued a clear policy addressing antique weapons or provided a definition of an antique or historic weapon. This left local public

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<sup>120</sup> Werner, *Karlsruhe 1945*, 253-254; Aktenvermerk, 3 Dec 46, GLA 235 No. 40308; Bad. Generallandesarchiv to Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden Abtl. Kultus und Unterricht, 20 Dec 46, *ibid*; DIAC/AEC/Memo(47)23, 18 Aug 47, NA, RG 466.

<sup>121</sup> Surveillance Sub-File, Order No. 2, File No. A-2-a, Index Item No. 3, 13 Jan 48, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: A-2-a Illegal Possession of Arms and Ammunition.

<sup>122</sup> I.C.D. MFA&A to Exec.O., 11 Mar 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 31, F: 120.5 Foreign Service of U.S. Foreign Service Posts. Post Reports. Since the start of the occupation, MG officials had frequently given private collectors verbal or written permission to retain souvenir or antique weapons. However, officials in Berlin had now begun to question this practice. Freiherr G. v. Gemmingen to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 10 Apr 47, LDK III/201; Henry Parkman to The Chief of Staff, 19 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 436, F: Antique Firearms and Collections.

safety officials hesitant to make pronouncements. Informally, Lieutenant Colonel R. L. Perry, head of Württemberg-Baden's public safety office, advised local MG officers to direct owners of weapons collections "to deposit their collections against receipt with some public museum." Officials in Berlin, he noted in explaining his advice, "will not state officially that knives, swords, etc are not to be turned in although they agree that it is carrying the program toward the extreme." His own doubts were perhaps revealed in his subsequent observation: "No doubt a knife is a deadly weapon at close range but so is a paving brick."<sup>123</sup> Perry's approach nevertheless meant that the Ulm museum became the temporary home of four privately held weapons collections, including one encompassing more than one hundred pistols and rifles dating from 1750 to 1918 and another that included "103 Papua arrows," "13 Papua and Buginese lances," and "28 Buginese swords and Java daggers."<sup>124</sup>

For some local museums, Perry's advice was not particularly welcome. According to a late February report drafted by Standen, MG and German officials did not always specify where the weapons should be delivered, and "this sometimes resulted in loads of weapons being dumped upon a museum director who had, in fact, nowhere to put them." Other problems frustrated her as well. The overall uncertainty of the situation and the fact that not all local MG officers had asked for advice had led to what she regarded as unfortunate developments.

In one Kreis, the Rathaus [city hall] contained 60 18<sup>th</sup> century firearms; the [MG] officer directed that 50 should be confiscated, 10 retained. In another, the [MG] officer stated that he had seen what he called "14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century muskets" among the confiscated arms. In several instances, the police have been insisting on the turn-in of pre-historic and ethnological weapons collections, such as Bronze Age swords and Pacific Islanders spears. The climax was probably reached when a sword-swallower appealed, through the Theater & Music Control officer, to be permitted to retain the 14 tools of his trade, necessary to his continuing business.

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<sup>123</sup> I.C.D. MFA&A to Exec.O., 11 Mar 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260. At the time, Henry Parkman, the Acting Director of OMGUS's Internal Affairs and Communications Division, parent organization of the Public Safety Branch, was arguing that MG regulations required the surrender of "all firearms and all other weapons of any kind." Parkman reasoned that "many firearms classified as antiques are capable of use as firearms" and that "many more, classified as souvenirs or as items of a collection, are modern weapons." None of these items should be held by individuals as long as the possession of firearms was prohibited, he believed. He nevertheless agreed that there were many "legitimate collections, public and private, of valuable antique weapons which should be retained intact." Public museums, supervised by MG officials who could safeguard the weapons, were logical places to store them. Henry Parkman to C/S, 7 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 436, F: Antique Firearms and Collections.

<sup>124</sup> Polizeidirektion Ulm to Allied Military Government Municipal and Rural District of Ulm, 17 Feb 47, StAU B 160/31 No. 5.

Other antique weapons, Standen added, “were actually arriving at the conversion and destruction centre at Willsbach.” And U.S. soldiers had walked off with some of these. She had since made arrangements to be alerted, informally, of any future such arrivals.<sup>125</sup>

Irritated by the “hurricane” generated by the directive’s imprecision and the absence of clear instructions from higher levels, Standen tried to impose order on the situation, asking pertinent cultural authorities in North Württemberg and North Baden for lists of “suitable museums and publicly owned castles” where historic weapons could be both securely stored and protected from MG confiscation. When local MG officers requested assistance, she was able to pass on this information. But her task was made more difficult when the German officials were slow in responding, sometimes because they were having trouble securing the requested information themselves.<sup>126</sup>

Gustav Wais, head of the *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege*, the Land agency responsible for historic properties and monuments, was not only corresponding with Standen regarding suitable repositories in North Württemberg, but also advising German museum officials. In early February, he notified administrators at Stuttgart’s Heimat Museum that private citizens might be asking them for help. He also explained that all antique or historically valuable weapons in their collections that could not be securely locked up in their present locations should be transferred to a room safe from thieves.<sup>127</sup> In addition, he made plans to publicize information identifying local repositories where individuals could deposit antique weapons. Directing that all modern weapons be turned in to the police, he apparently adopted a definition suggested by Land public safety officials in characterizing antique weapons as items dating from before 1850. Exceptions could be made for post-1850 weapons that were obviously of unusual value, either because of their materials or craftsmanship.<sup>128</sup>

The American instructions increased the work load of German officials forced to respond to individual questions and generally supervise compliance activities.<sup>129</sup> It also exasperated the Germans affected. Writing

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<sup>125</sup> I.C.D. MFA&A to Exec.O., 11 Mar 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.; Edith A. Standen to Landesdenkmalamt Baden, 1 Feb 47, LDK III/201; Edith A. Standen to Herr Dr. Haupt, Landesamt fuer Denkmalpflege, Baden, 19 Mar 47, *ibid.*; Landesdenkmalamt to Amerikanisch Militärregierung Württemberg-Baden, Information Control Division, MFA&A Section, 26 Mar 47, *ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Heimatmuseum, 10 Feb 47, EA 2/302 Bü 40 Teil II.

<sup>128</sup> Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Landratsamt [blank], 10 Feb 47, *ibid.*; Eugene P. Walters to L&S Officer, Landkreis Stuttgart, 7 Mar 47, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Abl. 27.4.1972 No. 0343.

<sup>129</sup> See, especially, LDK III/201.



to the local MG in late February, Stuttgart's lord mayor warned that "the surrender of these old historic weapons will be perceived as being petty and bullying, since these weapons of past centuries have no practical importance as weapons at the present time."<sup>130</sup> The negative impact of the prevailing chaos was not lost on Standen either. She concluded her rather biting appraisal of the current state of affairs in late February by observing that she did not believe "that any antique weapons have been, or will be, beaten into the modern equivalent of plowshares, but a widespread scattering has certainly taken place and many pieces may never be returned to their owners." Potentially more serious, she suggested, was "a strengthening of the German belief, frequently held though generally politely concealed, that Americans are congenital idiots."<sup>131</sup> Many Germans possessing antique, artistic, and historic weapons nevertheless eventually relinquished them, for a few years at least, to local officials or public museums.<sup>132</sup>

*Street Names.* Directive No. 30 affected many more street signs than museums, although its actual impact in any community depended upon both the overall number of objectionable signs and the carefulness, zeal, and analytical skills of local officials. In Ulm, for instance, the directive triggered only a few changes. In November 1946, lord mayor Robert Scholl received a form letter from Württemberg-Baden's Interior Ministry instructing the city to send Land officials information on its eliminated Nazi and militaristic street names.<sup>133</sup> As ordered by the MG, the old signs were to be gone by January 1, 1947, whether replacements were ready or not. That Ulm officials either never received or never made a point of checking the exact terms of the directive is

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<sup>130</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister to Militärregierung für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart, 26 Feb 47, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Abl. 27.4.1947 No. 0343.

<sup>131</sup> I.C.D. MFA&A to Exec.O., 11 Mar 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260.

<sup>132</sup> Eugene P. Walters to L&S Officer, Landkreis Stuttgart, 7 Mar 47, StAS; Georg L. Erion, to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 9 Apr 47, LDK III/201; Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Herr Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, 16 May 47, *ibid.*; Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Innere Verwaltung, to Innenministerium, 8 Dec 47, EA 2/302 Bü 40 Teil II. Although it is not entirely clear, evidence suggests that MG officials backed off of their strict position already in spring 1947. In early March, Deputy Military Governor Major General Frank Keating labelled a draft clarifying directive regarding antique weapons "a bit far fetched" and suggested that a blunderbuss posed no more threat to U.S. troops than a baseball bat. "I'm satisfied," he added, "that M.G. officers can inspect 'antiques,' pass on them from a security point of view, and give the owner authority to retain them." If U.S. policy did indeed change, however, North Baden officials were unaware of this. Not until 1952 did they inform the museums safeguarding personal collections that they might return the weapons to their original owners. Combined Routing—Information—Filing Form, "Antique Firearms & Collections," 27 Feb 47, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Civil Administration Division, Box 280, F: #2404 Antique Firearms and Collections; GLA 235 No. 40308; Landesdenkmalamt to Bad. Landesmuseum Karlsruhe, et al, 27 Mar 52, LDK III/201.

<sup>133</sup> Innenministerium to Landratsämter in Nordwürttemberg, et al, 20 Nov 46, StAU B 614/56 No. 6.

suggested by the names they considered for removal. Specifically, Ulm's civil engineering office compiled a preliminary list of names that encompassed an array of general military terms, such as Trommlergasse (Drummer Lane) and Soldatenstrasse (Soldier Street), and a large group of names alluding to Prussian military history, among them Blücherstrasse, Lützowstrasse, and Yorckstrasse. In total, the roster for the former garrison city included 26 streets, 10 casernes, five forts, one bastion, and one fortress.<sup>134</sup>

Reviewing this information, Scholl drew his own conclusions as to what deserved removal. Specifically, he chose 12 streets to receive new names, all of which referenced general military terms or rather dated Prussian military history. He had no doubts, he told the city's planning department, that street names referring to drummers, buglers, and the like could stay, as could, among others, Hindenburgring.<sup>135</sup> By the time Scholl submitted the name change recommendations to the city council's building committee, moreover, the list had shrunk still further to six. In Ulm, therefore, Directive No. 30 led to new names only for Königs-Grenadier-Strasse, Faber du Faur-Strasse, Lützowstrasse, Artilleriestrasse, Dragonerstrasse, and Ulanenweg.<sup>136</sup>

Most of the names listed on the original roster that did not make the final cut did not blatantly violate Allied regulations. But a few did. Most notably, Hindenburg retained not only his ring, but a caserne as well. More significantly, Ulm's surviving street name landscape hints at a conceptual weakness of the Allies' narrowly defined excision policy. Although Scholl was probably right in concluding that streets named after buglers and pipers could retain their names, these were just two of a group of streets comprising a largely military-themed webbing around Ulm's Sedankaserne (itself named after an 1870 Prussian victory over the French), with neighboring streets bearing such names as Moltke, Blücher, Yorck, Strassburg, Saarland, and Sedan. In other words, a small district of the city essentially retained its military character.<sup>137</sup>

Not surprisingly, given this outcome, Weisser in January 1947 again vented his frustrations in the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung*. "More slowly than the clearing away of the material rubble proceeds the elimination of ideological and historical rubbish," he began, adding that "the Sedan-Strasse and other memorials to our 'glorious past' and flawed historical development still spoil the present." He did not buy arguments

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<sup>134</sup> Städt. Tiefbauamt Ulm to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 3 Dec 46, *ibid*.

<sup>135</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister to G.R. dem Stadtplanungsamt, 6 Dec 46, *ibid*.

<sup>136</sup> Stadtarchiv to Stadtplanungsamt, 18 Dec 46, *ibid*; Auszug aus der Niederschrift über die Verhandlungen des Bauausschusses des Gemeinderats vom 19.Dez. 1946, n.d., *ibid*.

<sup>137</sup> Amtlicher Plan der Stadt Ulm, 1950, StAU F1 No. 92.

regarding the difficulties involved in making changes and dismissed any professed “respect for the past.” It was not so long ago, he contended, that the bureaucracy “fetched like a well-trained poodle” in response to wishes only hinted at by its rulers, regardless of any difficulties. “Behind the petty bourgeois bureaucratic rhetoric,” Weisser maintained, “hides, not infrequently, the reactionary.” Even as efforts in other arenas presented the Germans with an accurate historical picture and new political ideas, “the gods of a false view of history” remained right in front of them, due to “backwardness and short-sightedness.” He reminded his readers that the world was watching and awaited evidence of an inner change on their part. “It is still full of mistrust toward us, which we can only defuse when we earnestly work at renewal.”<sup>138</sup>

If Ulm’s leaders wielded the knife sparingly, more than 50 communities in North Baden removed all traces of Field Marshal Hindenburg from their street signs.<sup>139</sup> The new MG regulations also sparked further changes in Karlsruhe, where the city council had earlier fended off the renaming enthusiasm of some of its members. In particular, in late 1946, city officials made plans to eliminate street names commemorating eight military men and eight World War I battles.<sup>140</sup> While the council could not object to these changes, Veit did ask it to approve a list of recommended replacement names and thus unleashed another lengthy discussion during which council members dredged up and aired many of their old arguments.

Communist Fritz Aschinger thus took the opportunity to argue that the council must finally get rid of street names honoring Prussian history and lamented the fact that the city had to be reminded by the MG to clean up its streets—an opinion repeated later by the CDU’s Wilhelm Bauer and supported by the SPD’s Fritz Töpfer. On the other hand, Christian Democrat Fridolin Heurich cited the work required and added that a complete cleansing of names appeared to be very risky at present. “The baby must not be thrown out with the bath water,” he argued. “Every Reich needs a certain dependence on the past.” Karlsruhe’s building director,

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<sup>138</sup> “Bemerkungen,” *BNN*, 9 Jan 47.

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, Landkreis Heidelberg, Verzeichnis über Beseitigung von deutschen militaristischen und nazistischen Strassen- und Wegeschildern, n.d., LDAK III/214; Landkreis Tauberbischofsheim, Verzeichnis über Beseitigung von deutschen militaristischen und nazistischen Strassen- und Wegeschildern, n.d., *ibid.* A form letter distributed by North Baden officials that specifically referenced Hindenburg may have helped to produce this result. Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Herr Landrat des Kreises Buchen, 16 Nov 46, GLA 345 G No. 1.047; Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 16 Nov 46, GLA 357 No. 30.024.

<sup>140</sup> Stadtverwaltung Karlsruhe, Abt. S. 1. B. to Landesdenkmalamt, Karlsruhe, 28 Nov 46, LDAK III/219.

meanwhile, contended it would take city officials an entire year of work to change just the 16 names already being discussed.<sup>141</sup>

Veit urged the council to stick to the agenda of adopting new designations for the street names that had to be eliminated immediately. But even this business proved troublesome. The CDU's Franz Sprauer proposed renaming Hindenburgstrasse after Weimar cabinet member Matthias Erzberger—who had signed the armistice ending World War I, supported the Treaty of Versailles, and been assassinated. The DVP's Kessler objected. "The Erzberger case," he observed cryptically, "has become a current issue." It served no purpose, he continued, "to suddenly install the name Erzberger in a district." Perhaps they would later be glad that they had not done so. Bauer countered that this was a "historically absolutely justifiable" move; the predecessors of the Nazis and a "clique around Hindenburg" were responsible for Erzberger's death. Kessler suggested that in four years they might need to change all the names again. Sprauer declared that if the council did not have the courage to introduce new political names, then it should choose names like "Mayflower." "Then in all eternity no street name changes would occur." In the end, the council voted to replace Hindenburg with Erzberger and approved 15 other names with little further excitement.<sup>142</sup>

Although some Karlsruhe councilmen feared a negative public reaction to extensive changes, an early December 1946 article in the *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* not only revealed implicit support for Directive No. 30, but also showed that Aschinger's broader agenda had additional proponents as well. Urging his readers to put an end to the "street of war" and choose the "street of peace," its author insisted that they had the power both to hinder "every murderous fool" who wanted to extend the street of war and to wipe out everything, "large and small," that could lead to war or encourage its ideology. In particular, he railed against Karlsruhe's street names, which did exactly that. The Germans were building a new democracy, he noted, yet on the city's street signs

militarism, demanding obedience, shows off the names of Roon and Werder, of Hindenburg, who screamed for capitulation and then found no words to contradict the Stab-in-the-back legend (instead, engaged a Hitler), . . . S.M. [His Majesty] with the armored fist and the shimmering weapon continues to haunt the Kaiserstr[asse], the Kaiserallee, the Kaiserplatz, . . . the iron chancellor resolutely claims the Bismarckstr[asse], the smith who forged the empire, who set German unity on the monarchical path, which led to the street of war. The grenades still burst and the rifle shots still hiss and whine in Karlsruhe in the Sedan- and Belfortstrasse, Hindenburg and Ludendorff still lead battles in Karlsruhe

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<sup>141</sup> Niederschrift über die 13.Sitzung des Stadtrates am 23.Dezember 1946, 7 Jan 47, StAK 3/B No. 1574.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

in the Tannenber- and in the Masurenstr[asse], the German volunteers of Langemarck still die here, . . . Over Flandernstr[asse] and Lorettoplatz drone the motors of fighter planes to Immelmann-, to Boelcke- and to Richthofenstr[asse].

His words were aimed not at these men “who fought and died for their land,” the writer explained, but rather “against the glorifying remembrance of war that is inseparably bound to the naming of these streets.” It was time for these and similar signs to vanish. This was not “a matter of iconoclasm.” Instead, these were “things of such deadly seriousness, that slogans are not appropriate.” Feelings of resentment were misguided; one had to summon the necessary courage to let them go. In place of the offending names, the writer added, should appear those of men who promoted peace.<sup>143</sup>

No demilitarizing revolution broke out in the streets of Karlsruhe during the years that followed, however. In November 1947 and again in November 1948, the *Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft* (German Peace Society) actually petitioned the city to rename its military-themed streets, but by the time the council seriously considered the request in early 1949, the 1948 currency reform had decimated the city’s funds and the councilors rejected a major renaming effort as completely unfeasible. Protesting this, a Social Democratic councilman argued that it was absolutely inappropriate to be too “pussy-footed” about renaming streets and reported having recently flipped through a city address book where he had encountered Grenadierstrasse, Kanonierstrasse, and a variety of other military-glorifying names added by the Nazis. This experience notwithstanding, he settled for formally requesting a name change only for Schlieffenstrasse, one of the city’s “shortest and most frequently used streets.” “Even when 50 official actions are necessary,” he implored, the street should immediately be given its former name, Seminarstrasse, and Herr Schlieffen—former chief of the general staff and architect of Germany’s World War I strategy—dismounted. The council approved his request.<sup>144</sup> Hindenburg, a handful of World War I pilots, and the theatres in which they fought thus vanished from the city’s streets at the behest of the Americans. But in the early twenty-first century, Grenadierstrasse and Kanonierstrasse, as well as Kaiserstrasse, Bismarckstrasse, and other street names associated with Germany’s imperial past and Prussian and Nazi militarism still appeared on the maps of Karlsruhe.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> “Die Strasse des Krieges . . .,” *BNN*, 21 Dec 46. Identified only by the initials “W.S.,” the author may well have been Social Democratic publisher Walter Schwerdtfeger.

<sup>144</sup> Niederschrift über die 11.Sitzung des Stadtrates am 3.August 1948, 17 Aug 48, StAK 3/B No. 1476; Niederschrift über die 19. – ausserordentliche – Sitzung des Stadtrates am Montag, dem 7. Februar 1949, 9 Feb 49, StAK 3/B No. 1577.

<sup>145</sup> Stadt Karlsruhe, “Strassennamen in Karlsruhe,” <http://www1.karlsruhe.de/Stadt/VLW/vlastrn.htm>.

Unlike their counterparts in Ulm and Karlsruhe, Stuttgart city leaders were already discussing additional name changes when they received the new MG instructions. And a subsequent transformation of the capital city's maps apparently resulted from events that unfolded relatively independent of any American influence. In late spring 1946, Communist city councilman Karl Gross gave Stuttgart officials a list of proposed name changes he had collected from various local "work committees," groups which had begun their lives at the end of the war as "anti-fascist committees."<sup>146</sup> In mid summer, the city council's internal affairs section considered this petition and also the gamut of issues related to street renaming, including potential costs, the advisability of eliminating duplicate names within the region, the need to get rid of Nazi and militaristic names, and the selection of replacement names.<sup>147</sup> The renaming movement received added momentum in early September following meetings involving city and Land officials, political party leaders, and members of a Land committee for individuals persecuted by the Nazis. Specifically, assistant mayor Josef Hirn asked the full council to approve nine new street names honoring individuals who had resisted the Nazis which would be announced during upcoming ceremonies to commemorate the victims of fascism. He also recommended that the body agree to the renaming of 60 city streets bearing names that were "no longer acceptable and no longer in keeping with the times," using some of the proposed new names to replace them. Hirn observed that Stuttgart should also eliminate some 327 duplicate names within the city limits (primarily a product of the 1942 incorporation of several other communities), but argued that the work, costs, and potential confusion associated with these changes were presently prohibitive.<sup>148</sup> The cleansing of the city landscape apparently took priority over this task.

With the council's approval, Stuttgart's official gazette subsequently announced 60 new street names. In addition to roughly 10 names associated with Germany's colonial ambitions, more than 40 of the streets and locations affected had military themed names, including Hindenburgstrasse (three streets), Hindenburgplatz (two plazas), Moltkestrasse (two streets), Scharnhorststrasse (two streets), Gneisenaustrasse (two streets), Von-Seeckt-Strasse, Tirpitz-Strasse, Roonstrasse, and Blücherstrasse, as well as Kanonenweg, Militärstrasse,

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<sup>146</sup> Niederschrift über die Sitzung der Inneren Abteilung des Gemeindebeirats am 16. April 1946, n.d., StAS MF S 7397 Band 119; Dr. Schiebe to Stellvertretender Oberbürgermeister, 16 May 46, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 2.

<sup>147</sup> Niederschrift über die 3. Sitzung der Inneren Abteilung des Gemeinderats vom 16. Juli 1946, n.d., StAS Gemeinderatsprotokolle, Volume 19.

<sup>148</sup> Sitzung des Gemeinderats am 6. September 1946, StAS MF S 7397 Band 122.

Kasernenstrasse, and a number of street designations honoring famous World War I pilots.<sup>149</sup> It seems likely Stuttgart officials were guided in part by Directive No. 30 in assessing existing street names. However, the council evidently did not invoke the directive during its discussion of the matter, nor did the directive require the eradication of nineteenth-century Prussian military heroes such as Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, and Roon. The fact that many of the men whose names were excised were Prussians, rather than Swabians, may be significant, perhaps making the names more desirable targets or at least making their excision a less emotionally charged undertaking.

If Stuttgart officials were far more aggressive in renaming streets than their colleagues in Ulm and Karlsruhe, their critics attacked their assertiveness rather than their timidity. The renaming initiative had “become the subject of debate” in certain circles, observed a mid December 1946 report of the local MG detachment.

Nationalistic circles as well as the majority of unpolitical bourgeoisie resent having Freiherr von Stein, Scharnhorst, and Gneisenau put into the category with the Nazi war criminals. It is believed that such re-naming is more or less designed to annihilate Germanism. In particular the abolition of “Kanonenweg” is debated, “Kanonenweg” because from there—at that time a street outside the city limits—each year, at the king’s birthday, a gun salute was given. A “highly militaristic affair,” somebody commented.<sup>150</sup>

Culture Minister Theodor Heuss also brought the Stuttgart situation to the attention of Württemberg-Baden’s cabinet, seemingly concerned about the number of removals. In particular, he asked whether it would be possible for the Interior Ministry to intervene to prevent further changes. Ultimately, the cabinet members agreed that they could only act in an advisory capacity, working through party channels.<sup>151</sup> What effect any efforts along these lines may have had is unclear, although there were no other major renaming initiatives in the years immediately following.

Why so few streets in Ulm and Karlsruhe received new names while Stuttgart officials changed street signs even the Allies were content to leave in place is not easily explained. All three cities had suffered heavy wartime damage, making reconstruction a priority for city expenditures. Although the Stuttgart area had a

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<sup>149</sup> “Strassenumbennungen,” ASkS, 12 Sep 46, StAS Wirtschaftsamt No. 327; “Strassenumbennungen,” ASkS, 19 Sep 46, *ibid*.

<sup>150</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 17 Dec 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [4].

<sup>151</sup> Protokoll der Vierunddreissigste Sitzung des Staatsministeriums am Freitag, den 27 September 1946, n.d., HStA EA 1/920 No. 139.

larger number of military themed street names, this does not explain why city leaders elected to remove street signs honoring Moltke and Blücher when their counterparts in Ulm and Karlsruhe did not. Ulm’s residents may have had a special affinity for Prussian military heroes, but it seems logical that any resentment of Prussian dominance would have been shared by the inhabitants of Karlsruhe and Stuttgart. Comparing the composition of their respective city councils in 1946 offers some insight into their different choices, but also provides no definitive answers.

*City council seats held by the four major parties during the fall of 1946.*<sup>152</sup>

	KPD	SPD	DVP	CDU	Other	Total
Ulm	2	8	6	16	4	36
Karlsruhe	2	9	3	10		24
Stuttgart	6	17	10	12	3	48

Where the Christian Democrats and the right-leaning parties, more generally, had a firm hold on Ulm’s council, Karlsruhe’s council was relatively balanced, something that also had been true during its 1945 discussions. Conversely, Social Democrats dominated in Stuttgart; however, even here the combined votes of the CDU and DVP nearly equaled the combined votes of the SPD and KPD.

Stuttgart’s councilors may have been responding to the perceived desires of their constituents. But the complaints their decisions provoked raise doubts on this point and, in fact, hint that these men were to some extent acting on the strength of their own convictions. Whatever the explanation, Stuttgart leaders showed a greater willingness to eradicate Germany’s military past from their city streets than colleagues in other key cities in Württemberg-Baden and, indeed, in other parts of western Germany.<sup>153</sup>

Wide-ranging to be sure, the September 1946 changes in Stuttgart were not comprehensive. The names of various World War I battles, German soldiers, and even armaments producers survived into the

<sup>152</sup> For Ulm’s figures, see Zusammensetzung des Gemeinderats im Jahre 1946, StAU B 005/5 S/IV 150 Band 309. For Karlsruhe, see Asche, et al., *Karlsruhe*, 540-541. For Stuttgart, see Vietzen, *Chronik der Stadt Stuttgart*, 161.

<sup>153</sup> As another point of comparison, Mannheim changed 24 street names during the fall of 1946, after having earlier removed 19 Nazi-associated names. Der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Mannheim to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 3 Dec 46, LDK III/245. On street sign changes in several other German cities, see Maoz Azaryahu, “Street Names and Political Identity: The Case of East Berlin,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 21, no. 4 (1986): 581-604; Jürgen Karwelat, “Ein Berliner Stadtplan von 1946—seiner Zeit voraus” and “Neutempelhof: Statt Pazifistenecke ein ‘Fliegerviertel,’” in *Sackgassen. Keine Wendemöglichkeit für Berliner Strassennamen*, ed. Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt (Berlin: Verlag Dirk Nishen, 1988); Azaryahu, “Renaming the Past”; Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, *Munich and Memory: Architecture, Monuments, and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 108-110.



twenty-first century.<sup>154</sup> Significantly, unchanged names included Flandernstrasse, Sommestrasse, and Verdunstrasse<sup>155</sup>—familiar names from World War I which MG officials should have known violated Directive No. 30.

On the whole, American policing of German street names was not overly stringent. Removal actions varied throughout Württemberg-Baden, suggesting MG officers did not conscientiously seek uniformity. Furthermore, while they demanded lists of names the Germans had eliminated, they apparently did not request information on names that had *not* been replaced. Even where they might reasonably have identified violations, they did not. A 1948 map of Ulm, for instance, bears both a street named Hindenburgring and an imprint indicating the American MG had authorized its release.<sup>156</sup>

American handling of several German army barracks was far more ironic. In Heidelberg, the *Grossdeutschland-Kaserne*—christened shortly after the *Anschluss*—did not receive a new name until August 1948. By then serving as the headquarters of the American European Command, the caserne was renamed Campbell Barracks in honor of an American sergeant killed near Mannheim two days before Heidelberg surrendered.<sup>157</sup> Meanwhile, as of 1950, all of Ulm’s casernes retained their original names.<sup>158</sup> And in the early 1950s, American troops, now on hand “to protect Germany from aggression,” took up residence in six of them, including the Flandernkaserne and Hindenburgkaserne.<sup>159</sup> Whether most Germans interpreted this as a final insult, or saw the barracks as a fitting home for their new protectors is impossible to say.

Sometimes lenient, uninformed, or negligent, MG enforcement of the various directives on naming did, nevertheless, push the Germans to act, first by requiring the removal of all Nazi-related names and later by ordering a purge of military themed markers. And here, the Americans had indigenous support. In fact, some Germans were quick to demand changes without MG prompting and even lobbied for more extensive renaming

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<sup>154</sup> Landeshauptstadt Stuttgart, *Stuttgarter Strassennamen*, 12-13.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>156</sup> Map of Ulm, 1948, StAU F1 No. 90.

<sup>157</sup> United States Army Europe Military History Office, “Campbell Barracks: The Story of a Caserne,” [http://www.history.hqusaureur.army.mil/campbell\\_barracks.htm](http://www.history.hqusaureur.army.mil/campbell_barracks.htm).

<sup>158</sup> Amtlicher Plan der Stadt Ulm, 1950, StAU F1 No. 92.

<sup>159</sup> John K. Huston to City Administration Ulm, 25 May 54, StAU B 151/10 No. 1; Verwaltungsbericht des Besatzungskostenamtes der Stadt Ulm/Donau für die Zeit vom 27.4.1945 bis 31.3.1955, n.d., *ibid*.

efforts, although they often did not have the political strength to achieve their goals on their own. Those rejecting calls for greater change could, on the other hand, see many reasons for proceeding cautiously. Some, perhaps, truly were reactionaries in bureaucrats' clothing. But genuine concerns about potential costs, labor requirements, and confusion, as well as an unwillingness to wipe out their city's historical consciousness—and their own interpretation of their local and national history—especially in a period of upheaval and transition, could also make leaders hesitant to act.

*Monuments.* Given Directive No. 30's expanded chronological and substantive scope, Württemberg-Baden's leaders had to take another look not only at the Land's street signs, but also at its monuments. Military government officials therefore issued new instructions in late August which outlined their expectations in this regard, noting the directive's January 1, 1947, deadline, stressing that it was not punitive but preventative, and urging the Germans to make certain that any actions taken in terms of altering or destroying monuments did not "offend accepted good taste or...occasion unnecessary bitterness or lasting resentment among the broad masses of the citizenry."<sup>160</sup>

At an early September meeting, two American officers also gave further guidance to the man supervising the work, Gustav Wais, head of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege. Concerned that anxious or overzealous monument owners might destroy valuable pieces, the officers indicated that no monument should be changed without the explicit authorization of Wais' agency. Using photographs, written descriptions, or, when necessary, site visits, each individual case was to be thoughtfully considered. For example, they explained, a steel helmet could be left on a gravestone, but not on a building. An iron cross need not be removed from a war monument, but should be taken off of a barracks entrance. The listing of names of regiments or fallen soldiers might be permissible, depending on their location. Artistic considerations were also to play a role, with appeals submitted to the zone commander for particularly significant objects.<sup>161</sup> Soon thereafter, Wais furnished instructions and blank questionnaires to the mayors of major cities and to all

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<sup>160</sup> Charles D. Winning to Ministerpräsident, Land Württemberg-Baden, 21 Aug 46, HStA EA 3/202 Bü 307.

<sup>161</sup> Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Württ. Kultministerium, 16 Sep 46, HStA EA 3/202 Bü 307.

Landräte in North Württemberg, as well as to the *Landesdenkmalamt* in Karlsruhe, which would oversee efforts in North Baden.<sup>162</sup>

A sense of how the subsequent monument review process actually unfolded is provided by records compiled by officials in North Baden.<sup>163</sup> As Land administrators had requested, completed questionnaires submitted to the *Landesdenkmalamt* by local officials described the monuments in their communities, indicating whether they included swords, flags, and the like, if a monument was made up of figures and/or name tables, and which was most important to the overall impression conveyed. Answers were brief and to the point. Typical in its content was one submission reading: “The monument consists of a stone on which the names of the fallen from 1914-1918 are carved. The inscription is decisive. Other than an iron cross with a laurel wreath (carved) there is nothing on the monument which could give offense.”<sup>164</sup> Images enclosed with the reports showed a wide variety of angels, eagles, helmets, iron crosses, boulders, and name tablets, as well as depictions of soldiers (Figures 12-16).<sup>165</sup>

In mid-November, the responsible official in North Baden, Professor Otto Haupt, wrote to Wais for additional guidance. Referring to the Americans’ evaluation criteria and examples, Haupt observed:

Because it is exactly these cases [that is, the examples the Americans had given] that make up the majority by far, they have especial significance, since it can’t be missed that through them a military tradition will be maintained. To cite a few details: on almost all monuments for the fallen there is an iron cross, frequently it dominates the whole form. Also, steel helmets, swords, and such emblems are represented almost everywhere and appear in many cases more than once. When these appear in connection with name tables, there is probably no reason for them to be eliminated. . . . Is that also valid when there is no name table, but only a general dedication?<sup>166</sup>

Referring to the many portrayals of uniformed soldiers, Haupt commented that dying fighters, praying soldiers, and mothers with wounded sons were no doubt unobjectionable, but what about expressionless soldiers

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<sup>162</sup> Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Württ. Kultministerium, 3 Oct 46, HStA EA 3/202 Bü 307.

<sup>163</sup> LDAK III/215, III/216, III/218, III/219, III/220, III/221, III/245, III/246. Striking here is the sheer volume of completed questionnaires, which confirm the extent to which even very small communities had erected monuments after World War I. For photographs and sketches of many monuments in North Württemberg, see NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 939, F: Lists of Fine Arts and Pictures.

<sup>164</sup> Meldebogen, Auerbach, Kreis Karlsruhe, LDAK III/219.

<sup>165</sup> Interestingly, a number of communities submitted postcards presumably showing the views of their village considered most beautiful or significant, including the local war monument—a fact that suggests military government concerns about inciting German resentment through monument destruction were not unfounded. See, for example, Meldebogen, Auerbach, Kreis Mosbach, LDAK III/220.

<sup>166</sup> Landesdenkmalamt to Württembergische Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 18 Nov 46, LDAK III/214.

standing watch, carrying flags, or with weapons by their feet? Most questionable appeared to be representations of battle scenes—for instance, someone throwing a hand grenade or soldiers attacking. And what of modern weapons, lists of battles, and inscriptions? With respect to the latter, he noted, “Several examples show me that in these very inscriptions many times the desire to maintain military tradition is expressed very clearly. Couldn’t unpleasant accusations against us result from this?”<sup>167</sup>

In responding, Wais did not engage the larger issues raised by Haupt, but provided very specific answers. Iron crosses, steel helmets, and swords were unobjectionable, with or without a name table. Soldiers standing watch, with weapons by their feet, or as flag carriers were not objectionable, but hand grenade throwers were. Groups of charging soldiers should be evaluated individually, and Wais recommended that photographs be submitted to MG officials for a decision. He believed that machine guns, submarines, and planes should be removed, but battle names on regimental monuments would not be objectionable, since they were historical commemorations. Inscriptions with militaristic tendencies were, of course, prohibited.<sup>168</sup>

The difficulties involved in reconciling these explicit criteria with the Allies’ highly subjective instructions, and applying both to sentence-long descriptions, sometimes small or muddy photos, and sketches on which body postures and facial expressions were at best approximate seem obvious. In a number of cases, North Baden’s Landesdenkmalamt sought additional information,<sup>169</sup> asking several communities, for example, to better characterize their soldier figures, as those embodying a “fighting spirit” would likely need to be removed.<sup>170</sup>

Submitting his results to Wais in late December, Haupt also forwarded materials relating to eight questionable memorials for submission to MG officials. The most interesting of these was a plaque commemorating troop maneuvers in 1907 that had involved Hindenburg, a World War I hero.<sup>171</sup> Initially objecting to the plaque, the Americans eventually approved its retention, concluding that it was a site of

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Landesdenkmalamt, 21 Nov 46, LDAK III/214.

<sup>169</sup> Landesdenkmalamt to Gemeindeverwaltung Singen, 19 Nov 46, LDAK III/221; Landesdenkmalamt to Gemeinde Oeschelbronn, 19 Nov 46, *ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> See, for example, Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Bürgermeister, Unteröwisheim, 17 Dec 46, LDAK III/215.

<sup>171</sup> Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Landesdenkmalamt, 17 Dec 46, LDAK III/214; Landesdenkmalamt to Württembergische Landesdenkmalamt, 30 Dec 46, *ibid.*

historical remembrance whose significance related to the pre-1914 period.<sup>172</sup> In several cases, the Landesdenkmalamt also later arranged for site visits. One town's soldier appeared to be both throwing a grenade and filled with a definite "fighting spirit,"<sup>173</sup> while that of another looked as if his right hand was raised in the "German greeting."<sup>174</sup> Told their soldiers might require removal, both towns protested, the first claiming their figure was in fact a dying soldier holding a broken sword,<sup>175</sup> the second describing theirs as carrying a machine gun on his right shoulder, while raising his left arm to indicate "Forwards!"<sup>176</sup> A local professor sent to investigate eventually confirmed that the grenade thrower was, as reported, a dying soldier and could stay. The second soldier, outfitted with a machine gun, an ammunition belt, and a large pistol, and gesturing to unseen comrades, was deemed both militaristic and reflective of a Nazi spirit and was removed.<sup>177</sup>

Haupt's need to rely on local experts for assistance was, in fact, indicative of troubles afflicting the German review effort as a whole. Erratic postal service and a lack of transportation hampered the work in North Baden.<sup>178</sup> And Wais complained repeatedly to the Land Ministry of Culture about his bureau's limited office space, its need for an automobile, and its shortage of personnel due to denazification proceedings and budget constraints. Still evaluating the more than 1,000 completed questionnaires from North Württemberg in late December, Wais reported that these problems were continuing to impede efforts to review submissions and to photograph, evaluate, and recommend changes for questionable monuments. His photographic lab, moreover, was currently unavailable, as it had been turned into a kitchen for the family of the state library's

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<sup>172</sup> Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Landesdenkmalamt, 27 Dec 46, LDK III/214; Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltung, Strümpfelbrunn, 31 Dec 46, LDK III/220; Bürgermeister, Strümpfelbrunn, to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 2 Jan 46, LDK III/220. According to the latter document, the full inscription read "In honor of German president Paul von Beneckendorff und Hindenburg. To thank the protector of the homeland, the communities of the Winterhauch and military associations of the Neckargau erected this column on his 80th birthday, the 20th of October 1927, on the site where he in 1907 participated in a maneuver as division commander." The extant correspondence suggests that the Landesamt in Stuttgart and the MG reached a decision on the plaque and notified the Landesdenkmalamt in late December 1946, several days before Karlsruhe received information from the community giving the exact wording—including the reference to its dedication in 1927. This may explain why the plaque could remain even though it was installed after the date specified in Directive No. 30.

<sup>173</sup> Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltung Helmsheim, 24 Dec 46, LDK III/215.

<sup>174</sup> Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltung Odenheim, 24 Dec 46, *ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Bürgermeister, Helmsheim, to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 28 Dec 46, *ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> Gemeindeverwaltung Odenheim to Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe, 30 Dec 46, *ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Professor A. W., 17 Jun 47, *ibid.*; Professor A. W. to Herr Direktor [Haupt], 3 Jul 47, *ibid.*; Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Landrat, Bruchsal, 21 Jul 47, *ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> Landesdenkmalamt to Württembergische Landesdenkmalamt, 30 Dec 46, LDK III/214.

boiler tender.<sup>179</sup> Wais seemed prone to complaining, but it cannot be overlooked that at the time the Allies issued their directive, the two Land agencies tasked with its implementation were already busy dealing with countless war-damaged historical buildings and monuments, as well as locating and retrieving stored church bells, works of art, and the like.<sup>180</sup>

In January 1947, German officials nevertheless began securing written statements, as demanded by U.S. authorities, confirming that those monuments identified as offensive had been modified or removed and the objectionable elements completely destroyed.<sup>181</sup> Some incoming notices also proposed changes or described alterations made to the monuments. The village of Bellberg, for example, asked for permission to replace its absent soldier with a stone cross. In Ludwigsburg, the drum held by a youth had become a twig. Most fittingly, Lautenbach had turned the sword carried by a child into a peace palm.<sup>182</sup>

Despite the paper and time expended, however, the final results of the appraisal effort were modest. Of nearly 1,500 reported monuments in Württemberg-Baden only 39 required destruction or modification (Figures 17-22).<sup>183</sup> Some monuments had been removed or altered already in 1945, but overall the touch of the MG in 1946 was light.

This restrained approach earned praise from an observer in Karlsruhe, whose city had survived the most recent review effort unscathed.<sup>184</sup> Writing in the *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* in January 1947, a man loosely affiliated with the Landesdenkmalamt assessed the city's various extant monuments. Removing the city's politically questionable but artistically admirable Wilhelm I statue, he concluded, would turn the Kaiser

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<sup>179</sup> Charles D. Winning to Ministerpräsident von Württemberg-Baden, 13 Sep 46, HStA EA 3/202 Bü 307; Württ. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to Kultministerium, 16 Dec 46, *ibid*; Aktenvermerk K 3110, 15 Jan 47, *ibid*.

<sup>180</sup> For a report on the Landesdenkmalamt's activities from 1945-1950, see Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Herr Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Kultus u. Unterricht, 8 Dec 50, GLA 235 No. 39854.

<sup>181</sup> Landesdenkmalamt Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltung Grünsfeld, et al, 2 Jan 46, LDK III/214; Richard G. Banks to Direktor, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 22 Jan 47, HStA 3/202 Bü 307.

<sup>182</sup> Bürgermeisteramt, Bellberg, to Landratsamt, Schäbisch Hall, 16 Apr 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 939, F: Lists of Fine Arts and Pictures; Oeberbürgermeister, Ludwigsburg, to Württembergisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, 2 Apr 47, *ibid*.; Bürgermeisteramt, Lautenbach, to Landratsamt, Crailsheim, 30 Jun 47, *ibid*.

<sup>183</sup> DIAC/AEC/Memo(47)23, 18 Aug 47, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 28, F: C-30-a Existence of Military or Nazi Memorials and Museums; Statistic on Monuments of Militaristic Character, n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 939, F: Lists of Fine Arts & Pictures. The August 18, 1947, Allied report stated that 1,488 monuments had been reported in Württemberg-Baden and 33 destroyed or modified. The second document tabulated raw figures from Land officials and gave the total number as 39—with 33 of these totally destroyed and another six modified. The discrepancy between the figures given in the two documents is likely explained by this latter breakdown.

<sup>184</sup> Beschluss, 29 Mar 47, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1860.

into “Wilhelm the Great” in the minds of many locals, a status he did not currently hold. A nearby horse and rider honoring World War I dead he described as a “harmless little figure of bronze.” His lance having vanished, the figure had become a “peaceful horseman” (Figure 18). The writer argued, too, that eliminating the battlefield names inscribed on a towering obelisk near the main post office would merely encourage every father to explain to his children what was now missing. People, he warned, could also turn monuments and buildings into martyrs.<sup>185</sup>

The local Communist Party disagreed. Supporting the retention of artistically valuable works, the party nevertheless asserted that there was a difference between “a piece of art and a monument as a symbol of an apparently ineradicable militarism.” As for inscription-deprived fathers, had the previous writer considered how many might remind their children that another so-called world conqueror had just as needlessly ordered their grandfathers into Moscow’s ice fields? “Sentimental war romanticism” should be done away with, it argued. Wilhelm I and Bismarck belonged in a museum; what their spirit had cost the German people was immense. And if questionable monuments remained after January 1947, reactionaries would be pleased, arguing that these were not militaristic, but harmless, and that Germans were conservative, not revolutionary. But working people expected progress, the party countered, and did not walk unthinkingly past “these gods of the past.”<sup>186</sup>

This brief dialogue was not alone in raising the issue of pre-World War I monuments. In August 1947, an Allied committee evaluating the implementation of Directive No. 30 proposed that it be expanded to include *all* monuments, observing that Germany also maintained militaristic monuments that pre-dated August 1, 1914.<sup>187</sup> But only the French ultimately supported this revision.<sup>188</sup> Similarly, for several years officials in Stuttgart periodically discussed the meaning and possible removal of their Wilhelm I monument,<sup>189</sup> though the statue remained (Figure 11).

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<sup>185</sup> Fritz Hugenschmidt, “Ein Wort für die Karlsruher Denkmäler,” *BNN*, 7 Jan 47.

<sup>186</sup> “Stimme der Parteien,” *BNN*, 25 Jan 47.

<sup>187</sup> DIAC/AEC/Memo(47)23, 18 Aug 47, NA, RG 466.

<sup>188</sup> DIAC/AEC/P(47)13, 14 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/P (45)(46)(47)(48).

<sup>189</sup> Zentrale für den Aufbau der Stadt Stuttgart to Herr Oberbürgermeister Dr. Klett, 20 Aug 46, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3751-1; Protokoll über die Sitzung der Städt.Kunstkommission, 3 Mar 49, StAS 17/1 HA Gruppe 3 No. 179.

Clearly there were Germans in Württemberg-Baden who, like the Allies, believed war monuments were harmful, glorifying a military tradition that had brought Germany excessive pain and destruction. Nevertheless, as was the case with street signs, the evidence suggests that these voices alone could not have forced such an extensive evaluation effort. This required the initiative and authority of the Americans, substantially influenced by their allies. Significantly, however, the fact that the United States set the rules also meant that it effectively established the limits of change. In drafting Directive No. 30, the Allies had—perhaps unintentionally—dealt with the slippery problem of defining militarism by also prohibiting monuments that glorified incidents of war and kept alive German military tradition. Yet they immediately narrowed this broad perspective by restricting the directive’s application to monuments falling within a certain date range. More importantly, the Americans urged German authorities to judge each monument individually, but also introduced guidelines which precluded truly nuanced appraisals and the removal of design elements that even German officials thought might keep alive Germany’s military tradition.

Excluding numerous World War I monuments as simply commemorative ultimately protected many that were not so innocuous as Allied officials believed. Reinhardt Koselleck has observed that remembering those killed in war is a political act, with the living left to assign meaning to the deaths of the fallen.<sup>190</sup> This need to give meaning was particularly great following the mass slaughter and defeat of World War I. In a far-reaching study of the forms, symbolism, and dedication ceremonies of Weimar-era war monuments, Meinhold Lurz has identified as repeated themes defiance against the Treaty of Versailles, summons to continue Germany’s fight in the present, and calls to restore German unity and strength—ideas conveyed not just by aggressive soldiers, but also by rigid horsemen, dying warriors, classical nudes, and steel helmets.<sup>191</sup> The Karlsruhe dragoon therefore not only remembered dead comrades, but in his muscular physique and upright bearing was representative of an iconography praising war-hardened manly virtues, German military prowess, and invincibility (Figure 18).<sup>192</sup> George Mosse similarly pointed to the importance during the interwar years of

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<sup>190</sup> Reinhardt Koselleck, “Einleitung,” in *Der politische Totenkult: Kriegerdenkmäler in der Moderne*, ed. Reinhardt Koselleck and Michael Jeismann, (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1994), 9; Reinhardt Koselleck, “Kriegerdenkmale als Identitätsstiftungen der Überlebenden,” in *Identität*, ed. Odo Marquard and Karlheinz Stierle (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1979), 255-257.

<sup>191</sup> Meinhold Lurz, *Kriegerdenkmäler in Deutschland*, Vol. 4, *Weimarer Republik* (Heidelberg: Esprint, 1985), 9-12, Part 5.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 146-148, 158-161, 167-169, 291; Stadt Karlsruhe and Stadtarchiv Karlsruhe, *Denkmäler, Brunnen und Freiplastiken in Karlsruhe*, 600.



what he termed the “Myth of War Experience,” which legitimized the war experience and displaced its ugly reality by stressing soldierly camaraderie, manliness, and war as a regenerating process.<sup>193</sup> Central to this myth was a “cult of the fallen soldier” that saw a soldier’s death as a noble sacrifice redeeming or revitalizing the nation and drew part of its strength from monuments embodying these ideals.<sup>194</sup> The Nazis only intensified the glorification of war martyrs, constructing more aggressive monuments and staging elaborate ceremonies honoring the war dead that made the call for emulation even more explicit.<sup>195</sup> World War I monuments had thus spoken to Germans of their nation’s past, present, and future in ways that post-World War II American officials did not and German officials were not required to acknowledge.<sup>196</sup>

Still, as Koselleck has suggested, a war monument’s political message tends to fade after those who erected it pass on. Monuments rarely continue to convey meaning without support from society.<sup>197</sup> The Americans, British, and Soviets seemed to sense this in dismissing the possible negative effects of pre-World War I monuments, though they did not spell out the distinctions they were making or apply this sensibility to more recent monuments. In theory, the U.S. approach supports Koselleck’s further assertion that monuments will be removed when they are seen as a threat, where unwelcome traditions are still alive.<sup>198</sup> In practice,

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<sup>193</sup> George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 7; George L. Mosse, “Two World Wars and the Myth of War Experience,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 21, No. 4 (1986): 491-496. Rudy Koshar has suggested that rather than being primarily a matter of “distortion and fabrication” that separated Germans from the reality of war, the Myth instead emphasized those aspects of war “on which a positive sense of identity could be built.” *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory, 1870-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 98.

<sup>194</sup> Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 70-80.

<sup>195</sup> Sabine Behrenbeck, “Heldenkult oder Friedensmahnung? Kriegerdenkmale nach beiden Weltkriegen,” in Niedhart and Riesenberg, *Lernen aus dem Krieg*, 346-347; Kunsthistorisches Institut der Universität Heidelberg, *Heidelberger Denkmäler, 1788-1981* (Heidelberg: Verlag Brausdruck, 1982), 89. See also Sabine Behrenbeck, *Der Kult um die toten Helden: Nationalsozialistische Mythen, Riten und Symbole 1923 bis 1945* (Vierow: SH-Verlag, 1996).

<sup>196</sup> One case where the Allies did discuss the past function of a monument was that of the Victory Column in Berlin, which had originally been erected to commemorate the German victory over the French in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871. In 1946, the French called for its removal. While the British, Americans, and Soviets believed that, due to its early erection date, the column did not fall under the terms of Directive No. 30, the French argued that the Nazis had modified the monument, moved it, and made it the focal point of Nazi gatherings. Given this, the column could be viewed as a new structure central to Nazi militarism and should be removed. Clearly, they were not successful in pressing their argument. Even in this instance, however, the Allies’ discussion focused solely on whether or not Directive No. 30 should govern the fate of this one monument, rather than stopping to consider the role any monument might play in public life and how this might or should impact the application of the directive more generally. See, for example, DIAC/P(47)13, 1 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 24, F: DIAC/P(47) 1-25; DIAC/AEC/M(47)3, 24 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/M(47)(48).

<sup>197</sup> Koselleck, “Kriegerdenkmale als Identitätsstiftungen der Überlebenden,” 274-275.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

however, the Americans exercised selectivity and restraint, an approach that resulted not just from oversight or ignorance, but that was also rooted in a conviction that respecting German sensitivities would in the end benefit Allied interests more than would insistence on all-encompassing destruction. Paradoxically, limited demilitarization would best serve the interests of a lasting peace.

Even as the review process unfolded, moreover, World War I monuments were losing their potency. One North Württemberg official alluded to this already in September 1949 when he wrote to Ulm's lord mayor asking the city to arrange for the clean-up of a local regimental monument and the grassy area surrounding it. "Even if monuments to the fallen of the First World War are presently not very popular," he observed, "the city administration would nevertheless earn the thanks of many old soldiers if it could fulfill this small wish."<sup>199</sup>

Form and iconography determine the parameters of monument interpretation, but meaning is best perpetuated when it is continually reinforced.<sup>200</sup> In occupied Germany, the social and cultural context of these and other tangible points of continuity was changing. The now unavoidable confrontation with destruction and death, the humiliation of occupation, and the introduction of new political leadership, as well as the many deliberate efforts to draw attention to Germany's militaristic past, were altering the meaning projected onto and drawn from the existing physical remainders of that past.

### Publications

If invading troops and the first military government officials on the scene readily divested German buildings and avenues of their swastikas and Adolf Hitler street signs, the Americans usually proceeded more carefully when dealing with German books. A commitment to eradicating potentially destructive ideas, reinforced by a need to alleviate paper shortages, eventually impelled them to act, however. In the end, MG officials overcame the resistance of those Americans—including some within their own ranks—who worried

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<sup>199</sup> Dr. Hermann Ebner to Herr Oberbürgermeister Dr. Pfizer, 14 Sep 49, StAU B 362/10 No. 26.

<sup>200</sup> Twona Irwin-Zarecka discusses not only the degree to which "memory markers" such as monuments guide us in remembering and interpreting the past, but points to how remnants of the past can be "framed" differently by different audiences and interpreters. *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 145-151, 175-191. Allied discussions pertaining to the fate of Berlin's Victory Column (see note 197) suggest an inherent, though again not explicit, awareness of the malleability of monument meaning. Not only had the French received British permission to fly their flag from the column, which was located in the British sector of Berlin, but a British delegate at one point commented that "in his opinion, his colleagues should take into account that the column is now standing among the ruins of Berlin and that the two should remain as a lasting memorial for the German people." Verbatim Minutes of Fifty-Third Meeting, DIAC, 9 Jan 4[7], NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 212, F: Verbatim/DIAC/47 1-7; DIAC/Memo(47)234, 15 Aug 47, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 248, F: DIAC/Memo(47) 201-206.

that confiscating books would not only fly in the face of basic American values but, because of this, also prove counterproductive. The result was a succession of removal efforts that, as with so many other demilitarization initiatives, began haphazardly amidst the post-invasion chaos before solidifying into broader Allied policies.

While American MG officials battled their own consciences and eventually scrambled to neutralize an emotional outcry at home, German schoolteachers, librarians, and book dealers repeatedly combed through stacks of books and outdated magazines searching for items that trespassed against vague criteria set by their occupiers. Whether eager, resentful, rolling their eyes, or attempting to reconcile their current work with a stated American commitment to democracy, they had little choice but to keep vetting.

### *The Early Months*

SHAEF divided responsibilities for dealing with German books between two different organizations. SHAEF education officers were to supervise all libraries other than commercial lending libraries, while the latter, along with bookstores and publishers, fell within the jurisdiction of information control officers.<sup>201</sup> Not surprisingly, the different types of institutions were also covered by coordinated, but separate, policies.

The SHAEF military government handbook finalized during the fall of 1944 had ordered the confiscation of all schoolbooks and teaching materials “reflecting a Nazi or militaristic outlook,” but also stated that books in public and university libraries and “reference books in the libraries of other institutions of higher education” were not to be removed, seized, or destroyed.<sup>202</sup> In May 1945, SHAEF officials were still directing that all books found on a school’s premises should immediately be placed in a locked room to prevent the future use of objectionable publications.<sup>203</sup> But they were reconsidering and still debating a policy for other libraries just days before Germany surrendered, with some on SHAEF’s civil affairs staff recommending that the Allies prohibit the circulation and review (but also destruction) of all materials deemed objectionable and its Legal

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<sup>201</sup> H.H. Newman to Distribution, 14 May 45, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 18, F: AG 371.1 Service of Information (Information Control Policy). At the start of the occupation, SHAEF’s Psychological Warfare Division handled information control operations. Eventually the American elements became OMGUS’s Information Control Division.

<sup>202</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*, Dec 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 7.

<sup>203</sup> Brigadier, Chief, Internal Affairs Branch, SHAEF, to 21 Army Group Main, 8 May 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 21, F: Germany – Educational Problems.

Branch protesting that the closing and control of libraries other than those in elementary and secondary schools was neither “desirable or practicable.”<sup>204</sup>

In particular, policymakers advocating restrictions worried that unacceptable books would continue to nurture Nazi ideas.<sup>205</sup> Some SHAEF planners also maintained that permitting objectionable publications to circulate freely “would render MG ridiculous.” Others argued the opposite. “From a psychological point of view,” they suggested, “it might be a good thing to *require* every German adult to re-read *Mein Kampf* and its derivative literature.”<sup>206</sup> Legal Branch officials pointed out that banning “otherwise insignificant books” just made them more tantalizing, while if left alone they would gradually become obsolete. They also cited the challenges of compiling a list of proscribed books, argued that library regulations would not eliminate the holdings of numerous clubs, associations, and individuals, and underscored the problems associated with cleansing technical libraries. “The reform of technical (i.e. educated) thought cannot be effected by preventing access to books,” they stressed. “In our especial field we should consider any attempt to control law libraries as impractical and as likely to defeat its own purpose.” Furthermore, they believed that MG officers had neither the qualifications nor the time to do the job.<sup>207</sup>

In contrast, information control regulations distributed by SHAEF early in the occupation explicitly prohibited the circulation of objectionable books. Lending libraries, book dealers, and printers could register with MG authorities and then reopen, but they had to clear their shelves of materials propagating Nazi, racist, anti-democratic, anti-Allied, or “militaristic ideas, including pan-Germanism and German imperialism.”<sup>208</sup>

Many bookstores and commercial libraries thus reopened quickly with vetted stocks.<sup>209</sup> This was true in Heidelberg, where information control officers also soon issued instructions for all unacceptable publications

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<sup>204</sup> H. Price-Williams to Psychological Warfare Division, 8 Apr 45, *ibid.*; Legal Br, G-5, to Edn & RA Sec, Internal Affairs, 29 Apr 45, *ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> Price-Williams to Psychological Warfare Division, 8 Apr 45, *ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> Quoted in Stieg, “The Postwar Purge of German Public Libraries,” 146.

<sup>207</sup> Legal Br, G-5, to Edn & RA Sec, Internal Affairs, 29 Apr 45, NA, RG 331.

<sup>208</sup> H.H. Newman to Headquarters, 21 Army Group, et al, 9 Jun 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 638, F: AG Military Government Law No. 191 (SHAEF).

<sup>209</sup> Edward C. Breitenkamp, *The U.S. Information Control Division and Its Effect on German Publishers and Writers, 1945 to 1949* (Grand Forks, ND: n.p., 1953), 38.

to be delivered to one location in the city.<sup>210</sup> American supervision, moreover, did not always end with the registrations, book confiscations, and follow-up spot checks. In mid July, for instance, a publications control officer noticed an objectionable book in the window of a Heidelberg lending library, prompting the local public safety officer to order a search of all of the city's book dealers. The rest of the establishments were "in pretty good shape," another publications control official later reported, although the offending library had "quite some objectionable material." Still, the official was not terribly worried, as he had earlier segregated some 100 books at the library and most of those recently identified were items the proprietor had simply not yet removed from the premises.<sup>211</sup>

Despite the fast action of some information control officers, it appears that early treatment of German libraries was erratic and not particularly proactive. In mid July, one publications control officer informed his superior that his detachment had been "forced to extend its control function over the local public and town libraries . . . because this important means of information has remained without supervision."<sup>212</sup> Commenting on the entire U.S. Zone, an Information Control Division (ICD) report similarly noted in late August that most libraries were closed and "few, if any, steps are being taken towards their reopening."<sup>213</sup>

At Ulm's Max-Eyth library, the head librarian stopped lending books on the day the Americans took over the city, apparently without receiving any specific instructions from them.<sup>214</sup> Only in late summer 1945 did German officials segregate its objectionable books and those of other area libraries.<sup>215</sup> As instructed by MG authorities, in mid September local public and commercial libraries, bookstores, antiquariats, and publishers also delivered more than 4,000 vetted books to a central location, where the items were locked up in

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<sup>210</sup> Document signed Felix Reichmann, 3 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 320, F: Heidelberg Outpost in.

<sup>211</sup> Ralph Manheim to Chief Publications Section, 6871<sup>st</sup> DISCC, 25 Jul 45, *ibid*.

<sup>212</sup> Felix Reichmann to Chief, Publications Section 6871<sup>st</sup> DISCC, 18 Jul 45, *ibid*. Reichmann suggested that the Publications Section be made responsible for all public libraries as well as commercial libraries.

<sup>213</sup> Douglas Waples to Lt. Col. Murphy, 28 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 236, F: German Libraries – Reports – 1945.

<sup>214</sup> Max-Eyth-Bücherei to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Ulm, 30 May 45, StAU B 321/12 No. 2.

<sup>215</sup> Tätigkeitsbericht des Kulturbeauftragten, 15 Aug 45, StAU B 300/3 No. 4; Stadtarchiv und Stadtbibliothek Ulm to Herr Oberbürgermeister, 1 Sep 45, StAU B 321/90 No. 2; Stadtarchiv und Stadtbibliothek Ulm to Militärregierung des Stadt- und Landkreises, 15 Sep 45, *ibid*.

anticipation of eventual transport elsewhere.<sup>216</sup> In Heidelberg, the local MG reopened the public library and its two branches on May 9 only to have new MG officials close them again at the end of July for a thorough cleansing.<sup>217</sup> With its offending books “sequestered in a place of safekeeping,” the city library finally received permission to reopen in late October.<sup>218</sup> It was one of the first in the area to do so.<sup>219</sup>

By comparison, the French moved swiftly and showed little reluctance to confiscate German books. Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, and surrounding communities in Baden and Württemberg thus had an experience considerably different than those areas initially controlled by the Americans. Already in mid June 1945, French MG authorities issued directives to local German officials in and around Karlsruhe giving them less than two weeks to collect in a single location all “Nazi books” held by schools, universities, bookstores, publishers, and others, including individuals, though the French did offer to make exceptions for books to be used for historical and scholarly purposes.<sup>220</sup>

Orders in hand, the Landrat of Landkreis Karlsruhe immediately instructed the mayors under his jurisdiction to collect all offending publications and transport them to the Papier- und Zellstoffwerke AG, a paper and pulp firm in Ettlingen, where a plant official had been tasked with safeguarding the materials.<sup>221</sup> One mayor subsequently reported that local residents had destroyed most of the relevant materials before the French arrived.<sup>222</sup> Others indicated that occupying troops had already confiscated or burned the books.<sup>223</sup> Another explained that he had recently ordered the people in his town to destroy any offending publications that the

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<sup>216</sup> “Erfassung nationalsozialistischen Schrifttums,” *AU*, 8 Sep 45; Stadtarchiv und Stadtbibliothek Ulm to Militärregierung des Stadt- und Landkreises, 29 Sep 45, StAU B 321/90 No. 2; Stadtarchiv und Stadtbibliothek Ulm to Militärregierung des Stadt- und Landkreises, 13 Oct 45, *ibid*.

<sup>217</sup> Intelligence Report No. 50, 3 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 90, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1945 [2].

<sup>218</sup> Weekly Military Government Summary Report, 1 Nov 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 547, F: 10300 Reports, Weekly, F-17 (G1E2).

<sup>219</sup> To Herr Dr. Moufang, 23 Dec 45, StAH AA 177 No. 2f.

<sup>220</sup> Lt. Colonel Mercellin to Herr Bürgermeister von Karlsruhe, 19 Jun 45, StAK 1/H-Reg. No. 1842; Der Commandant Senechal to Herr Landrat des Landkreises Karlsruhe, 19 Jun 45, GLA 357 No. 31.493.

<sup>221</sup> Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Herren Bürgermeister des Kreises Karlsruhe, 22 Jun 45, GLA 357 No. 31.493; Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Herr Albert S., 25 Jun 45, *ibid*.

<sup>222</sup> Der Bürgermeister—Gemeinde Blankenloch to the Landrat in Ettlingen, 3 Jul 45, GLA 357 No. 31.493.

<sup>223</sup> Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Burbach to Herr Landrat des Kreises Khe., 17 Jul 45, *ibid*; Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Flehingen, 16 Jul 45, *ibid*.

French had left untouched.<sup>224</sup> Still another professed that few people in his Catholic village had ever owned such items.<sup>225</sup> On the other hand, the mayor of one town reported collecting some 3,000 kilograms of books and papers,<sup>226</sup> and, altogether, individuals and organizations in the Landkreis surrendered more than 10,000 kilograms of printed materials.<sup>227</sup>

In Karlsruhe, meanwhile, the directive provoked a flurry of activity. Provisional mayor Josef Heinrich quickly put city officials to work securing personnel assistance, arranging for the printing of placards and handbills, and notifying schools, bookstores, printers, and the district officials who were to organize and supervise most of the collecting efforts.<sup>228</sup> During the days that followed, district staffers posted placards and distributed some 35,000 handbills informing Karlsruhe residents, private businesses, associations, and others that they should turn in all printed matter dealing with topics like National Socialism, Japan, defense policies (*Wehrpolitik*), education for war (*Wehrerziehung*), military history, Nazi economics, and the Nuremberg laws, as well as all German histories published after 1933 and “all entertainment magazines, youth publications, readers, etc, with military, fascist, or racist tendencies.”<sup>229</sup> In the meantime, the district chiefs located facilities suitable for amassing books.<sup>230</sup> Several later complained in their weekly reports about the burden the book collection effort—added to the French clothing collection order—placed on their already overworked staffs. “Such additional work can bog down the whole operation of a district administration,” protested one.<sup>231</sup> Once the districts had assumed control of all of the publications from their areas, hand- and horse carts supplied by the city picked the materials up and transported them to the *Haus Solms* (a small local palace), where other workers tracked the deliveries.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Bürgermeisteramt Leopoldshafen, to Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 3 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Büchig to Herr Landrat in Ettlingen, 2 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Liedolsheim to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 2 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> A. Semling to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 12 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> “Betr.: Erfassung von Nazibüchern,” 23 Jun 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852.

<sup>229</sup> Untitled Document, 29 Jun 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852; Handbill, “Ablieferung von Nazibüchern,” n.d., StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852.

<sup>230</sup> Rundschreiben Nr. 37, 23 Jun 45, StAK 1/Bez.Vew.Amt No. 30.

<sup>231</sup> Tätigkeitsbericht Südstadt v. 24.6 – 30.6.45, n.d., StAK 1/Bez.Ver.Amt No. 28.

<sup>232</sup> “Betr.: Erfassung von Nazibüchern,” 23 Jun 45, StAK; To Herr Studienrat Paul Stern, 26 Jun 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852.

On June 30, Heinrich reported to French authorities that Karlsruhe residents had turned in more than 28,000 books and some 29,000 magazines and booklets.<sup>233</sup> Burdensome to those struggling to meet a tight deadline, the goal of the enterprise had the tacit approval of at least a few involved. The city library's newly appointed director, for example, later described his institution's review efforts as eliminating the "Nazi poison." Citing the subjects listed in the handbills, he suggested that the "roots" lay beyond these, in the "evil spirit of Potsdam," and should be traced back to this time.<sup>234</sup>

Similar events were unfolding in neighboring Württemberg, where on June 25 the local French MG sent Stuttgart's lord mayor instructions stating that all libraries should be closed. All librarians were to lock up their books and to prepare, for submission to the MG, lists of books falling into four categories: Nazi propaganda, books that advocated Prussian militarism, anti-French works, and anti-Allied publications. The French made the lord mayor responsible for collecting and storing all "literature works of the Third Reich in schools, libraries, publishing houses, and private libraries" and reporting back to the city commander regarding the outcome of these efforts before July 5. Accordingly, Stuttgart officials hurriedly informed key city administrators of the directive and published a notice in the official city gazette specifying that all publications should be delivered to the city business school's gymnasium.<sup>235</sup> In early July, moreover, the French expanded the order to include all of Württemberg, with a notice in the gazette stressing that the Germans should use "the strictest standard" in deciding what books to surrender. Even a guide to letter-writing that used the greeting "Heil Hitler" only once was offensive, it advised, although references to National Socialism, leading Nazis, or Nazi agencies found in technical or scholarly books could be pasted over.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Heinrich to Militärregierung für die Stadt, 30 Jun 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852.

<sup>234</sup> Ziele, Aufgaben und Tätigkeitsbericht der Volksbücherei, 22 Jan 46, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1816. Josef Werner describes the library director, Artur Schmitteckert, as a member of the new Kulturbund, which he indicates had close ties to the KPD. *Karlsruhe 1945*, 261.

<sup>235</sup> Fregattenkapitän Mercadier to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Stuttgart, 25 Jun 45, and attachments, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3280; "Die Militärregierung hat angeordnet," 27 Jun 45, *Nachrichtenblatt der Militärregierung für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart*, *ibid*. The city's public libraries had been closed since April 20, 1945. Volksbüchereien der Stadt Stuttgart to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Stuttgart, 27 Jun 45, *ibid*.

<sup>236</sup> "Ablieferung der Literaturwerke des Dritten Reiches," 5 Jul 45, *Nachrichtenblatt der Militärregierung für den Stadtkreis Stuttgart*, *ibid*. This was an interesting move by the French given that the Americans controlled a portion of Württemberg and were about to move into Stuttgart. Significantly, the Americans did not—yet—hold the capital city, where Land officials could issue Land-wide instructions.



During the days that followed, employees of local factories, public libraries, city offices, and other establishments dutifully drew up lists and turned in their books. The publications surrendered included numerous copies of *Mein Kampf*, as well as works by Josef Goebbels, Alfred Rosenberg, and other leading Nazis. Some books dealt with pet Nazi themes: *Was ist Rasse* (What is Race?), *Wie ein Proletarierjunge SA-Mann wurde* (How a Proletarian Boy Became an SA-Mann), and *Die germanischen Grundlagen des schwäbischen Bauerntums* (The Germanic Foundations of the Swabian Peasantry).<sup>237</sup> Stuttgart's Zeiss Ikon firm turned over 34 copies of *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft* (The Secret of Japanese Power).<sup>238</sup> Several schools submitted categorized lists. Among the items they classified under "militarism" were works produced by the Wehrmacht High Command, books describing assorted military campaigns, biographies of men such as Hindenburg and Richthofen, and texts aimed at young readers and their teachers, including *Jungens in Feldgrau* (Boys in Field Gray), *Hans wird Flieger* (Hans Becomes a Pilot), *Der Fliegerbuch des deutschen Jugend* (The Aircraft Book of German Youth), *Luftfahrt im Unterricht* (Aviation in School), *Wehrgeist in der Schule* (Military Spirit in the School), and *Soldatendienst im Neuen Reich* (Military Service in the New Reich).<sup>239</sup>

Some respondents had little to report, as Allied bombing and fires had destroyed parts or most of their holdings. Others cited difficulties arising from the fact that materials had been moved to outlying locations during the war. Seven public libraries in the Stuttgart area initially indicated that they would turn in catalog cards describing the books removed, since the shortage of typewriters made it impossible for them to prepare the required lists by the deadline specified. (City officials apparently eventually dealt with this problem.)<sup>240</sup> Meanwhile, a ruined card catalog could exponentially magnify the time needed to complete a review.<sup>241</sup>

School administrators who, in terms of sheer numbers, were most affected by the directive, sometimes had more unusual problems. Children had taken books home and had now left the area or could not retrieve

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<sup>237</sup> For more than 50 lists submitted to Stuttgart officials, see StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3280.

<sup>238</sup> "Abgelieferte Bücher der Firma Zeiss-Ikon A.G.," 2 Jul 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3280.

<sup>239</sup> Schickhardt Mittelschule Stuttgart to Bezirksschulamt, 2 Jul 45, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38; Heusteig- und Fangelsbachhauptschule Stuttgart to Herr Bezirksschulrat Stuttgart, 1 Jul 45, *ibid*; Rektorat der Filderschule to Bezirksschulamt, 2 Jul 45, *ibid*.

<sup>240</sup> Sonderschule I und II, Sprachheil- und Schwerhörigenschule to Bezirksschulamt Stuttgart, 2 Jul 45, *ibid*.; Johanneschule Stuttgart to Bezirksschulamt Stuttgart, 3 Jul 45, *ibid*; Volksbüchereien der Stadt Stuttgart to Herr Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Stuttgart, 27 Jun 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3280; Archiv und Bücherei to Herr Stadtrat Dr. Waidelich, 4 Jul 45, *ibid*.

<sup>241</sup> Robert Bosch GMGH to Stadtverwaltung Stuttgart, 30 Jun 45, *ibid*.

books from houses commandeered by the Americans.<sup>242</sup> Sometimes no one was available to do the work. One regional official sent an instructor from a nearby school to clean out the library of a school whose teacher was elsewhere helping with the harvest.<sup>243</sup> Another reported difficulties conducting a review of a student library because both the principal and the library administrator were absent and the books locked up.<sup>244</sup> School officials also had trouble simply obtaining access to their schools. Several schools were housing Russians or serving as military hospitals.<sup>245</sup> One administrator attributed his delay in reporting to the fact that until recently a Wehrmacht unit had been using the local school as a demobilization center.<sup>246</sup> Many others explained that occupation forces—sometimes French, sometimes American—had requisitioned their schools and denied them access.<sup>247</sup> In a few cases, the arriving troops had looted the books.<sup>248</sup> The head of one secondary school reported that when it was evacuated, the school's libraries had been hastily moved to the building's stage. "Everything lies there now higgled-piggledy—the goats next to the sheep—jumbled," he complained. A sorting effort was currently impossible on the dark stage, he added. He and the school librarian nevertheless completed a vetting of the materials several weeks later, as ordered by a regional official.<sup>249</sup>

At some point, a few mayors evidently burned objectionable books identified in their villages.<sup>250</sup> And the French took away most of the books assembled at Stuttgart's business school, as well as publications

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<sup>242</sup> Oberschule f. J. Bopfingen to Bezirksschulamt Ellwangen, 31 Jul 45, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>243</sup> Bezirksschulamt Leonberg to Landesverwaltung für Kultus, Erziehung und Kunst, 3 Aug 45, *ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> Oberschule Bietigheim/E. to Landesverwaltung für Kultus, Erziehung und Kunst in Württemberg, 25 Jun 45, *ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> Ostheimer Schule, et al. to Bezirksschulamt Stuttgart, 2 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Volksschule Stgt.-Hedelfingen to Stadtverwaltung Stuttgart, 1 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Der Leiter der Schubart-Oberschule, Aalen, to Ministerialabteilung für die höheren Schulen, 27 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>246</sup> Gewerbliche Berufsschule Aalen to Ministerialabteilung für die Fachschulen, 15 Aug 45, *ibid.*

<sup>247</sup> From Pragschule Stuttgart, 2 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Hohenstaufenoberschule f.J. Göppingen to Landesverwaltung für Kultus, Erziehung und Kunst in Württemberg, 26 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Mörike-Oberschule f. J., Ludwigsburg to Landesverwaltung für Kultus, Erziehung und Kunst, 27 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> Der Schulleiter der Bismarckschule und stv. Leiter der Hohewartschule und der Brühlschule Stuttgart/Feuerbach to Bezirksschulamt Stuttgart, 2 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>249</sup> Studienrat H. to Bezirksschulamt Böblingen in Sindelfingen, 19 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Bezirksschulamt Böblingen in Sindelfingen to Landesverwaltung für Kultus, Erziehung und Kunst, 28 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Studienrat H. to Landesverwaltg. für Kultus, Erziehung u. Kunst, 5 Aug 45, *ibid.*

<sup>250</sup> Gewerbliche Berufsschule Aalen, Kreisbeauftragter für die Berufs- und Fachschulen to Württ.Kultministerium, 25 Feb 47, *ibid.*; Gewerbl. Berufsschule Blaufelden to Kultministerium U IV, 25 Feb 47, *ibid.*

gathered in some other communities.<sup>251</sup> As directed by Württemberg education authorities, most school officials locked up books culled from their libraries and sought instructions from local MG officers as to what they should do with them. But by this time, American officials had inherited responsibility for their disposition in North Württemberg and often had no immediate answers. In at least one case, MG officers told a regional administrator to keep the materials secured in the schools and await further instructions.<sup>252</sup>

The French also left North Baden before determining the fate of books amassed at Karlsruhe's Haus Solms and at the Papier- und Zellstoffwerke AG in Ettlingen.<sup>253</sup> The Landrat from Landkreis Karlsruhe almost immediately recommended to incoming U.S. officials that the materials in Ettlingen be pulped and any monies received donated to a fund for local Nazi victims.<sup>254</sup> But although the Americans inspected the publications soon thereafter, it was months before they finally decided how to dispose of them.<sup>255</sup> In the interim, Karlsruhe officials had also looked into sending their books to the paper mill, with the city to receive supplies of much-coveted new paper in return.<sup>256</sup> At the end of 1945, the city library's director was reporting that the MG had ordered the books stored in the Haus Solms to be pulped.<sup>257</sup> But this, too, did not immediately occur.

By now, another American player had joined the game. Nobly preserving materials for posterity, it was also effectively slowing the work of local MG officers and reducing the volume of paper the Germans might receive in any bartering operations. Shortly after the war ended, the U.S. Library of Congress (LoC) had established a "mission" in Europe designed to augment its own collections and assist other American libraries in doing the same. Specifically, library agents began tracking down book orders that had remained unshipped when war broke out and buying up old stocks from publishers to distribute to more than 100 American research

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<sup>251</sup> Der Oberbürgermeister der Stadt Stuttgart to American Military Government, 17 Nov 45, StAS HA Gruppe 3 Abl. 15.1.1969 No. 3280; Oberschule Bietigheim/E., 15 Jul 45, HStA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>252</sup> U I Nr. 18, 7 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Oberschule für Jungen Marbach/Neckar to Herr Präzeptor Paul S., 25 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Oberschule f. J. Bopfingen to Bezirksschulamt Ellwangen, 31 Jul 45, *ibid.*; Der Bezirksschulrat für Böblingen in Sindelfingen to Landesverwaltung für Kultus Erziehung und Kunst, 30 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>253</sup> One mayor from Landkreis Karlsruhe later reported that when American troops took over his community, they burned the books the town had assembled in one of its schoolhouses. Der Bürgermeister der Gemeinde Neurat to Herr Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe, 16 Jul 45, GLA 357 No. 31.493.

<sup>254</sup> The Landrat the Kreis Karlsruhe to the Military Government, 24 Jul 45, *ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> Daily Report, Lt. Lee, 5 Sep 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 524, F: Daily Reports Det G-45.

<sup>256</sup> "Nazi-Bücher," 10 Sep 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1852.

<sup>257</sup> Ziele, Aufgaben und Tätigkeitsbericht der Volksbücherei, 22 Jan 46, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 1816.

libraries that had been unable to keep their collections current during the hostilities. The LoC personnel, however, also agreed to help with the screening and disposing of objectionable German publications and thus had their pick of materials confiscated not only from German army and Nazi organizations and but also from German booksellers, publishers, libraries, and other sources. Altogether, the library representatives sought to purchase and rescue from paper mills “up to fifty copies each of books of general reference value and at least three copies of all other publications.”<sup>258</sup>

The picture that emerges of these efforts during the spring of 1946 is a rather disorderly one involving LoC agents traveling about occupied Germany, visiting publishers and inspecting stashes of books captured by the army and collected by the ICD, selecting items for preservation, and making plans for the books to be shipped back to the United States. In this context, the LoC’s representative in Württemberg-Baden, Julius Allen, finally determined the fate of many of the confiscated publications. As of January 1946, no ICD outpost could authorize the pulping of books until an LoC agent had first examined them.<sup>259</sup> After Allen concluded that there were no items of interest held in Pforzheim, for example, an ICD official recommended to a local MG officer that the materials be pulped.<sup>260</sup> In Landkreis Aalen, Allen identified publications turned over by a library that were actually unobjectionable and could be returned.<sup>261</sup> On the other hand, in late March, he acquired “about three or four boxes” of “tendentious literature” from Stuttgart’s ICD detachment. He also spent several days in Karlsruhe, where at the Haus Solms he sifted through Nazi literature, school books, and periodicals published since 1933, which he believed comprised “a fair percentage of the material of this nature collected in Baden.” He later reported that he had laid claim to roughly “5,000 volumes (at least), certainly enough to load two 6x6 trucks if books were not crated.” In addition, he planned to take several boxes of the city library’s offensive publications. A portion of the remainder was destined for the archives of the badly

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<sup>258</sup> Robert B. Downs, “Wartime Co-Operative Acquisitions,” *The Library Quarterly* 19, No. 3 (1949): 157-159, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division, Records of the Library of Congress, European Mission & Cooperative Acquisitions Project [hereafter LoC-MD, European Mission], Box 27, F: Mission History, 1945-51; “European Wartime Acquisitions and the Library of Congress Mission,” ca. Feb 46, LoC-MD, European Mission, Box 6, F: Order No. 4, the law and its history – some comment; Felix Reichmann to All Outposts, 10 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 591, F: Letters from FR to this Outpost.

<sup>259</sup> Felix Reichmann to All Outposts, 10 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 591, F: Letters from FR to this Outpost.

<sup>260</sup> Werner N. Gumpertz to Mr. Allen, 8 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 596, F: Pforzheim; Julius W. Allen to Werner, 22 Apr 46, *ibid*; Chief, Publications Section, to Lt. Schreyer, 26 Apr 46, *ibid*.

<sup>261</sup> Julius W. Allen to Mr Helmut H. Haeussler, 5 Jun 46, LoC-MD, European Mission, Box 7, F: Kreis Aalen 1946.

decimated Baden State Library, while the rest was to be pulped. Allen also visited Ettlingen's paper mill, where he rescued from pulping some four boxes of materials, including music.<sup>262</sup>

As suggested by Allen's report, the Americans were not averse to allowing German institutions to retain objectionable publications themselves. In addition to permitting Baden's state library to supplement its holdings, the Americans agreed to let the Karlsruhe public library keep more than 600 books for scholarly use and also approved a request from Württemberg cultural officials that the Land's research libraries be allowed to retain books from the Third Reich, provided they remained under lock and key with access granted only to authorized researchers.<sup>263</sup> Yet the Americans evidently did cart off some rather significant materials. Allen, for instance, was also deciding how best to handle Stuttgart's *Weltkriegsbücherei* (World War Library), a large collection of books, pamphlets, pictures, and other items relating to the First World War. At least a portion was eventually sent to the United States.<sup>264</sup> Library officials in Washington, however, ultimately decided against retaining or distributing materials clearly identified as belonging to German research institutions and actually shipped 190 cases of *Weltkriegsbücherei* materials *back* to Stuttgart even before the occupation had ended.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Julius W. Allen to Mr. Reuben Peiss and Mr. David Clift, 21 Mar 46, LoC-MD, European Mission, Box 8, F: Karlsruhe Captured Miscellany 41/1-80 1946-1947; Julius W. Allen to David Clift, 26 Mar 46, *ibid*; Julius W. Allen to Mr. David Clift, 1 Apr 46, *ibid*. (Emphasis in original.)

<sup>263</sup> Commiss. Bürgermeister to Military Government, 17 Jul 45, StAK 1/H-Reg No 1816; Untitled document, 31 Jul 45, *ibid*; Department of Culture in Wurttemberg to Military Government – Region, 31 Jul 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 884, F: 308.

<sup>264</sup> Allen to Peiss and Clift, 21 Mar 46, LoC-MD; Downs, "Wartime Co-Operative Acquisitions," 163. A 1936 *Journal of American History* book review described the *Weltkriegsbücherei* as "an organization with a four-fold purpose. . . . (1) to make available some 75,000 volumes of writings on the Great War; (2) to serve as a research institute for advanced study on all phases of the War; (3) to give access to a very extensive periodical and newspaper collection of materials on the war; (4) to serve as a museum for a vast mass of miscellaneous materials on the war." Bibliography, *Journal of American History* 8, No. 2 (1936): 244.

<sup>265</sup> Downs, "Wartime Co-Operative Acquisitions," 162-163. The library was walking a fine ethical line and was criticized for it even at the time. The author of this contemporary article described the challenges the library faced. "An ethical problem in relation to the project troubled the consciences of idealists," he noted. "It was feared that, in the huge mass of confiscated publications received through military channels, books belonging to universities, public libraries, and other cultural institutions may have been included. A few librarians even contended that all nonpurchased material was military loot, regardless of the type of organization from which it had been taken, and as such should be rejected by American libraries. A more reasonable attitude was adopted by the Library of Congress, which realized the practical impossibility of returning any substantial percentage of the collection to the original owners. Every reasonable precaution was exercised by the Library, however, to insure that material from non-Nazi research organizations was identified and, if feasible, returned to the rightful owners rather than distributed to American libraries." The return of the *Weltkriegsbücherei* material was an example of "the strict ethical principles observed by the Library of Congress" in administering its program.

Late in 1945, the chief of the ICD's Publications Section summarized for a colleague the American position regarding German books, explaining that it was against U.S. policy for Americans to destroy German-owned publications or to specify "particular publications which Germans may not own, read, lend, sell or display." They were, however, permitted to specify "the types of publications which conflict with the stated purpose of the occupation." They might also make German registrants responsible for preventing the sale or circulation of this literature, help German agencies to "segregate publications they consider objectionable in terms of U.S. policy and move them to paper mills for pulping," and accept lists of objectionable books prepared by the Germans to use in spot-checking publications held by registered book dealers.<sup>266</sup> In other words, as a compromise between outright censorship and American long-term security needs, while simultaneously promoting new German values, the Americans prohibited the Germans from circulating certain kinds of literature, monitored their obedience, and were willing to help arrange for the destruction of offending materials to produce badly needed paper. But, officially, they were unwilling to instruct the Germans as to what books, specifically, should be removed or to destroy the publications themselves.

As with so many American policies, Berlin's quadripartite governing apparatus was slowly catching up. Not surprisingly, Allied talks regarding the confiscation of Nazi and militaristic literature now provoked new discussions in U.S. policymaking circles concerning the advisability and potential impact of such measures. Perhaps more unexpected was the storm of protest the policy now incited at home.

Prompted by papers submitted by the Soviets and by an informal quadripartite information control services group, respectively, both the Military Directorate and Political Directorate began discussing the issue of German publications in early 1946. While the military paper emphasized forbidding Germans to possess books, journals, memoirs, regulations, and other materials that could be used in military training or study, as well as Nazi works,<sup>267</sup> the second document centered on more typical concerns in seeking to ban the selling, lending, or distribution of literature that supported or glorified Nazi or militaristic ideas or that tried to create

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<sup>266</sup> Douglas Waples to Assistant Chief of Division (Ops), 10 Dec 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 236, F: German Publications – Blacklists of.

<sup>267</sup> DMIL/P(46)5, 19 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 425, F: DMIL/P(46) 1-53.

divisions among the Allies.<sup>268</sup> Eventually, the Political Directorate decided to combine the information control paper with one approved by the Military Directorate to produce a document for further discussion.<sup>269</sup>

OMGUS officials had mixed feelings about these developments, struggling to navigate between conflicting concerns. For ICD officers, the proposed information control plan essentially represented only a minor change in degree. The division did, however, adamantly resist Soviet pressures to order the vetting of personal libraries.<sup>270</sup> Absolutely committed to confiscating all military training materials, the Armed Forces Division worried less about infringements on personal freedoms. “It must be remembered,” wrote Colonel Thomas Whitted, Jr., head of the division’s Demobilization Branch, “that the primary reason for the occupation of Germany is the liquidation of its war potential and the removal of a threat to peace. Democratic principles and privileges should be granted to the German people, in such a measure, as they are earned and can be absorbed by the German people themselves.”<sup>271</sup> Division officials, however, were also being coached by members of OMGUS’s Political Affairs Office, who were the most squeamish about ongoing talks. A proposal for the confiscation and destruction of literature was undemocratic and too reminiscent of the Nazis’ own conduct, Donald Heath explained informally to the military representatives.<sup>272</sup>

State Department officials in Washington were even more disturbed. In a telegram to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Clay’s political advisor Robert Murphy conceded that measures being considered might provoke a negative reaction in democratic countries, but also pointed out that the ACC’s Law No. 8 on military training already banned many of the materials. “Furthermore,” he suggested, “during early stages of occupation when Germans are exposed to democratic way of life which many of them still regard as alien and with which many others are unfamiliar, a wisely drawn paper giving more precise content to Law 8 and perhaps also incorporating provisions curbing possible abuses of police power in matter of restraint of public expression,

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<sup>268</sup> DPOL/P(46)13, 2 Feb 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 413, F: DPOL/P(46) 1-47.

<sup>269</sup> Mr. Heath to Ambassador Murphy, n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 257, F: ACA Order No. 4.

<sup>270</sup> Edward T. Peeples to Armed Forces Division, 11 Feb 46, *ibid*.

<sup>271</sup> “Brief on: Surrender and Destruction of All Printed Publications, Manuscripts and Works of Military Nature in Germany,” 7 Feb 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Reading File, 1 Jan 1946 – April 1946 2 of 3.

<sup>272</sup> F.E.E., Jr., to General Harper, 28 Jan 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Reading File, 1 Jan 1946 – 22 April 1946 3 of 3.

might be beneficial.”<sup>273</sup> His Washington counterparts remained skeptical. The department, Byrnes replied, was concerned “lest a program for suppression of allegedly noxious printed material lead to grave abuses reminiscent of Nazi book burnings and similar acts of violence to the intellect” and wanted to study the new proposal before OMGUS officials agreed to it. Consistent with the department’s emphasis on reconstruction and reeducation, Byrnes also explained that it recognized the “need for carefully weighed measures to prevent literary campaigns for revival of National Socialism and militarism,” but was “persuaded that fundamental change of German outlook must come from positive program of democratic teaching and democratic example rather than from attempting to suppress the extended categories of materials” the information control group had proposed. “As Dept understands this program,” he concluded, “it appears not only impossible of enforcement without excessive police methods but also psychologically unsound.”<sup>274</sup>

Despite Washington’s concerns, a proposal regarding literature confiscation slowly made its way through Berlin’s quadripartite machinery. The major sticking point here involved books held by individual Germans. The Americans and the British, in particular, refused to countenance any provision to remove books from private homes, while the Soviets stressed the need to eradicate Germany’s Nazi and militarist heritage and countered claims that enforcement would be impossible by reporting satisfactory results in their own zone.<sup>275</sup> The end result of the talks was ACC Order No. 4, which required all circulating libraries, bookshops, and publishers, as well as all city, state, school, university, research institution, and scientific and technical association libraries—but not individuals—to turn in a broad range of materials, including “books, pamphlets, magazines, files of newspapers, albums, manuscripts, documents, maps, plans, song and music books, cinematographic films and magic lantern slides,” containing Nazi propaganda (including “incitements to aggression”) and any textbooks, instructions, diagrams, plans and other items that contributed to “military training and education or to the maintenance and development of war potential.” All of the materials, the order noted, “shall be placed at the disposal of the Military Zone Commanders for destruction.”<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> The United States Political Advisor for Germany (Murphy) to the Secretary of State, 18 Feb 46, *FRUS, 1946* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1969), 5:661-663.

<sup>274</sup> The Secretary of State to the United States Political Advisor for Germany (Murphy), 25 Feb 45, *FRUS, 1946*, 5:663.

<sup>275</sup> DPOL/Memo(46)17, 1 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 412, F: DPOL/MEMO(46) 1-178; CORC/M(46)20, 9 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, CORC, Box 141, F: Fiftieth Mtg. Coordinating Comm.

<sup>276</sup> Control Council Order No. 4, 13 May 46, in Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany Under Occupation*, 134-135.



From nearly the moment the ACC ratified it on May 13, 1946, Order No. 4 caused controversy. And OMGUS officials were immediately thrown into damage control mode. At two news briefings on the thirteenth, an agitated Berlin press corps hurled a barrage of questions at Vivian Cox, an assistant to the U.S. member of the Military Directorate. No, she reported, the United States had not objected to the measure on the grounds that it impinged on freedom of speech and the press, but rather due to concerns about practicality. No, it did not matter that American-licensed German newspapers might be denied the use of critical resources. The objective of the order, like the directive regarding monuments issued the same day, was to wipe out German militarism and Nazism to the degree that this was possible. Yes, she understood that book banning elsewhere had increased book sales and that thousands of copies of *Mein Kampf* circulating outside of Germany could be returned when the Allies departed; in fact, the Germans could hide and circulate copies of their own, if they were so inclined, she added. Yes, even short passages might doom entire books. Yes, only *German* authors and *German* militarism were covered.<sup>277</sup>

To Cox's audience, the implications of her explanations were clear. As the *New York Times*' McLaughlin put it, "All books glorifying militarism of other countries would be available to students of history in German universities, to whom, however, would be denied an opportunity to peruse works of German authors contaminated by even brief mentions of German military successes." One particularly sensitive issue raised at the news briefing, moreover, was that of burning books. When a reporter asked how the principles embodied in the order differed from those of the infamous Nazi book burnings, Cox indicated that she believed the principles involved were the same. Nevertheless, according to McLaughlin, Cox "stoutly defended the action . . . on the ground that it was imperative to cleanse the German mentality of any militaristic taint." It may have been this assertion that prompted McLaughlin to conclude the first paragraph of her article on the order with the sentence: "It is assumed that books will be burned."<sup>278</sup> This supposition, and its unstated corollary, that the Allies were swimming dangerously close to fascist waters, earned MG officials fierce criticism.

"Of all the orders issued by the Allied Military Government in Germany, the one that must sound most familiar to the Germans is that decreeing the burning of millions of books, newspapers, and other writings deemed 'anti-democratic, militaristic, or Nazi,'" declared the editors of the *New York Times* two days later. "If

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<sup>277</sup> Kathleen McLaughlin, "Allies to Wipe Out All Pro-Nazi Books," *NYT*, 14 May 45.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

the Germans still desire to read about war,” they added, “they can satisfy their perverse desire by reading the military literature of their conquerors. . . . But they must not gaze upon such products of their own authorship, even if that means rewriting their whole political, military and economic history.” Suggesting that “Hitler’s ghost” was laughing at how his conquerors were “beginning to tread in his footsteps,” the *Times* editors argued that “to the democratic world, and to the American people in particular, the order will appear simply stupid, if only for the reason that it is bound to achieve precisely the opposite result.” The order would make Nazi ideology a persecuted religion and teach that Hitler had been correct—the Allies, after all, were adopting his methods. Moreover, outlawing “patriotism” would drive it underground “to nazism.”<sup>279</sup>

The following day, a letter to the *Times* from a representative of the New York City bar association expressed a similar view. Americans had fought the war to defend and extend the principles of the Bill of Rights, the writer insisted, and if they now abandoned their ideals and burned their enemies’ books, they would have “won a war only to betray the great principles for which [they] fought.” Instead, the books should be preserved so that all might understand “the thoughts and motives which made Germany the most hated nation in the world and reduced that once honored and respected country to dust and ashes.”<sup>280</sup> American Library Association leaders, meanwhile, sent telegrams to President Truman, the secretaries of war and state, and key members of Congress labeling the plan to confiscate and destroy Nazi publications “short-sighted, unsound, and contrary to democratic principles” and calling for its revocation.<sup>281</sup> American officials also received a variety of other letters protesting the burning of German books.<sup>282</sup>

On the other hand, some Americans no doubt agreed with another *Times* letter writer who asked, “Do we imitate a criminal when we pay him back tit for tat?” and contended that burning books would be wrong in the United States, “but in present-day Germany, with heart and mind still full of Nazi poison, drastic measures are necessary.”<sup>283</sup> In June, Library of Congress officials in Germany also jumped into the fray, telling

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<sup>279</sup> “Burning More Books,” *NYT*, 15 May 46.

<sup>280</sup> Committee on the Bill of Rights, Association of the Bar of the City of New York, letter to the editor, *NYT*, 16 May 46.

<sup>281</sup> Quoted in Stieg, “The Postwar Purge of German Public Libraries,” 154.

<sup>282</sup> Col. Whipple to Hon. Thomas D’Alesandro, Jr., 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 257, F: ACA Order No. 4; Edward T. Peeples to Mrs. James Myers, Jr., 25 Jun 46, *ibid*; AGWAR from WDSCA from Echols to OMGUS, 14 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 104, F: AG 461 Confiscation of Nazi Literature.

<sup>283</sup> J. Globus, letter to the editor, *NYT*, 22 May 46.

colleagues from the library association that the recent telegram was “a harmful piece of poor statesmanship” likely “based upon incomplete (if not inaccurate) information probably deriving from sensational press reports.” The “practice of military authorities,” they argued, had been “reasoned, enlightened, and in no sense undemocratic,” with welcome recognition for the importance of preserving materials for research. “They should be commended rather than reproved.”<sup>284</sup>

Despite certain votes of confidence—and the reality that the American MG had been confiscating books for nearly a year—U.S. Military Governor General Joseph McNarney in late May acknowledged the extent of the negative reaction in the U.S., admitting at a press conference that officials were reviewing the policy.<sup>285</sup> In fact, OMGUS was responding in a number of ways. At several meetings in mid May, high-level personnel from the information control, education, and political staffs agreed that the new order called for no change in existing policy. For some time, books had been pulped to provide badly needed paper for new schoolbooks. “The aim followed in disposing of undesirable literature by pulping has been the production of paper for the execution of a positive program of democratic re-education of Germany,” they concluded. But they also were not entirely happy with the way the order had turned out.<sup>286</sup> Almost immediately, American ACA delegates began pushing for an amendment stating explicitly that zone commanders could permit books to be saved for “research and scientific study.”<sup>287</sup> Prevailing over Soviet resistance, the Americans, with solid British support, achieved this objective in August.<sup>288</sup> OMGUS also launched a review to assess how such an unsatisfactory order had come to be issued. Concluding that “the staff action was badly bungled,” an

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<sup>284</sup> Reuben Peiss, Memorandum of Interview with Brigadier General George S. Eyster, 12 Jun 46, LoC-MD, European Mission, Box 6, F: Allied Control Council, Order #4 General, 1946-1954.

<sup>285</sup> Kathleen McLaughlin, “McNarney Ponders Potsdam Revision,” *NYT*, 22 May 46.

<sup>286</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Education and Religious Affairs Branch, 16 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 20, F: Conference – Minutes of Branch; Minutes of Meeting of Education and Religious Affairs Branch, 20 May 46, *ibid.*

<sup>287</sup> DIAC/AEC/P(46)18, 21 May 46, NA, RG 260, DIAC, Box 203, F: DIAC/AEC/P (45)(46)(47)(48).

<sup>288</sup> DPOL/M(46)24, 21 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, DPOL, Box 411, F: DPOL/M(46) 23-34; G.H. Garde to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 13 Sep 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: A-4 Confiscation of Literature and Material of a Nazi and Militarist Nature. OMGUS’s Armed Forces Division continued to take a less flexible position than the other divisions regarding German publications. Asked to comment on a draft of the amendment, the Demobilization Branch’s Colonel Whitted proposed that the Military Directorate state that “it sees no necessity for the retention of militaristic literature for the purpose of research or study by any Germans.” The directorate ultimately took this stance, to no avail. “Brief on: Draft Amendment to Control Council Order No. 4,” 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 24, F: Demil. Br., Reading File, 23 April 1946 – 31 July 1946 1 of 3; Minutes of Thirty-First Meeting of Military Directorate, n.d., NA, RG 260, DMIL, Box 424, F: DMIL/M(46) 1-30.

investigator cited a pervasive lack of initiative and the breakdown of internal consultation processes on multiple fronts.<sup>289</sup>

Clay, meanwhile, was dousing fires in Washington. In late May, the War Department Civil Affairs Division's head, Major General O. P. Echols, raised the issue of civil liberties with Clay. The new order, Clay replied, introduced no substantial policy change—MG had prohibited the circulation of offensive literature since the occupation began and hundreds of thousands of books had already been pulped. Nazi textbooks could clearly no longer be used in German schools, he reminded, and he favored pulping the most egregious books currently sequestered in German libraries as well. There would, of course, be no public book burnings, and the Library of Congress was ensuring that copies of the pulped books were being saved. Clay, however, conveyed this information within a lengthy commentary on the civil liberties question. “It was my understanding that restoration of civil liberties in Germany was an objective to be obtained as rapidly as consistent with other objectives such as denazification and demilitarization,” he began. “Of course we have not restored all civil liberties in Germany.” He cited post-publication press censorship, the “thousands still in jail without bond awaiting trial until Nuremberg is over,” control of scientific studies that might be applied to war, the possible restraint of general staff officers “for years to come,” and American approval of party platforms. “None of these measures are consistent with our understanding of civil liberties,” he pointed out. Restoring civil liberties under MG, he advised, “must be a slow process during which there will always be conflicting opinion as to the rapidity with which such liberties are being restored as compared to the attainment of our other objectives.” The Americans had “advanced more rapidly” than the other zones, but they were “still far from having a democratic Germany.” If the War Department thought they should restore civil liberties now, he added, they “would probably have to withdraw from quadripartite government as the other powers are not ready for such action.” He continued: “In my opinion neither is the U.S. zone in Germany, even though we have progressed better than expected.”<sup>290</sup>

Soon thereafter, General John Hilldring, now an assistant secretary of state, asked Echols for comments on a draft cable to army officials in Germany stating that the order was “so sweeping in import” that

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<sup>289</sup> Lt. Col. Sole to Col. Whipple, 22 May 46, NA, RG 260, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 104, F: AG Confiscation of Nazi Literature. (Emphasis in original.)

<sup>290</sup> From Clay to Echols, 31 May 46, in Jean Edward Smith, ed., *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay, Germany 1945-1949*, Vol. 1 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), 224-226.

the government wanted to study the issue further before endorsing it as policy. Leaving out Clay's comments regarding German civil liberties, Echols summarized Clay's remarks on the new policy for Hilldring and reported that Donald Heath had assured that the order would permit reference and university libraries to retain books for authorized users. Echols also pointed out that the cable "would undoubtedly embarrass General Clay in quadripartite circles since it could be regarded as nonconcurrence in his judgment by the United States Government" and "would require that no action be taken in the U.S Zone on an Order which has already been published and is being implemented." He suggested, too, that "most of the objections . . . have been caused by the poor public relations job done in allowing such an important story to be released by Miss Cox. . . . The references in the press to 'burning of books' and the likening of the order to Nazi practices were most unfortunate." He advised that Clay be asked both to carry out the order as planned and to fully explain the program to the American press in Germany to make clear that there would be no book burnings or witch hunts.<sup>291</sup> Echols' view evidently ultimately prevailed.

Interestingly, as Clay had informed Echols, the American people seemed far more distressed by the new order than the Germans were. This may have been due, in part, to the fact that the measures were not really new to them. The democratic sensibilities of some were perhaps also less acute. Yet Clay was correct, too, in arguing that "some responsible German liberals who have always opposed Nazism have consistently favored the removal of Nazi literature from Germany or its destruction."<sup>292</sup>

Shortly after the ACC issued Order No. 4, the ICD sent out interviewers to solicit German opinions on the subject. Some raised the very issues about which many Americans were concerned. "In Heidelberg publishers' circles the opinion prevails that the application of such a law is incompatible with democratic principles," MG officials reported, adding, "Quite a few publishers called this order a copy of national-socialist legislation." They had also maintained that publishing it was "dangerous for creating opposite tendencies." A number of Germans worried, similarly, that proscribing books would just make them more attractive. "Forbidden books always are exciting for young people and are a great temptation," noted a secondary school principal in Stuttgart. In Ulm, a publications control official raised a different issue. Booksellers and librarians,

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<sup>291</sup> The Director of the Civil Affairs Division of the War Department (Echols) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Occupied Areas (Hilldring), 4 Jun 46, *FRUS, 1946*, 5:677-679.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, 678.

he observed, “know that these books become rare and that their value increases steadily.” They were therefore taking them home or giving them to friends to prevent their confiscation.<sup>293</sup>

A few of those interviewed suggested that many Germans were indifferent to the new order. Others appreciated it. Ulm’s Weisser, reported a local intelligence officer, “could not think of a more ideal way of tackling the question.” The order, he also noted, “was generally welcomed in publishers’ circles. They take a positive attitude towards the law and think it almost too tolerant.” Most thought it quite generous in permitting private possession of the banned literature. In Heidelberg, Hans Meier, the chairman of the SPD, and Ralph Agricola, the Communist editor of the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, both advocated burning Nazi books, the latter indicating that the new order was, in the words of a MG report, “absolutely necessary for the rebuilding of the young democracy.”<sup>294</sup>

Many of those approached by ICD interviewers occupied a middle ground. Like Agricola, a few suggested that the surrender of books should be voluntary. More often, individuals argued that certain books were dangerous and should be removed from public libraries and schools, but also lobbied for retaining samples of Nazi materials for educational and research purposes. Having Nazi literature at hand was critical for those trying to combat old ideas and instill new ones, some explained. Others hoped to reveal the foolishness of Nazi ideas.<sup>295</sup>

Whether or not they saw value in the book removal initiative, a number of Germans saw its limits. Obtaining new books containing new ideas was equally, if not more, important some pointed out. “The Nazi period itself has shown that you cannot suppress an entire literature by forbidding it,” reminded a librarian from the Württemberg State Library. “Ideas have to be killed by ideas, not by governmental orders.” His thoughts were echoed by an Ulm high school student who maintained “that if democracy offers better ideas than those represented by fascist and militarist literature, there is no need for destruction.”<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Intelligence Report No. 804, 5 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2]; Hugh H. Weil to Chief, Information Control Division, 3 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [1]; Ludwig Lefebvre to Chief, Information Control Division, 3 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 86, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [1]; Intelligence Report No. 238, 4 Jun 46, *ibid*.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid*.

*Literature Confiscation: Round Two*

While the Germans assessed the order's merits and the OMGUS staff in Berlin began crafting implementing instructions, information control officials locally began issuing new directives to lending libraries, bookshops, and publishers mandating the removal of all objectionable books.<sup>297</sup> In mid summer, the head of Württemberg-Baden's MG education staff, Richard Banks, followed suit, ordering Land officials to see to the vetting of all books held by schools and public libraries. The objectionable publications were to be delivered to collecting points already established by the ICD.<sup>298</sup> Although OMGUS headquarters set a mid August 1946 deadline, the collecting effort dragged into the fall and beyond. Land MG officials also waited until mid September for headquarters to disseminate instructions regarding procedures for sorting and pulping the materials.<sup>299</sup>

When asked about the new ACC order, a number of German librarians, publishers, and book dealers had expressed a desire for an index of objectionable items. Some worried that anxious librarians would hand over books not targeted by the order and others were uncertain as to what should be considered offensive, particularly in terms of "militaristic" books.<sup>300</sup> But a definitive list continued to be officially anathema to the Americans. Instead, they turned to German professionals for help in compiling an advisory document, ultimately settling on a register of 35 magazines and 1,000 books and authors developed at their request by the director of the Württemberg State Library. This they distributed to local MG authorities as an *illustrative* list containing obvious works of Nazi propaganda and militarism for use in spot checking compliance. The list, a cover sheet emphasized, was not exhaustive, but indicative of the "type and character" of literature to be removed. Titles included books such as *Deutsche Soldaten sehen die Sowjet-Union* (German Soldiers See the

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<sup>297</sup> Chief, Publications Control Section to Bad. Neueste Nachrichten, 29 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 592, F: Correspondence.

<sup>298</sup> Richard G. Banks to Ministry of Culture, 27 Jun 46, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38. OMGUS's implementing instructions called for items received from commercial sellers, lenders, and distributors to be purchased "at an appropriate rate for pulping," while materials belonging to schools, libraries, and similar institutions were to be "sorted and delivered to Military Government for appropriate disposition." Bryan L. Milburn to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 30 Jun 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: A-4 Confiscation of Literature & Material of a Nazi and Militarist Nature.

<sup>299</sup> Charles K. Gailey to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, 10 Sep 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: A-4 Confiscation of Literature & Material of a Nazi and Militarist Nature.

<sup>300</sup> Intelligence Report No. 804, 5 Jun 46, NA, RG 260; Lefebvre to Chief, Information Control Division, 3 Jun 46, NA, RG 260; Intelligence Report No. 238, 4 Jun 46, NA, RG 260.

Soviet Union), *Luftmacht Deutschland* (Air Power Germany), and *Das Buch der Freikorpskämpfer* (The Book of the Free Corps Fighter), as well as magazines like *Volk und Rasse* (People and Race) and *Odal*.

*Monatsschrift für Blut und Boden* (Monthly Magazine for Blood and Soil).<sup>301</sup> Conceived as an aid to MG officers and their German assistants, it was sometimes circulated more widely to school officials and bookshop owners.<sup>302</sup> However, other Germans charged with cleaning up their holdings had to rely on their own instincts or turned for help to a Soviet Zone catalog containing roughly 15,000 entries (a document that was not entirely compatible with the U.S. list).<sup>303</sup>

A list—any list—could facilitate the review process, but the absence of definitive guidance still prolonged and complicated the work. In addition to sorting out obviously objectionable works, the Germans had to carefully check many other publications. The instructions from Banks stated that any textbooks disapproved by the Americans had to be removed from libraries, but urged a close examination of all other materials, specifying that “only those which are completely bad should be collected.”<sup>304</sup> Yet German officials could hardly allow even slightly dubious publications to circulate. Recent editions of older books thus had to be scoured for fawning tributes to Nazi leaders, as did the prefaces and epilogues of works on seemingly innocuous scholarly topics.<sup>305</sup> One employee of the Karlsruhe city library later recalled some of the idiosyncrasies of the review effort, noting, for example, that saving a book on the ascent of the north face of Switzerland’s Eiger mountain required the library staff to cut out various pages and to black out parts that discussed Hitler receiving

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<sup>301</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Education and Religious Affairs, 22 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 20, F: Conference – Minutes of Branch; “Memorandum: Conversation with General Clay re: Allied Control Council Order No. 4,” 13 Jun 46, LoC-MD, European Mission, Box 7, F: 3 Background Material on the Order 1946-47; Bryan L. Milburn to Directors, Office of Military Government for Bavaria, et al, 30 Jun 46, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 26, F: A-4 Confiscation of Literature & Material of a Nazi and Militarist Nature.

<sup>302</sup> Bryan L. Milburn to Direktoren, Geschäftsstelle der Mil.Reg. für Bayern, et al, 30 Jun 46, StAL EL 209 Bü 158; Dr. T. to Militärregierung Württemberg-Baden, Information Control Division, Publications Branch, 24 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 594, F: Landratsamt – Pforzheim Landrat Milit.govt.

<sup>303</sup> Bruno W. to Office of Military Government Württemberg-Baden, Information Control Division, Publications Branch, 1 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 597, F: Wirtschaftskontrollamt; Breitenkamp, *U.S. Information Control Division*, 11-12.

<sup>304</sup> Richard G. Banks to Ministry of Culture, 27 Jun 46, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>305</sup> Verwaltungsbericht der Städtischen Büchereien 1946, n.d., StAS HA Gruppe 0 Abl. 27.4.1972 No. 0622 Verwaltungsberichte 1946; “Nazibücher wurden jetzt ‘entrümpelt,’” *SDZ*, 31 Jul 46.



the climbers.<sup>306</sup> Heidelberg's city library placed an insert in each book it loaned out asking readers to alert the staff if they discovered questionable passages inside.<sup>307</sup>

In the end, Stuttgart officials removed an additional 2,900 books from the city's libraries.<sup>308</sup> In Ulm, city library personnel culled out more than 1,600 items and set aside several hundred others for minor changes. Most, explained an article in the local paper, were standard Nazi works or contaminated works for youth, with the militaristic literature encompassing primarily the "countless accounts of experiences" that had appeared during the war.<sup>309</sup> Herbert van der Berg noted in late July that of the approximately seven tons of books collected in Ulm to date that were not school books, two thirds were "of a militaristic nature." "When requisitioning the books in the libraries, [a local representative of MG] ran into quite a number of misunderstandings," he added. "MG was criticized for confiscating some of the militaristic type books, especially those types which are of historical nature."<sup>310</sup>

Agents authorized by the ICD checked the holdings of bookstores and lending libraries, where violations might only lead to a removal of the offending works, but could also lead to a revocation of the operator's registration.<sup>311</sup> The Land's schools, meanwhile, reported to the Ministry of Culture, with many stating that they had already removed all or most of their objectionable books during the past year and turned them over to the MG, town authorities, or a local paper firm. Some submitted lists of titles harvested during a second review effort. Occasionally, schools still had items they had segregated months before which no one had yet picked up.<sup>312</sup> As negotiated in Berlin, the Land's key scholarly institutions obtained permission to retain their sequestered books. As of September 1946, this group included the Württemberg and Baden state

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<sup>306</sup> Notes from Joseph Werner conversation with Fritz Ehret, 22 Aug 46, StAK 8/StS 17 No. 106.

<sup>307</sup> Dr. Moufang to Herr Stadtrat Prof. Dr. Kaufmann Bühler, 19 Dec 46, StAH AA 177 No. 2f; "An unsere Leser!" n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>308</sup> Verwaltungsbericht der Städtischen Büchereien 1946, n.d., StAS.

<sup>309</sup> "Nazibücher wurden jetzt 'entrümpelt,'" *SDZ*, 31 Jul 46.

<sup>310</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 22 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].

<sup>311</sup> James Hamill to Herr Dr. Max T., 5 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 594, F: Landratsamt – Pforzheim Landrat Milit.govt.; Breitenkamp, *U.S. Information Control Policy*, 38.

<sup>312</sup> Oberschule Möckmühl to Kultministerium, Abt. UIII, 4 Aug 46, StAL EL 209 Bü 158; Oberschule für Jungen, Vaihingen-Enz, 6 Aug 46, *ibid.*; Friedrich Schiller-Oberschule für Jungen, Ludwigsburg, to Kultministerium Abt. U III, 7 Aug 46, *ibid.*; Oberschule für Jungen, Der Schulleiter, to Kultministerium Abt. U III, 3 Aug 46, *ibid.*

libraries and the libraries of Heidelberg University, Hohenheim Agricultural College, and the Karlsruhe and Stuttgart Institutes of Technology.<sup>313</sup>

By the end of July 1946, Württemberg-Baden MG officials were reporting that with their work half done they had amassed more than 90,000 books.<sup>314</sup> Most of the collecting was done by late September, but contributions continued to trickle in during the fall.<sup>315</sup> In addition, spot checks exposing violations led the Land MG to demand yet another vetting of all school libraries in early 1947. Informing their subordinates, German education administrators told them to make sure, in particular, that they removed all booklets from the series *Kriegserlebnisse schwäbische Frontsoldaten* (War Experiences of Swabian Front Soldiers).<sup>316</sup> The new initiative elicited many negative reports, but exhumed additional offending materials as well.<sup>317</sup> It led one school official to suggest that with this review, they had removed books that, viewed impartially, would cause no harm in a school library. Still, the 21-item list he enclosed contained four works by authors whose entire output was condemned in the Americans' illustrative catalog.<sup>318</sup>

As long discussed, MG directives called for most of the newly confiscated materials to be pulped to produce new paper. But OMGUS officials also felt an obligation to posterity (and perhaps to the American public and press). In addition to allowing German institutions to preserve their collections, therefore, the Americans decided to set aside 150 copies of many of the confiscated publications for use by OMGUS, U.S. government agencies, American libraries, other countries, and other interested parties (UNESCO, for example, requested 20 copies of each book for research purposes). Helpful to administrators and scholars, this decision delayed pulping activities appreciably, as LoC officials laboriously cataloged collected materials in Berlin and

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<sup>313</sup> John W. Taylor to CS thru IA&C, 23 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 104, F: AG Confiscation of Nazi Literature.

<sup>314</sup> Leonard C. Cooke to Commanding General, Office of Military Government for Germany (US), 29 Jul 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 257, F: ACA Order No. 4.

<sup>315</sup> John W. Taylor to CS thru IA&C, 23 Sep 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General's Office, Box 104, F: AG Confiscation of Nazi Literature.

<sup>316</sup> Kultministerium to Bezirkschulämter, et al, 28 Jan 47, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>317</sup> See HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>318</sup> Kaufmännische Berufsschule für Jungen to Kultministerium U I, 26 Feb 47, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

attempted to locate and gather multiple copies of literally thousands of texts.<sup>319</sup> Poor or non-existent record-keeping in the collection centers especially impeded this process. To facilitate the LoC's efforts, Württemberg-Baden's MG had directed that all confiscated works should be delivered to a location in Stuttgart for evaluation by library representatives, with both military and German trucks with unused space to assist in the enterprise. But higher priority demands for transporting fuel and food meant that most of the books remained scattered at various collecting points throughout the winter of 1946.<sup>320</sup>

The delays caused by higher echelons, especially the LoC personnel, frustrated some ICD staffers at the Land level.<sup>321</sup> They indirectly annoyed the Germans as well. In late December 1946, education authorities from North Baden asked Ministry of Culture officials whether books not yet delivered by some schools might be sent instead to waste paper dealers for coupons for badly needed new writing materials. They were told that all publications had to be delivered to MG officials who would undoubtedly make sure that the confiscated literature benefited the schools.<sup>322</sup>

The long-term retention of the materials at sometimes poorly secured collecting centers had other consequences, too. In August 1946, van der Berg reported that some Nazi literature confiscated locally had been stolen. Although he cited rumors attributing the theft to former Nazis, he pointed out that rumors also indicated that *Mein Kampf* sold for 300 cigarettes on the black market.<sup>323</sup> For that matter, paper itself was a valuable commodity. Collecting centers were also attractive targets for American scavengers. Describing their survey of some 15 centers in the U.S. Zone, several OMGUS officials later reported that "a good percentage of

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<sup>319</sup> Reuben Peiss, "Allied Control Council Order No. 4: Its Background and History," 1 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 56, F: Confiscation and Disposal of Literature.

<sup>320</sup> Richard G. Banks to Ministry of Culture, Wuerttemberg-Baden, 2 Dec 46, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38; James J. Kelleher to All Outposts, Publications Control Branch, ICD, 27 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 591, F: Letters from FR to this Outpost; John B. Rhind and Elisha I. Greifer to E&RA, OMGUS, 24 Jan 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 56, F: Confiscation and Disposal of Literature.

<sup>321</sup> Interoffice Communication, 29 Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 310, F: Publications Control Branch. Even higher level officials were not happy with the delays. Observing to an LoC representative in April 1947 that "this work has been dragging for a long time," the deputy chief of OMGUS's Education and Religious Affairs Branch also pointed out that "the progress made in our Zone in comparison with that made in the others, as reported by Allied delegates when the report to the Council of Foreign Ministers was drawn up on the subject, caused us a bit of embarrassment." He called for the work to be brought quickly to a close. L. D. Gresh to D. C. Travis, 28 Apr 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 257, F: ACA Order No. 4.

<sup>322</sup> Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden, Abt. Kultus und Unterricht, to Kultministerium, 23 Dec 46, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 38.

<sup>323</sup> Herbert P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 27 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2].

the collection points have been visited innumerable times and culled over by unauthorized Americans seeking souvenirs and collectors items, so much so in fact, that at several of these points the [German] director's first act was to rummage through the collection and hand us a copy of 'Mein Kampf', hoping thereby to dissuade us from further perusal of the collection."<sup>324</sup>

During the summer of 1947, military government officers in Württemberg-Baden finally received clearance to turn over for pulping all of the confiscated publications still on hand.<sup>325</sup> Their responsibilities did not immediately end, however. In early 1948, some communities in North Baden were still turning in small sets of objectionable books.<sup>326</sup>

### *Concluding Thoughts*

Dragging on longer than military government efforts to eliminate offensive street signs and monuments, the literature removal program also drew on the energies of many more OMGUS officials and provoked a greater degree of American soul-searching. Education, information control, military, and library authorities, among others, were forced to seek a balance between fundamentally incompatible interests and objectives: the need for paper and the need to protect resources for future research; the need to eradicate poisonous intellectual influences in Germany and the need to satisfy the American press and public; and, most importantly, the need to protect, but also to exemplify, democracy. Washington policymakers and MG officials hesitated to confiscate German publications because such actions were anti-democratic and too reminiscent of Nazi policies. Yet despite obvious discomfort with this task, which revealed itself most clearly in a refusal to seize privately held literature and a "no blacklist" policy that was in truth more apparent than real, they remained committed to demilitarizing and denazifying German intellectual life for ideological and, sometimes,

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<sup>324</sup> "Report of ERA and ODIC Representatives' Visit to the Laender re Disposal of Confiscated Literature and Materials of a Nazi and Militarist Nature," 4 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 56, F: Confiscation and Disposal of Literature.

<sup>325</sup> Douglas Waples to ICD, OMG for Bavaria, et al, 5 May 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 56, F: Confiscation and Disposal of Literature. The LoC was at this time wrapping up its efforts, having collected and cataloged roughly 20,000 books for OMGUS's library and also gathered some 70,000 duplicates—one to 150 copies of each work. Henry A. Dunlap to Distribution, 2 Oct 47, with attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 56, F: Confiscation and Disposal of Literature.

<sup>326</sup> Gemeinderverwaltung Schatthausen to Herr Landrat Heidelberg, Abt IVa, 24 Jul 47, GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 No. 407; Bad. Generallandesarchiv to Herr Landrat Heidelberg, 22 Oct 47, *ibid*; Gemeinderverwaltung Schatthausen to Herr Landrat in Heidelberg, 17 Feb 48, *ibid*.

practical reasons. In this respect, the dire conditions in Germany were a blessing, as the Americans could point to the importance of replenished paper supplies for the success of more popular, less divisive democratization programs.

At the same time, the American decision to proceed with book-gathering efforts added still more tasks to the already cluttered daily agendas of state, regional, and local German administrators and drafted new cadres of their fellow citizens to work on the postwar demilitarization project. Multiple rounds of screening thinned library holdings that had already been depleted by Nazi purges and Allied bombings. In some areas, the upheaval of the immediate postwar period and transportation and personnel shortages impeded the Germans' ability to respond promptly, or served as a convenient excuse for their failure or refusal to do so. Some Germans nevertheless welcomed the initiative, while others conceded that it might not be such a bad thing.

As with German street signs and monuments, the Americans ultimately left many items untouched. Research libraries kept their collections, as did individuals. On the other hand, thousands and thousands of volumes ended up in the vats of German paper mills where they became the raw material for much-needed newsprint, school textbooks, and healthier literature. Moreover, despite some grumbling regarding the inconsistencies of American policy, the literature purging detour on the road to democracy apparently caused little long-term damage. This can perhaps be viewed as proof of the Americans' successful navigation of a middle road between censorship and liberty. But it may also merely illuminate the absence of a deeply felt passion for discredited Nazi ideas and a genre of literature centered on the very military adventures that had made obeying American orders to repeatedly vet German libraries a reality in the first place.

### **Conclusions**

In early June 1946, a young former German officer who now served as the mayor of a village near Stuttgart told an American ICD officer “that he would approve of the destruction of German war monuments and nationalist or militarist books—provided the Allies themselves practice the ideals they preach in Germany.” Explained the American: “He suspects that as a result of the present war the Allied nations will glorify at home

the very ideas they say they came to Germany to destroy—destroy war monuments in Germany and set them up in Russia, Britain, and the USA.”<sup>327</sup>

The former officer’s observations pointed to just one of the many difficulties afflicting American efforts to excise seemingly injurious practices, objects, and intellectual influences from German culture. Military government officials stifled saluting, prevented the Germans from marching and making a spectacle of carrying flags, made sure they removed or altered their most offensive street signs and war monuments, and confiscated and arranged for the destruction of many tons of Nazi propaganda, militaristic literature, and military training materials. However, while the Americans’ achievements were measurable, the obstacles to countering a culturally produced phenomenon proved to be many and varied. The result was a demilitarization enterprise that was systematic and broad—sometimes absurdly so—but not always uniform, consistent, or thorough.

Eliminating the sources and symptoms of militarism in German culture was not a simple task. It was easy to ban—and easy to justify banning—swastikas and Nazi greetings. And specifying 1933 as a cut-off date for denazification projects was indisputably logical. But tackling militarism raised an entirely different spectrum of questions. Did the deleterious influence of the phenomenon begin with the Nazis? Or with Hindenburg? Or Bismarck? Or Scharnhorst? Was a hand salute itself dangerous, or only the manner in which it was performed? Were monuments honoring Germany’s war dead either inherently insidious or inherently harmless? Or did that depend upon how the Germans interpreted them or what forms of community life centered on the physical structures? Were sober histories of the Franco-Prussian War harmful? Or only those that glorified German military exploits in World War I? What about military training manuals? Or Clausewitz’s *On War*?

Not every American was sure. And those who were could not assume that their nearest colleague would agree. Officials at the highest levels coped with the uncertainties both by refusing to draw fine lines—a salute was a military greeting, period—and by drawing very fine lines, choosing specific dates, sometimes influenced by their allies. In other instances, they, officially, left it to the Germans to decide. Did a soldier statue “glorify incidents of war”? Should a book be classified as militaristic? In the former case, monuments

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<sup>327</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 4 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2].

that contravened American regulations undoubtedly slipped through the review process, while in the latter, librarians could be overly zealous in rejecting texts.

The ultimate effect of particular policies could also not be predicted. In no case was efficacy assured, and nearly every measure that offered hope of positive results either had potentially negative side effects or could stimulate a reaction that was exactly the opposite of that intended. In fact, the factor that most complicated the American expurgation enterprise was the German response. In some cases, American decision makers considered this carefully and thoughtfully. Drilling and marching U.S. troops could teach lessons to the Germans. Conversely, resentment, ridicule, and charges of hypocrisy, which might threaten the Americans' ability to achieve the major goals of the occupation, had to be avoided by exercising caution and restraint. In other instances, however, the MG officials evidently either ignored or failed to think through the possible repercussions of their actions. This was particularly true when it came to the Americans' rather naive or unconsidered assumption that the negative influences of military parades and war literature were rooted as much in German nationalism as in a German penchant for all things military—that it was a national manifestation of the ritual or subject, rather than the ritual or subject itself, that triggered German enthusiasm.

Then, too, OMGUS policymakers could not always be sure that their underlings in the field would agree with their judgments or attentively enforce Allied policies. A public safety officer in Stuttgart might appreciate the value of a well-disciplined, saluting police force far more than American concerns about a future recrudescence of German militarism. Local MG officers may also have simply lacked the knowledge or information to supervise the Germans. Without a list documenting possible objectionable street names, would the average military policeman have recognized the names of all of Germany's World War I flying aces? Even where they had the knowledge, moreover, MG officials could be less than vigilant, or certainly less than strict.

The small number of MG officers and their concomitant inability to regularly visit every one of Württemberg-Baden's tiny villages also undoubtedly restricted American enforcement efforts. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that as late as May 1947, the Landrat of Landkreis Karlsruhe felt compelled to send an admonitory notice to all of the communities in his jurisdiction. During a recent visit to one village, he explained, he had discovered that there were still pictures of Hindenburg and Frederick the Great hanging in various rooms of the town hall. The local library still held "purely militaristic books," which could be better used to produce paper, and had maps on its walls showing the 1940 campaign in France and the eastern front in

1943. In the mayor's office, there was a fireman's helmet still bearing a swastika. It was, he stated, the duty of all local leaders and community employees to make sure these symbols of the past disappeared. He threatened to take the "sharpest action" if he discovered any problems in the future, arguing that such thoughtlessness was irresponsible not only vis-à-vis the Americans, but also vis-à-vis Germany's youth.<sup>328</sup> The Landrat also reprimanded the village concerned, noting that his discovery was especially unfortunate as a German agent of the MG had accompanied him and would surely report his findings.<sup>329</sup>

Although relatively minor, the Landkreis Karlsruhe incident calls attention to the degree to which the MG had to rely upon a large number of Germans for help in its efforts to change German culture. Clearly, German administrators and politicians had no choice but to implement MG regulations. Yet even when they resented or bemoaned the work created, they could be supportive of the Americans' basic objectives. The German discussions regarding monuments and street signs, in particular, shed light on an assortment of fault lines in German society during the immediate postwar years.

Although their individual views could be diverse, those taking a stance on the removal question fell into roughly three categories. On one hand, Communists, often supported by Social Democrats and sometimes by those of other political leanings as well, recommenced their pre-Third Reich campaign against Prussian militarism with new passion and commitment. For them, the need to get rid of military monuments and street signs honoring German military exploits of the past 200 years was self-explanatory.

A second group believed that the Germans needed to put Nazi values behind them and to plot a new future in which the military and war would have a much less prominent role, but their ideas on what this should mean for German culture were both less severe and less uniform. Some saw the cleansing of Germany's cultural landscape as draining time and resources that were either already inadequate for the tasks at hand or better spent on reconstruction. Changes might be warranted, or at least tolerable, but they could wait. Others worried about acting too vigorously in haste or refused to "throw the baby out with the bathwater" by tossing aside legitimate commemorations of Germany's history. For some, this stance was perhaps the outward expression of an inner resistance to the argument that the achievements of Kaiser Wilhelm I, the machinations

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<sup>328</sup> Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Die Gemeindeverwaltungen des Kreises Karlsruhe, 6 May 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 538, F: Ltrs from Burgermeister.

<sup>329</sup> Der Landrat des Kreises Karlsruhe to Gemeindeverwaltung Langensteinbach, 6 May 46, *ibid.*



of Bismarck, or Prussia's illustrious military record had led to Hitler's rise and Germany's fall. For some, it was grounded in a belief that the nation's past undergirded German society and honoring the past was therefore both positive and necessary. This perspective was inherently controversial, however, when decision makers could not agree on what in that past deserved commemoration. Those on the left often had little interest in remembering men who had deliberately and forcefully combated democracy, socialism, and peace. Conversely, their desire to change street names could rightfully be interpreted by their opponents as an attempt to reconceptualize the nation's past in the city's streets. Removing the names inserted by Nazi usurpers was one thing. Re-writing Germany's history was another.

Finally, although their voices were normally barred from city council chambers and the pages of local newspapers, there were those who saw very little need to redirect Germany's course in any major respect, with its monuments and street names naturally to be left alone as well. The best evidence that such opinions did, in fact, exist are the passionate arguments men like Weisser felt compelled to launch against them.

In the absence of a German consensus regarding the necessity and scope of cultural cleansing measures, American influence proved decisive. Without explicitly supporting one German faction over another, MG regulations effectively threw weight behind Communist demands. But the extent and depth of change demanded by the Americans, and the vigilance (or lack thereof) with which they enforced their orders, also effectively set the boundaries of these efforts. German leaders, as exemplified by Stuttgart's city councilors, sometimes pushed beyond them, but, more often than not, the limits established by the Americans became the limits of physical, if not necessarily psychological or spiritual, change.

German politicians and administrators made the difficult decisions and bore the weight of responsibility for obedience. But many Germans helped with a multitude of little tasks. Complying with American orders required the hands and minds of hundreds of people who unearthed old "Hauptstrasse" signs, took down "Hindenburgstrasse" markers, re-labeled maps, renumbered streets, sketched war monuments, chiseled off inscriptions, distributed handbills door to door, reviewed card catalogs, scanned book pages, boxed up runs of old magazines, typed up lists, loaded trucks or wagons, or just walked across town to retrieve the local schoolteacher from his garden. When considering the final impact of American excision regulations, this cannot be overlooked, for the *process* of implementation, which compelled Germans to evaluate their environment, may have been as powerful in its effects as any material results.

In the end, in rural areas as well as large cities, Allied policies intruded into the daily lives of nearly all Germans, if only in small ways. Residents of Karlsruhe and Stuttgart began the occupation by combing their personal libraries for books outlawed by the French. In some villages, meanwhile, “militarism” may have been just an abstract concept left unexamined by most. But local inhabitants no doubt noticed that the old field marshal no longer commanded their main street or that the monument to the fallen located at the center of town looked slightly different now. And perhaps a few, at least, paused to consider why.

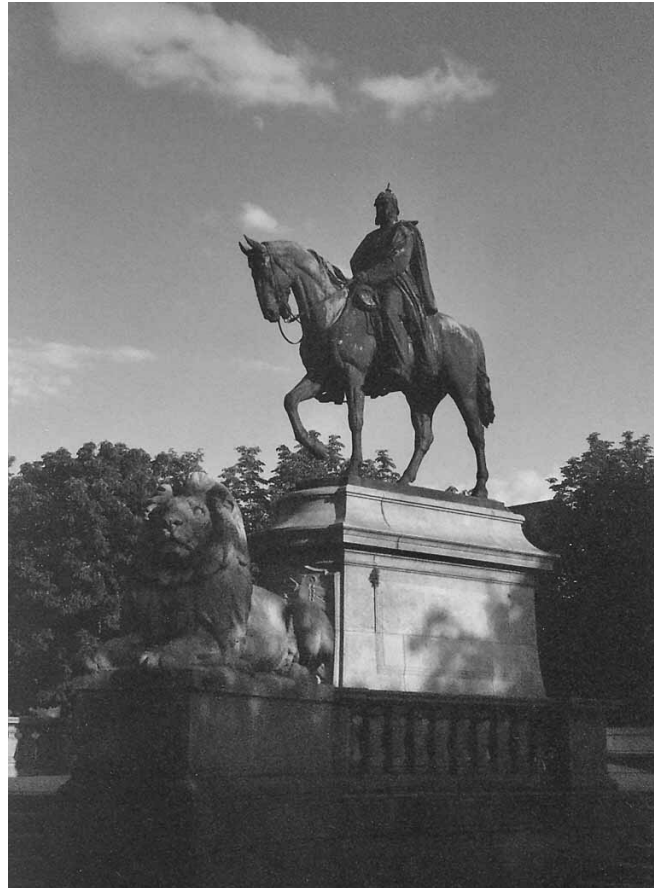
## Monuments and Memorials Not Covered by ACC Directive No. 30



**Fig. 9 – Gravestone, 1917,  
Stuttgart Waldfriedhof.**  
(Credit: Author, 2004)

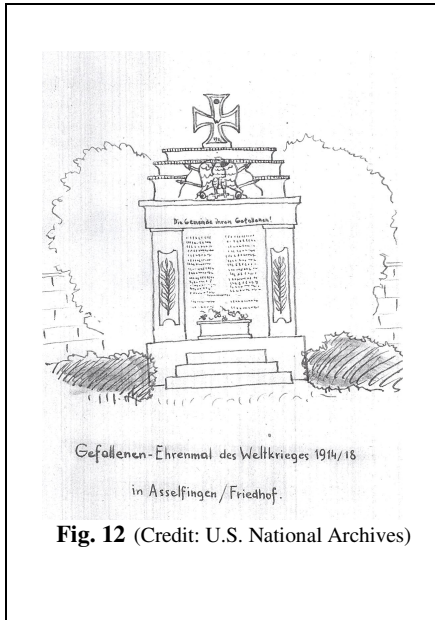


**Fig. 10 – Gravestone, 1917,  
Stuttgart Waldfriedhof.**  
(Credit: Author, 2004)

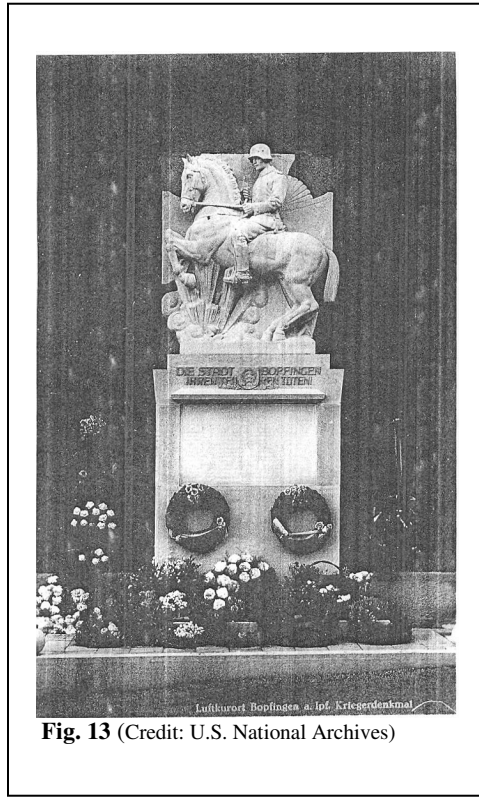


**Fig. 11 – Kaiser Wilhelm I Monument, Stuttgart.**  
(Credit: Author, 2004)

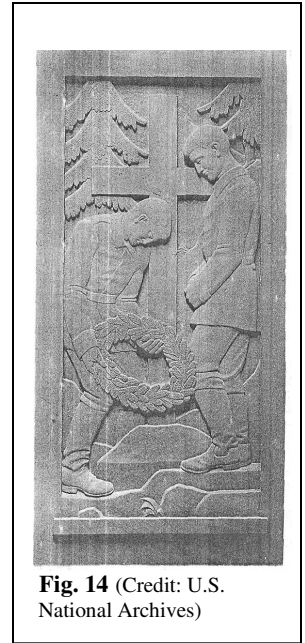
Images Submitted for Review Under ACC Directive No. 30



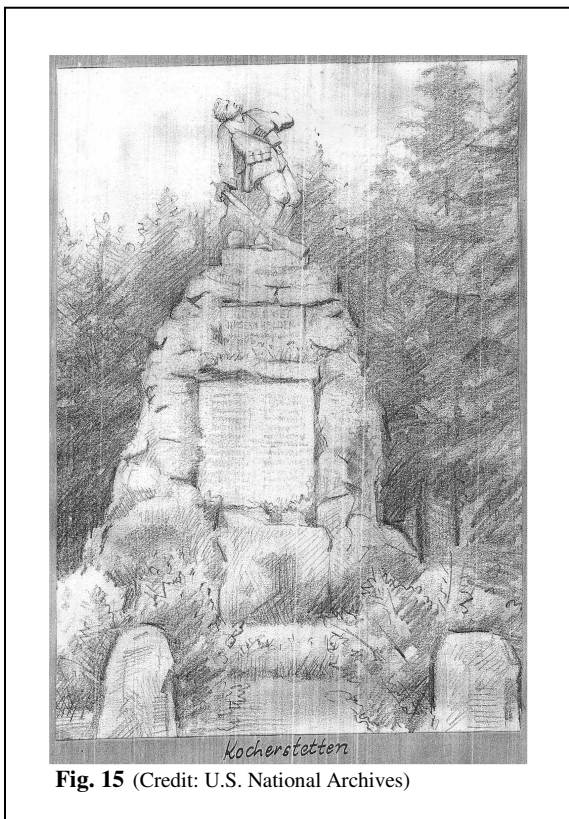
**Fig. 12** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



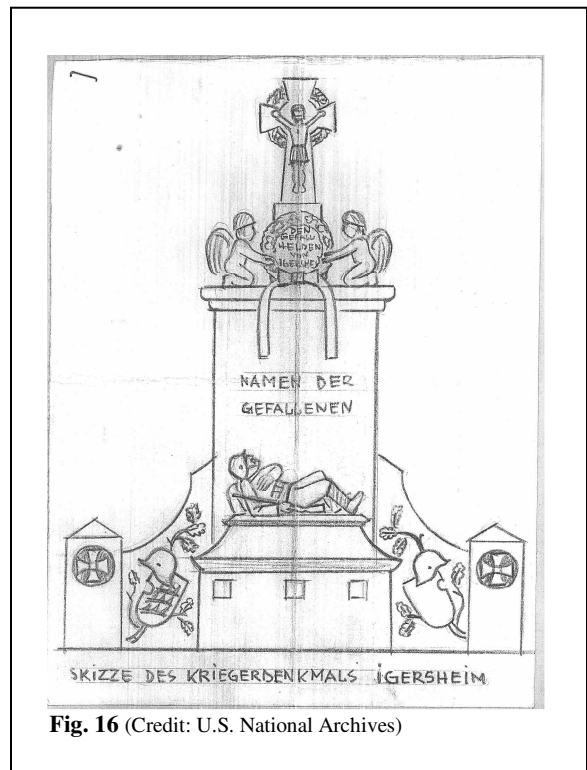
**Fig. 13** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 14** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)

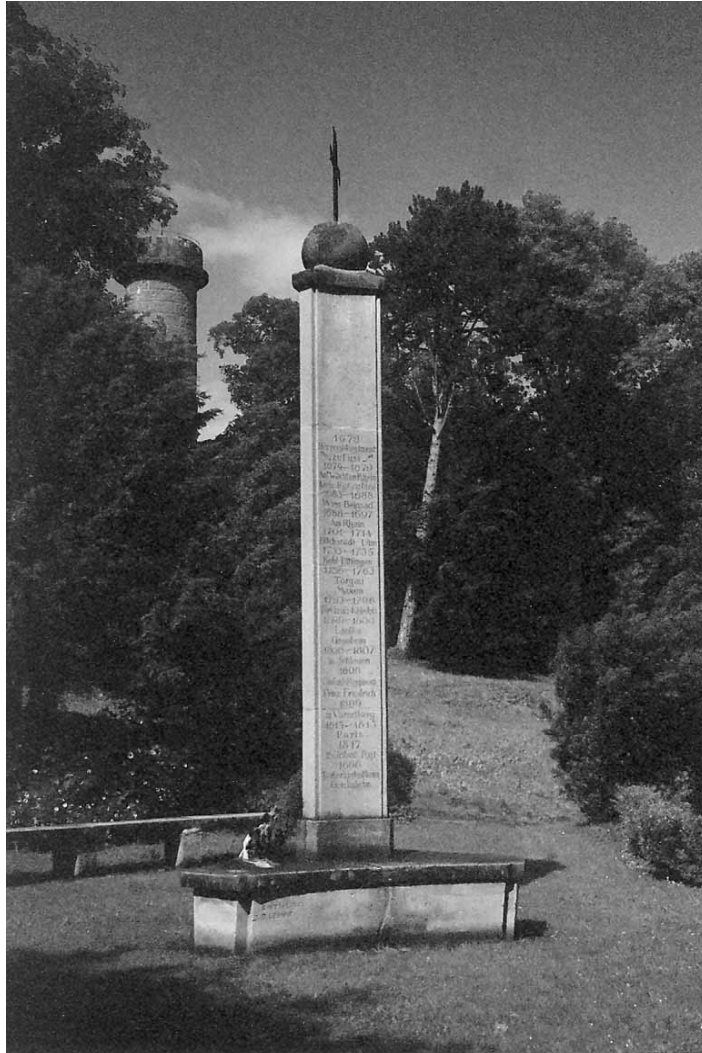


**Fig. 15** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)



**Fig. 16** (Credit: U.S. National Archives)

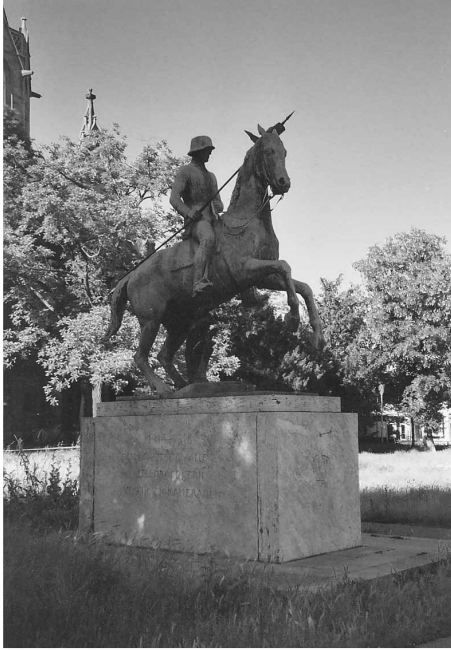
## Monument Altered Under ACC Directive No. 30



**Fig. 17 – Military Monument, Ulm, 2004.**

In 1946, Land officials required the removal of three reliefs—“The Infantryman Then and Now”—from the upper portion of this three-sided monument. One of the reliefs depicted a soldier with hand grenades and a spade. (Credit: Author, 2004)

**Monuments and Memorials Not Altered Under ACC Directive No. 30**

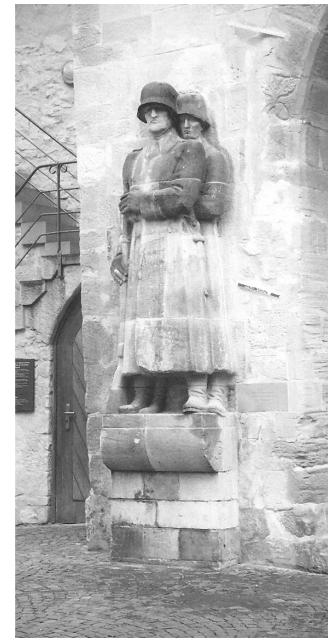


**Fig. 18 – World War I monument, Karlsruhe. The “harmless little figure of bronze” with his lance restored.**  
(Credit: Author, 2004)



**Figs. 19 and 20 – Statues decorating the exterior of the U.S. Army’s Campbell Barracks (formerly *Grossdeutschland Kaserne*) in Heidelberg.**

(Credit: <http://www.history.hqusaar.army.mil/photos/photos.htm>)



**Figs. 21 and 22 – World War I Monument, Marbach.**  
(Credit: Author, 2004)

## Chapter 8

### FROM DYING FOR THE FATHERLAND TO LIVING FOR A PEACEFUL DEMOCRACY

“Although this was always denied by Hitler Youth leaders after 1945, the hallmark of [Hitler Youth] socialization was militarization, with a view to a war of territorial expansion and, as its predetermined goal, the neutralization of Europe’s Jews,” historian Michael Kater has observed in his recent study of the National Socialists’ all-encompassing youth organization. For the young people of the Third Reich, uniforms and marching were ubiquitous. Rigorous camping trips included roll calls, flag ceremonies, map study, rifle practice, and war games played out under a hierarchically organized command structure. For enhanced drilling performance, children learned to chant songs, “in the manner of soldiers on the march,” that were “clearly martial in character, related to Fatherland, duty, honor, blood and soil, and above all fighting and death.” Agricultural service brought them to German border regions where hiking trips introduced them to unknown, but desirable, territories. During the war, they assisted disabled soldiers, served as air raid wardens, and helped build fortifications.<sup>1</sup>

By the mid 1930s, the Hitler Youth had also largely wrested control of all youth sports from the principal Nazi sports organization, which was itself a successor to or umbrella organization for a multitude of sports clubs that frequently had their own histories of emphasizing the connection between athletics, soldierly achievements, and war. Viewed by the Nazis as critical to maintaining the general health of the *Volk*, sports were also valued for preparing individual bodies for war and teaching special skills needed by military units. All boys from ages 10 to 18 learned to shoot, first with air guns, later with small-caliber rifles. Special elite Hitler Youth units took in young men with distinctive interests or aptitudes. In groups for fliers, for example,

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<sup>1</sup> Michael H. Kater, *Hitler Youth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 28-37. The vast majority of Germany’s young people were officially enrolled in the Hitler Youth. Kater reports that “students of trade schools throughout southwest German Baden in October of [1935] managed [a Hitler Youth] membership of less than 80 percent, whereas Gymnasien were higher than 90 percent, and elementary schools just under 90 percent. . . . In all of Wuerttemberg, . . . less than a year before the compulsory order of March 1939, 89.7 percent of students in all schools had joined, with those in Gymnasium at the highest rate, those in trade-oriented schools the lowest, and elementary pupils somewhere in between” (24).

boys constructed model airplanes and piloted gliders, perfecting their flying abilities for later Luftwaffe service.<sup>2</sup> Participation in sports could shape attitudes as well. Raving about the Wehrmacht's recent success in 1941, Carl Diem, a renowned German sports official and secretary general of the 1936 Olympic Games organizing committee, argued that a fundamental reason for this was a maturation in the "spirit of sports" in Germany's youth. "No longer is there among them that flabby reluctance to compete, that dull greediness of softer times. . . . Instead we have joy in struggle, joy in self-denial, joy in danger. Only with such ideals could Norway be conquered and France be overrun." Diem also venerated the German soldier's female "comrades in sport." "These women did not, in fact, storm through France, but they contributed to the new attitudes that led to the battle charge," he maintained. "As mothers, sisters, and wives, they have fashioned this new generation."<sup>3</sup>

Significantly, these militarizing activities did not necessarily draw questions or criticism. Even before the start of World War II, Kater has reminded, "the most ingenuous Hitler Youths found this trend quite normal: they had been told in school and at home—to say nothing of the [Hitler Youth] itself—that Germany was preparing for an 'unavoidable war.'"<sup>4</sup> Indeed, physical education in German schools was being infused with a similar spirit. Furthermore, education officials had rewritten textbooks and instructors adapted their teaching of science, literature, history, geography, and other subjects to reflect the ideology and interests of Nazi leaders who were committed to readying the entire German *Volksgemeinschaft* for a war of conquest.

While not aware of all of the details, American wartime policymakers knew that Germany's Hitler Youth leaders and teachers were providing paramilitary training and actively indoctrinating the country's young people.<sup>5</sup> And they were concerned. Not only might defeated and disillusioned young Nazis equipped with military skills pose an immediate security threat to Allied occupation forces, but they represented a major long-term problem. Likely to be the most deeply indoctrinated individuals in all of Germany, they were also its future leaders. Early encounters between U.S. intelligence analysts and German youngsters did little to dispel

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 30-32; Bernett, *Der Weg des Sports in die nationalsozialistische Diktatur*, 55-57, 80-81.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Richard D. Mandell, "Carl Diem on Sport and War," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education* 5, No. 1 (1974), 11. On Diem's illustrious career, see Horst Ueberhorst, "The Importance of the Historians' Quarrel and the Problem of Continuity for the German History of Sport," *Journal of Sport History* 17, No. 2 (1999): 236-239.

<sup>4</sup> Kater, *Hitler Youth*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> On the views of U.S. policymakers, see Chapter 3 and Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*, Chapter 2.



these concerns, as a number of the young Germans voiced highly racist, nationalistic, and militaristic opinions, apparently oblivious to how offensive and shocking their ideas sounded to their interviewers.<sup>6</sup> Recounting his experiences near Aachen, journalist Julian Bach captured American thinking regarding German children in its most basic form. “You watch a youngster, perhaps aged six, goose-stepping back and forth by the road every time an Allied truck passes,” wrote Bach. “He thinks he is being cute. . . . You think so too. . . . Until you remember that unless he is taught to stop goose-stepping, your son may be doing close-order drill.”<sup>7</sup>

It took time for the specifics of U.S. policy relating to German schools and youth work to take firm shape, but American officials had settled on certain principles already prior to Germany’s surrender. First, they agreed that German children should learn to be good democrats. Changing German attitudes and increasing understanding of the workings and value of a democratic system were essential if a democratic government was to succeed. And it was critically important that it do so. As Assistant Secretary of State Archibald MacLeish told his boss in July 1945, the U.S. needed to “encourage the self-government of people on the grounds that tyrannies have been demonstrated to be dangerous to the security of the world and that nations in which the people govern themselves are more likely to keep peace and to promote the common interests of mankind.”<sup>8</sup> Second, the Americans decided that they would be working at cross purposes if they attempted to force democratic reforms on the Germans. Instead, any changes in the educational system and youth programs should come from the Germans themselves, working with American advice and under the watchful eyes of their occupiers.

However, the Americans also realized that their educational work would need to have two overlapping phases. According to SHAEF’s technical manual for education, the first phase would be “one mainly of destruction, destruction throughout the German educational system of Nazism, German militarism and all they connote,” while the second would be one of reconstruction.<sup>9</sup> Or, as a planning paper drafted by U.S. Group Control Council education officers in the spring of 1945 explained, the American mission would include, first, eradicating “Nazi influence and doctrine,” especially “instruction giving support for world domination,

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<sup>6</sup> Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*, 63-66; Padover, *Experiment in Germany*, 41-44, 84-86, 351-352.

<sup>7</sup> Bach, *America’s Germany*, 25. On Bach, see Chapter 6, note 189.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> SHAEF, *Technical Manual for Education and Religious Affairs*, Feb 45, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 7.

militarism, pan-Germanism, the ‘Fuhrer’ principle and discrimination,” and, second, encouraging “the development of a system of education inculcating in the German people democratic and humanitarian principles and values, and emphasizing the necessity for peace and international understanding.”<sup>10</sup>

There is a goodly amount of literature on American educational efforts in Germany, especially with respect to German schools. But most of it centers on the second, “positive” portion of the American agenda.<sup>11</sup> It was the positive elements of the program that suffered most from early OMGUS neglect and which encountered the most resistance from German educators. Moreover, West Germany’s subsequent emergence in the context of the Cold War as a solid and solidly democratic American ally has generated legitimate interest in the mechanisms behind the country’s transformation.

Much less attention has been given to the “negative” measures, particularly as they related to militarism rather than Nazism.<sup>12</sup> Yet these merit closer scrutiny, for they shaped German education and youth programs directly. They helped to determine the nature of instruction, or lack thereof, received by millions of German schoolchildren immediately after the war and influenced the character of teaching resources in both the short and the long term. They also contributed to a visible transformation of German youth and sports organizations—a transformation which had committed, widespread support throughout Württemberg-Baden. As importantly, the American program of “destruction” was essential in clearing the ground upon which democratic, tolerant, and peaceful institutions and attitudes could be built.

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<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 62.

<sup>11</sup> For a helpful introduction to the literature on German education after World War II, see Puaca, “Learning Democracy,” 5-15. Puaca examines educational developments during the occupation within the larger context of German education during the 20 years following the end of the war, focusing especially on democratic practices within schools in Berlin and Hesse. The best source dealing with U.S. policy and institutional developments in the field of education during the U.S. occupation remains Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*. On education in Württemberg-Baden during the occupation, see Birgit Braun, *Umerziehung in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone*. On American policies concerning youth organizations, see especially Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*, and, for Württemberg-Baden, Burkhard Fehrlen and Ulrich Schubert, *Offene Jugendarbeit in Baden-Württemberg. Von der Nachkriegszeit bis zum Ende der 60er Jahre* (Leinfelden-Echterdingen: Verlag Burkhard Fehrlen, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> Puaca, for example, deals in broad terms with some of the textbook and teaching problems covered in detail below, discussing a range of concerns the Americans had with German curricula and textbooks. However, he is most interested in the “positive” portion of the U.S. program. See “Learning Democracy,” 62-70, 92-96.

## German Schools

### *Getting Started*

Historians have pointed out that although German schools were critical to the long-term reeducation of Germany, these institutions and the MG officers responsible for them often were not treated as crucial components of the American occupation program, especially prior to 1947. Problems in the early years included insufficient MG personnel, inadequate support from OMGUS's upper echelons, and the absence of a clear, focused policy for meeting stated positive educational goals. At the same time, the Americans clearly had firm beliefs about what should be barred from German schools. And, in this arena, they felt much less compulsion to defer to the wishes of German educators.

According to SHAEF's December 1944 handbook, all schools were to be closed until freed of undesirable personnel and teaching materials. Objectionable books were to be impounded and, under threat of dismissal and punishment for disobedience, instructors were to purge from their lessons, among other ideas, anything that glorified militarism or "expound[ed] the practice of war or of mobilization and preparation for war, whether in the scientific, economic or industrial fields, or the study of military geography."<sup>13</sup>

Although reasonably straightforward, these prohibitions created real difficulties when combined with a desire to reopen schools quickly. The Americans wanted to make sure that children "so completely and so viciously indoctrinated" and who had only recently served in the military or been trained by the Hitler Youth to be snipers or saboteurs might be "brought without delay under more wholesome influences."<sup>14</sup> But in 1944, members of the education and religious affairs section of SHAEF's German Country Unit (GCU), which was tasked with making plans for the reopening of schools, realized that even aside from anticipated shortages of politically clean teachers and usable facilities, they would have trouble meeting this goal because most available textbooks would violate Allied regulations. Leaving the procurement of suitable books to local authorities, moreover, would further slow the process.<sup>15</sup>

Fortunately, stockpiling usable texts was a project GCU planners could undertake even while Allied forces remained outside German borders. Their primary challenge thus became locating acceptable texts and

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<sup>13</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*, Dec 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 7.

<sup>14</sup> SHAEF, *Technical Manual for Education and Religious Affairs*, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Marshall Knappen, *And Call It Peace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), 63.

procuring, on relatively short notice, supplies adequate to permit the revival of elementary and secondary education in western Germany. They dismissed Nazi-era books as too thoroughly permeated with National Socialist doctrine to be usable. This held true even in fields like mathematics, where texts contained offensive elements such as arithmetic problems referring to usurious Jewish moneylenders. Although the GCU planners considered pasting coverings over unacceptable passages, ultimately they discarded the idea as likely only to provoke greater curiosity. They also discussed using Swiss texts—books which were both German and democratic. But these contained uniquely Swiss details the men feared would kindle nationalist sentiments. For similar reasons, they rejected translations of American and English publications and also ruled out refugee works, lest the Germans resist them out of resentment toward those who had not shared in their suffering.<sup>16</sup> Daunting as the situation appeared, the GCU planners also agreed that the schools could not operate without textbooks, having learned from negative experiences in occupied Italy, where schools reopened without sufficient textbook supplies.<sup>17</sup>

In the end, they decided that texts from the Weimar Republic, though hardly perfect, could at least be promoted as German books and could be used temporarily until the Germans themselves were able to produce up-to-date, pedagogically more sophisticated replacements. Most Weimar textbooks had been pulped to make Nazi substitutes, but Dr. John Taylor, head of the American staff of the GCU's education section, knew of a collection he had helped to assemble at Columbia Teacher's College in New York City. He therefore had nearly 270 books microfilmed and sent to the GCU's quarters in England. During the summer and fall of 1944, Major Oscar Reinmuth, chair of the University of Texas classics department in civilian life, evaluated the texts, identifying those he deemed "least objectionable" for certain key subjects.<sup>18</sup>

Although a MG publication subsequently reported that U.S. officials had developed "techniques for the elimination of Nazi, militaristic, and nationalistic strains" in conducting this review,<sup>19</sup> the GCU's Marshall Knappen later suggested that the Americans' interpretation of what was harmful was not as strict as that of their

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 63-65. For an analysis of the often toxic contents of Nazi textbooks, see Gilmer W. Blackburn, *Education in the Third Reich: A Study of Race and History in Nazi Textbooks* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985).

<sup>17</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 27-28.

<sup>18</sup> Knappen, *And Call It Peace*, 64-66.

<sup>19</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, *Textbooks in Germany. American Zone*, Aug 46, 2, NA, RG 407, Box 1015, F: "Education—(US Zone) Germany (Textbooks in Germany—American Zone).

British colleagues. Describing consultations to compile a list of books to republish, Knappen recalled that “the most interesting feature was the British objection to much of the Weimar material as too militaristic and nationalistic.” The British, for example, expressed misgivings about readers dealing with the Battle of Leipzig and the wars of liberation from Napoleon. They also objected to referring to the history of “Germany” during the Middle Ages, when there was, in fact, no Germany, but rather a Holy Roman Empire. A Michigan State College history professor himself, Knappen observed: “The discussions of historical perspective and whether there is any such thing as objective history made academic treatments of these problems in more peaceful days seem somewhat more practical than had once been suspected.” On the whole, he added, the perspective of the Americans was

(1) that war was a part of history and life and that to reflect this fact in reasonable moderation was not objectionable; (2) that, until England and the United States agreed on an objective treatment of the War of 1812 which could be taught in both countries, a certain nationalistic bias in the texts of any country was inevitable, and that (3) the admittedly imperfect Weimar texts were preferable to the only apparent alternative—attempting to conduct schools without texts.<sup>20</sup>

Eventually the group approved eight readers, five arithmetic books, three history texts and four works on “nature study” for elementary schools. In early 1945, SHAEF began printing copies on presses in parts of Germany already occupied by the Allies. Later, education officials secured access to the Munich presses of the former Nazi newspaper to turn out more than five million textbooks.<sup>21</sup> Due to their reservations about the materials, they qualified their selections by placing a short statement in each newly printed book explaining its temporary nature and that its issuance did “not imply that it is entirely suitable from an educational view or otherwise.” It was “merely the best book which could be found in the circumstances and must serve until Germany produces better textbooks of its own.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Knappen, *And Call It Peace*, 66-67. That the texts eventually chosen left much to be desired and were not seen by all Germans as mostly innocuous is suggested by a letter sent to a U.S. education officer by a Berlin city official. The Soviet-appointed Communist official complained about a set of readers selected for local schools that contained “some nationalistic utterances, glorifications of ‘Prussianism,’ and the German arrogance which could become dangerous.” He analyzed the problems of a piece titled “Soldiers’ Faithfulness” and also cited specific excerpts from several other articles and poems dealing with war and soldiers. The official argued that it was “precisely with the lead soldier and such themes in the school books” that “the education into Prussian-German militarism which the Allies intend to eliminate” began. Paul F. Shafer to Commanding Officer, 6 Aug 45, and attachment, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 105, F: Schools Berlin. A commentary published in a Württemberg youth magazine made a similar complaint as late as June 1947. “Notruf der Schuljugend!” *Das junge Wort [DJW]*, 1 Jun 47, 12.

<sup>21</sup> Knappen, *And Call It Peace*, 67, 82-84; Henry P. Pilgert, *The West German Educational System* ([Washington, DC]: Historical Division, Office of the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, 1953), 55.

<sup>22</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 43.

### *Vetting German Textbooks*

Although SHAEF managed to procure several million textbooks under difficult conditions, these did not come close to alleviating the schoolbook problem. In Württemberg-Baden, for example, the distribution provided just one text for every four pupils.<sup>23</sup> Children “often spend half the evening going from house to house searching for the book to do their lesson,” an October 1945 MG weekly report noted.<sup>24</sup> The Americans therefore also investigated additional sources of textbooks. Occupation guidelines specified that the Germans might use other publications, but only if SHAEF representatives approved them first.<sup>25</sup> And it was not long before German officials began asking MG authorities about stocks of old, but apparently still serviceable texts. Publishers, similarly, submitted for approval partially revised or at least hastily corrected editions. As a result, Reinmuth soon took charge of a staff of “readers” to confront the MG’s expanding library.<sup>26</sup>

The Americans eventually devised a multilayered textbook evaluation system that lasted for nearly the duration of the occupation. Potentially usable books were submitted to OMGUS’s Textbook Section by German education authorities or MG officials. Following an initial reading, an analyst employed by the section forwarded the book and a completed evaluation sheet to the staff textbook specialist for approval, with each volume eventually receiving one of three designations: A—approved, B—disapproved, or C—conditionally approved but needing changes before it could be used. In time, the readers began employing this same procedure to appraise new manuscripts prepared by German authors. Although the Americans exempted certain books from evaluation starting in January 1946, these were not works which particularly lent themselves to instilling Nazi ideology or fostering militarism, as they included only higher secondary education standard author works (such as German classics by Goethe, and only those without editing, introductions, or notes) and books designed for adult, technical, and commercial schools and the like. Even then, instructors were expected to use no objectionable material and had to provide Land education officials with, in the case of the former, a list of course materials they planned to use and, in the case of the latter, a statement guaranteeing the books’

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<sup>23</sup> Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 123.

<sup>24</sup> Weekly Report, 20/27 Oct 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2].

<sup>25</sup> SHAEF, *Technical Manual for Education and Religious Affairs*, Feb 45, NA, RG 331.

<sup>26</sup> Knappen, *And Call It Peace*, 84-85.

acceptability.<sup>27</sup> It is worth noting that while the Americans required the explicit authorization of nearly all books used in German schools, they did not compel schools to use particular books.<sup>28</sup> Selection from the pool of approved texts was left to German administrators.

Altogether, MG personnel reviewed more than 3,100 books and manuscripts from 1945 through 1948. Of the 995 items consulted in 1945—more than 900 of which were textbooks used during the Third Reich or before—textbook analysts approved 70 percent, with another 13 percent conditionally approved and 17 percent rejected outright. In 1946, by contrast, MG officials unconditionally approved only 48 percent of the 1,354 submitted books, with 20 percent rejected in their entirety. Interestingly, from 1945 through July 1946, analysts disapproved more than half of the Latin and geography texts and a full 67 percent of the 73 history books submitted. In 1946, old books still made up more than two thirds of the materials reviewed, but by 1947 this figure had dropped to 16 percent and fell to less than 2 percent in 1948. During 1947 and 1948, approval figures stabilized at about 80 percent, with fewer than 10 percent of the submitted books and manuscripts rejected completely.<sup>29</sup>

It was during the early years of the occupation, then, that MG textbook analysts most vigorously wielded their knives, working their way through a backlog of Nazi and Weimar era texts, weeding out truly offensive or unsalvageable works and identifying passages, sentences, and even words to be deleted from conditionally approved books and manuscripts. In late 1947, the character of the effort changed as the Americans replaced a strictly negative approach to textbook evaluation—i.e., searching out vestiges of Nazism, nationalism, racism, and militarism—with new textbook appraisal criteria that took into consideration a manuscript or publication's pedagogical strategies and the degree to which it encouraged tolerance, democratic thinking, and other positive values.<sup>30</sup>

The systematic review of several thousand publications confirmed for American analysts that not only Nazi textbooks, but also many Weimar materials were deeply infected with harmful ideas. They reported that geography books referred to territory lost via the Treaty of Versailles and highlighted Germany's relative lack

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<sup>27</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 3-4.

<sup>28</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 126.

<sup>29</sup> Office of U.S. High Commissioner, Education Branch, "Report on Textbook Evaluation 1945-1948," Sep 50, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 106, F: Textbook Evaluation '45-'48; *Textbooks in Germany*, 5.

<sup>30</sup> "Report on Textbook Evaluation 1945-1948." This publication contains a copy of the new criteria.

of colonies. History books were “one-sided” and nationalistic and treated “militarists and battles . . . too fully.” French language books as well as German literature and language texts encouraged militarism. Greek textbooks stressed “the patriotic fighting spirit,” while Latin texts were particularly offensive in glorifying strong leaders, stressing “the readiness of the individual to sacrifice himself for the state,” and presenting “illustrations of the great fighting spirit of the old Romans and the German peoples.” Math books “taught militarism” by using bullets to calculate speed and integrating regimental recruits into problems designed to teach students to read mortality tables.<sup>31</sup>

As interesting as the Americans’ general conclusions were, their assessments of individual textbooks were even more intriguing. For MG textbook analysts were not only alert to the tiniest of details, they also paid more attention to the “big picture” than did many MG officials charged with cleansing various aspects of German culture. At the very least, their eyes were good. “Approved with omission of p. 6 picture. . . . Picture may be included if uniform is removed,” read an August 1945 evaluation sheet discussing a reader proposed for Mannheim’s elementary schools.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, analysts assessing books submitted by Landkreis Ludwigsburg officials in late 1945 conditionally approved several math texts pending the excision of a number of individual problems whose “objectionable features” were identified as “soldiers” or “involves military matters.” Two other arithmetic books contained three exercises each that referenced tin soldiers. Another included a problem marked for removal due to its “unnecessary Prussian tone.”<sup>33</sup> A fifth grade math book prepared in Stuttgart in 1946 received only the following comment: “P 51 Substitute ‘Flugzeuge’ [airplanes] for ‘Düsenjäger’ [jet fighters].”<sup>34</sup>

Strict and insistent, and undoubtedly sometimes overly sensitive, MG textbook analysts were not, however, necessarily just following the letter of the law for the law’s sake. Individual sentences could teach values and preach harmful ideas. One Greek text, for instance, contained the assertions “War terrifies the cowards, the good are not terrified” and “The fighting was terrible, but the victory beautiful.”<sup>35</sup> The Americans

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<sup>31</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 6-15.

<sup>32</sup> Textbook Evaluation Sheet, Mannheimer Lesebogen 3. Klasse, 5 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 99, F: German Readers Manuscripts.

<sup>33</sup> H. Robinson to Ministry of Culture for Württemberg, 13 Apr 46, and attachments, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 36.

<sup>34</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Oct 46, 8, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 12.



also believed that an accumulation of relatively harmless sentences could influence the overall tone and message of a book. One MG official made this concern explicit in asking for the deletion of “military examples” on 15 different pages of a German language book. “The constant use of war examples merely to illustrate rules in grammar,” the analyst noted, “is the sort of thing which gradually poisons the minds of young people into believing that war is a natural, inevitable occurrence, part and parcel of everyday life. This is precisely what is to be avoided.”<sup>36</sup> Bemused readers also criticized several shorthand books. Wrote one analyst: “This manuscript requires a thorough revisal before it can be accepted. Perfectly good examples can be found without resorting to the use of numerous war expressions. Heldentum [heroism] does not have to be extolled to teach shorthand.”<sup>37</sup>

In making their decisions, analysts also kept in mind both the recent experiences of Germany’s youth and contemporary conditions. Identifying passages for removal from a compilation of sources from the Napoleonic era, one reviewer commented that these were not all automatically “objectionable in themselves,” but should be eliminated “because military and nationalistic aspects of Germany’s opposition to Napoleon have been exploited too much during the Hitler period with the intention of stirring up exaggerated national feeling for purposes of aggression.” Other source material would provide a “more complete picture of the tendencies of the times.”<sup>38</sup> Asking that a piece titled “Vom ewigen Frieden” (Of Eternal Peace) be eliminated from a reader manuscript intended for Mannheim’s elementary schools, another analyst explained that the piece “rouses skepticism and suspicion regarding the possibility of peace” and added that “in normal times this would be a harmless fable but can serve no useful purpose today when such thinking is already widespread.”<sup>39</sup>

Overall, the textbook evaluators took a broad view of war and militarism. It was not just German military references and influences that should be purged from textbooks, but an overemphasis on war and military glory in all its manifestations. “This anthology in view of treatment of the French Revolution and Napoleon, presents a pretty war-like picture,” commented an analyst of a French book. “Selections II and III

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<sup>36</sup> Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Oct 46, 8.

<sup>37</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Sep 46, 8, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 36.

<sup>38</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Dec 46, 5, *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Textbook Evaluation Sheet, Mannheimer Lesebogen, 12 Mar 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 99, F: German Readers Manuscripts.

deal with Napoleon's actual campaigns; this gives them proportionately more weight than they should enjoy in an anthology of this nature. . . . Good selections with less war content could be chosen." Another MG official called for the deletion of a number of pages from a 1930 geography text on Australia and New Zealand with the observation that the "passages deal with warfare of native tribes and are not good for mental health of young people whose imaginations have already been overstimulated in this direction." The reviewer of a book of English poetry required the removal of "Rule Britannia," "Ye Mariners of England," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," and several other pieces with the comment: "To reduce the number of military poems." Another reviewer slated "The Marseillaise" for excision, explaining that the policy of the textbook office was to eliminate all "military or nationalistic songs regardless of national origin . . . to enable German youth to regain their perspective." After calling for the deletion of a passage on the Spanish Armada, the analyst evaluating an English reader for secondary school students took the opportunity to comment on German textbooks more generally. He urged that new books "cease to emphasize feats of war, . . . [and] empire expansionist, military or naval heroes . . . and devote more space to feats of another kind (such as Scott's exploration of the South Pole), [and] heroes working in other fields (such as Livingston)." A review of "hundreds of English books used in German schools," the analyst added, had shown that "certain phases of British history" were stressed. These included the Armada, "Cromwell (England's moderate counterpart of a 'Führer')," and "British expansionism naval and military heroes (Clive, Wolfe, Nelson etc)." This material was not necessarily "objectionable per se," but the analyst believed "that a new Europe requires a complete change of emphasis."<sup>40</sup>

This did not mean textbook analysts got rid of all references to military activities and war, however. In appraising a 1932 history book dealing with Hamburg, a MG reader noted that it discussed battles and wars, but the "descriptions are factual and war is not glorified." These, moreover, were "an integral part of the story and

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<sup>40</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 31 Jul 46, 9, 11, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 36; OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 31 Aug 46, 7-9, *ibid.*; Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Sep 46, 7. Campaigning to cleanse textbooks of harmful themes and instead use them to encourage international understanding was not new or unique to American MG officials—nor were German textbooks the only focus of concern for international educators. As early as 1889, an international peace conference had advocated more accurate textbook treatment of the causes and character of war, hoping thereby to create a more favorable atmosphere for peaceful international relationships. Similar discussions were held in the years between the wars, sponsored by the League of Nations. During the occupation, Library of Congress and UNESCO publications both reiterated concerns about textbook content, calling attention to their important educational role. In 1948, the library's study explained that because texts were treated as an authoritative source, they could integrally shape a child's perception of truth, acting either as the seed of "an eventual harvest of international understanding and friendship" or of a "crop of misunderstanding, hate and contempt among nations." James I. Quillen, *Textbook Improvement and International Understanding* (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1948), 2-4; *Textbooks: Their Examination and Improvement. A Report on International and National Planning and Studies* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, European Affairs Division, 1948), preface.

furthermore necessary to give the student a comprehensive picture of life in the Hanseatic period” and therefore did not need to be removed.<sup>41</sup> A 1931 text on the Middle Ages earned a similar review. The book, wrote an analyst, emphasized militarism and “the German right to ‘colonisation’ (invasion of neighboring territories) under the pretext of cultural superiority.” But the history was “interestingly written and well organized” and it was “not necessary to delete facts regarding wars and conquest . . . but individual interpretations which underscore the cruelty or glory of war and would see a meritorious thing in conquest and subjection of foreign peoples.”<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps surprising in the work of the OMGUS Textbook Office is the number of new manuscripts found to contain objectionable material. As of August 1946, for example, some 32 percent of the manuscripts submitted had been only conditionally approved.<sup>43</sup> And in 1947, MG analysts still only conditionally approved 14 percent of all new manuscripts.<sup>44</sup> Some of this was due to laziness or a lack of vigilance on the part of publishers and education officials, as new manuscripts were sometimes merely hurriedly prepared revisions of older works. But the Americans and Germans also did not always entirely agree on how German textbooks should be changed. In August 1946, a MG report noted that this was especially true when it came to Latin and history texts. It criticized one Latin manuscript as “old-fashioned and dry,” but also “full of militaristic material which could have been largely avoided even if the book is intended to prepare the student for the reading of Caesar.” Three history manuscripts, meanwhile, were deemed “highly nationalistic and militaristic.”<sup>45</sup>

Indeed, the writing of history proved to be particularly problematic. In some fields, the inhibiting factor in the production of new books was the availability of paper.<sup>46</sup> In history, other issues were definitive. Language, literature, math, science, and shorthand books, after all, could be filled with new examples taken from non-military fields. But the study of history could not entirely discount the influences of past wars. Nor

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<sup>41</sup> Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Sep 46, 8.

<sup>42</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Apr 47, 4, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 36. (Emphasis in original.)

<sup>43</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 21.

<sup>44</sup> “Report on Textbook Evaluation 1945-1948.”

<sup>45</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 21-22.

<sup>46</sup> On the American program to promote and support the writing of new textbooks, see Braun, *Umerziehung in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone*, 100-114.

could books dealing with the recent past ignore the Third Reich and World War II. History, moreover, was grounded in interpretation and presentation, both of which were products of the textbook author's worldview. A new narrative might first necessitate a shift in thinking. Creating acceptable textbooks could therefore be challenging. And some writers clearly did not understand what the Americans wanted, even when MG officials were vetting primarily for negative elements. In some instances, too, German authors were waiting for the Länder to develop new curricula into which their works would need to fit.

In time, MG officials crafted guidelines for history textbook writing to help German authors. The guidelines urged them to write less about war and to highlight its costs when compelled to do so. While the Americans did not expect all nationalism to be eliminated, they encouraged the Germans to call attention to their country's relationship with other nations and to the polyglot nature of German society itself. They also advised them to discuss more than just German accomplishments. In the end, the Americans wanted history instruction "to build responsible citizens, not only Germans but also Europeans and human beings."<sup>47</sup>

History textbooks nevertheless remained a bottleneck. Military government officials continued to be concerned about these writing efforts in part because the Germans ultimately responsible for new textbooks often disappointed them. Describing a recent meeting of educators from the U.S. Zone, the August 1946 MG report contended that "very few of the teachers present were able to see the subject of history from an objective or from a wider point of view than of a narrow national one."<sup>48</sup> The Third Reich had made Nazi, militaristic, racial, and imperialistic ideas "the current coin of the realm, to such an extent, that even unconsciously opponents of Nazism at times fall into the phraseology that was created by Hitler, Goebbels, and the rest," a planning document from early 1947 similarly commented.<sup>49</sup> In March 1948, Major Richard Banks, deputy director of the Land MG's education division, suggested that "the change from a nationalistic to an internationalistic point of view is such a departure from past traditions that no body of literature exists in Germany today from which historians may draw in the preparation of such manuscripts." Like others, he, too, noted that very few historians were "competent to deal with history from other than a nationalistic standpoint."

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<sup>47</sup> Puaca, "Learning Democracy," 153-154.

<sup>48</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 22.

<sup>49</sup> "Functional Program, Part IV, Education Section," Jan 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 111, F: Policy Papers.

To date only one history and one civics book had been published in Württemberg-Baden, he reported, and he did not think either was particularly good.<sup>50</sup> By June 1949, instructional materials for history education produced in the Land still consisted of just “two small pamphlets on the 1848 revolution” and one lengthy history timetable.<sup>51</sup> The fact that local sensitivities generally led administrators to resist using texts developed in other areas of Germany made this especially troubling.

That is not to say there were no Germans who found their country’s recent, and even long-established, pedagogical and analytical approaches to be flawed. Many German educators were genuinely committed to reforming German education. Some had been pressing for changes since the days of the Weimar Republic.<sup>52</sup> In Württemberg-Baden, men like Theodor Bäuerle, who initially served as deputy to Culture Minister Theodor Heuss and later as culture minister himself, and Ministerialrat Schneckenburger, head of the ministry’s elementary schools section, wanted to free the Land’s schools of history instruction that lauded the German nation above all others, focused too much on war, and glorified Frederick the Great and Bismarck while treating Matthias Erzberger and Friedrich Ebert as villains.<sup>53</sup> A late 1945 report from MG education officials observed that conferences with Bäuerle and other key officials at the Culture Ministry had shown them to be “leaning toward the development in the German schools of a broad and free vision of the world and a development of background for the children based on an understanding of economic and cultural development rather than upon the militaristic ideology that has permeated much history of the world up until the last few years and German History always.”<sup>54</sup> This did not mean, however, that these men always completely agreed with American ideas.

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<sup>50</sup> Richard G. Banks to Dep Dir Lt Col Edwards, 18 Mar 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 882, F: 209.6.

<sup>51</sup> Quarterly Summary of Dr. Mönnich, n.d. [ca. Jun 49], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 905, F: Reports – Mainly Educational Service Centers.

<sup>52</sup> Puaca, “Learning Democracy,” 29-31, 34-53.

<sup>53</sup> “Ministerialdirektor Bäuerle sprach,” *SDZ*, 2 Mar 46; “Erziehung zur Verantwortlichkeit,” *SDZ*, 10 Jul 46; Notes on Meeting, 15 Jan 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 891, F: Conferences; Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden, *5 Jahre Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden. Ein Tätigkeitsbericht 1945-1950* (Stuttgart: n.p., 1951), 35. For a North Baden elementary education official’s vigorous condemnation of educational practices during the Nazi era, see A. Kimmelmann, “Education in the New Spirit of our Age,” attached to John F. Mead to CO, F17, 31 Aug 45, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 590, F: Misc. Applications (not important). For a Karlsruhe teacher’s ideas on how history instruction should be transformed, see Otto Baitsch, “Geschichts-Unterricht in der Volksschule,” *Süddeutsche Schul-Zeitung* 2, No. 15 (1948): 1, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 884, F: 309. The Culture Ministry appointed Baitsch to serve on a committee dealing with history and civics curriculum development. Kultministerium to US Military Government Ed & Rel Aff Div, 6 Aug 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 904, F: Correspondence on School Reform.

<sup>54</sup> Weekly Report, 24 Nov – 1 Dec, n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2]. Bäuerle was an “adult education leader” whom MG education officer Richard Banks described as a “strongly anti-Nazi,”

Nor did it mean they could always influence the writing of individual books. When it came to history texts, the Germans themselves could not reach a consensus on what they should say.<sup>55</sup>

Still, about the time the Americans turned vetting responsibilities over to the Germans and ended their supervision of German education with the birth of the Federal Republic, Land officials approved—and in the case of North Baden, even recommended—as an option for use in their schools a series of history textbooks recently prepared in Berlin with the support of the Americans.<sup>56</sup> While still showing certain interpretative weaknesses (for example, in their approach to the Third Reich) the books replaced an openly nationalistic and militaristic interpretation of Germany's past with a narrative that traced the nation's struggle for democracy and introduced artists, scientists, and writers as men to be most admired.<sup>57</sup>

### *In the Classroom*

The American decision to eradicate incitements to militarism from German schools had repercussions for German education beyond dictating the revision of German textbooks. It led to the temporary removal of entire fields of study from the curriculum of some schools and to an abrupt shift in the approach to certain subjects. Moreover, inadequate educational resources and new standards made even more challenging the job of teachers who were already battling unheated schools, hungry pupils, and, frequently, their own inexperience. For a time, schools in Württemberg-Baden were turning out students whose distorted view of German history and its attendant value system had not necessarily been corrected or who had reason to doubt whether what they had been taught was actually the truth.

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apolitical “professional educator.” Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 110. See also Theodor Bäuerle, “Life,” 14 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 883, F: 302.12.

<sup>55</sup> Bericht über die Lehrbuchkonferenz am 25. Juli 1946, n.d., HStA EA 3/604 Bü 8.

<sup>56</sup> Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden Abt. Kultus und Unterricht to Direktionen der Höheren Schulen, 29 Aug 49, GLA 235 No. 35448; To the Westfälische Zeitung, 6 Apr 51, HStA EA 3/604 Bü 27.

<sup>57</sup> On the creation and content of this series, titled *Wege der Volker*, see Puaca, “Learning Democracy,” 156-164; Gregory P. Wegner, “The Power of Tradition in Education: The Formation of the History Curriculum in the Gymnasium of the American Sector in Berlin, 1945-1955” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988), Chapter 5. “The sections [in the modern history volume] on Hitler's war garnered the most print of any historical event with the exception of World War One,” states Wegner. However, “in the few pictures chosen to accompany the text, most illustrated the dark underside of war. . . . The placement of the pictures along with factual descriptions on the course of the conflict suggested the utter futility of war.” Battle plans and strategy were not covered in great detail. Military leaders such as Rommel were “mentioned in connection with various military operations without any tendency toward hero worship” (275-276).

As with German textbooks, American MG officers had to ensure that everything that occurred in German classrooms was unobjectionable. In Heidelberg, U.S. officials issued demands almost immediately. Meeting with city and Landkreis authorities already on May 5, 1945, the education officer for Baden and the local MG commander explained procedures for initiating the reopening of schools, stressing that the reorganization of German education would be grounded in two principles: every political influence would disappear and any militaristic spirit would be eliminated. As part of the reopening process, responsible officials were therefore to send the Americans not only information on each school's history, staff, and current condition, but also a statement certifying, among other things, that the school would not teach the principles of Nazism or militarism.<sup>58</sup>

In early October 1945, Württemberg-Baden's MG confirmed the U.S. position officially, informing the Ministry of Culture that it was to prevent every teacher from permitting "physical training to be expanded into what would be para military training" and from teaching anything that "glorifies militarism" or "expounds the practice of war or of mobilization, preparation for war, whether in the scientific, industrial, or economic fields, or promotes the study of military geography."<sup>59</sup> The ministry subsequently notified school administrators that all instructors were to sign a statement containing the MG rules and indicating that they would adhere to them. Offenders would be punished, possibly with dismissal.<sup>60</sup> During the summer of 1946, an ACC directive added additional bite to the American regulations. It specified that any administrator or teacher who "spreads and advocates, or assists, therein, or encourages others to spread or advocate militarist, Nazi, or anti-democratic doctrine, at any time or place" was to be let go immediately. In this instance, American officials clarified that the directive was not intended to prohibit "a limited amount of scientific, objective or factual discussion, explanation or exposition of Nazi history and philosophy or of militarist Nazi and anti-democratic doctrines" provided there was "no attempt made to extol, perpetuate or glorify National Socialist accomplishments, or to deliberately disparage, vilify or discredit the democratic form of government."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Niederschrift über eine Sitzung, 5 May 45, StAH AA 308a No. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Headquarters, U.S. Military Government, Württemberg/Baden to Minister of Culture, Land Württemberg-Baden, 1 Oct 45, HStA EA 3/101 Bü 60.

<sup>60</sup> Kultministerium to sämtliche Bezirksschulämter, et al, 8 Dec 45, *ibid.* This rule was in place until 1949. Kultministerium to Behörden und Anstalten, 26 Jan 50, attached to Kultministerium, V 2719, 10 Nov 49, *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> William W. Dawson to Minister President, Land Württemberg-Baden, 6 Aug 46, HStA 3/603 Bü 16.

Ironically, vigilance in controlling textbooks sometimes actually hurt the Americans' ability to control what occurred in German schools. Because there were often only small quantities of OMGUS-approved texts available, institutions other than those that had originally submitted the books for review could rarely obtain copies. A mid 1946 MG report explained that there were generally no more than 50 extant copies of each text; most schools used the original emergency texts supplied by the MG. Even where there were books, they had "been passed from hand to hand, and shared by from two to fifty students," the report pointed out, adding, "The state of the old books or of the paper-bound emergency texts after a year of such service may easily be imagined."<sup>62</sup> Some teachers responded to these problems by consulting pre-1933 texts as reference sources or drawing on their own knowledge and then dictating information to their students who took notes on whatever paper they could get their hands on and learned at home. Other teachers compiled binders of self-authored material. Some even wrote their own primers.<sup>63</sup> Obviously, the ability of the MG to exercise pre-use censorship in these cases was limited.

The paucity of acceptable books, combined with the contentious nature of the subject itself, also led to limitations and even prohibitions on history teaching. German history teachers had traditionally offered up a highly nationalistic, military-focused interpretation of their country's past that could not now be easily purged or reconceptualized. Locating the boundary between "factual discussion" and propaganda, moreover, could be challenging. Even educational experts did not always agree on how the subject should be handled in the wake of the Third Reich. In the thinking of some Germans, the only sure way to avoid trouble—or to dodge unwelcome questions—was to avoid potentially touchy subjects altogether, at least for a time. Ultimately, MG education officers and German administrators both cast a wary eye on history instruction during the first years of the occupation. Although the evidentiary record is murky on this point, the apparent result was a suspension of history teaching in many schools, particularly when vetted or new textbooks were unobtainable.

It is not entirely clear exactly what rules Land MG officials laid down for history teaching. Writing in March 1948, Banks noted that "no ban upon the teaching of history exists in Wuerttemberg-Baden nor has any ban ever been ordered in Wuerttemberg-Baden by Military Government."<sup>64</sup> His assertion echoed a May 1946

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<sup>62</sup> *Textbooks in Germany*, 18.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*; Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden, *5 Jahre Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden*, 14.

<sup>64</sup> Richard G. Banks to Lt. Col. Edwards, 18 Mar 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 882, F: 209.6.



letter from Land MG director Colonel Morris Edwards to Minister-President Reinhold Maier which observed that “an idea apparently exists that the teaching of history is forbidden” but that this was “not so.” Rather, for history, as for other subjects, the only restriction was that the textbooks and curriculum needed MG approval. History teaching, Edwards added, “has been largely handicapped up until now by lack of source material from which to draw.”<sup>65</sup> Just a few days before Edwards signed his letter, however, a monthly report from the Culture Ministry’s secondary schools section had stated that, “after lengthy negotiations with the American education officer,” the MG had granted the Germans permission to resume history instruction in secondary schools.<sup>66</sup> Taken in context, this reference can perhaps be explained by the section’s August report, which indicated that MG officials had now authorized *Stoffpläne* (subject matter plans) for history and geography—intimating that the Americans did not object to the teaching of the subject in and of itself, but rather had disagreed with the specific approach proposed by the Land.<sup>67</sup>

The German perspective on history teaching is equally difficult to unravel. In 1948, Banks reported that “for the first year of the occupation the German government on its own initiative banned the teaching of history until teachers could be reoriented at least to a slight degree.”<sup>68</sup> He was evidently only partially correct. North Württemberg elementary schools that had access to Allied emergency textbooks resumed history instruction already in October 1945,<sup>69</sup> although Culture Ministry officials did not authorize the teaching of *modern* history in elementary schools until 1948.<sup>70</sup> June 1946 reports from the Heidelberg MG detachment likewise stated that some history was being taught in the primary schools of North Baden.<sup>71</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>65</sup> Morris O. Edwards to Dr. Reinhold Maier, 29 May 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 320, F: Heidelberg Outpost in.

<sup>66</sup> U III to Abt. V des Kultministeriums, 25 May 46, StAL EL 209 Bü 153.

<sup>67</sup> Monatsbericht der Abteilung U III für den Monat August 1946, n.d., *ibid.* See also Kultministerium to Präsident der Landesverwaltung Baden, Abteilung Kultus und Unterricht, 22 May 46, GLA 235 No. 35448. The myth of a blanket American ban on history teaching nevertheless persisted. See Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden, *5 Jahre Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden*, 16.

<sup>68</sup> Banks to Edwards, 18 Mar 48, NA, RG 260.

<sup>69</sup> Kultministerium to Präsident der Landesverwaltung Baden, Abteilung Kultus und Unterricht, 22 May 46, GLA 235 No. 35448; Sitzungsbericht über die Geschichtstagung in der US-Zone, 13 Mar 47, HStA 3/604 Bü 8.

<sup>70</sup> “Geschichtsunterricht in den Volksschulen,” *Amtsblatt des Kultministeriums*, No. 6 (1948), 83.

<sup>71</sup> Intelligence Report No. 247, 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [1]; Ludwig Lefebvre to Chief, Information Control Division, 18 Jun 46, *ibid.*

a late 1948 MG report from Landkreis Karlsruhe observed that there was no teaching of history in local primary schools, as ordered by North Baden's government.<sup>72</sup> A source from the 1950s similarly stated that North Baden officials did not officially reintroduce history instruction into elementary schools until the 1950-1951 school year, when acceptable preparatory texts, "in the new spirit," were finally available for teachers.<sup>73</sup>

The fate of history instruction in secondary schools also apparently varied. In January 1946, the head of a Heidelberg gymnasium petitioned the North Baden government to recommence history instruction (which he viewed as extremely important to correct distorted Nazi interpretations) and noted that, to his knowledge, no history was being taught in secondary schools.<sup>74</sup> He was later informed by North Baden officials—"after talking to the military government"—that instruction in history might be resumed only after new texts were written.<sup>75</sup> As noted above, prior to the summer of 1946 there was also no teaching of history in North Württemberg secondary schools supervised by the Culture Ministry. However, while ministry officials were soon making plans to reintroduce the subject there,<sup>76</sup> North Baden did not direct its secondary schools to revive history instruction until mid 1947, when a detailed chronological timetable was published which teachers could use in the absence of new books.<sup>77</sup>

Given this evidence, it seems plausible that local school officials were equally uncertain at the start of the occupation as to what, exactly, current policy was regarding the teaching of history. Early on, it was difficult for Land officials to contact outlying schools, and the MG's education division was appallingly understaffed and thus unable to visit schools to discuss MG policies or to check compliance.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, relations between Culture Ministry officials in Stuttgart and their counterparts at North Baden's previously independent education administration left a great deal to be desired—writing in 1949, Banks suggested that

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<sup>72</sup> Intelligence Report, From 25 November 1948 to 1 December 1948, n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 548, F: 400.1 Intelligence Activities (Weekly Intl. Reports) Karlsruhe 1948 [3].

<sup>73</sup> Memorandum, "Geschichtsunterricht in der Volksschule," n.d. [ca. 1950s], GLA 235 No. 35448.

<sup>74</sup> Mädchenrealgymnasium to Herr Präsident der Landesverwaltung Baden Abt. Kultus und Unterricht, 17 Jan 46, GLA 235 No. 35448.

<sup>75</sup> To the Direktion der Mädchenrealgymnasium, 8 Feb 46, *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> U III to Abt. V des Kultministeriums, 25 May 46, StAL EL 209 Bü 153.

<sup>77</sup> Der Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden Abt. Kultus und Unterricht to Direktionen der Höheren Schulen, 1 Jul 47, GLA 235 No. 35448.

<sup>78</sup> Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden, *5 Jahre Kultministerium Württemberg-Baden*, 15; Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 80-81, 117.

during the early years of the occupation they were “openly hostile” and remained “strained.”<sup>79</sup> Then, too, local MG officials were not always fully informed regarding U.S. or Land MG policies.

At the very least, there were real impediments to the resumption of history instruction. Offering reasons why “practically no history or geography is being taught” in June 1946, one North Baden MG official pointed to a shortage of teachers, insufficient class time to cover material, inadequate educational resources, and a “lack of directives on what to teach and how to treat the material.”<sup>80</sup> In the early 1950s, a retrospective piece on history instruction in North Baden’s elementary schools argued that even had the Americans not banned the teaching of history in the fall of 1945, German officials would have done so anyway. Young people being hastily trained to be teachers had learned the subject during the Nazi era, veteran teachers had to be reoriented, refugee teachers needed to better understand Baden’s history, and, in the absence of new history books for both instructors and pupils, there was always the risk that teachers would rely on books from 1933 to 1945 to prepare their lessons.<sup>81</sup>

Even where it was permitted, instruction in the schools left much to be desired. “The quality of [history] teaching is probably lower than that of any of the other subjects because of the radical change in the standpoint necessary on the part of the teacher,” observed Banks in 1948.<sup>82</sup> Some instructors, particularly older, more conservative ones, resented or resisted obeying MG regulations.<sup>83</sup> Teachers also made their own rules. A math instructor who headed a Karlsruhe secondary school immediately after the war later remembered prohibiting all references to Hitler or Germany’s immediate history. “Neither a word about the past nor about that which everyone was talking about at the moment [*was momentan an Bewegung war*], for example, the suicide of Hitler or something. That was never mentioned in the school at all,” he recalled. “I made it a

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<sup>79</sup> Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 195.

<sup>80</sup> Lefebvre to Chief, Information Control Division, NA, RG 260.

<sup>81</sup> “Geschichtsunterricht in der Volksschule.”

<sup>82</sup> Banks to Edwards, 18 Mar 48, NA, RG 260. A directive issued to Wiesbaden’s elementary school teachers by the Nazis in 1941 sheds light on the radicalness of the shift required. “History teaching,” it declared, “forms the basis for political education and should fill our children with confidence in the historic mission and future of our German people. Main subject for all history teaching must be the fateful struggle for the formation of the Fatherland. In this historic development the potent racial forces must be recognized. History teaching must inspire heroic spirit, create enthusiasm and foster the desire for martial living.” Bach, *America’s Germany*, 150.

<sup>83</sup> Puaca, “Learning Democracy,” 36-37.

principle, to make everyone forget the whole thing.”<sup>84</sup> By contrast, a fifth grade teacher in the same city (who, like the math instructor, had been born in the 1880s) later recalled teaching history “secretly,” viewing it as an absolutely necessary part of a democratic education.<sup>85</sup> Most teachers, at a minimum, required time to adjust to new circumstances and new ideas.

The deficiencies and difficulties of history teaching led to predictable results. In June 1946, the ICD sent its interviewers out to gather information on German schools. At times citing the attitude of individual teachers as the definitive factor, American observers in Württemberg-Baden pointed out that while some German youngsters were quite knowledgeable, or were well informed on specific topics, others showed a regrettable ignorance regarding basic political and historical questions.<sup>86</sup> A Heidelberg report, for instance, indicated that only nine of 43 pupils asked could correctly answer the question “did Germany declare war on the USA or vice-versa?” When asked about the greatest man in German history, the responses were “Karl der Grosse, Bismarck and Hitler,” with “none of the children . . . in a position to explain why they thought so.” The pupils’ teachers, the report added, “gave the excuse that history was only taken up recently and at present they were teaching the historical events of the middle ages.”<sup>87</sup>

A MG official from Stuttgart similarly noted that only two of the 42 14- and 15-year-olds in one elementary school graduating class knew that Germany had been a republic between 1919 and 1933. “One boy wrote that in 1933 the German government changed because a new Führer was elected,” he continued. “Seven out of 42 guessed correctly what the League of Nations had been.” The 17- and 18-year-old boys in a local secondary school had been much better informed, the American noted, but even eight of the 30 students polled there did not know what form of government Germany had between 1919 and 1933. Meanwhile, the answers gleaned from the 16- to 18-year-old girls of one secondary school were “remarkable for the amount of dogmatically proclaimed misinformation” they contained. He explained: “The inevitable survival of the Nazi

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<sup>84</sup> Transcript of Joseph Werner interview with Herr Professor Joseph Dolland, 30 Apr 84, 6, StAK 8/StS 17 No. 103.

<sup>85</sup> Barbara Guttman, “*Zwischen Trümmern und Träumen*”—*Karlsruherinnen in Politik und Gesellschaft der Nachkriegszeit. Portraits* (Karlsruhe: Stadt Karlsruhe, Frauenbeauftragte und Stadtarchiv, 1997), 99.

<sup>86</sup> Describing his findings in Landkreis Bruchsal and Landkreis Sinsheim, for example, an ICD interviewer wrote: “The boys in Bruchsal were better informed than the other children. This was obviously because of their teacher, an alert and capable man. The teacher of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls in Bruchsal was a bitter old maid and her class reflected her attitude.” Lefebre to Chief, Information Control Division, NA, RG 260.

<sup>87</sup> Intelligence Report No. 247, 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260.

propaganda became apparent in the following answers: ‘In 1939 war broke out because Polish troops invaded Germany’; ‘the revolution of 1918 is the fault of the Communists’; ‘the KPD is bad because the wrong people (Jews) would assume power’; ‘Goethe is great because he expresses the German way of life.’” Most telling were the comments of one girl—whom the American termed “a young skeptic in the group”—who wrote: “How can we possibly answer your questions? We young people have no idea about what happened from 1800 until 1933.”<sup>88</sup>

Occasionally, students offered responses to simpler questions that the interviewers found equally disconcerting. For example, asked about his reading preferences, a sixth grade boy in Sinsheim, who “seemed one of the brightest in the class,” said he liked soldier books the best.<sup>89</sup> On the other hand, after speaking with teachers, students of a variety of ages, and the school superintendent for Landkreis Ulm, Ulm’s ever vigilant Herbert van der Berg had other concerns. He reported being struck by the fact that “one of the boys asked when they would be allowed to march again as they had done in the [Hitler Youth]” and “that when leaving a class room the teacher would give some kind of a command which sounded like hupp and that thereupon the students would rise quickly and stand erect next to their desk saying Auf Wiedersehen.” “These incidents,” he concluded, “gave the investigator the impression that militarism is still deeply impressed in the boys’ minds.”<sup>90</sup>

Even apart from their irregular schooling during the final war years and the inadequate instruction they were currently receiving, the confusion of school children was perhaps understandable given the abrupt shift in Germany’s official value system and its new conception of historical truth. If the sudden change could unsettle and confuse teachers it could undoubtedly jar, puzzle, or demoralize their pupils as well. One German alluded to this in recalling his experiences as a teenager in neighboring Bavaria right after the war.

The history teacher returned as if nothing had happened since he stopped teaching nine months earlier. But the “Heil Hitler” greeting on his entry into the classroom was dropped in favor of a snappy “Gruess Gott,” followed by a prayer in Latin. In spring 1945 he had ended our survey of European history with the German invasions of the Roman Empire, having arrived in our slow trek through European history at around the year 100 B.C. We had learned that morally pure Teutonic tribes, the Cimbri and Teutonici in particular, had swept in from the north to free the enfeebled Romans from their decadent way of life. Now, at the end of 1945, the same teacher described the same German

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<sup>88</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2].

<sup>89</sup> Lefebre to Chief, Information Control Division, NA, RG 260.

<sup>90</sup> Sgt. H. P. van der Berg to Chief, Information Control Division, 18 Jun 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 89, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Ulm 1946 [2]. (Emphasis in original.)

invasion and the same battle of Aquae Sextiae, but this time he instructed us that the cosmopolitan Romans were defending civilization against the onslaught of the barbaric Teutons from the north. Where did he stand? I asked myself. He had switched sides without breaking his pedagogical stride. He lost all credibility in my eyes at that moment, and from then on, I devised ways of interrupting classes just below the threshold of detection. . . .<sup>91</sup>

Interestingly, many ordinary Germans were not overly concerned about these developments. Nor did they always appreciate the American insistence on changing the content of history teaching. In January 1948, ICD interviewers spoke with 223 adults from Stuttgart of assorted ages and income levels regarding educational issues. When asked if they thought the failure to teach history would have “very serious effects,” 51 percent of those interviewed said “yes.” The ICD’s summary report nevertheless pointed out that this statistic was misleading. Almost no interviewees “volunteered” the idea that the dearth of history teaching in schools was a flaw in Germany’s current educational situation, and when asked specifically which subjects they believed were most affected by a lack of books, only 7 percent mentioned history. The report also noted that interviewers had asked each person for their assessment of the “basic reason” history was not being taught. “Replies to this question were, in the large, set within the frame of bitterness and sarcasm,” the report asserted. It stressed that not even one in 10 individuals “lauded the necessity of complete removal of nazi and militaristic ideas” from history instruction, adding that “large majorities of the public, however, recognized that the matter hinges on this problem.” These observations were supported with details regarding the responses given to the question.

*Answers to survey question “What do you think the basic reason is why history is not being taught today?”*

General confusion in political situation; revision in conception of history; Allies and “experts” disagree on interpretation.	31%
Nothing more dare be said about militarism or nazism	21%
Necessary and good idea to remove influence of militaristic and nazi ideas	4%
National consciousness and Germany’s past great history are being suppressed	4%
Scarcities and shortages (books, time, teachers, etc.)	14%
No opinion	26%
Total	100%

Appraising the ICD’s findings in Stuttgart, as well as the results of interviews with some 450 Berliners, the report concluded that about half of the public viewed history teaching in schools as important, but that the Germans believed “physical problems” should be resolved first and that facilitating the teaching of other subjects should take priority over historical instruction. “In the background of thinking about history,” it

<sup>91</sup> Rosner and Tubach, *An Uncommon Friendship*, 176-177.

contended, “is a very wide understanding of what seems to be termed ‘unduly revisionistic’ thinking about history on the part of the Allies.”<sup>92</sup>

Still, there were some Germans who shared the Americans’ concerns about the shortcomings of history teaching in their schools. Speaking to a March 1946 gathering of North Baden youth program officials, one Heidelberg youth argued that Germany’s young people passionately wanted truthful, objective history instruction. A peer from Mannheim suggested that they needed to learn about the mistakes made during the past 12 years so that these could be eliminated.<sup>93</sup> In January 1946, a writer in a Württemberg youth publication similarly lamented the absence of history and geography teaching in the upper grades and insisted that it was critical to reeducate Germany’s young people to correct historical thinking and to understanding for people outside of the country’s borders. Underscoring the importance of finally freeing Germany’s youth from an accustomed glorification of and clamoring for war in German history writing, he called for producing new texts as soon as possible, if they were, in fact, necessary for reviving history instruction. Every cohort of young people who emerged from the schools without the necessary knowledge of German history and the world was lost to the new state, he stressed, because it would not learn these things in the workplace.<sup>94</sup>

Many influential German administrators also believed that the content of history instruction had to be altered. Although they might not agree on what specific changes were necessary, Land education officials were genuinely trying “to infuse a new spirit of history, as a story of culture and civilization throughout the world” and to exclude “all war-making and radical propaganda.”<sup>95</sup> Most notably, to encourage, reorient, and improve the capabilities of history teachers, the Culture Ministry eventually began sponsoring workshops and training

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<sup>92</sup> OMGUS, ICD Opinion Surveys, Report No. 95, “Appraisal of the Content of Education and Educational Facilities in Berlin and Stuttgart,” 25 Feb 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 162, F: Opinion Survey Reports 81-100. Other findings presented in the report help to explain why some Germans did not view history teaching as especially important. “The educational philosophy of various population groups shows a primary emphasis on ‘order and conduct’ and a fairly heavy vote for ‘vocational training’ among the old, the lower class, and those with eight years or less education,” it explained. Conversely, German youth, individuals with at least nine years of education, and members of the upper and middle classes “overwhelmingly” cited two other educational aims as most important: “a rounded general education and the development of independent thinking.” Opinions regarding history teaching were influenced by these perspectives on the goals of education, the report stated. “Teaching of history is considered least important by those who regard vocational training as the prime aim of education [as 20 percent of those interviewed in Stuttgart did], and most important by those who consider critical thinking the main objective [a goal cited by 16 percent].”

<sup>93</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung des Jugendrates von Nordbaden, 25 Mar 46, StAH AA 3 No. 3b.

<sup>94</sup> Hans-Karl Tarden, “Warum kein Geschichtsunterricht,” *DJW*, 15 Jan 46, 7.

<sup>95</sup> Semi-Monthly Progress Report, 15 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 887, F: Semi-Monthly Progress Report (1947); Notes on Conference, 22 Jan 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 891, F: Conferences.

courses for instructors—endeavors that even drew on the services of such heavyweights as Theodor Heuss and Gerhard Ritter.<sup>96</sup>

History nevertheless remained a ticklish subject. In one enlightening case, an instructor who attempted to teach his students about Germany's recent past found himself snared on the line between objective discussion and objectionable propaganda. During the summer of 1948, the Schwäbisch Gmünd MG office received a complaint about a local secondary school's principal. According to U.S. officials, it was alleged that the man had "adopted a theme of extreme old-time Nationalism" in teaching sixth grade boys. Specifically, he had "lectured for many hours on the ill-timed subject: 'The war-guilt lie of 1914,'" emphasizing "the policy of encirclement of the former Entente Powers" and "peremptorily reject[ing] the suggestion that Germany had been responsible for the First World War." His unacceptable "manner" and "tone" were evidenced in excerpts from a lecture he had purportedly given on the Versailles Treaty. "The whole peace treaty (Versailles) was founded on the spurious assumption that the Reich was responsible for the outbreak of the war 1914-1918," he had allegedly argued. "The terms of the treaty conceived in an attitude of insidious hostility not only failed to guarantee a real peace, but were deliberately designed to plunder and disintegrate Germany, and to keep Germany on her knees. The peace was considered to be a continuation of the war in another form; Germany was to lose her independence. . . . It was intended to dishonour the Germans and to injure their reputation by those punitive measures."<sup>97</sup>

Both the instructor himself and Dr. Albert Mack, head of the Culture Ministry's secondary education section, were distressed by these accusations. In addition to sending a member of his staff to investigate in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Mack had a "long and thorough conversation" with the accused, Dr. F, in Stuttgart, discussing "point for point" the local MG's report. Mack also eventually gave the Land MG an explanation more than three pages long, single-spaced, written by Dr. F himself.

In his written account, Dr. F offered a spirited defense of his teaching. First, he noted, he had not been lecturing sixth grade boys, but rather young men in the ninth grade, most of whom were over 20 years old and many of whom were former soldiers and former POWs who already possessed more mature and independent

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<sup>96</sup> 19. Monatsbericht der Abteilung U III (für Höhere Schulen) über den Monat Oktober 1947, n.d., StAL EL 209 Bü 153; "Historiker-Tagung auf der Comburg," *BNN*, 20 May 49.

<sup>97</sup> Kultministerium to Military Government Educational and Cultural Division, 9 Aug 48, and attachments, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 900, F: Complaints of Teachers.



judgment. Dr. F stressed that he had not spoken of the “war guilt lie,” but instead of the “war guilt question,” and had dealt with it as part of two different lessons rather than lecturing on the topic for hours. Furthermore, in terms of content, he had made it very clear that Germany had instigated the wars of 1864 and 1866 and especially the war begun in 1939. However, World War I was very different and he had informed his students of this as well. Many European nations contributed to its outbreak, he had contended, though he had also criticized the “saber-rattling, harmful style of Kaiser Wilhelm II” and, above all, the Germans’ handling of the Austrian-Serbian conflict. The victors of World War I had, in fact, justified the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles with the argument that Germany was responsible for the war, Dr. F reminded in his letter. He then explained that he had told his students that the punitive treaty, influenced by the suffering and vengeful peoples of the victorious nations, did not bring a lasting peace, but, instead, as some had foreseen it would, led to further conflict. To back up his interpretation of these events, Dr. F pointed to the war causation discussion printed in an American world history textbook circulated as a U.S. War Department manual, quoted forceful statements from Winston Churchill regarding the Versailles negotiations (as carried in the American-sponsored newspaper *Die Neue Zeitung*), and cited remarks regarding the Versailles Treaty made by none other than Marshall Foch and Georges Clemenceau.<sup>98</sup>

Summarizing Dr. F’s main points in his cover letter, Mack reported that his section had “no doubt whatever, that [Dr. F’s] report represents the full truth.” Never a party member and always a pious Catholic, Dr. F was a “most reliable personality whose sincerity cannot be called into a question.” Ministry officials were firmly convinced that he was “neither an extreme nationalist nor a representative of chauvinism nor a militarist.” As for the issue of history teaching itself, they believed that “in the highest grade, before the boys leave school and go to the university, they ought to be brought to a free and open discussion of decisive questions of the political life of Germany and that only thus the new democratic spirit for which we long for so intensely will be realized.” They endorsed “the idea that history teaching ought to serve truth” and, Mack implied, also agreed with Dr. F’s interpretation of the past. Mack concluded, however, that “the main point in those lessons . . . is the spirit, in and out of which historical instruction is given by the teacher.” And there was

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

no doubt here. Dr. F's approach was "a purely democratic one." He advocated "the ideal of peace all over the world, a 'no-more-war-atmosphere' and full truth within the relations among the nations of the world."<sup>99</sup>

Taken as a whole, Dr. F's arguments were certainly open to challenge, but they were not outrageous and would, undoubtedly, have found an accepting audience among some American historians. If he had indeed presented these very ideas to his students, they could perhaps be viewed as provocative, but could hardly be termed dangerous propaganda. Not surprisingly, both Mack and Dr. F believed someone had deliberately chosen to defame the instructor—someone who, in reading the contemporary environment in Germany, obviously had assumed that an accusation of incendiary nationalistic teaching regarding World War I would, in fact, cause trouble for the man. What the MG ultimately decided to do with Dr. F is not clear, but it seems likely that they would have let the matter rest.

Although Dr. F's alleged defiance of MG rules proved to be a fire without much fuel, the Americans showed a certain amount of persistence in investigating the truth of the accusations, even as late as mid 1948. Moreover, if Dr. F was not guilty, MG officials did discover several obvious violations of MG regulations even relatively late in the occupation. In July 1947, for example, Württemberg-Baden's top MG education official, John Steiner, sent a sharp letter of reprimand to Bäuerle concerning Stuttgart's business school. Two weeks before, one of its teachers had given students preparing for a German-English exam copies of old examinations. This, Steiner noted, was a "clear violation of Military Government directives and indicates either gross negligence or a gross malicious intent." He added that a subsequent investigation of the school had revealed "much material of this type. . . . [that] was not even under lock and key." He blamed the school administration for making the material available. But the teacher had also told investigators that the school had acted on instructions from the responsible section of the Culture Ministry in using old files for exam preparations. This, Steiner continued, raised the issue of why Land officials had not removed these kinds of resources from their schools. Concluding with a reference to this "distressing incident," Steiner asked that the ministry look into it, check whether similar materials were still available in other schools, and take action to make sure all teachers knew what items could not be used in their classrooms.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> John P. Steiner to Ministerial Director Theodor Baeuerle, 3 Jul 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 885, F: 310.

Equally surprising was the May 19, 1949, daily report from a Land MG official which read: "Attention all you textbook experts! Picked up a copy of a school song book in the [Stuttgart] Moerikeschule in the evening and discovered that it contains such old [military and nationalistic] favorites as 'die Wacht am Rhein', 'Deutschland ueber alles', 'Barbarossa', 'Frisch auf zum Streit', 'Zur Strassburg auf der Schanz', 'Der Soldat'. So much for your efforts to revise the singing habits!" Whether the Americans took action to confiscate the book of songs dating from the imperial era is unknown.<sup>101</sup>

By 1949, German education clearly was still in transition. The early days of the occupation had brought chaos and uncertainty, with textbooks in short supply and teachers often inexperienced or disoriented, or both. At the same time, American regulations and the goals of German education officials required teachers and students to adjust rapidly to an entirely new value system. A resulting hiatus in history teaching sometimes led to ignorant and confused students, but it also gave educators time to adapt and rethink their approach. Overall, lasting change and the arrival of stability came at different speeds in different places. But by the time the Americans turned over complete responsibility for education to the Germans, teacher training programs were in place, improved texts were becoming available, and German education was settling into new patterns which would serve as at least a partial foundation for further improvements in years to come.<sup>102</sup>

### **Organized German Youth Activities**

#### *Establishing a Policy Framework*

The teacher and classroom shortages that substantially reduced the amount of time children spent in school did more than slow their intellectual development. Shorter school days meant more free time for most young Germans and more headaches for German and American officials. The dissolution of the Hitler Youth, Banks later recounted, "left the youth of Germany, who had been accustomed to strong direction, in the position of a leaderless milling band of sheep."<sup>103</sup> Children and teenagers testing their talents on the black market, running afoul of the law, or just wandering the streets with little to do worried MG officers and German

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<sup>101</sup> Mr. Horner, Daily Report, 19 May 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 11 April 1949 to 25 May 1949.

<sup>102</sup> On this point, see especially Puaca, "Learning Democracy."

<sup>103</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Wuerttemberg-Baden," 98.

authorities both. Both also recognized the potential psychological problems facing the young, who had endured six years of war, disrupted households, and, in most cases, the loss of homes, family members, or friends. Now they were dealing with hunger and uncertainty. Fiercely indoctrinated for much of their lives, they were also confronting the collapse of their value system and ideals. Even young people who were only in their teens frequently had thrown their hearts into Nazi activism at home or had sacrificed important years of their lives and perhaps their health as soldiers in service of a system now defined as criminal. Some now picked up the pieces and looked forward. But many others were slow to adjust, either refusing to relinquish their faith or having difficulty coming to terms with a dramatically reordered world. In Germany's young people, American and German officials identified—often accurately—obdurate Nazi and nationalistic attitudes, disillusionment, and apathy.<sup>104</sup> Addressing these problems became important for a multitude of reasons.

At the outset of the occupation, U.S. policy called for dissolving the Hitler Youth and stipulated that any new youth groups must be approved by SHAEF. But occupation officers were not to deliberately encourage the formation of new organizations.<sup>105</sup> Right after the war, therefore, youth programs were varied, spotty, localized, and dependent as much on the rules set by local MG officials as on the initiative of the Germans living in an area. First to sponsor activities for young people were the Catholic and Protestant churches.<sup>106</sup> Stuttgart's anti-fascist working committees similarly organized sporting events, instructional sessions, and clean-up and reconstruction projects.<sup>107</sup> Concerned about idle and restive young Germans, army

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<sup>104</sup> For a contemporary assessment of the problems of Germany's youth, see Henry J. Kellermann, "The Present Status of German Youth," Part I, *Department of State Bulletin*, 14 Jul 46. For an analysis of the experiences of young people immediately after World War II based especially on oral history interviews, see Kimberly A. Redding, *Growing Up in Hitler's Shadow: Remembering Youth in Postwar Berlin* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004). On the concerns of German and American officials and their efforts to deal with them, see also Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*, and Fehren and Schubert, *Offene Jugendarbeit in Baden-Württemberg*. On the revival of Catholic youth groups after the war, see Mark Edward Ruff, *The Wayward Flock: Catholic Youth in Postwar Germany, 1945-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005). On the range of feelings expressed by former German soldiers immediately after the war, see Fritz, *Frontsoldaten*, Chapter 9. On the ways German society used a complex discourse about Germany's youth as means of coming to terms with the past, see Jaimey Fisher, *Disciplining Germany: Youth, Reeducation, and Reconstruction after the Second World War* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007).

<sup>105</sup> SHAEF, *Handbook for Military Government in Germany*, Dec 44, NA, RG 331, SHAEF, Entry 47, Box 7; SHAEF, *Technical Manual for Education and Religious Affairs*, Feb 45, *ibid*.

<sup>106</sup> Heinrich Hassinger, "Gebt der Deutschen Jugend Eine Chance!" StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4650-1 Ausschüsse, Arbeitsgemeinschaften u.ä.; Protokoll einer von der Militär-Regierung Karlsruhe einberufene Besprechung über Jugend-Fragen, 14 Dec 45, GLA 356 Zug. 1969-10 No. 2.433.

<sup>107</sup> Arbeitsausschuss Gross-Stuttgart Zentrale, "4 Monate Arbeit," 24 Aug 45, StAS HA Gruppe 0 Bestand 14 No. 71.

officials also soon instructed American troops to get involved in arranging German youth activities.<sup>108</sup> In some instances, however, Germans eager to launch new programs encountered MG obstacles. In Heidelberg, for example, former sports leaders assembled already in late July 1945 to discuss the resumption of sporting activities in the city, only to have local American officials deny them permission to implement their plans.<sup>109</sup> About the same time, a MG public safety officer was informing Landkreis Heidelberg's Landrat that U.S. regulations presently barred Germans from meeting for purposes such as music, theater, and athletics.<sup>110</sup> Both city and Landkreis officials subsequently pressed their cases by pointing out that in nearby areas sporting activities were already in full swing, including those under the auspices of authorized sports clubs.<sup>111</sup>

In late October 1945, a new OMGUS directive governing youth activities altered American policy and imposed greater uniformity on activities in the U.S. Zone. Rather than leaving matters mostly to the Germans, American officials were now to encourage the formation of new youth groups and the reestablishment of defunct organizations such as the Boy Scouts and YMCA. All groups, OMGUS headquarters explained, "should exist for purposes of culture, religion or recreation" and should "aim to make possible the successful development of democratic ideas and the cultivation of the ideals of fair play, tolerance and honesty." Detailed instructions specified, further, that Landkreis youth committees should be created to oversee local groups. All organizations had to be authorized by MG officials, with all group leaders and committee members approved according to current denazification rules. Seeking to instill new values in Germany's youth, the Americans did not neglect to also state what was expressly forbidden as part of this effort. Specifically, they prohibited political groups and directed local MG authorities to prevent the revival of military, paramilitary, or Hitler Youth-type activities. German officials were to inform all those involved with youth programs that they would be severely punished if their efforts included anything that glorified militarism or nationalism, tried to "propagate, revive or justify the doctrines of National Socialist leaders," or explained "the practice of war or preparation for war, whether in the scientific, economic, or industrial field" or "promote[d] the study of geo-

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<sup>108</sup> Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden," 99.

<sup>109</sup> Besprechung über Sportangelegenheiten, 25 Jul 45, StAH AA 48 No. 58; To the Herr Oberbürgermeister, 23 Aug 45, *ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Jack C. Smith to The Landrat of Landkreis Heidelberg, 18 Aug 46, GLA 356 No. 4469.

<sup>111</sup> Memorandum, "Memorial concerning the reorganization of sporting activities in Heidelberg," n.d., StAH AA 48 No. 58; Beschluss, 12 Sep 45, GLA 356 No. 4469.

politics.” “Parades, drilling, marching, and any form of pre-military or paramilitary training” were also banned and U.S. officials had to approve all uniforms and emblems.<sup>112</sup> Württemberg-Baden’s Culture Ministry, which the Land MG soon tasked with overseeing all youth programs, subsequently passed on these rules to all Landkreis youth committees.<sup>113</sup>

Eventually the Americans permitted the Germans to form youth organizations that stretched beyond the Landkreis to the Land level and also fostered the creation of Land youth committees. Political restrictions on youth groups were later relaxed, and by mid 1947, Landkreis youth committees had received authority to approve all local groups and leaders, although they had to keep MG officials apprised of their decisions, with the Americans reserving the right to intervene directly, if necessary. The assistance of U.S. occupation troops with youth work was formalized in a new “German Youth Activities” (GYA) program.<sup>114</sup> However, the basic goals and restrictions of the October 1945 youth activities directive remained in place until the end of the occupation.

While falling under the purview of the various youth program directives, sports clubs were also subject to additional regulations. The Americans had insisted from the start of the occupation that no military exercises should be carried out under the guise of athletic activities.<sup>115</sup> And in late 1945, the Allies issued detailed instructions pertaining to sports. Allied Control Council Directive No. 23 mandated the dissolution of “all sport and military or para-military athletic organizations” that had existed prior to Germany’s surrender. Along with proscribing all “military athletic organizations,” particularly those “engaged in Aviation, Parachuting, Gliding, Fencing, Military or Para-military drill or display, [and] shooting with firearms,” it forbade military-type athletic instruction and activities in schools, factories, political groups, and other organizations. Expressly authorizing local non-military sports associations, provided Allied officials approved and supervised them, it

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<sup>112</sup> M.C. Stayer to The Chief of Staff, 26 Sep 46, and attachments, NA, RG 260, Records of the USGCC, Box 16, F: AG 353.9 German Youth (Reeducation & Rehabilitation; German Youth Activities Program); Banks, “The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden,” 99-100.

<sup>113</sup> Kultministerium to Kreisausschüsse der deutschen Jugend in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone, 21 Jan 46, HStA EA 3/301 Bü 100.

<sup>114</sup> Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*, 114-117; Fehrlen and Schubert, *Offene Jugendarbeit in Baden-Württemberg*, 47-50; Jugend und Freizeitbetätigung Allgemeine Richtlinien für Württemberg-Baden, Jul 47, GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 No. 799. On the GYA program in Württemberg-Baden, see especially Fehrlen and Schubert, *Offene Jugendarbeit in Baden-Württemberg*, Part II.

<sup>115</sup> Niederschrift über die Besprechung zwischen Capt. Haskell, Oberbürgermeister Amberger, Oberbaudirektor Hussong und Dr. Häfner, 5 Jul 45, StAH AA 239k/1 No. 3.

required that any organizations above the Landkreis level be authorized by zone commanders, and only those “that could not possibly have any military significance” were permitted. In addition, the directive swiped at the ghosts of the Hitler Youth, declaring that physical education for youth “will concentrate on elements of health, hygiene and recreation.”<sup>116</sup>

In a March 1946 letter to the Länder MGs, OMGUS headquarters spelled out a new zonal policy based on Directive No. 23, offering supplementary instructions for enforcement officials which not only listed sporting activities that were banned, but also gave examples of specifically authorized sports, including soccer, handball, ice hockey, and boxing.<sup>117</sup> Ultimately, the Americans sanctioned many activities that the Nazis had promoted as particularly beneficial for turning Germany’s youth into good soldiers. German educators, for example, had stressed the value of sports such as handball and soccer for cultivating desirable personal qualities like manliness, and Hitler himself had favored boxing as an educational tool.<sup>118</sup> Similarly, while the Americans banned air gun shooting, they did not forbid hammer throwing, though both sports had been among the events comprising the 1933 German Sports Festival’s “*Wehrturnkämpfe*” (military athletics contests).<sup>119</sup> On one hand, the Americans’ choices thus appear rather arbitrary and perhaps naive; on the other hand, they might be seen as generous, and probably wise, in singling out for prohibition only those sports that seemed to have a clear and direct applicability to military operations.

In keeping with OMGUS’s October 1945 instructions, communities throughout Württemberg-Baden set up local youth committees in late 1945 and early 1946.<sup>120</sup> Starting in November 1945, MG officers also began formally authorizing church groups and other youth organizations under the new guidelines.<sup>121</sup> Sports clubs were often the first to organize, with local officials reconstituting old associations, forming new ones, or

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<sup>116</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Occupation of Germany*, 103. Although U.S. officials began allowing the formation of Land-level organizations in April 1946, the ACC directive’s basic prohibitions remained in place throughout the occupation.

<sup>117</sup> S.R. Brentnall, Memorandum for Record, 7 March 1944, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, Executive Office, Adjutant General’s Office, Box 645, F: AG 010.6 Control Council Directive No. 23; Milburn to Directors, 13 March 1946, *ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> Heymen, Pfister, and Wolff-Brembach, “Erziehung zur Wehrhaftigkeit,” 170-171.

<sup>119</sup> Krüger, *Von Klimmzügen, Aufschwüngen und Riesenwellen*, 134.

<sup>120</sup> Weekly Report, Education and Religious Affairs Office, 3.11. – 10.11.45, n.d., NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2]; Report, “History of Youth Activities,” n.d. [ca. mid 1946], NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 514, F: Civil Censorship; Protokoll der Sitzung des Gesamt-Jugendrats der Stadt Heidelberg, 18 Feb 46, StAH AA 3 No. 3b.

<sup>121</sup> “History of Youth Activities”; Hassinger, “Gebt der Deutschen Jugend Eine Chance!”

uniting several disbanded clubs.<sup>122</sup> In North Baden, a MG report indicated that 1,600 local youth groups and 560 sports clubs were operating in late June 1946.<sup>123</sup> By January 1949, youth organizations in the Land encompassed more than 400,000 young people.<sup>124</sup> Some 180,000 belonged to sports clubs.<sup>125</sup> Despite their growth over time, the many groups did not include all of Germany's youth, however. Figures compiled in May 1946, for instance, showed 85,000 young people enrolled in the Württemberg-Baden's youth organizations, with some youngsters belonging to more than one group, at a time when the Land had more than 412,000 children between the ages of six and 14 attending its elementary schools.<sup>126</sup>

To be approved, all youth committees and groups had to provide the Americans with information on their proposed leaders, who were then evaluated according to applicable denazification criteria. In early 1946, the MG official responsible for youth and sports activities in North Baden told German officials under his jurisdiction that no former active military officers might be members of local youth committees, but it is unclear whether this ban was widely applied or how long it remained in force.<sup>127</sup> Both more and less explicit were the several dozen formal authorization letters Landkreis Heidelberg officers mailed out to sports clubs and other groups in December 1946 which stated that "no former leading nazis or militarists may be admitted as leaders."<sup>128</sup> In later years, Ulm's sports chief approved club leaders with the cautionary note that this approval was contingent upon their obeying the current rules for athletic activities.<sup>129</sup>

Over time, the authorizing process for leaders was streamlined and its stringency relaxed. Increasingly, applicants could simply supply youth committees with their Spruchkammer decisions. When the

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<sup>122</sup> Beschluss, 21 Nov 45, GLA 356 Zug. 1969-10 No. 2.433; "Zulassung von Sportvereinen," *SDZ*, 16 Mar 46; Protokoll, Hauptversammlung des KTV 1846, 30 Nov 45, StAK 8/StS 20 No. 1007; Athletiksportverein 04 Grötzingen eV to Herr Landrat Abt.Polizeiwesen, Karlsruhe, 21 Aug 46, GLA 357 No. 34.674; Memorandum, "Frühere Turnerschaft Durlach," 5 Mar 46, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 5431.

<sup>123</sup> "History of Youth Activities."

<sup>124</sup> Table, "Land-wide Youth Organizations in Wuerttemberg-Baden," 11 Jan 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 972, F: Organizations.

<sup>125</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 2 Mar 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: Unlabeled [2].

<sup>126</sup> Henry J. Kellermann, "The Present Status of German Youth," Part III, *Department of State Bulletin*, 28 Jul 46, 144.

<sup>127</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung des Jugendrates von Nordbaden, 25 Feb 46, StAH AA 3 No. 3b.

<sup>128</sup> For copies of more than four dozen letters of authorization for sports clubs, singing clubs, and small animal breeding associations, see GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 No. 800. Letters of authorization for singing groups, which were issued by ICD officials, stated that no former Nazis or militarists might be *members*.

<sup>129</sup> Karl Lohrmann to Verein für Leibesübungen, 29 Jan 48, StAU B 542/00 No. 2.



MG's 1947 regulations clarified that no person assigned to Groups 1, 2, or 3 under the March 1946 denazification law might occupy a leading position in a youth or sports organization (although the Americans technically could still deny positions to anyone),<sup>130</sup> the leniency of the tribunals meant that very few individuals were excluded from these posts. During the last years of the occupation, then, the door was opened for the return—at least to the sports arena—of men denied responsible positions by the Americans during the early years. In this, the sports community followed a broader trend in German society that saw the rehabilitation of former Nazis fueled in part by a need for experienced, competent personnel.<sup>131</sup>

Policies regarding the membership of youth organizations were much less exclusionary. In fact, MG officials explicitly advised German officials to welcome former Hitler Youth members and the children of SA men and party members into the new organizations. As one set of instructions noted, the Americans were especially interested in reeducating these young people.<sup>132</sup>

In addition to reporting on their leaders, organizations seeking MG authorization had to describe their goals and planned activities. The Americans therefore received applications from a range of groups proposing to offer German youngsters religious and musical instruction, healthy sporting activities, and organized opportunities for hiking and otherwise communing with nature. Some groups addressed the issue of militarism directly in their submissions or in their official documents, either explicitly eschewing militaristic activities or promising to fight against militarism itself. Thus, the March 1946 statutes of the *Deutsche Jungenschaft* (German Boys' Club)—described by a MG official in 1948 as a club having “a complete balance of youth with reference to ideological groups”—stated that “every militaristic activity” would be rejected “in sport and game.”<sup>133</sup> The socialist Falcons listed among their aims the eradication of Nazi and militaristic thought from

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<sup>130</sup> Jugend und Freizeitbetätigung Allgemeine Richtlinien für Württemberg-Baden, Jul 47, GLA.

<sup>131</sup> Gerd Weisspfennig, “Der Neuaufbau des Sports in Westdeutschland bis zur Grundung des Deutschen Sportbundes,” in *Geschichte der Leibesübungen*, Band 3/2, ed. Horst Ueberhorst (Berlin: Bartels & Wernitz, 1982), 763-764; Krüger, *Von Klimmzügen, Aufschwüngen und Riesenwellen*, 161-164. On the rehabilitation of Carl Diem and other national leaders, see Ueberhorst, “The Importance of the Historians' Quarrel,” 232-244.

<sup>132</sup> 1. Sitzung des Jugendring-Ausschusses, 19 Dec 45, StAU E320 SJR Geschichte; “Jugendbetätigung,” n.d., GLA 356, Zug. 1969-10 No. 2.433.

<sup>133</sup> Leon A. Shelnutt to Inform. Serv. Div. Press Branch, 28 Sep 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-12 Deutsche Jungenschaft; *Deutsche Jungenschaft* (Aalen: W.A. Stierlin Buchdruckerei, 1946), 8, *ibid*.

home and school,<sup>134</sup> while the communist-leaning *Schwäbische Volksjugend* (Swabian People's Youth) set as their overarching goals the "transformation of the lives of our youth on a democratic basis" and the overcoming of "the spiritual and practical causes and effects of fascism and militarism."<sup>135</sup>

Obviously, groups were unlikely to propose sponsoring paramilitary exercises or to include among their goals the preparation of Germany's youth for war. At the same time, neither the Germans nor the Americans could be certain that the organizations they authorized were genuinely committed to their stated agendas. Initially even authorized groups had to notify the local MG in advance of all meetings, however, and had to allow American officials to attend if they wished.<sup>136</sup> The Americans could therefore monitor group activities and possibly deter illegal undertakings. Additionally, MG policy required youth groups to submit regular reports concerning their gatherings. ICD intelligence officials also occasionally reported on the activities of approved groups.

#### *Reconceptualizing German Youth and Sporting Activities*

In supervising German youth programs, the Americans had two principal goals: permanently eliminating militarism and Nazism and encouraging the growth of democratic practices, institutions, and attitudes. In practice, this meant that after the first few months of the occupation, measures to combat militarism were carried out within a larger framework of ongoing democratization efforts, which were often both frustrating and frustrated.

The methods and plans promoted by American military government officers, for instance, frequently conflicted with the traditional approaches and priorities of German youth authorities. During the Weimar era, Germany's youth scene had been characterized by a multiplicity of youth groups and leagues that frequently mirrored the political and religious fragmentation of the adult world. In addition to the right-leaning "*Bünde*" (leagues)—more martial and hierarchical successors to the elite, individualistic, semi-mystical *Wandervögel* groups of the pre-World War I era—and, on the far right, the Hitler Youth, groups sponsored by various

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<sup>134</sup> Daily Report, Education and Religious Affairs, 23 April 1946, 24 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 888, F: Weekly Reports E&CR [2].

<sup>135</sup> Satzungen der Schwäbischen Volksjugend (SVJ), 14 Apr 46, HStA EA 1/013 Bü 50.

<sup>136</sup> "An die Sportvereine!" *AU*, 3 Jan 46; William J. Truxhal to Herr Karl R., 18 Dec 46, GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 No. 800; William J. Truxhal to Herr Erwin O., 18 Dec 46, *ibid*.

political parties had appeared, as had youth leagues affiliated with the Protestant and Catholic churches.<sup>137</sup>

Upon receiving military government permission to form new youth clubs, German youth authorities therefore quickly returned to their old patterns, erecting a multitude of organizations and, in the process, often reestablishing old religious and political barriers, as well as jealously guarding their right to independent action. Comfortable with the pluralistic German approach, the Americans worked to restrain state officials from interfering in the operations of individual clubs. But they also pressed for integrating young people themselves into the management of youth affairs and clashed with German officials when establishing youth centers intended to foster interaction between young people belonging to different groups and to corral youngsters who had not joined any official organizations.<sup>138</sup>

American objectives likewise entangled MG officers in the complicated and turbulent politics of the German sports world. German discussions regarding the postwar revival of athletics came to center especially on the question of organization and, as a corollary, on the issue of personnel. Many in the field wished to form a more unified sports system than had existed in the 1920s, as sportsmen across the political spectrum viewed the condition of the pre-1933 German sports movement, which had been nearly as fragmented as the youth scene, as partly responsible for the Nazis' ability to easily subjugate and manipulate even the right-leaning Weimar sports organizations. However, while former members of the pre-1933 workers' sports clubs generally favored the creation of one unified sports association with numerous branches, other sports leaders, above all the remnants of the former "bourgeois" clubs, wanted to reestablish multiple associations—*Fachverbände*—emphasizing one type of sport, perhaps integrated into a loose union, but without conceding too much power to the umbrella group. This quarrel over structure, moreover, was in part an argument about the past. To the left-leaning men who took charge of German sports after the war, it was self-explanatory that the leaders of the former "politically neutral" bourgeois clubs should be excluded from influential roles in any rebuilding effort. Their history was one of militarism and antidemocratic tendencies, and they had jumped aboard the Nazi sports bandwagon "with flags flying." Representatives of the bourgeois clubs, meanwhile, considered themselves betrayed by the Nazis and denied any wrong-doing. Many criticized, too, the socialists' unapologetic desire to use athletics to instill a new anti-militaristic, anti-fascist outlook in Germany's youth and to prepare them for

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<sup>137</sup> Kater, *Hitler Youth*, 7-10.

<sup>138</sup> Füssl, *Die Umerziehung der Deutschen*; Fehrlen and Schubert, *Offene Jugendarbeit in Baden-Württemberg*.

resisting future attempts at political seduction. They also disliked submitting themselves to the authority of left-leaning officials. Instead, they called for the return and strengthening of apolitical *Fachverbände*.<sup>139</sup> In Württemberg-Baden, MG officials navigated these churning waters by promoting the founding of a range of sports organizations, battling perceived attempts by sports leaders to hoard power and authority, and working to counteract the politicization, centralizing inclinations, and predisposition toward dominating other organizations of those associations formed as umbrella bodies for multiple groups.<sup>140</sup>

Yet whatever the points of contention between the Germans and their occupiers, and among the Germans themselves, there was widespread agreement that German youth and sports operations needed to be substantially reoriented. In this arena, more than any other addressed by the demilitarizing Americans, MG officials encountered a shared perspective and few prominent critics. Some Germans disagreed with specific MG decisions or with the particulars of individual regulations, but the Americans' overriding "negative" objective was endorsed by most.

Land and local officials, for example, repeatedly called for cleansing youth programs of militaristic practices and for using them to prevent, rather than to prepare for war. Speaking to members of the new Land youth committee in April 1946, Deputy Culture Minister Bäuerle argued that introducing German young people to the spirit of genuine democracy was their most important assignment. "Actions based on freedom and responsibility" were the goal, he maintained, adding that commitment (*Bindung*) and freedom were interdependent. "*Gemeinschaft*" (community) was not about uniforms and training, but rather about the cooperation of self-reliant people and groups.<sup>141</sup> Heinrich Hassinger, the Culture Ministry official in charge of youth and sports, similarly told several hundred young people amassed in Stuttgart on Land Youth Day in June 1946 that it should never again be allowed for Germany's youth to be "misused for any egoistic or martial

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<sup>139</sup> Ausschuss zur Wiedergründung der Arbeiter-Sport- und Gesangvereine to Herr Oberbürgermeister Veit, 24 Aug 45, StAK 8/StS 20 No. 72; "Deutscher Sportaufbau," *SDZ*, 26 Jan 46; Protokoll der Sport-Besprechung am 21. Februar 1946, n.d., StAH AA 48 No. 58; Krüger, *Von Klimmzügen, Aufschwüngen, und Riesenwellen*, 154-155, 161-164; Eduard Strych, *Der westdeutscher Sport in der Phase der Neugruendung, 1945-1950* (Schorndorf bei Stuttgart: Verlag Karl Hofmann, 1975), 10-11.

<sup>140</sup> "Topical Report 10 December 1947: The Development of Sports in Wuerttemberg-Baden," NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 890, F: Topical Reports 1947.

<sup>141</sup> Landesassussschuss für Jugendpflege und Jugendbewegung, Niederschrift über die erste (konstituierende) Sitzung, 29 Apr 46, StAU E320 Band 16 Bundes-, Landes-, Bezirks- Jugendring.

purpose.”<sup>142</sup> Hassinger believed that the “physical toughening” of young people during the Third Reich, the fact that the “souls of the youth had been uniformed,” and other failings of the Nazi system had contributed directly to the wretched physical, spiritual, and intellectual condition of Germany’s youth at the end of the war. His own work and the efforts of youth leaders throughout the Land, Hassinger suggested at a conference in January 1947, were now aimed at helping these young people and rescuing them “for civilization, culture, and, with that, for the future.”<sup>143</sup>

Other officials emphasized the importance of youth work as a vehicle for fostering peace. In September 1947, Social Democratic Interior Minister Fritz Ulrich reminded a gathering of Falcons in Stuttgart that they had a vital mission. According to a MG report, Ulrich told the young people that “for 80 years the German SPD had been fighting against militarism and hate among the nations and for peace and understanding.” He then

spoke of the determination to educate the youth in this spirit of peace and harmony among the nations. The nationalists used to say that he who wages war, destroys cities and sows discord among the people is a hero. A new and different hero worship must be introduced. He shall be a hero who builds cities, safeguards the peace and makes people happier, richer and more harmonious in their community life.

Ulrich also promised the Allies “that in future the German socialists, especially the young socialists, would work to this end.”<sup>144</sup> Ulm’s top youth official, Hugo Roller, likewise believed that transforming the role war played in the thinking of Germany’s youth was critically important. “I give you the assurance, that all of my youth work stands under the motto: ‘Never Again War,’” Roller wrote to a member of a German peace group. “Already before the Third Reich, I promoted pacifism in youth education and will, of course, after this murderous war, more than ever exert all of my energy for peace.”<sup>145</sup>

For some Germans, concerns about the future character of German youth activities were manifested in doubts expressed regarding the reorganization of the Boy Scouts. In early 1946, about the time a Stuttgart pastor was attempting to form a small troop of scouts, representatives of the KPD, German Peace Society, SPD women’s organization, and International Women’s League voiced strong reservations about the reestablishment

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<sup>142</sup> “Der Landesjugendtag 1946,” *SDZ*, 25 Jun 46.

<sup>143</sup> Hassinger, “Gebt der Deutschen Jugend Eine Chance!”

<sup>144</sup> “Socialist Youth Meeting of the ‘Falcons’ in Stuttgart,” 1 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 972, F: Reference Material Youth Activities Section ECR Div [1].

<sup>145</sup> Hugo Roller to Herr W. H., 14 Jun 46, StAU E320 Stadtjugendring Schriftwechsel an 1945-1949. See also 1.Sitzung des Jugendring-Ausschusses, 19 Dec 45, StAU E320 SJR Geschichte.

of the group, arguing that in Germany they could expect a “militant organization” to emerge—after all, the Weimar incarnation had merged with the Stahlhelm.<sup>146</sup> A communist politician later told an ICD interviewer that he thought the Boy Scout movement was very dangerous. Unlike in the United States, he contended, in Germany it had been a military organization. The secretary of Stuttgart’s SPD agreed, calling the group “the militarists’ spiritual preschool” (*geistliche Vorschule der Militaristen*).<sup>147</sup> In Heidelberg, youth committee members objected to the idea of forming a group locally by recalling that the Boy Scouts had worked with the Nazis even before 1933 and that the earliest leaders of the Hitler Youth had come from their ranks.<sup>148</sup> As late as November 1948, a MG official was still commenting that many Germans considered scouting militaristic and that groups with programs similar to that of the Boy Scouts had chosen not to use the name, in light of popular attitudes.<sup>149</sup> On the other hand, the socialist Falcons also came in for criticism during a national gathering in Stuttgart in 1947. Some observers, noted the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, “saw a danger in the uniforms, the emblems, [and] the marching songs, given the mentality of our nation.”<sup>150</sup>

While not addressing youth programs directly, writers in the licensed press likewise periodically discussed the problem of Germany’s young people, condemning their treatment and experiences during the Third Reich and calling for a transformation in youth values, one that eliminated militarism and focused on more constructive and presently more critical goals.<sup>151</sup> Germany’s young people, wrote an observer in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, were now living in an age where their experiences in recent years were of no use. “No one needs soldiers, marchers, destroyers, followers, and the exaggerated emotionalism of martial instinct,” he argued. What was needed now was “noble enthusiasm for the true, good, and beautiful” and “commitment to the rebuilding of our homeland, to mutual help between individuals, to the preservation of peace and the

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<sup>146</sup> To Herr Dr. Steinbach, 26 Feb 46, HStA EA 1/013 Bü 49.

<sup>147</sup> Daniel Lee McCarthy to Chief, Information Control Division, 24 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [2]. Not everyone shared these concerns. A CDU representative, for example, argued that the Boy Scouts “should be the only uniformed group allowed in Germany; until 1933 it maintained a truly democratic character.” Daniel Lee McCarthy to Chief, Information Control Division, 7 May 46, *ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> Füssl, *Umerziehung der Deutschen*, 108.

<sup>149</sup> Leon A. Shelnett to Dep. Director, 8 Nov 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 973, F: Youth Activities [4]. At the time, there were 70 groups encompassing some 1,700 members.

<sup>150</sup> “Die Falken-Tage in Stuttgart,” *SZ*, 3 Sep 47.

<sup>151</sup> Olaf Salle, “Ein Wort an die deutsche Jugend,” *SZ*, 10 Jul 46; Robert Widéra, “Rumorende Jugend,” *SZ*, 15 Feb 47.

regaining of freedom of thinking and acting, to life values, therefore, for which one indeed does not receive medals and decorations, but for which one arguably receives the only desirable human prize, namely, inner human dignity.”<sup>152</sup>

Calling for change, however, was always easier than bringing it about. “I have often asked myself,” noted a man from Mannheim in a letter to Württemberg-Baden’s culture minister, “what is to be done to tackle the difficult assignment of reeducating our youth, to lead them away from a warlike spirit to a peace-loving, understanding, and internationally unifying spirit.”<sup>153</sup>

Those promoting sports believed they had at least a partial answer to this question. Here, too, influential Germans were insisting that the military overtones of athletics must be eradicated and pre-military training eliminated. “Every sportsman will recognize that the mechanical, pattern-following drill of the past had nothing to do with true sport,” asserted a writer in the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* in September 1945. “The time is past when one drummed military virtues into our youth in a tone meant for the barracks and, with brutal necessity, made sports into a duty in order to train soldiers.” Sporting activities should instead revert to their original function, with an emphasis placed on their value for the health of the human body and soul. Individuals should not be obsessed with defeating another person or team, but rather should focus on improving their own performances or enjoying themselves. Sports should bring joy, more than one newspaper article declared. Like their occupiers, many Germans also maintained that athletics could teach essential values such as fairness, tolerance, and understanding. Sports, in fact, had the potential to increase international understanding and to restore Germany’s good name.<sup>154</sup>

Finally, some German young people had their own ideas about what youth activities should look like and needed few lectures from their elders. Speaking to a gathering of North Baden officials in March 1946, one youth insisted that Germany’s young people did not want to again be trained to be soldiers and to die. Rather, they wanted to acquire practical skills and to learn about a variety of subjects, including politics. They also

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<sup>152</sup> “Begeisterung nicht Pathos,” *SZ*, 25 Apr 46.

<sup>153</sup> Paul B. to Herr Erziehungsminister der Länder Württemberg-Baden, 18 Nov 46, HStA EA 3/201 Bü 31.

<sup>154</sup> “Warum Sport?” *SZ*, 15 Sep 45; Protokoll der Gründungsversammlung der Sportgemeinschaft Heidelberg, 5 Oct 45, StAH AA 48 No. 58; Protokoll der Sitzung des Jugendrates der Stadt Heidelberg, 23 Apr 46, StAH AA 3 No. 3b; “Stellung des Staates zum Sport,” *SZ*, 4 Apr 46; “Heinrich Hassinger Präsident im Landessportverband,” *SZ*, 9 Oct 46; “Rudern und Skilauf Militärsport?” *RNZ*, 5 Dec 45; “Der deutsche Sport,” *RNZ*, 15 Sep 45; “Erziehungsaufgaben des Sports,” *SZ*, 15 Dec 45; Walter R. Koch, “Sport in der sozialen Umwelt,” *RNZ*, 5 Sep 46; Otto Peltzer, *Sport. Ein Weg zu Freiheit und Kultur* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1946).

wanted to have a chance to just have fun.<sup>155</sup> A 24-year-old dentistry student who had co-founded a youth club in Buchen similarly told an ICD interviewer that “the aim of German youth organizations should be to lead youth away from militarism and marching, to a more human attitude; to make healthy Germans and to model the youthful character.”<sup>156</sup> When in early 1946 the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* asked its young readers what they expected from organized youth groups, one responded that they should no longer feed adolescents with plans for world conquest and teachings of hate, but instead encourage love for other people and teach the laws of humanity. Overall, noted Kurt Fried, most letters had shown an unambiguous rejection of the compulsion and standardization of the Hitler Youth—though a few had appeared not to condemn the organization’s ideas so much as its approach. More forceful was a letter that addressed the question of youth generally. “One truly no longer needs to try to explain to us the effects of militarism,” wrote the young man. “We have gotten to know militarism. But we don’t want to let anyone take away from us our pride in what we had to accomplish as soldiers. However, that is all behind us. As far as we are concerned, we do not want to have to sacrifice our human dignity to blind obedience ever again.”<sup>157</sup>

### *Skepticism, Violations, and Protest*

Among the Germans, there was clearly broad agreement on the subject of changing youth and sports activities after the war. One might even talk in terms of a prevailing consensus, certainly among important administrators and politicians, youth and sports leaders, the licensed press, most parents, and many young people, and certainly when it came to rejecting the intensely militarized youth experience of the Third Reich. Still, there were Germans were not fully on board. While their skepticism and questioning sometimes seemed born of unrepentant nationalism and militarism or unflagging enthusiasm for military traditions and routines, these attitudes could also be caused by disorientation in a changed world or—probably most often and of least concern to the Americans—by resentment at the loss of a beloved hobby or passion.

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<sup>155</sup> Protokoll der Sitzung des Jugendrates von Nordbaden, 25 Mar 46, StAH AA 3 No. 3b.

<sup>156</sup> Ludwig Lefebre to Chief, Information Control Division, 29 Apr 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 86, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

<sup>157</sup> Kurt Fried, “Die Jugend antwortet,” *SDZ*, 16 Feb 46.



Especially worrisome to MG and German officials were the attitudes of those veterans who appeared unwilling or unable to adapt to new circumstances. Some had a hard time letting go of their previous values or at least their previous status. Others, rightly or wrongly, felt unfairly ostracized, criticized, disdained, ignored, or blamed. Many had proven their merits as soldiers only to discover that their skills were no longer valued. Military service carried out as demanded by others was now dismissed as worthless, or, worse, something to be condemned. Some interpreted criticism of the war and the values of the Third Reich as disparagement of their own experiences and devaluation of their contributions. A few or all of these complaints might lead to skeptical, contemptuous, or defiant attitudes toward official reeducation initiatives.

In January 1946, for instance, a speaker participating in the Land Interior Ministry's "Reflection" (*Besinnung*) lecture series in Stuttgart addressed the topic "Who is helping the youth?" Following his remarks, which centered on the current state of Germany's young people and what the goals, functions, and organizational structure of a reconceived youth program should be, there was a brief discussion period during which most of the commentators evidently spent little time discussing the speaker's ideas (save to criticize his organizational proposals) and instead offered their own thoughts on the subject. Among those pontificating were Heinrich Hassinger and representatives of the trade unions and the *Schwäbische Volksjugend*. A number of attendees later sent the ministry descriptions of the event that not only lamented the pathetic display which had followed the talk but also noted that the liveliest response from the reasonably large number of young men attending had come during the short speech of a local pastor who had himself served as a soldier.<sup>158</sup> One correspondent described the episode in terse form, beginning with a summary of the pastor's comments: "Must state: It is not permissible to throw into the dirt all of the values for which many died. (Unrest in the auditorium.)"<sup>159</sup> Another writer, whose report hinted at socialist leanings, offered a microcosmic picture of the evening, stating that he had closely watched four young former soldiers who were probably only 19 or 20 years old. "They sat there with completely hostile faces, a superior, contemptuous smile on their faces. I had the

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<sup>158</sup> "Betr.: Vortrag vom 24.1.1946 'Wer hilft der Jugend?'" 29 Jan 46, HStA EA 1/013 Bü 12; Protokoll über den Vortrag Paul Schempp in der Vortragsreihe BESINNUNG des Innenministeriums, 25 Jan 46, *ibid*.

<sup>159</sup> "Diskussion über den 'Wer hilft der Jugend?' des Herrn Paul Schempp am 24. Januar 1946," n.d., *ibid*.

impression the four young men . . . cannot be shaken by anything any more. They made biting comments continuously.” Only when the pastor spoke did they suddenly come alive, shouting approval.<sup>160</sup>

The author of a July 1946 letter to *Das junge Wort*, a youth magazine put out in conjunction with the Culture Ministry, similarly suggested that some young people were developing dangerous attitudes toward the past. It often seemed as if memories of the horrors of the war years were beginning to fade, he wrote, with many talking about the time when Germany was still the victor. “It is part of human nature to quickly forget the unpleasantness of the past,” he noted, “especially when the present is anything but enjoyable.” But, he added, idealizing the war and whitewashing wartime events posed a serious danger. This was exactly what had occurred after the last war, with a militarized society, another war, millions of war victims, destroyed cities, and the loss of political autonomy as the results. Germany’s youth could not be held accountable for these disastrous developments, he contended, but they would be guilty in the future if they did not draw the right lessons from the past. Among other things, this meant recognizing that Germany’s current situation had been caused by “our former Führer and the people who made his rule possible,” not by Jews, Communists, German generals, or “malevolent fate.” They should, further, not try to extract some meaning from the apparent nonsense of the last war. Yes, most young men had believed they were defending their homeland and should thus not be reproached for their behavior. But they should also not hold up their service as something meritorious, however long and brave. In the end, it was all for a “small criminal clique” and hurtful to the German people. “The objection that other nations have also not completely freed themselves from nationalistic or militaristic ideas is not sound,” he insisted. “At one time, there was nowhere where these ideas exerted such an excessive influence on politics as in Germany; besides, after our experiences, we would have to reject nationalism even if the whole world were still caught up in this.”<sup>161</sup>

Perhaps the most visible signs of the reluctance or refusal of some young men to internalize reorienting lessons from the recent past, as well as of their discontent, resentment, or skepticism regarding the imposition of a new value system, were the problems at German universities. “In the majority of instances, the nationalism of the students appears purely negative,” observed State Department analyst Henry Kellermann in assessing the

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<sup>160</sup> “‘Wer hilft der Jugend?’ (Grundsätzliche Betrachtung zum Referat Paul Schempp 24. Januar 1946 im Festsaal des Furtbachhauses),” n.d., *ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> Briefkasten, *DJW*, 1 Aug 46, 10.

“militaristic and chauvinistic views” of some students in mid 1946. “It mirrors a fundamental inability to face realities, an unwillingness to reform, and a fanatic adherence to the *status quo ante*.” Such sentiments led these students and other veterans to active opposition and resistance, Kellermann noted. Most, however, were just apathetic and lived their lives without taking an interest in politics or organized youth activities.<sup>162</sup>

In a few instances, U.S. regulations were directly violated. In August 1946, MG officials suspended Boy Scout activities in Heidelberg and removed the leader of 200 scouts because the man “wore an unauthorized uniform, printed posters without Military Government permission, and gave militaristic titles to specific groups under him.”<sup>163</sup> While these were relatively minor infractions, recent events made the swift and rather severe response of U.S. officials more understandable. Earlier in the year, 12 Bavarian youths had been convicted of possessing explosives and using the cover of an unauthorized Christian Pathfinders organization—one of several versions of the Boy Scouts in Germany at the time—to create a new Nazi movement. The group had adopted symbols and methods used by the Hitler Youth and SA and “engaged in semi-military drill, sang military songs, informed on civic officials, and blacklisted, defamed, and attacked girls who associated with American soldiers.” American officials had likewise determined that a scout group in Wiesbaden was planning subversive activities.<sup>164</sup>

Heidelberg was also home to the first and probably only person arrested and convicted in Württemberg-Baden for violating MG Law No. 154, which outlawed all forms of military training. In mid September 1946, the Americans sentenced a 51-year-old physical education teacher to six months in prison. According to the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, witnesses had reported seeing the man make his 32 teenage charges march in formation and perform military drills.<sup>165</sup> The headline writers at the *New York Times* described the teacher as a “drill instructor,”<sup>166</sup> while the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* criticized him for apparently believing he could continue to indulge in his “parade ground attitude” with the boys entrusted to him by the new democratic state

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<sup>162</sup> Henry J. Kellermann, “The Present Status of German Youth,” Part II, *Department of State Bulletin*, 21 Jul 46, 84; Kellermann, “The Present Status of German Youth,” Part I, 50-55.

<sup>163</sup> OMGUS, Internal Affairs and Communications Division, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, “Youth Activities. Report on German Youth, Second Year of the Occupation, 1 April 1946 – 31 March 1947,” 14, 31 Mar 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, E&CR Division, Box 128, F: Youth Activities 1946 & 1947.

<sup>164</sup> Kellermann, “The Present Status of German Youth,” Part II, 84.

<sup>165</sup> “Militärische Uebungen sind verboten,” *SZ*, 9 Oct 46.

<sup>166</sup> “German Drill Instructor Jailed,” *NYT*, 3 Oct 46.

and held up his conviction as a warning to others who “still yearn to make excursions into the parade ground milieu.”<sup>167</sup>

Closer scrutiny of the episode revealed a somewhat less stereotypically Prussian picture, however, and underscored yet again the interpretive challenges inherent in any campaign to root out militarism. Describing the incident, a MG report explained that the

defendant was seen by U.S. soldiers marching 38 school children in a column of twos from the school to the playing field. The place of observation was a street in Heidelberg. When vehicle approached, at a signal from the teacher the children gave way to the side three steps in a manner simulating a military movement. The defendant teacher was then arrested for violating Military Government Law No. 154.

A petition for review of the case subsequently argued that the man had handled his pupils as German teachers had for years and that he had not deliberately violated the law. Such discipline was needed when ushering children along busy streets, it maintained, and the instructor had exercised no more discipline than was typical in teaching sports. The court itself also recommended that the sentence be suspended due to the defendant’s lack of intent and the absence of established precedent. Reviewing the case in late October, the Land MG’s Legal Division concluded that “the evidence clearly indicates that the action of the children was a simulation of military discipline and formation,” but that “it does not so clearly indicate an intention to violate or a violation of Law No. 154.” Ultimately refusing to overturn the court’s decision, the division nevertheless decided that in light of the “mitigating circumstances,” the court’s recommendation, and the fact that the teacher had already served time in jail, the man had been “sufficiently punished” and should be released.<sup>168</sup>

The episode captured the attention of Heidelberg’s other teachers all the same. Several days after the Legal Division’s decision, but perhaps before it was publicized, an ICD officer reported that educators were criticizing the sentence, contending that the man had simply ordered the children to walk “two and two in a line, according to an old school custom, to maintain order outside the school grounds.” He had never been a militarist or party member. “Due to this incidence [*sic*],” stated the American, “teachers are now afraid to teach calisthenics in the open air and gymnasiums are at present not available.” Dr. Erich Kaufmann-Buehler, a high school teacher, city councilman, and nonconformist CDU delegate to the body finalizing the Land’s new constitution (which would be followed by elections for a legislature) had allegedly quipped: “Don’t count on

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<sup>167</sup> “Turnlehrer ‘drillt’ Schulkinder,” *SDZ*, 5 Oct 46.

<sup>168</sup> Case File, Case No. 5982, Hugo B., 18 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1053, F: Reviews Capt. Basinski [1].

my nomination, I only have to walk my junior class in a queue up to the [Heidelberg] castle and it's all up with my candidature."<sup>169</sup>

Even when they refrained from violating American regulations, some adolescents and their leaders clearly missed the marching, flag-carrying, and uniform-wearing that had been part and parcel of so many German youth activities even prior to the Nazi ascension to power.<sup>170</sup> They may have rejected the ideology of war service and death that had characterized the Hitler Youth, but the pageantry and symbolic accoutrements of former eras remained attractive to some. And, indeed, sporting events and youth gatherings sometimes still included diluted versions of these.

More common were complaints about and requests for ending specific sports prohibitions. The Americans, for example, received occasional inquiries regarding the resumption of fencing.<sup>171</sup> However, apart from hunters, whose zeal was restrained not only by the Allies' concerns about German militarism, but also by their unyielding refusal to compromise security, the most vocal frustrated sports enthusiasts were those interested in aviation. Certainly there were observers to whom the MG aviation restrictions made perfect sense. When in early 1946 someone wrote to the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* asking why gliding and model airplane flying were forbidden and suggesting that international meetings to discuss the newest technological developments could help to cleanse "Hitlerism" from the minds of German youth, a newspaper writer responded with sarcasm: "Of all things! And perhaps the Hitler Youth so eagerly built model planes in order to achieve international understanding?"<sup>172</sup> Using a German play on words, Kurt Fried also took a dig at Germany's flying

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<sup>169</sup> Intelligence Report No. 345, 21 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2]. See also Intelligence Report No. 359, 5 Nov 46, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [3]. The *Stuttgarter Zeitung* article reported that the teacher was a former NCO. A later MG report suggested he had been in the SS. If either of these things was true, neither was mentioned in the Legal Division's decision. For the MG report, see Charles L. Jackson to Commanding Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Military Government Bn (Sep), 4 Feb 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 457, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports 10 Dec 45 – 4 Aug 47 Vol. I. For a biography of Kaufmann-Buehler, see Intelligence Report, 7 Apr 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports 3 Feb 49 to 28 Apr 49 Vol. V.

<sup>170</sup> See Chapters 6 and 7. See also Ruff, *Wayward Flock*, 59-60.

<sup>171</sup> Charles L. Jackson to Director, Office of Military Government Land Wuerttemberg-Baden, 14 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 811, F: Correspondence; Aksel G. Nielsen to Director, Internal Affairs and Communications Division, 3 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 970, F: Correspondence; Aksel G. Nielsen to Mr. Peter H., 30 Jun 49, and attachment, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 971, F: Misc. Corr.

<sup>172</sup> "Was ist nun Militärsport?" *RNZ*, 9 Jan 46.

enthusiasts, observing that Hermann Goering had insisted that “the German people must become a nation of *Fliegern* [fliers],” with the result that “we became a nation of *Fliegergeschädigten* [bombing victims].”<sup>173</sup>

But others viewed the situation differently. There is little reason to doubt that these men, boys, and even women were first and foremost eager to give expression to a passion. Whether a few, or even a measurable percentage, had motives that went beyond this is difficult to judge. What is undeniable is that they were adamant and unrelenting in their pleas. One group of glider enthusiasts from Stuttgart actually petitioned President Harry Truman and later sent a letter to Secretary of State Dean Acheson asking that “these restrictions on the most primitive human rights” be removed.<sup>174</sup> More commonly, aviation fans used the pages of licensed publications and direct appeals to MG officials to lobby for or request permission to resume their activities.

One of their favorite tactics was to ask why aviation was receiving special treatment. An official from the Baden state sports association provided a model example of this argument in June 1948 when he defended a petition being circulated by a Berlin group that intended to ask the ACC to change its policy. Mistakenly assuming that this petition was causing a backlash from the Americans, he complained to Leon Shelnutt, head of youth activities for the Land MG.

According to my opinion some gentleman has been asked for his signature to whom gliding is an eyesore and who looks upon every model airplane group as a militaristic club and sees a bomber in every glider and a newly rising Luftwaffe in a model airplane. If anybody should be inclined to see things this way I can only give him fair warning: every motorcar may become a tank and its driver a tank man. I might as well look upon every rowing vessel as a future U-boat and upon every swimmer as a Kampfschwimmer (soldier especially trained in swimming for blowing up bridges etc.) It is impossible to imagine that flying be eliminated from our modern world of technics and speed.<sup>175</sup>

In an August 1946 letter to *Das junge Wort*, well-known gliding pioneer Wolf Hirth likewise suggested that if one could prohibit Germany from maintaining submarines and a navy but permit rowing sports, gliding could be permitted without fostering a revival of military aviation. At most, gliding could be used for pre-military training. But then hiking and every sport must be banned because they could also toughen individuals physically and thus be viewed as a form of pre-military training.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Kurt Fried, “Sport und Jugenderziehung,” *SDZ*, 5 Jan 46.

<sup>174</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 13 Jul 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: Unlabeled [2].

<sup>175</sup> Rudolf M. to Mr. Leon A. Shelnutt, 15 Jun 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948.

<sup>176</sup> Briefkasten, *DJW*, 15 Aug 46, 10.

There were gliding enthusiasts in countries all over the world, the sport's proponents also argued. "Why is gliding only a 'militaristic' sport for Germany?" asked a writer in the *Badische Neueste Nachrichten* in July 1949. Germans interested in gliding did not want to have anything to do with bombers and weapons, just to be allowed to rejoin the international gliding community. If the Allies granted that permission, he added, it would be a sign of trust and would contribute to international understanding. Trust and understanding, moreover, were the guarantors of peace and security.<sup>177</sup> In repeated—and repeatedly rejected—appeals to the Land MG to form a club, a group of glider pilots from Stuttgart not only proposed to open their rolls to U.S. soldiers, to maintain contacts with foreign clubs, and to eventually organize an international organization, they described their mission in metaphysical terms. In one of their applications, written in slightly choppy English, they explained the primary goal of their proposed association.

To reduce the idea of flying to its true contents: symbol of freedom and humanity.

To build new spiritual foundations of aviation (Flying should not be regarded from a military point of view, but from a sportsmanlike, and—we should like to say—even more from a religious than from a sportsmanlike basis).

In the future every honest man, who feels the necessity to fly must be entitled to do so, and no differences between peoples and races should be made.<sup>178</sup>

The arguments of aviation enthusiasts made some sense. But they also contained their share of exaggeration and skewed logic. Learning to skillfully handle a kayak, for example, would seem to offer few insights into operating a submarine. Additionally, in their professed inability to understand the Allied position, their criticism of its obvious inequities, and their insistence that aviation could foster international understanding, commentators sometimes ignored the recent history of gliding and aviation in Germany. Thus, Hirth could point with pride to the fact that sport gliding was a sport born in Germany during the 1920s without mentioning the circumstances that had nurtured this development, namely, a lost war, a humiliated nation, and a Versailles Treaty which had encouraged military leaders to seek means of developing German aviation expertise and capabilities in violation of the spirit of the treaty.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> "Sport und Vertrauen," *BNN*, 28 Jul 49.

<sup>178</sup> Guenther R. to Office Mil Govt Land Wuerttemberg-Baden, 23 Aug 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948. The stress on the international aspects of sport flying was no doubt intended partly to address U.S. concerns about German nationalism and the potential for subversive activities. However, MG officials looked with disfavor on references to groups planning to organize on anything other than a strictly local level. Aksel G. Nielsen to Frau H., 14 Dec 48, *ibid*.

<sup>179</sup> Briefkasten, *DJW*, 15 Aug 46, 10. On the cultural meaning of aviation, flying, and pilots in interwar Germany, see Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*, 119-125; Peter Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers: German Aviation and the Popular Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, "Flying and Killing: Military Masculinity

Charged with enforcing Allied sports regulations, the Land MG's youth officials remained largely unmoved by the appeals of Württemberg-Baden's glider pilots. On the other hand, they proved willing to give some ground in the area of model airplane building and flying. But here they encountered obstacles strewn by other OMGUS officials and by America's allies, both of whom saw in aviation the intersection of cultural militarism and genuine military preparedness.

In July 1947, the new youth program regulations issued by Württemberg-Baden's MG stated that the building and flying of model airplanes without motors and without accommodation for passengers did not violate current regulations, provided these were recreational activities.<sup>180</sup> However, this new policy interpretation was under review already by October. Model airplane enthusiasts apparently had staged an illegal competition near Stuttgart in April 1947 using airplanes with motors. When OMGUS officials later learned of the event, they prompted Land youth officials to revisit their decision.<sup>181</sup> Asking various other offices of the Land MG for formal comments regarding their interpretation—requested with reference to the overarching question “when does model airplanes [*sic*] become aviation?”—the youth officials received a mixed response.<sup>182</sup> The Legal Division, for instance, argued that model airplanes did not teach “the theory, principles, technique or mechanics of war,” as outlawed by the ACC law on military training. Nor were model airplane clubs involved in “aviation,” which, they noted, *Black's Law Dictionary* defined as people “travel[ing] through the air by means of airplanes.”<sup>183</sup> The Field Operations Division supported the youth officials with the observation that “this office does not believe that model airplane building inspires aggression in German Youth (or those of any other nationality) and from a psychological standpoint probably is as harmless as building or playing with miniature trains, racing cars, etc.”<sup>184</sup> But public safety officials wondered whether the definition

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in German Pilot Literature, 1914-1939,” in Hagemann and Schüler-Springorum, *Home/Front*, 205-232. On the development of gliding in this context, its saturation with nationalist sentiments during the 1920s, and the militarization and Nazification of the movement during the Third Reich, see especially Fritzsche, *A Nation of Fliers*, 103-131, 191-203. “The Nazis exerted special effort to support gliding, which they considered the most suitable way to train a nation of fliers,” writes Fritzsche. “Glider pilots were valuable because they had learned how to fly in more demanding circumstances” (195).

<sup>180</sup> Jugend und Freizeitbetätigung Allgemeine Richtlinien für Württemberg-Baden, Jul 47, GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 No. 799.

<sup>181</sup> Leon A. Shelnett to Badischer Sportverband, Sparte Flugmodellsport, 28 Jun 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948; Leon A. Shelnett to Lt. Col. David E. Kunkel, Jr., 24 Mar 48, *ibid*.

<sup>182</sup> Leon A. Shelnett to Pub Saf, et al, 14 Oct 47, *ibid*.

<sup>183</sup> Richard J. Jackson to Ed. & Rel. Aff. Div., 17 Oct 47, and attachment, *ibid*.

<sup>184</sup> EPW to ERA Div Youth Br, 29 Oct 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 973, F: Youth Activities [1].



was “too loose” and suggested that the scientific research control staff be consulted.<sup>185</sup> This branch objected, citing not regulations relating to military training or sports, but ACC Law No. 43 banning the “manufacture, import, export, transport and storage of war materials,” which specifically referred to model airplanes and gliders, with or without means of propulsion.<sup>186</sup>

At a meeting at OMGUS headquarters in December 1947, personnel from the education and scientific research control staffs decided that the ACC law did, indeed, prohibit the activities the Württemberg-Baden MG had approved. Moreover, caution was needed, due to the quadripartite nature of the law. Considering the various aspects of the issue, the OMGUS officials finally concluded that “intent must be a primary concern, rather than the attempt to specifically designate model craft” and therefore staked out a middle ground. Land officials were to answer questions relating to model airplanes based on *educational* principles, as if Law No. 43 did not exist, and “in advising with leaders and groups” the “educational approach” was to be maintained. No groups “whose name indicated the primary purpose to be model airplane flying” would be authorized, as this “would raise the whole question at quadripartite level.” In addition, “such a group would more likely violate the spirit of the Law #43 than would unorganized modeling.” Land officials were not to publicize any “official rulings” made, but instead to deal with each case “individually and through discussion.”<sup>187</sup> Evidently model building might continue below the radar as an educational activity, so long as this was not advertised.

Shelnutt subsequently asked his Culture Ministry counterparts to delete from the July 1947 regulations the provision permitting model airplane activities. But he also met personally with ministry officials and leaders of the North Baden and North Württemberg sports associations to discuss the newest developments and, apparently, to lay out the MG’s current, rather muddy policy. He later explained to an official from OMGUS’s Armed Forces Division that the MG’s youth staff had “not gone into the cellars to look for boys who may have

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<sup>185</sup> Robert L. Perry to Legal Division, 16 Oct 47, attached to Shelnutt to Pub Saf, et al, 14 Oct 47, NA, RG 260.

<sup>186</sup> Leon A. Shelnutt to Director, Internal Affairs and Communications Division, 18 Nov 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948; Control Council Law No. 43, U.S. Library of Congress, ACC Laws in Full, [http://www.loc.gov/r/r/frd/Military\\_Law/Enactments/05LAW43.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/r/r/frd/Military_Law/Enactments/05LAW43.pdf).

<sup>187</sup> Memorandum, “Model Planes and Gliding,” 8 Dec 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948.

made model airplanes on their own private initiative,” adding, “as we see it, the danger lies in the promotion of large clubs and organizations.”<sup>188</sup>

Not surprisingly, given the circumstances, some local sports authorities now protested the renewed ban on model airplane construction and flying.<sup>189</sup> Others were able to obtain only vague guidance on how they were to proceed. When an Ulm youth official asked the Land youth committee whether model airplane clubs with “theoretical tasks and goals” would be permitted, even when denied the right to build and fly aircraft, he received a sketchy and probably not particularly helpful response.<sup>190</sup> The committee’s director replied that he could not, or rather did not, want to answer the man precisely. “I hope that that is clear enough,” he added.

There are things that one does. On the basis of a conversation with Mr. Shelnut, I know from him that one sometimes should not ask too many questions. It is important, certainly, that on the surface you do not appear to be doing anything forbidden and that you can at all times take responsibility for everything that is done, that is, not in terms of adhering strictly to the regulations [*d.h. nicht streng nach den Vorschriften gedacht*], but taking into account our own sense of responsibility.<sup>191</sup>

During the year that followed, the Americans’ official position continued to vacillate. By the fall of 1948, the Germans were pressing for permission to establish model airplane clubs.<sup>192</sup> As before, Shelnut himself was content to say yes, but the decision was not his to make.<sup>193</sup> In early November, a senior official in OMGUS’s education division told Shelnut that OMGUS Berlin was still considering the issue of model airplane club formation and the recreational and educational building and flying of models, but that his office had received informal approval by phone.<sup>194</sup> Aksel Nielsen, the Land MG’s top sports official, thus began spreading the word that model airplane activities were now permitted, although he urged a low-profile

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<sup>188</sup> Leon A. Shelnut to Ministry of Culture, 23 Mar 48, *ibid*; Leon A. Shelnut to Mr. Paul Keller, 19 Feb 48, *ibid*; Leon A. Shelnut to Lt. Col. David E. Kunkel, Jr., 24 Mar 48, *ibid*.

<sup>189</sup> Rudolf M. to Mr. Leon A. Shelnut, 15 Jun 48, *ibid*.

<sup>190</sup> To the Landesjugendausschuss, 23 Apr 48, StAU E 320 Band 16 Bundes-, Landes-, Bezirks-Jugendring.

<sup>191</sup> Alfred Christmann to Kreisjugendausschuss, 24 May 48, *ibid*.

<sup>192</sup> Leon A. Shelnut, Daily Report, 22 Sep 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 20 Sept 1948 To 19 Oct 1948.

<sup>193</sup> Leon A. Shelnut to Director, E&CR Div., 19 Oct 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 963, F: C-17 Model Airplanes 1947/1948.

<sup>194</sup> L.E. Norrie to Director of Education and Cultural Relations Division, Office of Military Government for Wuerttemberg-Baden, 4 Nov 48, *ibid*.

approach, pending issuance of a zone-wide policy.<sup>195</sup> Once again MG officials found themselves on the defensive, however, as formal approval from Berlin did not materialize, still hung up on the question of whether clubs were compatible with legal restrictions on scientific research.<sup>196</sup> In late March 1949, Shelnutt finally documented an authoritative answer in his daily activity report: “Definite word received from OMGUS that model airplanes and sailing planes are forbidden. This ruling handed down by tripartite control council.”<sup>197</sup> He nevertheless remained dissatisfied, noting in late June that the day before he had seen model airplanes being sold in two Stuttgart shops. “A boy in a Boy Scout uniform was purchasing six during my presence,” he added. “It seems to me that it is time to change our directives to conform with existing conditions.”<sup>198</sup> Shelnutt’s sentiments notwithstanding, this would not occur until after control of western Germany passed into hands of the Federal Republic and the Allied High Commission.

The glider enthusiasts, meanwhile, had made no gains and remained restive. By spring 1949, their voices were growing louder and bolder. Convinced that there was little chance the Americans would alter their policy on flying, they began to pin their hopes on obtaining the assistance of the incoming West German government. In early July, roughly 75 former glider pilots gathered in Stuttgart to discuss the status of gliding and to plot strategies for the sport’s future.<sup>199</sup> Because the meeting did not involve an organized club, the Americans could not deny the group permission to meet.<sup>200</sup> For their part, the Germans were not attempting to huddle in secret, but rather invited both Shelnutt and Nielsen to attend (neither of whom did so).<sup>201</sup> At a meeting in Mannheim a week later, glider enthusiasts discussed “What is an Air Pocket?” and heard a speech

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<sup>195</sup> Aksel G. Nielsen to Frau H., 14 Dec 48, *ibid*; Aksel G. Nielsen to 7780<sup>th</sup> OMGUS Group, Wuerttemberg-Baden Section, Liaison and Security Office Bad Mergentheim, 14 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 973, F: Youth Activities [1].

<sup>196</sup> Daily Activity Report of 15 February 1949, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 19 Jan 1949 to 28 Feb 1949; Daily Report of 8 Mar 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 1 Mar 1949 to 8 April 1949.

<sup>197</sup> Daily report of 22 March 1949, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 1 Mar 1949 to 8 April 1949.

<sup>198</sup> Leon A. Shelnutt, Daily Report, 20 Jun 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 26 May 1949 to 12 July 1949.

<sup>199</sup> Monthly Report, Education and Cultural Relations Division, Aug 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 880, F: 201.08 A; Weekly Intelligence Report, 13 Jul 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: Unlabeled [2].

<sup>200</sup> Mr. Shelnutt, Daily Report, 4 Jul 49, *ibid*.

<sup>201</sup> Leon A. Shelnutt, Daily Report, 6 Jul 49, *ibid*.

titled “On what Basis Can Gliding Be Re-Established in Germany?” During the latter, a MG intelligence report recounted, “the speaker said it was difficult to understand Allied views on gliding as a military sport, since much additional training was required by regular fliers; by the same token, he said, pedestrians were military potential for the infantry.”<sup>202</sup>

Like their allies, at least some American MG officials continued to be wary of this particular German interest group and its barely legal assemblies. The aforementioned MG report noted that, on the positive side, Wolf Hirth had attended the Stuttgart meeting and, “in accordance with his customary policy,” had warned his younger colleagues “against being hasty and rash in their efforts to resume gliding.” In the past, he had reportedly “sought to deter several members who had secretly begun to build gliders.” Other leading lights in the movement seemed to be equally sensible. And the glider enthusiasts had indicated a willingness to submit to surveillance to avoid a recurrence of what had happened after World War I. But the report also saw reasons for concern. While the glider pilots were ready to accept controls, this did not mean that “their motives would necessarily remain so disinterested.” Furthermore, excepting some of the older ones, they seemed “impatient and demanding.” The report also criticized the fact that “the terms in which glider fans express their devotion to flying and their tendency to lift it into the realm of metaphysics and philosophy are often reminiscent of the emotional jargon of national socialism.” A recent newspaper piece stating that Hanna Reitsch—“famous Luftwaffe pilot who moved in the highest nazi circles”—had planned to take part in a now prohibited national meeting was likewise “not reassuring.” As a whole, the individuals who attended the gatherings raised some eyebrows as well. The glider groups allegedly received the most support “from universities and [institute of technology] circles and from ex-Luftwaffe officers, particularly non-commissioned officers who were mechanics or members of ground crews and did not fly themselves but developed an interest in flying.” The report ended by observing that “the fact that the glider groups naturally attract many ex-Luftwaffe personnel, obviously would facilitate development of a widely organized cadre of potential military flyers.” Then, too, “the fact that some of the flying enthusiasts are fanatically interested in the new techniques of aviation” was “worth noting.”<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 13 Jul 49, NA, RG 260.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

If there was little the Americans could do to prevent glider pilots from assembling locally, in July 1949 the Land MGs of Hesse and Württemberg-Baden both turned down a request from the movement's leaders to hold a strategy session involving representatives from all four zones.<sup>204</sup> Already disappointed, the gliding enthusiasts also learned that the Allies would likely continue their prohibition on gliding even after the founding of the Federal Republic. With a potentially difficult road ahead, they nevertheless anticipated a lifting of the ban in "some months."<sup>205</sup> Their frustration would not soon be relieved, however. The Allied High Commission did not permit glider pilots to resume their flying until June 1951, when rearmament talks were already in full swing.<sup>206</sup>

### *Organized Youth Activities*

Given the widespread agreement in Württemberg-Baden regarding the desired content and objectives of youth and sports programs, the Americans usually found little reason to reprimand or discipline German officials or organizations. They did not always endorse the methods or tone used by the Germans, but here they were more concerned about autocratic tendencies that imperiled democratizing reforms than about a return to the militarized approach of Germany's past. Most youth activities appeared innocuous. And in some cases, the Land's young people stepped forward as conspicuous and vocal proponents of peace.

In seeking to reorient Germany's youth, American MG personnel frequently criticized the age of German youth officials. As older men, sometimes returning to the field following a Nazi-imposed absence, they might have little understanding of the true needs and interests of Germany's youth and often were unwilling or unable to abandon old pedagogical and bureaucratic approaches to youth work. An American emphasis on training new, younger leaders resulted in part from a recognition of this situation. The challenges posed by German youth leaders went even beyond this, however. Youth leaders both young and old at times perpetuated nationalistic ideas and continued using chauvinistic, even racist, language without really perceiving, or conceding, the close connection between their thinking and the spiritual universe of Nazism. These

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.; Leon A. Shelnett, Daily Report, 1 Aug 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 889, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div From 13 July 1949 to 29 Aug 1949.

<sup>205</sup> Monthly Report, Education and Cultural Relations Division, Aug 1949, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 880, F: 201.08 A; Intelligence Report, 17 Aug 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 819, F: Intelligence Reports 1949.

<sup>206</sup> "Flieger kennen keine Ländergrenzen," *BNN*, 20 Jun 51, StAK 1/H-Reg No. 5474.

tendencies came into view, for instance, in descriptions of the philosophical goals of youth clubs and in explanations offered for encouraging German youngsters to embrace traditional folk dancing and reject jazz music.<sup>207</sup> Some groups thus retained a nationalistic flavor that was hardly what MG education officials had in mind when promoting youth work as a means of democratization.

Yet the lingering residues of chauvinistic nationalism did not normally translate into explicitly belligerent teachings or pre-military training or drill, except perhaps of the sort practiced by Heidelberg's "drill instructor." A late March 1947 MG report noted, for instance, that the Americans were having certain difficulties with the German sports organizations but that the Germans so far had not attempted to reintroduce paramilitary or military sports.<sup>208</sup> Even the *Turner* (gymnastics) clubs, which the Allies viewed especially warily given their history of promoting physical exercise as a patriotic form of pre-military training, displayed signs of genuine transformation. A March 1949 MG report expressed concern that the gymnastics movement in Württemberg-Baden still showed evidence of its heritage, citing "a sentimental reverence for [the nineteenth-century spiritual father of German gymnastics] Father Jahn" and his accomplishments; "an irrepressible delight in marching onto and off the field or stage in rows and columns"; and the "performance of feats with a strikingly military precision and rigid attention while the performer is not in action." The report admitted that "it would be difficult to prove that the emphasis on bodily discipline or any of the mannerisms traditional in Turnen have any bearing on militarism, or that Turnen is in any way connected with politics," but it also stressed that it had been Jahn's "avowed purpose to develop the German 'Volksgeist' through physical training." More recently, the report added, the still influential Carl Diem had suggested that future state leaders should emerge from among Germany's gymnasts.<sup>209</sup> An April 1949 MG report analyzing a 1,200-member group in Heidelberg drew more favorable conclusions, however. "The contrast between liberals and nationalist elements is expressed in the issue of modern gymnastics vs. old-time, drill calisthenics," it observed. Most members of the club, particularly the younger ones, preferred "the more easy-going modern gymnastics," while

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<sup>207</sup> Arno Klönne, "'Kulturkampf': Bemerkungen zur Schul- und Jugendpolitik der Besatzungsmächte in Deutschland nach 1945," in *Jahrbuch für zeitgeschichtliche Jugendforschung 1994/95* (1995), 36-38. For more on how some of these trends played out in German political culture as a whole during the 1950s, see Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels*.

<sup>208</sup> "Youth Activities. Report on Germany Youth, Second Year of the Occupation," 14.

<sup>209</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 2 Mar 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: Unlabeled [2].

those advocating “the traditional army drill style calisthenics” were “not very significant.”<sup>210</sup> In his balanced history of the *Schwäbischer Turnerbund* (Swabian Gymnastics Association), historian Michael Krüger likewise has identified a qualified, but noticeable change in the movement’s postwar activities. Formal gatherings again included lofty speeches, processions, the handing over of banners, and the singing of old Turner songs. But in the 1950s there was no more talk of “*Wehrturnen*” (military gymnastics), let alone evidence of it in practice. German sportsmen agreed, he notes, that “*Wehrturnen* was not Turnen and *Wehrsport* was not sport.”<sup>211</sup>

The vast majority of other youth group activities were fundamentally harmless in form, even when sometimes questionable in terms of ideological content. Organizations devoted weekends to hiking and camping and evenings to singing, Bible study, crafts, theater, lectures, and discussions. As noted, scout groups seemed to run into trouble more often than most clubs. Yet in June 1949 Shelnutz also described watching Boy Scouts being sworn in at a rally just outside of Stuttgart and reported that he “could not tell that it differed greatly from the investiture ceremonies that I have attended in the U.S.,” though it was “certainly less militaristic (perhaps because I was there).”<sup>212</sup>

In some cases, youth organizations spent time explicitly considering the issues of war and military service. In April 1946, for example, some 75 members of Ulm’s *Schwäbische Jugendbund* group attended a lecture on the book *Männer gegen Tod und Teufel* (Men Against Death and the Devil) in which the speaker presented doctors and scientists like Galen and Paracelsus as role models. “It was not the hypocritical heroism of the glory- and blood-covered battlefield which captivated us, but the quiet valor of researchers and doctors who devoted their lives to the good of humanity,” explained a girl reporting on the talk. “On this evening, we left the small auditorium deeply impressed.”<sup>213</sup> In September 1946, some 100 Falcons and their followers attended an anti-war demonstration in Heidelberg at which the Social Democratic keynote speaker argued that the duty of Germany’s youth should be to work for their country’s welfare, not to die for it. He called for honoring the German resistance movement and, according to a MG report, urged the youth to “fight for the

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<sup>210</sup> Intelligence Report, 14 Apr 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports 3 Feb 49 to 28 Apr 49 Vol. V.

<sup>211</sup> Krüger, *Von Klimmzügen, Aufschwüngen, und Riesenwellen*, 166, 171.

<sup>212</sup> Daily Journal, 24 Jun 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 890, F: Daily Report of Activities E&CR Div from 26 May 1949 to 12 July 1949.

<sup>213</sup> Wochenbericht vom 8.4.46 bis 14.4.1946, n.d., HStA EA 3/301 Bü 1218.

brotherhood of the world” and to do everything they could “for the re-entry of Germany into the family of nations.”<sup>214</sup> The month before, a similar rally in Stuttgart had drawn about 2,000 youths aged nine to 20 years old, as well as approximately 500 adults.<sup>215</sup>

More impressively, Stuttgart’s youth parliament caused a genuine stir when it took on Württemberg-Baden’s legislature, the *Landtag*. A roughly 100-member group representing some 37,000 organized young people, the parliament in October 1947 officially asked the legislators to amend the Land constitution to state that no person could be forced by law into military service, either bearing arms or in an auxiliary capacity.<sup>216</sup> Although widespread criticism of the misuse of Germany’s youth during the Third Reich might have made the prompt approval of this change a reasonable expectation despite Germany’s long history of universal conscription, particularly since the country currently had no armed forces, reality proved to be somewhat different. The views the Land’s politicians voiced regarding war service instead were complex and differentiated. Above all, the context was complicated. Not only was Germany occupied by foreign powers who legally exercised complete control over the country’s governing bodies, but by this time, relations between the western Allies and the Soviet Union had soured nearly to the point of unworkability. In March 1948, the ACC stopped meeting, and the blockade of Berlin would begin in June. Germany’s security, which to some had always appeared uncertain in the absence of a war-ending peace treaty, seemed more precarious than ever. By spring 1948, some European newspapers had even begun speculating openly about the possible value of reestablishing a German army to strengthen western Europe’s defenses.<sup>217</sup> These circumstances could make constitutional protection against conscription seem that much more important to Germany’s young people. But for their leaders, the situation seemed to require political finesse and cautious thinking.

After the Landtag’s legal committee sat on the conscription proposal for a number of months without taking any action, the youth parliament in early April 1948 invited members of the press, public officials, and Landtag representatives to a special meeting. In a room filled to overflowing, the Landtag’s president, Social

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<sup>214</sup> Intelligence Report No. 338, 8 Oct 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 85, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Heidelberg 1946 [2].

<sup>215</sup> Weekly Political Intelligence Report, 28 Aug 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: 350.2 Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [3].

<sup>216</sup> “Kriegsgegner wollen am 8.Mai demonstrieren,” *SDZ*, 8 Apr 48; To Leon A. Shelnett, 8 Apr 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 964, F: C-22 Jugendparlament.

<sup>217</sup> “Deutsches Heer zur Rettung Europas?” *RNZ*, Oster-Ausgabe 48.



Democrat Wilhelm Keil, the leaders of the four major parties represented in the Landtag, and a variety of other politicians offered the youth delegates their views on the proposal, with the lively discussion at times growing heated. According to newspaper and other accounts of the proceedings, the politicians generally viewed the anti-conscription proposal as something positive and believed the youth parliament's initiative could serve a beneficial educational function in the future. Conversely, both sides agreed that changing the constitution would do little to prevent war. The far more contentious question was what should be done about the proposed revision. A KPD delegate supported the change unconditionally, although he saw it as only one small step on the road to peace. The DVP's Henry Bernhard, who had served as private secretary to the conciliatory Weimar foreign minister and chancellor Gustav Stresemann, earned loud approval from the young people by arguing that the Landtag could not adopt such a provision soon enough. But in this he was speaking against the views of others in his own party. Stuttgart's Wolfgang Haussmann, a DVP member of the Landtag's legal committee, argued that an important decision like this by a small Land like Württemberg-Baden could hardly make a difference in a state the size of Germany. Keil, meanwhile, contended that the social, economic, and political conditions that led to wars needed to be changed first.<sup>218</sup>

The youth parliament next gave the Landtag what amounted to an ultimatum, threatening to demonstrate before the Landtag building on May 8, the anniversary of Germany's capitulation, if they did not get an answer.<sup>219</sup> Within a few weeks, the Landtag did, in fact, act, though hardly with the vigor the parliament desired. Leaving the constitution alone, the Landtag members voted on a free-standing law that simply stated that "no one may be forced into war service with a weapon." Significantly, just 46 of 100 delegates were present for the vote, 43 of whom voted for the measure, 3 of whom abstained—including Minister-President Reinhold Maier and Ulm's Johannes Weisser.<sup>220</sup>

In a front-page editorial, the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* criticized this outcome, condemning the new law as a weak and ambiguous substitute that could be easily revoked and accusing the legislature of throwing out a meatless bone to appease the youth parliament. It pointed to the problems faced by the legislators, among them

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<sup>218</sup> Intelligence Report, 7 Apr 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 816, F: Intelligence Reports 1948; "Kriegsgegner wollen am 8.Mai demonstrieren," *SDZ*, 8 Apr 48; "Jugend will Kriegsdienst verweigern," *RNZ*, 8 Apr 48; To Leon A. Shelnutt, 8 Apr 48, NA, RG 260.

<sup>219</sup> "Jugend will Kriegsdienst verweigern," *RNZ*, 8 Apr 48.

<sup>220</sup> "Landtag nimmt Gesetz über Kriegsdienstverweigerung an," *SZ*, 24 Apr 48.

their politically feeble status and the chances that a substantive debate on the issue would have raised issues of sovereignty and other touchy subjects. But it also intimated that it would have welcomed such a discussion by the Land's leading politicians.<sup>221</sup>

The newspaper piece itself provoked additional responses. Anna Haag, an SPD Landtag delegate from Stuttgart who had lobbied for the provision's adoption on behalf of the youth parliament, conceded in a letter to the editor that she would have preferred a change in the constitution, but she defended the law nevertheless, citing its inspirational value, its historical significance, and the importance of making incremental progress toward a more substantial goal.<sup>222</sup> Another writer had quite another take on the matter, asking, "Is it not downright ludicrous when the initiative for such a law has to come from youngsters who people at every opportunity since the end of the war have thought it necessary to reproach with: they only know 'marching,' despotic commands, groveling obedience, war enthusiasm, uniforms, in short: militarism?" And was it not even more absurd when people now passively resisted this initiative—especially when they were in part the same people who had been critical in the first place? The law's significance lay in showing clearly that the youth had never had, or at least had renounced, "that condemnable spirit."<sup>223</sup>

Weisser, meanwhile, offered a defense against accusations such as these in a lengthy opinion piece in the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* that explained his decision to abstain from voting. The world was home to more than lambs, he argued. And although he hated war and the "soldierly life" and favored settling disputes between nations using peaceful means, he believed people had to be prepared to deal with the wolves who refused to submit to nonviolent pressure. The recent histories of Germany, Japan, Italy, and Russia offered proof of what happened when peace-loving countries sat back passively in the face of aggression. Now the Soviets were picking up where Hitler had left off and the Landtag law served their interests. "No reasonable person will wish for the violent conflict that is hanging over the world like a threatening thundercloud," Weisser asserted, "but we must confront the danger." The Germans had no control over whether there would be another war. But if there was a war, they could not run and hide, particularly since it might develop on German soil. Any law of this kind would not survive, anyway, if this occurred. Under these conditions, he stressed, he could

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<sup>221</sup> "Ein kraftloses Gesetz," SZ, 28 Apr 48.

<sup>222</sup> Briefe an die Herausgeber, SZ, 30 Apr 48.

<sup>223</sup> Briefe an die Herausgeber, SZ, 15 May 48.

not endorse the law. He would have readily supported a proposal allowing conscientious objection to war service based on one's religious beliefs or *Weltanschauung*, but not due to political considerations. Even in international relations it was too much to expect one to receive a slap on the left cheek and then to turn the right one.<sup>224</sup>

During the months that followed, the Americans periodically found themselves called upon to reassure those who attended town hall meetings sponsored by the MG and local officials that Germany's young men would not be forced to serve in the U.S. Army in the event of war. "We are all sick and tired of being soldiers," insisted one attendee in Neurath. Military government officials, in turn, stressed that the Hague Convention prohibited an occupier from impressing soldiers and that it also went against American tradition.<sup>225</sup>

Still, there were few German laws or traditions to protect the country's young men when in autumn 1948 the Germans themselves began talking about assisting in the maintenance of their own security. In Württemberg-Baden, Dr. Rudolf Vogel, a well-known and influential member of the Land's CDU, took the lead in this effort, publicly calling for German participation in a broader European defense force, arguing that western Europe, and Germany especially, could not be adequately protected without this. Such a move, he contended, could be legally justified given the Soviet Zone's large, heavily armed police forces. Vogel also suggested that German young people should be trained outside of Germany, in the United States, England, or elsewhere, and used only as ground troops, in order to assuage French and British concerns about a resurgence of German militarism. European soldiers could be stationed in Germany and German soldiers stationed in other parts of Europe or in the United States.<sup>226</sup> Vogel's arguments eventually touched off a public debate in Württemberg-Baden that was fed in part by rumors regarding a withdrawal of Allied troops from western Germany and by recent events in Asia, where a newly independent South Korea had faced a communist uprising.<sup>227</sup> In addition, the local press began weighing in on a national discussion concerning the remarks of

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<sup>224</sup> "Bemerkung," *SDZ*, 1 May 48.

<sup>225</sup> Intelligence Report, 29 Sep 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 548, F: 400.1 Intelligence Activities (Weekly Intel. Reports) Karlsruhe 1948 [2]; Intelligence Report, 22 Sep 48, *ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 3 Nov 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1296, F: 229-3/12 1 (Part 2 of 3); Weekly Intelligence Report, 17 Nov 48, *ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 3 Nov 48, *ibid.*; Weekly Intelligence Report, 17 Nov 48, *ibid.*; Weekly Intelligence Report, 1 Dec 48, *ibid.*; Intelligence Report, 1 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 818, F: Intelligence Reports 1948-1949; "Kleine Ursache—grosse Wirkung," *SDZ*, 2 Dec 48; "'Remilitarisierung' und Stromkürzung im Landtag," *BNN*, 2 Dec 48; "Remilitarisierung vor dem Landtag," *RNZ*, 3 Dec 48.

Hessian journalist and concentration camp survivor Dr. Eugen Kogon, who had claimed that the British and Americans were already secretly creating new German military forces and stressed the importance of ensuring that the experiences of the Weimar Republic were not repeated.<sup>228</sup>

Some of the Land's youth organizations now also entered this fray. In early December, 40 members of Heidelberg's Young Socialists group dealt with the issue at one of their gatherings. "Several discussion speakers considered it inconceivable that the issue of re-militarization was the topic of public discussion as early as three years after the cessation of hostilities," observed a MG report. Some had argued that "the SPD ought to do everything in its power to prevent the spreading of militaristic ideas." And even though the city's SPD chairman had pointed to his party's traditional support for a national militia—as opposed to a professional army—and maintained that "an armed conflict becomes unavoidable when individual freedom must be defended against totalitarian aggression," he had not persuaded most of his listeners, "who remained firmly opposed to any kind of re-militarization."<sup>229</sup>

A few weeks later, Stuttgart's youth committee, which represented the city's 19 youth associations, issued a resolution explicitly condemning Vogel's proposal.

As youth organizations which since 1945 have tirelessly raised their voices against war, we feel obligated to energetically reject this proposition. We strive to give the German youth more attractive and better ideals than those of war and the annihilation of people, which have always brought us and all of humanity only hardship and misery. Therefore, we refuse firmly—no matter for whom it might be—to assume the role of cannon fodder! If the deaths of millions of people, the distress of war invalids and surviving military dependents, our destroyed cities—if that can all have some meaning, then only this, to derive from it the realization that there must be no more war.<sup>230</sup>

Yet with the now full-fledged Cold War showing no signs of abating, the western Allies constructing the foundations of NATO, and the pending establishment of the Federal Republic encouraging Germany's leaders to consider their new state's military and international future, public discussions regarding the possibility of remilitarization continued throughout 1949. In this context, Ulm's youth committee, on behalf of

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<sup>228</sup> Large, *Germans to the Front*, 46-47; "Kogon über deutsche Aufrüstung," *Die Neue Zeitung*, 25 Nov 48, HStA EA 1/106 Bü 1419; "Remilitarisierung Westdeutschlands," *RNZ*, 26 Nov 48; "Die Zukunft der deutschen Presse," *BNN*, 29 Nov 48; Weekly Intelligence Report, 1 Dec 48, NA, RG 260.

<sup>229</sup> Intelligence Report, 9 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports 4 Nov 48 to 27 Jan 49 Vol. IV.

<sup>230</sup> Intelligence Report, 22 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 818, F: Intelligence Reports 1948-1949. (Emphasis in original.)

some 52,000 members of 27 youth organizations, also joined the protest movement, adopting its own passionate resolution in late December 1949.

The grievous wounds of the war are not yet healed, the rubble not yet cleared away, the last POWs not yet returned, and already reactionary powers are ever more openly forging their plans for rearmament and, with this, for war.

One speaks not of security and defense when in the background the preparation for a new war threatens.

We oppose militaristic propaganda of any kind and education through related literature, we oppose the sale of military toys, etc.

We protest fiercely against these plans, in any form, and call the youth to active resistance. . .

Together with the youth of other nations, Germany's young people seek a social order that no longer knows war!<sup>231</sup>

The military question, however, was not about to go away. Ultimately, the discussions of late 1948 and 1949 proved to be merely the opening salvos of a debate that would rage well into the 1950s, when the United States and its allies began talking overtly and earnestly about the possible formation of new German military forces.

While the youth initiatives of the occupation years might logically have defused concerns about the nationalistic tendencies of Germany's young people, it is important to remember that only a portion of Württemberg-Baden's several million children, teenagers, and young adults belonged to organized youth groups.<sup>232</sup> And even fewer were actively pursuing pacifist, anti-war, or anti-conscription agendas. Positive as the signs may have been for the future, skeptics could still point to the past as a check on excessive optimism, noting that pacifist activism after World War I had eventually been trampled underfoot by the jackboots of stronger nationalist and militaristic movements. They could only wait and see whether the second postwar era and its vulnerabilities, insecurities, and uncertainties would bring a similar development.

### Conclusions

At the end of the occupation, the jury was still out on the future character of formal education in Württemberg-Baden's schools. American literature removal and textbook vetting regulations, as well as MG control of the paper supply, had ensured that German schools were mostly free of militaristic books. And the

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<sup>231</sup> "Aufruf der Jugend!" 19 Dec 48, StAU E320 Stadtjugendring Schriftwechsel an 1945-1949.

<sup>232</sup> In January 1949, for example, 22 Stuttgart youth organizations had more than 40,000 members, but another 70,000 young people in the city had not joined any groups. Intelligence Report, 19 Jan 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 818, F: Intelligence Reports 1948-1949.

Americans were still encouraging the Germans to produce textbooks that excluded military poems, songs, math problems, and Latin sentences and eschewed glorifying the military past of Germany or any other country in favor of studying society, other cultures, and admirable scientists and artists.<sup>233</sup> But there were still very few history textbooks available written specifically for children in Württemberg-Baden and history instruction was only just resuming in some North Baden schools. Most importantly, U.S. officials could not be sure the Germans would continue to respect American wishes. Nor could they control how German teachers would use any of the new materials they acquired.

Still, there were some promising signs. The Americans could be reassured by the fact that Württemberg-Baden's top educators seemed sincerely determined to redirect instruction in German schools in a more peaceful direction. This could be seen in their willingness to steer teachers toward history texts that offered a fresh interpretation of German history—even when those texts had been written far from the Badenese or Swabian *Heimat*. A commitment to a new approach was also suggested by the curriculum for elementary schools issued by the Culture Ministry for the 1950-1951 school year. Discussing the teaching of history, it urged instructors to integrate local and national history with European and world history and to tell children that they could love their home and Fatherland without overweening nationalism and that peaceful cooperation with other peoples bore more fruit than a policy of force. The ministry cautioned, as well, that “every glorification of war is to be avoided.”<sup>234</sup> When the role of American officials evolved from a supervisory one to an advisory one in late 1949, the content of education in Württemberg-Baden seemed to be evolving in the right direction.

More impressive was the change in youth programs outside of the classroom. In some cases, the nationalist overtones and emotive pageantry of pre-1945 youth activities persisted. And soon fencing, model airplane flying, gliding, and shooting would all again be sanctioned by the western Allies and German officials. Lasting change on all fronts could therefore not be assumed or guaranteed. But by late 1949, military uniforms, soldier songs, drill instruction, paramilitary training, and Wehrsport competitions were no longer central

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<sup>233</sup> In a study comparing a variety of textbooks from the first postwar decade with those from the previous half century, Jürgen Bennack is critical of the new books for their lack of engagement with current problems, support for a democratic system, and examination of the recent past. He also notes the continuing “revanchist” tendencies of geography books which, in particular, pointed to Germany's lost territories. However, Bennack also concludes that the new books, of all kinds, no longer stressed soldierly virtues or glorified war. “Volksschulbücher der Nachkriegszeit zwischen Erneuerung und Restauration,” in *Zwischen Restauration und Innovation: Bildungsreformen in Ost und West nach 1945*, ed. Manfred Heinemann (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1999), 1-15.

<sup>234</sup> “Entwurf eines Lehrplans für die Volksschulen in Württemberg-Baden,” *Amtsblatt des Kultministeriums*, No. 8 (1950), 181, 185.

components of official youth programs. During the years that followed, moreover, the governing documents of many youth organizations would continue to declare their intent to combat militarism and war.<sup>235</sup> If perhaps falling short in meeting the democratic standards the Americans set for them, German youth activities had nevertheless been transformed, a process that was sustained, notably, by a broad consensus that Germany's young people should no longer be programmed to die for the Fatherland. This development was far from inconsequential. As the final year of the occupation showed, what role the Germans envisioned for their young people in the new West Germany and what attitudes they might instill in them regarding some future West German army were rapidly becoming more than just interesting theoretical questions.

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<sup>235</sup> Satzung des Stadtjugendrings Stuttgart, 13 Sep 54, StAS HA Gruppe 4 Abl. 29.1.1974 No. 4651-5 Akten betr. Satzung; Stadtjugendring Stuttgart, Satzung, 2 Jul 62, *ibid*; Stadtjugendring Ulm (Donau), Satzungen, n.d. [1949-1959], StAU E320 Band 1 Allgemeines; Bund Junger Genossenschaftler, Jugendgruppe Ulm, to Stadtjugendring, 29 Jan 54, and attachments, *ibid*; Helmut M. to Leiter des Stadtjugendrings, 13 Aug 54, and attachment, *ibid*; "Empfehlungen des Landesjugendrings Baden-Württemberg," 25 Nov 64, *ibid*.

## Chapter 9

### CONCLUSION

In mid March 1949, an intelligence report drafted by the Heidelberg military government detachment described a recent informal poll asking “twelve ‘men on the street’” for their views on the North Atlantic Treaty. This, it observed, had led to “an interesting discovery.”

Much has been heard about preventing Germany from waging an aggressive war in the future. Judging from the reactions obtained from these plain people who walk the streets anonymously and who must do all the real fighting when a war actually presents itself, it will be difficult to get Germany to fight even a defensive war. The plain man on the street has had enough of war. He is tired of it, afraid of it, and wants nothing more to do with it. . . .

Peering ahead into the time when the Atlantic Pact signatories may be inclined to look upon the West German State as a possible military ally, these signatories may be surprised to find that a strongly pacifistic feeling exists in many of the common people, and that they fear and dislike war more than may be suspected. The opinion held by some that Western Germany would jump at the chance to join the pact and to rearm may not be so valid.<sup>1</sup>

The results of this survey, moreover, were in keeping with other developments in Heidelberg during the year leading up to the founding of the Federal Republic. In late December 1948, for example, the Heidelberg Women’s Association had protested any remilitarizing of Germany. One speaker at an association gathering had hinted at the sometimes conflicted motives which led to such protests in arguing that there should be no rearmament without a peace treaty and the return of all of Germany’s POWs, but she also had insisted that there was just one acceptable slogan: “No more wars.” According to MG officials, she had “urged all women to influence men to discard the false conception of heroism which can only materialize in war,” adding that “real heroes secure the peace.”<sup>2</sup> Six weeks later, they reported that more than 800 people had crowded into and huddled outside of a Heidelberg University auditorium for an open press forum sponsored by the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung* and later broadcast on Radio Stuttgart. At this event, “an elderly man” who called for the

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<sup>1</sup> Intelligence Report, 24 Mar 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports. 3 Feb 49 to 28 Aug 49 Vol. V.

<sup>2</sup> Intelligence Report, 23 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports. 4 Nov 48 to 27 Jan 49 Vol. IV. On the range of motivations that led German women to become peace activists after World War II—some of which had little to do with the war itself—see Irene Stoehr, “Cold War Communities: Women’s Peace Politics in Postwar West Germany, 1945-1952,” in Hagemann and Schüler-Springorum, *Home/Front*, 311-333.



newspaper to “stop publishing articles containing admittance of German guilt for World War II” and declared “that those powers who had preferred bolshevism to naziism [*sic*] were the real guilty parties” had been “drowned by angry protests of the majority of the audience.” Theodor Heuss subsequently told the man that the paper had “never pursued a policy of admittance of German collective guilt,” but argued, too, that “a denial of German guilt for World War II would be nothing but a falsification of history and a delusion of the German people.”<sup>3</sup>

In late March 1949, Heidelberg MG officials maintained that “the only groups that still adore the idea of war and strong military forces are the ultra-nationalists, the diehard Nazis, and a few expellees, who hope that a war against the countries behind the Iron Curtain would enable them to return to their homes.”<sup>4</sup> In April, they cited the failure of “an extreme rightist group,” the *Europäische Volksbewegung Deutschlands*, to gain a foothold in the city as evidence “that overt demonstrations of preference for non-democratic government and for militaristic tendencies enjoy very little sympathy with the general public.”<sup>5</sup>

Still, other reports drafted by the Americans suggested that they still had work to do. In fact, in December 1948, they painted a rather gloomy picture of local conditions. It was “regrettable,” noted one report, that just three years after the war’s end, leading Germans were discussing the remilitarization of Germany. Despite many efforts “to inculcate democracy and peace loving ideas into the minds of the Germans,” some were demanding the reestablishment of a German military. “American Military Government has not succeeded in convincing the Germans that war and militarism are evil,” the report continued. “The only evil that some Germans recognize is the losing of a war. The Germans do not believe that suffering and hardship would have been theirs as a result of war. They feel that suffering and hardship only comes to those who lose a war.”<sup>6</sup>

The document went on to complain that of the many initiatives intended to reorient the Germans toward democracy “the least amount of effort has been exerted in convincing the Germans that they should become peace loving people.” This, it implied, was a mistake. There were “sufficient nationalistic die-hards”

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<sup>3</sup> Intelligence Report, 10 Feb 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports. 3 Feb 49 to 28 Aug 49 Vol. V.

<sup>4</sup> Intelligence Report, 31 Mar 49, *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Intelligence Report, 28 Apr 49, *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Intelligence Report, 9 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 458, F: Weekly Intelligence Reports. 4 Nov 48 to 27 Jan 49 Vol. IV.

who believed Germany could “once again emerge a great military power,” even if “small groups” of Germans condemned militarism and were working to prevent its return. “Too many people remember the days when Germany was a mighty military power and at least hope that Germany will once again return to its former position of glory,” the report maintained. Moreover, had the U.S. actually succeeded in fostering a desire for peace, the “antics of the Russians” would have undermined it. The Germans had “once again been given an opportunity to demand an armed force for themselves for reasons that sound justifiable.”<sup>7</sup>

Two weeks later, Heidelberg MG officials reported on a speech by the chairman of the “European Free Reconstruction Movement” that had included comments such as “Germany will be the motor of a European Federation because of the superior technical and spiritual qualities of her people” and “There is no soldier in the world who possesses better human and fighting qualities than the German soldier.” In addition to demanding German remilitarization and the restoration of Germany’s eastern territories, he had asserted “that every German will gladly don ‘the grey coat of honor’ when the arms are taken up against the Soviet Union” and called for using the imperial colors of 1871 for the national flag. His final words—“Your strength belongs to the fatherland and your people for all time. When you enter the eternal hunting grounds everybody must be able to call you a good German.”—had reportedly been “wildly cheered by the thirty adherents of the [movement] who attended the meeting.”<sup>8</sup>

On the same day, a local elementary school had held a Christmas celebration called, in true Nazi fashion, “Winterfest,” during which students had put on two plays. According to the MG’s information, “in one play, a boy was given a rifle which he fired several times.” In the second, the children had “clicked their heels together and raised their right arm and shouted Hurrah three times, when Santa Claus entered.” Heidelberg’s school board had scripts for many plays that displayed no Nazi or militarist leanings, the report observed, yet the school’s teachers had chosen “those plays which suited their own taste best.” It added that the school board’s president would be investigating the matter.<sup>9</sup>

Taken together, the Heidelberg reports point to a number of conclusions. First, the Americans clearly saw what they took to be very positive signs regarding German thinking on the issues of war and rearmament.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Intelligence Report, 23 Dec 48, NA, RG 260.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

The Germans of 1949 appeared to be very different from those criticized relentlessly during American postwar planning sessions in the early 1940s. On the other hand, even in late 1948, the Americans still were not entirely sure what to make of the Germans. Old stereotypes and presumptions persisted in some quarters, but concerns were also at least occasionally triggered by legitimately disquieting activities and opinions. The intensifying Cold War had certainly not caused all Americans to welcome the Germans into their fold unconditionally or to dismiss the continuing importance of teaching the Germans to love peace. The reports also show that the German people still held a range of different opinions regarding the issues of war and the military and underscore the degree to which they increasingly found themselves in the darkness of shadows cast by two very different trees, both of which were large and seemingly immovable: World War II, with its loss of life and devastation, and the Cold War, with its rumors and threats of war. German opinions could not be explained or understood without taking both into consideration. The Heidelberg reports therefore offer insight into the perspectives of both the Americans and the Germans less than a year before West Germany was born. They also provide a sense of the mixture of prejudices, opinions, goals, and concrete initiatives which comprised and shaped the demilitarization project in American-occupied Württemberg-Baden.

Years after he had participated in the Allied invasion of Germany as a soldier and covered the occupation as a newspaper correspondent, journalist Edwin Hartrich described the wreckage of the Wehrmacht and the Third Reich at the end of the war and adopted the voice of conventional wisdom in asserting that, at this point, “Germany’s will to fight on, or to offer any resistance to the conqueror’s rule, was broken. Germany had truly been ‘demilitarized,’ physically, mentally, and spiritually.” Describing the Germans’ resistance to rearmament five years later, he explained that “there was widespread revulsion to the war and all things associated with it which had sunk deep into the German psyche. The militarists had become disillusioned and converted to pacifism.”<sup>10</sup> Clearly, however, the Heidelberg reports raise doubts about this rather simplistic assessment. Germany’s postwar transformation from a highly militaristic country to a country devoid of marching uniformed minions, where large numbers of people opposed rearmament and later scholars would detect a “culture of antimilitarism,” certainly was rooted in its wartime experiences.<sup>11</sup> But a closer look at the

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<sup>10</sup> Edwin Hartrich, *The Fourth and Richest Reich* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 57, 61.

<sup>11</sup> A volume of essays edited by Gottfried Niedhart and Dieter Riesenberger explicitly explores the question of what the Germans “learned” from the two world wars, evaluating the extent and limits of change after each of the wars in various areas of German political, cultural, and economic life, particularly with respect to issues of war and peace. The volume

American demilitarization program in Württemberg-Baden shows that the nature and extent of change was also determined in part by what happened *after* the war, and not just as a byproduct of a generalized resentment of the occupying powers for perceived injustices and privation. Moreover, the transformation of society and culture that occurred between 1945 and 1950 was not wholly spontaneous, not unchallenged, not comprehensive, far from uniform, and not solely a German achievement. It was, in truth, a much more complex process than it might have appeared to Hartrich.

### **Stages of Demilitarization**

The Americans entered Germany with social and cultural demilitarization as a key aim, but without a uniform or theoretically grounded definition of militarism and with only the outlines of a plan for achieving their goal. Still, they had traced German militarism to what they believed to be its most important, deepest sources and had developed a basic strategy, with a multitude of components, to root out the problem. Perhaps naively optimistic that they could actually realize their objective, they also knew that their efforts might take time to produce results. In fact, the real significance of their work would lie in the future. The consequences of war, defeat, and total occupation would likely keep most Germans subdued in the short term. But the aftermath of World War I raised doubts about whether this state of affairs would last. Similarly, it might be possible to undo and negate the external militarizing influences of the National Socialists and their predecessors relatively quickly. But if the American analysis of the forces at work in Germany was accurate, it might take much longer for the German people to internalize new values and show evidence of a changed outlook. Seemingly extreme in the extent of their concerns, American policymakers in virtually all postwar planning organizations nevertheless showed an insightful awareness of the importance of social and cultural influences on the politics, attitudes, and actions of nations, leading them to a proactive strategy that may appear less absurd now, in the wake of several decades of scholarly research treating society and culture with respectful consideration, than it did even at the time.

In practice, American demilitarizing initiatives tended to follow similar chronological patterns. They began haphazardly in the chaos accompanying the conquest of the western half of Germany, with Allied

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provides a useful introduction to the two immediate postwar periods while also analyzing enlightening differences between them. It is less helpful for distinguishing between lessons learned from World War II itself and the effects of new postwar influences. *Lernen aus dem Krieg*.

soldiers and local military government officials handing out instructions that might be in line with basic Allied thinking, but that were also often independently formulated and implemented only locally. By late summer 1945, American officials were issuing more detailed, uniform directives and laws which, in many instances, were eventually complemented or superseded by more broadly applicable regulations developed by the Allied Control Authority. During the first two years of the occupation, then, the Americans introduced a layering of policies that were never explicitly conceptualized as a unified whole, but which influenced a wide array of MG activities and corresponding areas of German society and culture. By mid 1947, most tasks requiring removals and other physical changes, including those addressing uniforms, street signs, monuments, literature, and textbooks, had been completed. By that time, too, many of Germany's high-ranking officers were returning home and the work of the denazification tribunals was well underway. From mid 1947 to mid 1949, the primary responsibilities of local and Land MG officials consisted of authorizing parades, new organizations, and the like; working with the Germans on the writing of new textbooks; reworking military pension provisions; fending off complaints from veterans, glider pilots, and other Germans dissatisfied with specific U.S. or Allied measures; advising German officials; monitoring compliance and enforcing existing regulations; and, in some cases, pressing higher echelons for changes in policy.

The shift in 1947 from an interventionist approach to one that involved primarily advising and enforcement corresponds with a general change in the tone of the U.S. occupation as a whole in late 1946 and 1947. This transitional period was book-ended, in some respects, by Secretary of State James Byrnes' September 1946 speech in Stuttgart promising American help with the economic recovery and reconstruction of Germany and assuring the Germans that they would soon be permitted to govern themselves and the issuance in July 1947 of JCS 1779, a less severe successor to JCS 1067. The reconstructive approach of the State Department finally achieved ascendancy, scholars have asserted, helped along by the growing hostilities of the early Cold War which transformed the Germans from enemies into potential allies. Although scholars evaluating the evolution of U.S. policy often refer to the early phase of the occupation as a "punitive" one, James Tent's observation that "the term 'reeducation' did not seem too harsh in 1945, and the basic doctrine, JCS 1067, embodying it has appeared unnecessarily punitive only in retrospect"<sup>12</sup> seems to offer a more accurate appraisal of the situation in the demilitarization arena. Karl-Heinz Füssl's contention that early MG

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<sup>12</sup> Tent, *Mission on the Rhine*, 318.

education and youth policies were more about a logical and necessary elimination of detrimental Nazi influences than about punishment can also arguably be more broadly applied.<sup>13</sup> Some demilitarization measures frustrated the Germans and a few disrupted their lives or worsened their material situation. And there were indeed Americans who cared little about injurious repercussions or who reasoned that the Germans had made their bed and had to lie in it. Yet the principal motive behind the measures was not retribution, nor was the primary aim punishment. The Americans wanted world peace. And this, they believed, required the destruction of German militarism. Eradicating militaristic influences in Germany was thus seen as akin to slicing off a layer of skin to get rid of a cancer. It hurt and had painful side effects. But hurting the creature—whether viewed as a regrettable, irrelevant, or desirable action—was not the goal. The goal was to produce a healthier, less belligerent creature.

Even though it unfolded along a track similar to that of other American programs, the social and cultural demilitarization project generally had its own momentum and trajectory, with its shift in focus in 1947 resulting primarily from the fact that many of the original policies had laid out concrete objectives which, once achieved, no longer needed to be actively pursued, but instead merely monitored. As the model airplane discussions showed, Land MG officials did slightly loosen the reins on the Germans in the later years of the occupation. But this development seems to be attributable chiefly to the specific views held by individual officials regarding the German people and the American program, rather than to changing national priorities. Thus Leon Shelnutt could conclude that model airplane flying by small groups of German children did not constitute a security threat, while Aksel Nielsen, a rather recent arrival in the Land MG office, could confess ignorance about the logic behind the ban on fencing when he asked his superiors about a possible reexamination of the policy because he worried it just encouraged interest in the sport.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Füssl, *Die Umerziehung des Deutschen*, 99.

<sup>14</sup> Aksel G. Nielsen to Director, Internal Affairs and Communications Division, 3 Sep 47, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 970, F: Correspondence. In a recent study, Petra Goedde tracks changing attitudes toward the Germans more generally during the occupation. Identifying a process she describes as the “cultural feminization” of the Germans, with the occupiers increasingly viewing the Germans less as evil enemies and more as helpless victims needing protection, she goes so far as to argue that the softening of American attitudes toward the Germans in Germany helped to stimulate the shift in U.S. policy away from punishment and toward reconstruction. “German-American rapprochement was,” she argues, “as much a cause as a consequence of the cold war” (205). *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945-1949* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003). Other scholars have contested this argument, though they do not dispute that German-American interaction helped to make the U.S. policy shift easier and more palatable.

It is essential to recognize, as well, that a softening of the American position toward Germany did not lead to a revocation or renunciation of existing demilitarization policies. Partly this was a matter of circumstance. A commitment to working with their wartime allies restricted the Americans' ability to make substantial changes quickly or without consequences. And if studies have shown that the redirection of occupation priorities to reflect Cold War realities resulted in fewer restrictions on former Nazis, a comparable phenomenon affecting militarists cannot be identified if for no other reason than that militarists had never been excluded and punished to the same degree. As noted, too, most of the major demilitarization initiatives were already concluded by mid 1947. But there is also little indication that local, Land, or zonal MG officials pressed adamantly for anything other than minor changes (such as allowing the Germans to form model airplane clubs) in the American regulations governing social and cultural demilitarization. Instead, they continued to cast a wary eye on former officers meeting with their colleagues and demanding admission to universities, to worry about the mindset of German textbook writers and glider pilots, to listen attentively at German political meetings, and to identify and investigate violations of MG policy. American officials may have begun strengthening Germany's economy and placing new stress on programs to democratize its people and institutions, and American officers in the deep recesses of the Pentagon may have started to entertain the idea of a German contribution to western Europe's defense, but in the U.S. Zone, training future soldiers and glorifying war, the Wehrmacht, and Germany's military past remained prohibited.

By mid 1949, then, the cultural and social landscape of Württemberg-Baden was noticeably different from the way it had been in 1945, although not as different as it might have been. On an immediately tangible level, a few war monuments were gone, others showed evidence of alteration, and some city streets and squares—often important streets and squares—bore new names. Museums had put away their military artifacts, with their locked storerooms also protecting for safekeeping a motley assortment of swords, rifles, and spears obtained from local collectors. More obvious was the revolution that had occurred on the shelves of bookstores and libraries, where thousands of volumes dissecting military tactics, clamoring for war, and stirring up dreams of soldierly glory had vanished. In public places, the only individuals wearing crisp, undyed military uniforms complete with decorations and military insignia were Allied soldiers. Even policemen and youth group members who had been allowed to don uniforms wore clothing judged to be harmless and displayed openly

only approved insignia and badges. There was still no national flag to fly and those who marched to the beat of military bands were not German.

If military style uniforms and precision marching were gone, German associational life had changed in other ways as well. Athletic clubs were no longer promoting *Wehrsport*, and sports publications were not singing the praises of young athletes who had proved themselves ready and willing to fight. Glider pilots remained grounded. No bellowing instructors were drilling youth club members, and youth organizers were not promoting hiking trips as pseudo-military experiences, but rather primarily as opportunities to enjoy nature and admire the German countryside. In German schools, the educational resources available to teachers remained inadequate, and an analysis of lesson content may have revealed some confusion, peculiar gaps, or questionable interpretations, but Culture Ministry officials were at least making a good faith effort to encourage instructors to rethink their approach.

German policemen, meanwhile, could do little more than nod politely when encountering MG officers and, when worried about American observers, had to refrain from saluting one another. Some Germans still viewed their police with suspicion and disdain, particularly when they saw too many former career soldiers in police uniforms. Yet the fact that these soldiers had joined local police forces at all was a sign of a radical change in German society. Former professional officers were now selling insurance, editing journals, learning trades, adapting to the corporate world, and adjusting to life as civil servants. With their ability to assemble severely limited, improving their own economic or social position was a challenge, to say nothing of plotting to regain national influence. Although still greeted with deferential respect in certain company, this treatment could no longer be expected—or demanded—as a matter of course. Instead, former officers might open the newspaper to find letters to the editor attacking their conduct during the war or calling for the permanent suspension of their undeserved pensions. Some were active in writing military studies for the U.S. government and others were in regular contact with German politicians, but their power in government circles had decreased considerably.

While some officers seethed at these conditions and continued to stress the inherent nobility of their former profession, many of Germany's young men—even those suspected of the most unreformed and unrepentant attitudes—evidently did not view a career as a soldier as something particularly desirable, whether because they felt unfairly disparaged or because they found the profession or war itself distasteful. Though it



cannot be viewed as definitive for assessing the attitudes of Württemberg-Baden's young men, an American survey from April 1950 is nevertheless instructive. At that time, interviewers spoke with more than 500 students at the Bavarian universities of Erlangen and Munich, 70 percent of whom previously had served in the military. When asked if they would want to become soldiers again, should Germany form a new army, more than 90 percent said no. A similarly lopsided number of those who answered "no" indicated that they would not want to become an officer if given the chance.<sup>15</sup> Those young men who eventually did choose to join the Federal Republic's new armed forces in the mid 1950s found that the status of the soldier in German society had still not regained the luster it held during the Third Reich. "Military personnel were vilified, spat upon, and in some cases stoned," writes historian David Large. "Now, instead of attracting women, their uniforms seemed a guarantee of celibacy. Bars put up signs saying 'No Soldiers Allowed!' and some restaurants refused to serve 'professional murderers.' 'Lepers in the middle ages probably had it better,' insisted one veteran of the early Bundeswehr."<sup>16</sup>

Certainly not all Germans approved of all of the postwar changes or thought they were necessary. Heidelberg MG officials described some of these alternative views in their reports from 1948 and 1949. In February 1949, another American report similarly argued that "militarism is not as dead as it is supposed to be," citing a variety of activities initiated by and involving former officers, including a letter being circulated by former General Hans von Donat soliciting funds to help pay for the defense of former field marshals Gerd von Rundstedt, Erich von Manstein, and other officers who were involved in one of the later Nuremberg trials. Reports had indicated that the total received for this purpose was "unexpectedly large."<sup>17</sup>

American MG officials also could not be completely sure what sentiments lay behind the apparent change of heart and cooperation of many Germans. Germany was, after all, an occupied country and German officials had little choice but to obey the Allies. Had the Germans really learned? Would the changes prove to be permanent? In late 1948, Clay expressed both optimism and caution on this point. "Physically, Germany

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<sup>15</sup> HICOG, Office of Public Affairs, Reactions Analysis Unit, Report No. 17, Series No. 2, "Attitudes of Students at Erlangen and Munich Universities," 30 Apr 50, 7, NA, RG 407, Entry 368B, Box 1123.

<sup>16</sup> Large, *Germans to the Front*, 245.

<sup>17</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 23 Feb 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1297, F: Unlabeled [2]. Six months later, a high-level Information Services Division official offered a similar assessment—"The militarist spirit has not been eradicated"—when describing a new book glorifying Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and the Afrika-Korps. Thomas P. Headen to Ralph Nicholson, 20 Oct 49, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 261, F: Violations (US Zone Publications).

has been completely demilitarized,” he noted. It had also “experienced the full horror of defeat in total war,” which had “certainly dimmed the military flame in German hearts.” But, he added, “only time can tell whether or not the military spirit which dominated Germany for so many years is dead.” For this reason, even as the western Allies were supervising German efforts to create a new state in western Germany, they were also setting up a Military Security Board “to detect and to recommend preventative measures if this spirit does return.”<sup>18</sup> Though the board was primarily tasked with monitoring German industry, scientific research, and disarmament, it also kept an eye on veterans and sports groups and on trends in German public opinion in order to “detect a significant resurgence in militarism.” The board’s work, suggested its U.S. representative in early 1950, included making certain that Germany’s “national pride” and “aggressive spirit” were contained and “made the basis for decent industrious citizenship, free from the passion to regiment and dominate other men.”<sup>19</sup>

### **A Joint Enterprise**

It is now clear that many changes in Württemberg-Baden were genuine and lasting. Some would be reversed, but many would not. And in the years following, the character of German culture and society would continue to evolve—if sometimes too slowly for some advocates—in the direction the Allies had hoped it would. The question thus becomes: What, or who, was responsible for the transformation? The war certainly influenced attitudes, reigniting old passions and stimulating new ideas. But this alone cannot explain the nature, extent, and, as importantly, the limits of the transformation. Many other factors, on both the American and German sides, also shaped this outcome.

American demilitarization efforts in Germany faced clear challenges and suffered from obvious weaknesses. A key problem was the absence of a reasoned, agreed upon understanding of the terms “militarism,” “militarist,” and “militaristic.” Combined with the wide reach of U.S. policies, this deficiency led to a lack of uniformity and clarity in the overall demilitarization program. The assorted committees, MG offices, and Allied directorates involved in policymaking instead relied on their own individual conceptions of

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<sup>18</sup> Smith, *Papers of General Lucius D. Clay*, 2:966.

<sup>19</sup> Office of the US High Commissioner for Germany, Office of Public Affairs, *Information Bulletin*, 3, 7, University of Wisconsin Digital Collections, The History Collection, Germany Under Reconstruction, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.omg1950Feb>. On the Military Security Board, see especially Glaser, *Das Militärische Sicherheitsamt*.

militarism in formulating sometimes arbitrary or vague policies. Uneven in their scope and impact and sometimes influenced by the conflicting national priorities and concerns of Allied negotiators, the various policies also frequently failed to instill certainty and confidence in the German officials held accountable for carrying them out.

Additionally, if much has been made of the difficulty of “dictating democracy” during the U.S. occupation, the demilitarizing project had its own inherent contradiction: the Americans set out to demilitarize Germany during and by way of a military occupation. Military government officials demanded obedience while seeking to undermine German authoritarianism and respect for military authority, preached against uniform worship while requiring U.S. personnel to wear uniforms that would generate respect and underscore hierarchical relationships, and outlawed German marching while staging their own military parades. These obvious contradictions were accompanied by more subtle ones. American GIs had privileges—in the form of food, shelter, and transportation—which the Germans did not. Even the well-known affection of U.S. soldiers for German children could have an unfortunate flip side. In late 1946, for instance, youth official Heinrich Hassinger invoked the specter of militarism when expressing concern about GIs who let German children ride on their tanks.<sup>20</sup> Taken as a whole, the American military presence did not deliver an unambiguous message.

Like initiatives to denazify and decartelize Germany, American demilitarization plans also suffered from ignorance of conditions in Germany and from the inefficiencies and blunders of the occupation administration itself. Early personnel demilitarization regulations in the U.S. Zone were obsessed with Prussian Junkers who, in the end, proved to be relatively scarce and not particularly threatening. In addition, as outsiders, MG officers were poorly equipped to make fair and informed decisions regarding German personnel appointments. In the absence of membership cards for “militarists” and criteria for judging attitudes, they had little choice but to put their faith in sometimes arbitrary categorizing and in information provided by the Germans themselves, conditions that could lead to both unwarranted removals and unwise appointments. Frustrations with this system helped bring about the March 1946 law which ultimately ensured that the Germans would censure or exclude few people for attitudes or conduct during the Third Reich that may have contributed to Germany’s—and the world’s—present predicament and did little to encourage public reflection on this point.

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<sup>20</sup> Intelligence Report No. 1027, 6 Nov 46, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 88, F: Political Movements, Organizations, and Activities Stuttgart 1946 [4].

Then, too, moves such as confiscating aboriginal spears and arresting army staff doctors hardly convinced the Germans of the Americans' ability to show them how things should be done, while cutting off pensions for the elderly and infirm without making provision for sufficient replacement income stirred up unnecessary resentment.

American enforcement efforts also had their shortcomings. Policies issued from on high were not always assiduously carried out and violations were not always carefully monitored. Sometimes this was unintentional, perhaps the result of staffing inadequacies which made it impossible, for instance, for MG personnel to check every town and school library. In other cases, MG officials chose to overlook minor infractions. Tasked with staffing town administrations or maintaining order, they also consciously ignored the spirit or letter of the law in an effort to successfully achieve other goals.

On the other hand, the Americans at times purposely designed policies to be less than comprehensive and thorough, not usually because their beliefs had changed or because they were not committed to demilitarizing Germany (although some obviously did find certain measures unnecessarily severe or extensive), but because they believed that restraint and sensitivity would be more effective in the long run. German wrath and ridicule could hurt American security and prestige, which could damage the U.S. program in Germany as a whole. As importantly, avoiding drastic intervention and sweeping changes in the short term would help to ensure lasting gains by minimizing discontent, idleness, and unrest. In this respect, the imprecision of existing definitions of militarism could work to the advantage of policymakers, permitting them to define the universe of threatening militaristic influences to exclude, for example, pre-World War I statues and commemorative tables of names. American officials could also argue that young former officers were not, in and of themselves, a threat to the democratizing mission of postwar universities and that there were few subjects inherently dangerous for them to study. They could instead press to integrate young veterans into the mainstream of German life and thereby hopefully decrease their frustrations, prod their thinking in new directions, and reduce the threat they might pose to the occupation forces and world security. In these cases, the Americans deliberately considered possible German reactions when crafting policy. On occasion, they also responded to German concerns and complaints after the fact, delaying enforcement or extending timetables for carrying out instructions. Most violations, moreover, did not elicit severe punishments. Arrests were not out of the question when demanded by law or when infractions threatened the safety of U.S. troops, but the most common

responses to violations were advice, reprimands, warning letters, and the suspension of authorizations or licenses.

Despite the ambiguity, ignorance, confusion, negligence, moderation, and leniency that characterized some or all of the various components of the U.S. demilitarization program, however, the Americans were no pushovers. Their goals were ambitious and their approach was simultaneously detailed in focus and broad in scope. They could respect German sensitivities when it came to commemorating the dead of World War I, but they officially refused to sanction a hand salute. They might suspend enforcement of the uniform regulation in light of freezing temperatures, but they did not rescind it or stop enforcement altogether despite severe clothing shortages.

In retrospect, some American requirements seem remarkably exacting. Policemen could not denote their ranks using chevrons, tin soldiers could not march into math problems, and singing groups could not unfurl their flags in funeral processions. The comments of the textbook analyst who observed that a book that continually used “war examples” to teach grammar might slowly poison the minds of Germany’s youth into thinking “that war is a natural, inevitable occurrence, part and parcel of everyday life”<sup>21</sup> help to make this approach understandable. It remains striking nonetheless.

More obviously influential was American tenacity in other arenas. In addition to insisting upon a number of permanent changes in Württemberg-Baden’s material culture landscape, the Americans ordered the vetting of German bookstores and libraries—in the case of school libraries, not just once, but three times. They demanded that textbooks and lesson plans be demilitarized and refused to permit the use of tainted materials. They required the redirection of youth and sports activities. Enforcement of these measures may have been imperfect, but the measures *were* enforced. The Americans also kept Germany’s military elites locked up for several years, denying them not only an opportunity to conspire against American troops, but also the chance to defend their own social and political position and to insert themselves into early postwar Land and local governance.

Even the paradox of a demilitarizing military occupation had a few positive byproducts, given that one U.S. objective was to alter German thinking regarding soldiers and how they should fit into a society.

American “citizens in uniform” not only modeled a different relationship to their uniforms, they led at least

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<sup>21</sup> OMGUS, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, Textbook Vetting Report, 30 Oct 46, 8, HStA EA 3/603 Bü 36.

some Germans to reflect on the possibility of a different kind of military behavior. Ulm's Kurt Fried addressed this point directly in the *Schwäbische Donau-Zeitung* in early 1947. Citing several recent meetings with an American major regarding youth matters, he praised the officer's informality, willingness to listen to opposing opinions, and genuine desire to help Germany's youth, even when he could not provide the material support for which the Germans were pleading. A similar meeting involving a German officer in Poland or France was virtually impossible to imagine, Fried asserted. Going on to urge his readers to recognize how good they had it under the Americans, despite continuing hardships and obvious shortcomings in American tactics, Fried concluded by noting that in conversations with Americans he had noticed repeatedly how skeptical they were about everything relating to the military. For them, a general was not a figure worthy of adoration, but rather a necessary evil. This, he suggested, was something worth thinking about.<sup>22</sup>

While MG officials sometimes chose to use a gentle touch, they never backed away from the rhetoric of demilitarization. As a result, even Germans unaffected by specific American policies could not escape the unfaltering American criticism of the evils of German militarism. Furthermore, military government officials were not the only ones critiquing this aspect of Germany's past, a fact which surely made their work easier and more effective. Indeed, the Americans had real allies, even partners, among the Germans.

Some Germans undoubtedly talked a good game merely to worm their way into the good graces of the Americans, perhaps obscuring some stain on their past at the same time. But there were many others whose own lifelong convictions, or new view of the world, made them eager to reform—even to revolutionize—German society and culture. Along with city council meeting minutes, German newspapers illustrate this best. Of their own accord, men like Ulm's Johannes Weisser and Karlsruhe's Fritz Aschinger campaigned for measures similar to those demanded by the Americans because these policies aligned with their own thinking. German journalists and letter writers, in effect, justified and explained American demilitarization regulations, stressing the importance of removing street signs and monuments, criticizing German tendencies to kow-tow to dazzling uniforms, and condemning the past machinations of Germany's military elites.

German reactions to both the multitude of American directives and a variety of indigenous proposals nevertheless also show that it would be too simplistic to claim that the Germans' experiences during World War II made any U.S. stimulus to social and cultural demilitarization unnecessary or that after the war all Germans

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<sup>22</sup> Kurt Fried, "Kleine Vision," *SDZ*, 15 Feb 47.

were fully supportive of the demilitarization project. Few Germans wanted another war, except perhaps those hoping to improve their own standing or Germany's position vis-à-vis the Allies. And Württemberg-Baden's new leaders and others readily agreed that "militarism" was abhorrent. As a result, they were often ready to take concrete steps to redirect school curricula and youth programs and to purge public institutions and police forces of the influence of soldiers and military attitudes and conduct. Yet even apart from outright dissenters, there were many Germans who questioned the scope and depth of the program introduced by the Americans.

In truth, fault lines emerged across national boundaries as well as within them during the occupation. There were Americans as well as Germans who viewed specific U.S. demilitarization tactics as too harsh, and others who wanted deep-cutting, thorough change. Interestingly, however, evidence suggests that shared political perspectives were not always the cause of shared views concerning demilitarization. The materials reviewed for this study frequently do not provide a clear picture of the rationale lying behind differences of opinion on the American side. The specifics of the larger U.S. program were typically worked out either by zonal level policymakers and negotiations or by local MG officials who were often recruits from the private sector or career officers below the general officer level. The activities of the former have received little concentrated attention here and ascertaining the political leanings or personal motivations of the latter is difficult. Both groups are certainly worthy of more intense scrutiny. In light of the sources available, however, it seems wrong to assume that the New Deal liberal and business-friendly conservative beliefs which so substantially shaped the American debate on economic questions (seen most clearly in the quarrels between the Treasury Department and the State Department during the war) also heavily influenced any disagreements regarding the demilitarization project.

Although sympathetic attitudes toward the German people that led some Americans to push for rehabilitation may also have shaped their thinking on the subject of demilitarization, social and cultural demilitarization, for the most part, did not noticeably either impede or facilitate Germany's economic recovery, which presumably made it less of a concern to those passionately advocating or resisting German economic reconstruction. OMGUS's Political Division, backed by the State Department, did tend to be wary of measures such as confining German officers, confiscating books, and changing the names of streets named after pre-Nazi military heroes. But if the Political Division's sensitivities correlated well with their desire for the rapid economic rehabilitation of Germany, they also reflected a concern for creating the best conditions for the

growth of a healthy democracy. Officials from the Intelligence and Armed Forces Divisions, by contrast, often took a hard line position. Yet they were hardly crusading New Dealers. Rather, the career colonels and generals weighing in on policy questions in these areas were pragmatists. Simply put, they were concerned about security. Hence pressing for the continued internment of former general staff officers, the destruction of military training manuals, or, in the words of General Robert Harper, “spiritual and intellectual demilitarization” was fully in keeping with their mission, regardless of any desire for vengeance individual officers may well have felt. This may also explain why American Military Directorate officials could preserve commemorative name tablets from destruction and sanction the admission of former army captains to German universities, but still desire close surveillance of former German generals.

In German circles, opinions more often than not followed a right to left political breakdown, with those on the right, predictably, most resistant to and least convinced of the necessity of the American measures. Official U.S. policies therefore frequently corresponded most closely with the agenda of Württemberg-Baden’s Communists and Social Democrats, requiring changes that many right-leaning and moderate Germans did not believe were warranted. On the other hand, the Americans did not always push far enough for the left-leaning parties—although the parties themselves did not raise this complaint. Instead, those on the left saw social and cultural changes as their own responsibility. In part, their position had long-standing ideological underpinnings, including socialism’s traditional condemnation of Germany’s professional army and the army’s social and political influence. But it also reflected their belief that making changes would provide proof of a healthy German soul, or show the world that the Germans were turning over a new leaf.

Engagement with the problem of militarism was not limited to the politically active, however. Indeed, in Württemberg-Baden an informal conversation regarding militarism and demilitarization developed which involved many more people than just the Land’s leading politicians and a variety of intellectual elites pondering the nature of German militarism and its social, political, and historical implications. Local administrators, youth officials, police directors, veterans, and ordinary Germans who took the time to draft letters to state officials and local newspapers all had something to say.

For some German administrators and elected officials, the greatest impediments to demilitarization were labor, costs, and time. They had a mess on their hands, and some saw physically demilitarizing Germany by removing uniforms, street signs, books, and museum pieces as time-consuming and expensive, and not



especially urgent in light of more pressing concerns. While German schools might have evolved in a terrible direction during the Third Reich, there were school buildings to repair, fuel supplies to obtain, teachers to hire, and writing tablets to procure. Vetting school libraries and even drafting new textbooks could wait. Denying the relative importance and urgency of demilitarizing measures, this type of reaction could also betray skepticism regarding the gravity and necessity of such actions.

Beyond this, individuals disagreed on what constituted a militarizing agent. Consequently, “demilitarization” did not mean the same thing to every person. A large number of Germans, for instance, refused to question basic soldierly values that the Americans frequently thought were suspect. Some did not see militarism in monuments, casual salutes, or military training.

In many respects, this informal conversation revolved around the issue of what the war, with its suffering, devastation, and loss, should mean for German society and culture. Was change warranted? If so, how fundamental should this be? What was broken, distorted, or flawed? Were minor adjustments sufficient? Could internal change be achieved or confirmed without external alterations? Or did internal change caused by the war obviate external changes? The subtext of this dialogue was centered on questions pertaining to Germany’s past. Had Germany’s history and its traditions, culture, and social practices (particularly as shaped and directed by Prussia) been fundamentally good or at least innocuous, with the Third Reich an aberration? Or had they been intrinsically flawed? Should the alteration process end after the work of the Nazis had been undone? Or was it important to reach further back and dig deeper? Views on street signs, monuments, physical training, the honor of average soldiers, and other issues were deeply rooted in historical interpretations and assessments.

To some Germans, pulling the rug of German history and tradition—which provided a sense of identity and orientation—out from under their own feet during a period of upheaval and disorientation was unacceptable even apart from the financial costs associated with any changes. But the implications of advocating a deeply penetrating demilitarization program could be unsettling in other ways, too, if one considered them carefully. Just as condemning a wide range of pre-war behaviors, attitudes, and practices as militaristic could expand the pool of culpable collaborators to include friends, neighbors, and oneself, to advocate extensive demilitarization was to admit that German institutions and customs had harmful qualities and that the nation’s history was problematic. Taken one step further, this made the Germans at least partially responsible for their own

predicament. In this regard, it was no doubt easier for those on the left and for non-Prussians to call for greater changes. In Württemberg-Baden, many Communists and Social Democrats, some individuals linked to other parties, and a good number of ordinary people writing letters to newspapers refused to deposit all of the blame for their current plight at the feet of the Third Reich's Nazi leaders or to deny the war guilt of Germans outside of activist Nazi circles. But impugning Prussian militarism and Germany's imperial past probably caused relatively few qualms of conscience for good Communists, Socialists, Swabians, and Badenese, who could assure themselves that they had done little—proactively—to bring about these problems.<sup>23</sup>

Whether German women were more consistently supportive of the American demilitarization project than were German men is difficult to assess on the basis of the records reviewed for this study. The Americans apparently did not target German women directly or explicitly solicit their support in this endeavor, nor did they regularly track the responses of women as a separate category of analysis. Furthermore, the implementation of American regulations was largely the province of men, both on the military government side and in German council chambers and government offices. Even German newspapers remained a sphere inhabited, not exclusively, but predominantly by men.<sup>24</sup>

A deeper investigation of the reaction of German women to the American demilitarization project would undoubtedly be fruitful, however. On one hand, the Americans' efforts may well have been facilitated by the fact that occupied Germany was a "country of women," many of whom had suffered greatly during the war and immediately afterwards. A woman's sense of self was also less likely to be integrally tied up with her military prowess or magnificent uniform. Women therefore would seemingly be less likely to perceive the U.S. regulations as a threat to their self-identity or denigration of their past achievements. Certainly the newly authorized organizations in Württemberg-Baden included several women's groups that were outspoken advocates for peace. Local activists, for instance, periodically issued pamphlets, sponsored meetings and penned articles for area newspapers that called for women to act to prevent future wars, encouraging them to

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<sup>23</sup> For an analysis of how Württembergers adapted to their place in the new German empire prior to World War I, developing a sense of national patriotism even as they retained a strong sense of local and regional identity, see Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

<sup>24</sup> Women occasionally wrote newspaper articles and letters to the editor, but it is hard to tell how many. The frequent use of one or more initials in by-lines and letter attributions makes it difficult to identify the gender of many authors.

promote international understanding and to ensure that their children were educated in a “new spirit.”<sup>25</sup> In keeping with its statutes, which explicitly condemned militaristic attitudes, the Württemberg section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom also printed flyers urging German women to refuse to let their children play with toy soldiers and toy weapons, to give books about animals and plants as gifts rather than those glorifying war, and to present to their children as heroes and role models scientists working for the good of humanity rather than military men.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, the pride of some women in their nation’s military history may have been equal to that of their male countrymen, and their praise for the accomplishments of the men in their lives may have been just as strong. Furthermore, a desire for peace would not necessarily have translated into support for the American agenda or for the specifics of the American demilitarization program.<sup>27</sup> The ACC uniform ordinance, for example, was yet another burden placed upon women who were already worn down by their ongoing struggle to feed and clothe their families.

In one instance where the Americans did deliberately raise the issue of gender in examining the Germans’ engagement with militarism, they discovered some skepticism regarding the likelihood that German women would help to foster peace. Cognizant of the male-female imbalance in occupied Germany and the support German women had provided to Hitler and his program, military government officials directing the 1948 ICD study on militarism asked German “opinion leaders”—most but not all of whom were men—“if they considered women in general a pacifist influence in German society.” Those who said yes, the ICD’s final report observed, usually argued that “women are by nature less militaristic than men and that mothers always fear losing their sons in war.” One Catholic leader had maintained, too, “that after their experiences during this

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<sup>25</sup> Anna Haag, “. . . Und wir Frauen?” n.d. [ca. Apr 46], StAS HA Gruppe 0 Abl. 27.4.1972 No. 0143; ““Ohne Liebe kein Friede,”” *BNN*, 3 May 47; “Friedensaufgaben der Frau,” *SZ*, 24 Sep 47; “Frauen werben für den Frieden,” *RNZ*, 6 Jul 49; Betty Binder-Asch, “Zur Friedensarbeit der Frauen,” *SZ*, 2 Feb 46. For an introduction to the (limited) political work of women in postwar Stuttgart, see Andrea Hauser, “Frauenöffentlichkeit in Stuttgart nach 1945—Gegenpol oder hilflos im Abseits?” in *Das Schicksal Deutschlands liegt in der Hand seiner Frauen—Frauen in der deutschen Nachkriegsgeschichte*, ed. Anna-Elisabeth Freier and Annette Kuhn (Düsseldorf: Pädagogischer Verlag Schwann-Bagel, 1984), 51-89.

<sup>26</sup> Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit, Satzungen, n.d. [ca. Spring 46], StAS HA Gruppe 0 Abl. 27.4.1972 No. 0143; Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit to Kultministerium, 15 Feb 49, and enclosure, HStA EA3/101 Bü 204.

<sup>27</sup> Irene Stoehr hints at this, as well, in arguing that the “abhorrence of war” evident in the peace politics of postwar women’s groups was not necessarily an outgrowth of their critique of the past. Rather, she suggests, the Nazi past and recent war “were marginalized in the discourses” of these groups in both East and West Germany. “Cold War Communities,” 311, 327.

last war German women certainly have had enough of war.” The report also noted, however, that a “large group” of those interviewed had responded that “German women are potentially a force for peace, but have been dangerously indoctrinated by nazi militarism” and that those not infected with this were not trained to be politically active. Still “another large group” had been “emphatic in the opinion that German women are more dangerous militarists than German men are.” They cited the “ardent feminine support given the Hitler regime and criticized women for admiration of uniforms and military display.”<sup>28</sup>

Significantly, an August 1946 military government report suggests that this skepticism regarding German women cannot be dismissed as just an exculpatory strategy or a reflection of German male bias. Using a complex questionnaire designed by a Columbia University professor, ICD officials had solicited the opinions of several groupings of Germans, including political prisoners, Marburg university students, young people in Württemberg-Baden aged 17 to 27, and a general sampling of nearly 1,500 residents of the U.S. Zone. In evaluating the “attitudes toward war and militarism” revealed by the survey, ICD researchers reported that just 43 percent of those surveyed had responded to all of five relevant statements in a way the Americans preferred. Strikingly, they also contended that “more widows, who had suffered the deprivation of their husbands as breadwinners and companions, were disposed to glorify war and war-making than were married people.” In fact, they added, “women in general seemed to admire militaristic values more frequently than did men.” Only 35 percent of the German women surveyed had responded to all five of the relevant statements in the way the Americans thought best.<sup>29</sup> If these reports intimate that the opinions of German women could not always be easily predicted, they also hint at the insights further study of women’s views of the American program, their

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<sup>28</sup> Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Information Control Division, Research Branch, “German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany Today As Revealed by the Attitudes of Opinion Leaders,” 12 Feb 48, 9, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 17, F: German Militarism and Re-militarization.

<sup>29</sup> Office of Director of Information Control, Surveys Branch, “Basic Attitudes Explored by the German Attitude Scale,” 19 Aug 46, 14-17, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 161, F: Opinion Survey Reports – Index and Numbers 1-20. The five statements used to gauge German attitudes toward war and militarism were the following: “Only by war can the human spirit be glorified”; “Fear is natural, and those people showing fear when faced with a dangerous situation should be treated with understanding”; “A civilian is a lower person than a member of the Army”; “The strength of a nation is weakened by democracy”; and “The greatest strength of American democracy is not based on its military power.” Notably, in their report the Americans also pointed out that people living in areas that had been bombed, including large cities like Stuttgart, were “less inclined to accept militaristic values” than were the inhabitants of communities with fewer than 2,000 people—an important distinction for Württemberg-Baden, where the population of rural areas was more than double that of urban areas. In January 1947, U.S. military government figures indicated that some 1,080,270 people lived in the city administrative districts of Heilbronn, Stuttgart, Ulm, Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, Mannheim, and Pforzheim, while roughly 2,527,534 people lived in Württemberg-Baden’s much more rural Landkreise. An October 1946 census, meanwhile, showed that the Land’s population included 1,643,155 men and 2,006,404 women. Office of Military Government for Germany (U.S.), Civil Administration Division, *Population Changes, 1947, U.S. Zone, Germany, 1947*, 49-50; U.S. Military Government of Germany, *The Population of Germany, Special Report of the Military Governor, U.S. Zone*, 15 Mar 47, Appendix J.

thoughts on German militarism, and, as importantly, the opinions of German men regarding the beliefs and actions of German women in this respect might yield concerning postwar gender relations more generally.

Overall, it is clear that even those Germans living in Württemberg-Baden who claimed to be against militarism did not necessarily endorse the broad contours of the U.S. program. That leap required a certain view of Germany's history, an interpretation of the causes, symptoms, and character of militarism similar to that which anchored American thinking, and, frequently, a desire for a fresh start. At the same time, the unique origins and nature of the German conversation meant that German prescriptions for the future were not always the same as American ones, even when Germans theoretically approved of the Americans' paramount objective.

The wide-ranging, if not always conspicuous, German conversation regarding militarism points to two other ways MG officials combined forces with the Germans themselves to shape the character of demilitarization in the immediate postwar period. First, in instructing the Germans to make changes, the Americans also effectively required them to discuss what changes were warranted and, to some degree, to think about why such changes might be warranted. Second, and more importantly, MG officials preserved the public sphere for critical native voices, thereby enabling and promoting a discourse of antimilitarism and condemnation of war. In effect, they steered the debate. The Americans policed all information sources, including not only newspapers, magazines, and radio broadcasts, but entertainment, education, and youth programs.<sup>30</sup> Especially early on, they appointed and approved German officials, politicians, teachers, editors, journalists, youth leaders, and others, while excluding those with questionable pasts or credentials. Once approved, individuals might have to defend themselves and could eventually even lose their positions if MG officials caught them voicing unacceptable views, as the experience of the schoolteacher in Schwäbisch Gmünd confirmed. As late as the fall of 1948, the Americans forced changes in the editorial staff of the journal *Christ und Welt* after it repeatedly used cover photos of men in uniforms and articles dealing with Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the Eastern Front, German victimization, and similar topics to attract new subscribers.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> On American control of media sources and entertainment in Württemberg-Baden, see especially Bausch, *Die Kulturpolitik der US-amerikanischen Information Control Division*; Pape, *Kulturelle Neubeginn in Heidelberg und Mannheim*; selections from Lersch, et al, *Stuttgart in den ersten Nachkriegsjahren*; and Thomas Steiert, "Zur Musik und Theaterpolitik in Stuttgart während der amerikanischen Besatzungszeit," in *Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland, 1945-1949*, ed. Gabriele Clemens (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1994), 44-68.

<sup>31</sup> Monthly Summary for Period 1 through 31 December 1948, 23 Dec 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, ICD, Box 249, F: Württemberg-Baden Monthly Reports 1948; Bausch, *Die Kulturpolitik der US-amerikanischen Information Control Division*, 79-80. The editors attributed rapidly climbing circulation numbers (reaching nearly 70,000 copies) to what MG officials termed "nationalist and military stories presented in rather sensational fashion"—a telling development in and of itself.

Thus for four years the voices Germans heard most frequently were those that condemned war and “militarism.” There were Germans who held very different views on these subjects, but MG officials, along with other Germans, made sure that they had very few platforms from which to preach their ideas. This did not preclude public discussion of matters such as officer pensions and gliding. But to glorify war or clamor for conquest was out of the question. In addition, where individuals disagreed with prevailing attitudes and opinions—for example, in advocating the benefits of military training for Germany’s youth—they, like former General Johannes Friessner, had to couch their arguments within the dominant discourse of antimilitarism by at least explaining why their views should not be considered “militaristic” or of a war-mongering nature. This rhetorical requirement, the need to condemn “militarism,” originated in the occupation period, perhaps due in part to the Allies’ relentless use of the couplet “Nazism and militarism” to identify the sources of the world’s miseries. It was possible to learn lessons regarding war—“war is bad”—from war. It did not necessarily follow that “militarism” would be tagged as responsible for the disaster. Discussing issues relating to war and the military, moreover, would continue to require caution and sensitivity. Even after the founding of the Federal Republic, the Germans could not risk offending the rest of the world or provoking the suspicion of the western Allies, lest they lose their ongoing struggle to regain political independence, respect, and international standing.

By late 1949, it was obvious that there was little support in Germany for either the waging of war or “militarism.” German society was increasingly characterized far less by militarism than by “civilianism,” in the sense described by Alfred Vagts in the late 1930s.<sup>32</sup> Uniforms no longer revealed and defined social hierarchies, high-ranking officers no longer were given priority of place, and children’s youth programs no longer glorified war and soldierly achievements. There was, indeed, a nascent “culture of antimilitarism.”<sup>33</sup> There was not, however, a culture of pacifism or a “culture of peace.”<sup>34</sup> Nor was this transformed—or

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<sup>32</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>33</sup> In using this term, political scientist Thomas Berger employs a rather limited definition of both culture and militarism. He is interested in Germany’s “political-military culture,” which he suggests “encompasses orientations [earlier described as ideas, beliefs, and values] related to defense, security, the military as an institution, and the use of force in international affairs.” Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism*, 9, 15.

<sup>34</sup> On the fate of the pacifist movement during the immediate postwar years, see Guido Grünewald and Dieter Riesenberger, “Die Friedensbewegung nach den Weltkriegen,” in Niedhart and Reisenberger, *Lernen aus dem Krieg*, 109-120. For an analysis of the extent to which the culture of West Germany evolved during the second half of the twentieth century from a “culture of war” to a “culture of peace,” in the sense of rejecting all violence, conscientiously seeking to solve all problems peacefully, and working to eradicate social, political, and cultural sources of conflict, see Thomas Kühne, ed., *Von der Kriegskultur zur Friedenskultur? Zum Mentalitätswandel in Deutschland seit 1945* (Münster: Lit, 2000).

transforming—culture distinguished by a consensus regarding the idea of war, the phenomenon of militarism, or the nature of Germany’s military past and how that past should be judged. In the end, one could be against war, against a new army, against “militarism,” and even a pacifist and not necessarily condemn everything having to do with war, soldiers, or Germany’s military past or see the need for altering street signs or changing the content of elementary school history lessons.

To say that the American military government “psychologically disarmed” the Germans living in Württemberg-Baden is to go too far. To the degree that this process occurred in the mid twentieth century, it was a complicated psychological, emotional, and spiritual one with many inputs, both internal and external, during the war and in the years (in some cases even decades) that followed. By the birth of the Federal Republic, however, the society and culture in which these Germans lived had been cleansed of what the Americans thought were their most offensive militaristic excesses. And local and Land leaders were being pushed, from inside and outside of Germany, to make further changes. This evolution was advocated and promoted by many Germans, particularly on the left of the political spectrum, but evidence suggests that, had they been left to their own devices, the transformation would not have taken on the character and proportions it did. The most outspoken advocates of change usually could not, by themselves, overcome a variety of political, economic, intellectual, psychological, and practical constraints impeding and slowing their efforts. To do this, they needed the authority and dictates of the occupying power. But this also meant that change often stopped where the Americans stopped pushing. The changes carried out with the least amount of resistance, and arguably the most noticeable and substantial changes, occurred, not surprisingly, where there was the greatest amount of agreement among the Germans themselves on what their goals should be.

### **The Ironies of Rearmament**

Almost immediately after the formal occupation of Germany ended in late 1949, the Americans had the opportunity to better judge the extent to which “the military flame in German hearts” had dimmed and to assess how likely it was to flare up again. Washington policymakers provided a perfect testing device when they chose to openly advocate the rearmament of the new West German state in order to shore up the defenses of western Europe. The results were enlightening. With the Americans now pressing for rearmament, a majority of Germans showed spirited opposition to their plans. What they stated unambiguously in newspaper

articles, posters, and graffiti, the West Germans also put quantitatively to various pollsters. In November 1950, the *Institut für Demoskopie* reported that roughly half of the individuals it had consulted were against rearmament, with just one-third coming out in favor and one fifth undecided.<sup>35</sup>

This development has long interested historians, not least because it involved an apparent role reversal. The Americans now saw Soviet communism as a greater threat to their security than German militarism. The German response, meanwhile, revealed a substantial shift in German opinion since the early 1940s, hinting at both German lessons learned and at American success in encouraging new German values. Although this appraisal is certainly not wholly false, it masks certain complexities and ambiguities, which are worth exploring briefly. For if understanding the American demilitarization program and the German conversation regarding militarism that took place during the occupation years helps to provide a sense of context for the German response to rearmament, it also makes possible a more nuanced reading of the decisions and debates relating to rearmament.

After years of condemning German militarism, the American policy reassessment understandably caused some turmoil. Writing in the late 1950s of his experiences in Germany as an assistant to U.S. High Commissioner John McCloy, Charles Thayer recalled that many Germans had “derived a secret pleasure from watching the almighty occupiers hoist by their own petards” when the Germans resisted rearmament. He remembered, in particular, a joke making the rounds that described two Americans meeting at an airport, each about to begin work for the High Commission. “‘What’s your job?’ one of them asked. ‘Demilitarization,’ the other answered. ‘That’s odd, the first one exclaimed. ‘Mine’s remilitarization.’”<sup>36</sup> Highlighting the irony and confusion of the situation, the witticism also mocked the Americans’ apparent about face. Some American observers, meanwhile, initially regarded German opposition to rearmament with incredulity because, as Harvard University professor and German émigré Carl Friedrich put it, “it ran so much counter to established views and

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<sup>35</sup> Geyer, “Cold War Angst,” 379. According to Geyer, another polling organization reported in January 1950 that “only 18 percent of [its] respondents considered it ‘right’ to serve as soldiers (or have husbands or sons serve), whereas a full 75 percent denied that claim and only 7 percent were undecided.” The *Institut für Demoskopie*, on the other hand, reported that half of all West Germans were unwilling to serve or unwilling to let their husband or son serve if the country was attacked. In early 1952, the institute indicated that less than half of the men under the age of 50 who they had surveyed said they would willingly serve in a new army.

<sup>36</sup> Charles W. Thayer, *The Unquiet Germans* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 213.



set opinions.”<sup>37</sup> In fact, U.S. newsmagazines and journals produced a steady stream of articles in the early 1950s dissecting West German views regarding the creation of a new army.<sup>38</sup> Variations on a popular theme pointed to the war-weary Germans’ new aversion to military conflict and their related concern that Germany would become the setting for a destructive war in which their troops would serve as little more than cannon fodder. If some scholars have since suggested that American military planners were dismayed to learn that they had been too successful in demilitarizing the Germans, contemporary critics on both sides of the Atlantic accused the U.S. government of foolishly abandoning its labors, worrying especially about the possible consequences of placing the new army in the hands of Germany’s old generals.<sup>39</sup>

The American decision to push the West Germans to form a new military certainly denoted a change in American thinking. Committed to the long-term disarmament of Germany at the end of the war, U.S. policymakers now called for the opposite. Furthermore, as scholars have noted, when confronted with German military reformers who wanted to alter the spirit and character of the Federal Republic’s future armed forces to correspond more closely with the values of their new democratic state, the western Allies’ military planners worried not that the Germans would *not* change, but that their new soldiers would not be as competent and skilled as their predecessors.<sup>40</sup>

A closer look, however, suggests that the reversal in American thinking was not quite as complete as it might first appear. American attitudes toward German officers were, in reality, relatively consistent. Policies for handling German generals and general staff officers at the end of World War II had been embedded in the assumption that German officers were highly skilled military men and therefore dangerous to both the Allied occupation forces and world security. Repeated discussions regarding exile, internment, and reeducation turned on the pivot of how best to neutralize this threat. When the western Allies chose to rearm West Germany, their

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<sup>37</sup> Carl J. Friedrich, “Why the Germans Hesitate,” *Atlantic Monthly*, Apr 51, 40. Friedrich had assisted Clay in 1947 and 1948 as an advisor dealing with constitutional and governmental affairs and had been involved—offering commentary from the American side—in the development of the Federal Republic’s constitution.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Felix E. Hirsch, “Growing German Pacifism,” *Current History*, Feb 51, 77-82; “The Germans Debate Rearmament,” *The Nation*, 25 Aug 51, 152-154; James P. O’Donnell, “Will the Germans Go Along With Us?” *Saturday Evening Post*, 15 Mar 52, 32-33ff.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, “Germans in Front,” *The Nation*, 28 Oct 50, 384.

<sup>40</sup> Large, *Germans to the Front*, 199; Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross*, 88-89.

views of Germany's officers did not change; rather, the context changed. Now those highly skilled military men could be unleashed as a potent force working *for* them, rather than against them.

More importantly, reconstituting a West German military did not obviate the need for social and cultural demilitarization or make continuing efforts in this direction hypocritical. Instead, it made these efforts all the more crucial. The thinking of American policymakers concerning this aspect of rearmament is beyond the scope of this inquiry and needs more study. But it seems fair to assert that American conceptions of German militarism did not preclude simultaneous rearmament and demilitarization—in the sense of eradicating and undoing the work of militarizing influences in German society and culture. American policymakers and military planners may have considered an army an essential precondition for militarism, but many would not have assumed an unavoidable cause and effect relationship. Even retaining a skepticism of German national tendencies, they could point to the United States as exemplifying the successful coexistence of a professional army and an (at least perceived) non-militaristic society. Viewed from another angle, an army would not inevitably give rise to militarism, provided a nation's institutions, traditions, and attitudes were not designed or inclined to encourage militarism and were resistant to the influences of the army, with civilian control of the armed forces a top priority. A 1948 MG report alluded to just this relationship in rejecting Dr. Rudolf Vogel's call "to inculcate German youth . . . with democratic soldierly values" by training them in foreign countries. Such an approach, it argued, was "based on a grave misconception." Democratized armies were "modeled primarily after the democratic pattern of the home country," which meant that "only if democracy is firmly established in government, education, local administrations, etc., of a given country, are the prerequisites present for creation of a democratic army." In short, it was "not the army which moulds democracy but democracy which moulds the army."<sup>41</sup> Similarly, any new military would have to be anchored not only in a western European community, but also in a non-militaristic society and culture.

What clearly gave some Americans pause was that messages coming out of Germany were not always consistent. Many Germans appeared to condemn war and militarism, yet, according to the disapproving compilers of the MG's 1948 report on German militarism, some German opinion leaders still approved of military training as a valuable way of instilling "discipline, order, and respect for society" in children, while more than half were already then asserting that it might be necessary to reestablish a new army for security

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<sup>41</sup> Weekly Intelligence Report, 17 Nov 48, NA, RG 260, OMGUS, OMGWB, Box 1296, F: 229-3/12 1 (Part 2 of 3).

reasons.<sup>42</sup> Late in the occupation, university students were itching to climb back into gliders, some Germans could not understand why traditional history teaching in German schools was suspect, and others were donating funds to support former elite officers accused of war crimes. By the early 1950s, moreover, loud-mouthed former generals and new veterans associations were raising eyebrows both inside and outside of West Germany.

In this regard, Michael Geyer's recent study analyzing the seeming paradox of, on one hand, widespread German opposition to rearmament, conscription, and eventually the deployment of nuclear weapons in West Germany during the 1950s, and, on the other, strong support for the conservative Adenauer government at the ballot box, seems convincing. The response to rearmament, he maintains, was a more complicated phenomenon than first meets the eye. Evaluating public opinion surveys conducted by West Germans in the early 1950s, he argues that citizens of the Federal Republic opposed rearmament for a variety of different reasons, not just because they rejected war in and of itself. Specifically, he contends that one half to two thirds of "public opinion had withdrawn from the modern state-compact." Included in this group were not only pacifists, but also a contingent, comprising one quarter to one third of all West Germans, who questioned the new state's very legitimacy and its ability and desire to provide security and protect "personal integrity." A key reason for this perspective was the fact that the state challenged many West Germans' view of the past—that the war was justified and Germany had fought honorably—a challenge which, in essence, threatened their sense of personal identity. As a result, they refused to serve in any army on the state's behalf. Notably, too, Geyer points to a third set of Germans who resisted the state's proposed rearmament in a western European framework for nationalist reasons; they wanted a German army or none at all.<sup>43</sup> In parsing public opinion polls from the early 1950s, Geyer thus uncovers lines of continuity with the diverse attitudes and beliefs Germans were expressing throughout the occupation to MG survey officials, to colleagues in city council chambers, and to the readers of local newspapers.<sup>44</sup>

While a German army can be identified as an element of "restoration" from the pre-war era, the change in the relationship between German society and the new German armed forces should not be overlooked. The

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<sup>42</sup> "German Militarism: A Study of Militaristic Tendencies in Germany Today As Revealed by the Attitudes of Opinion Leaders," 2.

<sup>43</sup> Geyer, "Cold War Angst," 380-385.

<sup>44</sup> For an anecdotal account of the wide range of views on military service voiced by a handful of veterans studying at Heidelberg University during the summer of 1950, see Friedrich, "Why the Germans Hesitate."

founders of the new Bundeswehr consciously sought to create an institution that was different from its predecessors, even if it ultimately resembled the Wehrmacht more than some reformers within and outside of its ranks may have hoped. More significantly, the army established in 1955 emerged in a changed environment. The Federal Republic was not a pacifist state, but the upper hand in West German political life now belonged to men who tenaciously insisted on civilian control of the nation's military. When military reformers called for an army of "citizens in uniform," this was not a peculiar concept; many of the foreign soldiers who had proved themselves capable of winning a war and who had lived among the West German people for a decade had, for better or worse, shown themselves to be just that. Then, too, the Bundeswehr's youngest recruits and conscripts were young men who had spent little time marching in formation as adolescents and teenagers. A notable percentage of their peers, in fact, had protested rearmament and conscription. German society still honored the service of its soldiers in World War II, perhaps holding them up as pitiable victims or recognizing them as POWs whose time in Soviet camps had ennobled them in some fashion. But the masculine soldier-hero of the interwar period was no longer universally present. Instead, ideal men were gentle, loving "citizen-fathers." Ready to defend their country, they were not defined by uniforms, but by their families and civilian dress.<sup>45</sup> The western Allies, moreover, retained a pronounced interest in German affairs, demonstrating a watchfulness that lingered to a greater or lesser degree even into the period following German reunification.

If Bonn was not Weimar, the Federal Republic was not the Kaiserreich or the Third Reich. In the second half of the twentieth century, West Germany was characterized by a "civilianism" whose earliest formative influences were not limited to the nation's wartime experiences, but instead also included the deliberate actions, public discussions, and personal reflections of the occupation period that followed.

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<sup>45</sup> Moeller, "'The Last Soldiers of the Great War.'"

**APPENDIX A**

<b>Enrollment in Institutions of Higher Learning in Württemberg-Baden<sup>46</sup></b>			
	<b>1939</b>	<b>Jul 1946</b>	<b>Feb 1947</b>
<b>University of Heidelberg</b>	1,818	3,167	4,002
<b>Stuttgart Institute of Technology</b>	797	1,984	3,965
<b>Karlsruhe Institute of Technology</b>	661	1,800	2,980
<b>Hohenheim Agricultural College</b>	141	260	388
<b>Stuttgart Academy of Music</b>	--	350	459
<b>Stuttgart Academy of Plastic Arts</b>	262	250	344
<b>Mannheim College of Commerce</b>	--	60	586
<b>Total</b>	3,679	7,871	13,724

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<sup>46</sup> Richard Griffin Banks, "The Development of Education in Württemberg-Baden Under United States Military Government" (M.A. Thesis, University of Virginia, 1949), 133, 143, 224.

## APPENDIX B

### Excerpts from the Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism, 5 March 1946<sup>47</sup>

#### CHAPTER I

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##### Article 5

Major Offenders are:

- (1) Persons who, out of political motives, committed crimes against victims or opponents of National Socialism;
- (2) Persons who, in Germany or in the occupied areas, treated foreign civilians or prisoners of war contrary to International Law;
- (3) Persons --who are responsible for excesses, plundering, deportations, or other acts of violence, even if committed in fighting against resistance movements;
- (4) Persons who were active in leading positions in the NSDAP, one of its formations, or affiliated organizations, or in any other Nazi or Militaristic organization;
- (5) Persons who in the government of the Reich, of a Land, or in the public administration of formerly occupied areas, were active in leading positions which could have been held only by leading Nazis or supporters of the National Socialistic tyranny.
- (6) Persons who otherwise gave major political, economic, propagandistic or other support to the National Socialist tyranny or who, by reason of their relations with the National Socialist tyranny, received very substantial profits for themselves or others.
- (7) Persons who were actively engaged for the National Socialist tyranny in the Gestapo, the SD, the SS, or the Geheime Feldpolizei or Grenzpolizei.
- (8) Persons who, in any form whatsoever, participated in killings, tortures, or other acts of cruelty in a concentration camp, a labor camp, an internment camp, or a medical institution or asylum.
- (9) Persons who, for personal profit or advantage, actively collaborated with the Gestapo, SD, SS or similar organizations by denouncing or otherwise aiding in the persecution of the opponents of the National Socialistic tyranny.

##### Article 6

Until rebuttal anyone who is listed in Class I of the list attached to this Law is deemed to be a Major Offender.

##### Article 7

I. Activists are:

- (1) Persons who, by reason of their position or activity, substantially assisted the tyranny of the NSDAP.
- (2) Persons who exploited their position, their influence or their connections to impose force and utter threats, to act with violence, and to carry out oppressions or other unjust measures.
- (3) Persons who manifested themselves as avowed believers in the National Socialistic tyranny and especially in racial creeds.

II. Activists are, in particular, the following persons insofar as they are not Major Offenders:

- (1) Anyone who substantially contributed to the establishment, consolidation or maintenance of the National Socialistic tyranny, by word or deed, especially in public through speeches or writings or through voluntary donations out of his own or another's property or through using his personal reputation or his position of influence in political, economic or cultural life;
- (2) Anyone who by teaching National Socialist doctrines or as educator poisoned the spirit and soul of the youth;
- (3) Anyone who, to strengthen the National Socialistic tyranny, undermined family and marital life by this contemptuous disregard of recognized moral principles;
- (4) Anyone who, in the service of National Socialism, illegally interfered in the administration of justice or

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<sup>47</sup> Office of Military Government for Germany, *Military Government Regulations, Title 24, Important German Legislation*, 1 May 47, NA, RG 466, Entry UD3, Box 28, F: C-38 Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis and Militarists [etc].

abused politically 'his office as judge or prosecutor;

(5) Anyone who, in the service of National Socialism, agitated with incitement or violence against churches, religious communities or ideological groups;

(6) Anyone who, in the service of National Socialism, derided, damaged or destroyed artistic or scientific values;

(7) Anyone who took a leading or active part in destroying trade unions, suppressing labor, and squandering trade union property;

(8) Anyone who as a provocateur, agent or informer caused or attempted to cause the initiation of proceedings to the detriment of others because of their race, religion, or political opposition to National Socialism, or because of violations of National Socialistic regulations;

(9) Anyone who exploited his position of influence under the National Socialistic tyranny to commit offenses, in particular, extortions, embezzlements or frauds;

(10) Anyone who, by word or deed, took an attitude of hatred towards opponents of the NSDAP at home or abroad, towards prisoners of war, the population of formerly occupied territories, foreign civilian workers, internees or similar persons;

(11) Anyone who favored the exemption from military service (UK-Stellung) or from combat service of individuals because of their National Socialist attitude, or who effected or attempted to effect their induction into military service or their transfer to the front because of their opposition to National Socialism.

III. Activists will also include persons who after 8 May 1945 have endangered the peace of the German people or of the world by advocating National Socialism or Militarism.

#### Article 8

I. Militarists are:

(1) Persons who attempted to bring the life of the German people in line with a policy of militaristic force:

(2) Persons who advocated or are responsible for the domination of foreign peoples, their exploitation or deportation; or

(3) Persons who promoted armament for these purposes.

II. Militarists are in particular the following persons, insofar as they are not Major Offenders:

(1) Persons who, by word or in writings, formulated or disseminated militaristic doctrines or programs or who were active outside the Wehrmacht in any organization which served to promote militaristic ideas;

(2) Persons who before 1935 organized or participated in the organization of the systematic training of youth for war;

(3) Persons who, exercising power of command, are responsible for the wanton devastation of cities and rural areas after the invasion of Germany;

(4) Persons who, as members of the Armed Forces (Wehrmacht), the Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst), the Organisation Todt (OT), or the Transport Group Speer, without regard to their rank, abused their authority to obtain special personal advantages or to mistreat subordinates brutally.

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#### Article 10

Until rebuttal anyone who is listed under Class II of the list attached to this Law is deemed to be an Offender (Activist, Militarist or Profiteer).

#### Article 11

I. A Lesser Offender is:

(1) Anyone who would otherwise belong to the group of Offenders who, however, because of special circumstances (Article 39-II) merits milder consideration and who, because of his character may be expected, after he has proved himself in a period of probation, to fulfill his duties as a citizen of a peaceful, democratic state

(2) Anyone who would otherwise belong to the group of Followers but who, because of his conduct and character, should first have to prove himself.

II. The probationary period shall be at least two years and, as a rule, not more than three years. The group to which the person concerned will be finally assigned will depend upon

his conduct during the period of probation (Article 42).

III. A Lesser Offender in particular is:

(1) Anyone born after 1 January 1919 who is not a Major Offender but appears to be an Offender, without however having manifested despicable or brutal conduct and who because of his character may be expected to prove himself.

(2) Anyone not a Major Offender who appears to be an Offender but who, at an early stage, turned away from National Socialism and its methods unqualifiedly and clearly.

Article 12

I. A Follower is:

Any person who was not more than a nominal participant or an insignificant supporter of National Socialism and who did not manifest himself as a Militarist.

II. Subject to this test, a Follower is in particular:

(1) Anyone who as a member of the NSDAP or of any of its formations, except HJ and BDM, did no more than pay his membership dues, participate in meetings where attendance was obligatory, or fulfilled unimportant or purely routine duties which were prescribed for all members.

(2) Anyone who was a candidate for membership in the Party and who was not finally admitted as a member.

Article 13

Exonerated are:

Persons who in spite of their formal membership, candidacy or other external indications, not only showed a passive attitude but also actively resisted the National Socialistic tyranny to the extent of their powers and thereby suffered disadvantages.

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## APPENDIX

### Part A (Class I and Class II)

Class I includes persons who, on the basis of rebuttable presumption, are classified as Major Offenders

Class II includes persons who, on the basis of rebuttable presumption, are classified as Offenders (activists, militarists, and profiteers)

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Section L – “The German Armed Forces and Militarists”

Class I

(1) NS-Führungsoffiziere - All full-time NS Führungsoffiziere down to and including division in the OKW, OKH, OKM, and OKL.

(2) General Staff Officers - All officers of the German General Staff who since 4 February 1938 belonged to the Wehrmachtsführungsstab of the OKW, OKH, OKM or OKL.

(3) Heads and Deputy Heads of Military and Civil Administration of countries and territories formerly occupied by Germany.

(4) All former officers of the Freikorps "Schwarze Reichswehr".

Class II

(1) NS-Führungsoffiziere - All regular officers regardless of whether they were professional or reserve officers, not included in Class I.

(2) General Staff Officers - All officers serving as General Staff Officers since 4 February 1938 not included in Class I.

(3) All military and civilian officials with special authority, including heads and deputies of any functional or



regional divisions in the military or civil administration of occupied countries and territories, as well as executive officials of RUK (armament and war production) except those included in Class I.

(4) All officials of the Raw Material Trade Association (Rohstoffhandelsgesellschaft).

(5) Military Commanders and their deputies in cities and townships.

(6) Die Wehrmacht - All regular officers of the Deutsche Wehrmacht including the rank of Generalmajor or equivalent rank, provided they were promoted to this rank after 1 June 1936, and all Wehrmacht officials down to the professional rank of Oberst.

(7) Organisation Todt (OT). Transportgruppe Speer – All officers down to and including the rank of "Einsatzleiter".

(8) All members of the training staffs and executive officials of the war academies and Kadettenanstalten.

(9) All professors, speakers and authors in the field of military science since 1933.

(10) All members of the Schwarze Reichswehr and all members of the Freikorps who became members of the NSDAP insofar as they are not included in Class I.

## APPENDIX C

### Sampling Procedure for Denazification Case Files

Denazification case files from Stuttgart's tribunals, which are located at the Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg, can be accessed using an alphabetized file of index cards that typically include the name, date of birth, and occupation of the individuals judged in the cases. In my research, I reviewed several hundred cards filed under the letter "R" and, from these, selected 65 case files for more careful scrutiny. I chose 40 of these solely on the basis of the age and gender of the individual, selecting files for both men and women from different age cohorts. Given my interest in determining how the March 1946 law's provisions regarding militarism were applied in tribunal proceedings, I intentionally selected more case files pertaining to men than to women, hoping thereby to be able to assess the degree to which the tribunals discussed the issue of militarism in considering the cases of men who had served in the Wehrmacht in a variety of capacities. I chose another 24 case files based on occupation as well as age and gender. I was particularly interested in professional soldiers and teachers—the latter because I hoped to determine whether the law's provisions regarding the dissemination of "militaristic doctrines" and the "systematic training of youth for war" came into play in these cases. The latter group included 18 teachers, two professors, three men identified as soldiers, and one *Gausportwart*, or district sports official. The final individual was a banker and former Wehrmacht reserve officer who was discussed in several newspaper articles as someone who had been charged as a militarist under the terms of the law. See table below.<sup>48</sup>

My initial review of index cards yielded just three cards describing the subject's occupation as a military one. Many of the case files relating to younger men ultimately showed that they had served in the Wehrmacht, but none of these men were professional senior officers who fell into the March 1946 law's Class I and Class II categories. That few men were listed on the cards as professional soldiers is not entirely surprising, given the fact that by the time the law took effect, the Wehrmacht had been dissolved and most former soldiers, including officers, had assumed new positions and listed these—or nothing—when asked to indicate their occupation. Identifying any high-ranking officers among the many persons referenced in the case file index cards was therefore almost impossible without knowledge of individual names or case numbers. Accordingly, I used names and addresses culled from the Nachlass Hans von Donat at the Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv to identify higher-ranking officers who were living in Stuttgart during the 1950s. With these as a guide, I was able to identify additional officers' case files and to review files pertaining to 13 generals and two colonels, intentionally selecting a variety of ages, ranks, and responsibilities (artillery, tanks, etc.). These included documentation relating to men ranging from the storied tank general Hermann Balck to an obscure colonel who had been in ill health throughout the war and retired in 1943.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, the holdings of the Hauptstaatsarchiv include copies of Spruchkammer decisions (generally without supporting documentation) for 23 general staff officers from Württemberg-Baden. They were tried by a special Spruchkammer established by Land officials which primarily handled men who had participated in a history writing program run by the U.S. Army.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> The case files reviewed at the Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg were all included in Bestand EL 902/20. They included the following file numbers (listed in alphabetical order): 13/6479, 12/25305, 3/8337, 12/3179, 16/6223, 13/14050, 8/17566, 12/8051, 5/17966, 3/5316, 10/4499, 4/12198, 14/18574, 4/18617, 1/5031, 3/12171a, 5/7460, 015/5632, 7/6429, 13/9148, 12/282, 9/11554, B 019/283, 14/14149, 019/2271, 41302, 8/15374, 40843, 019/2270, 5/16906, 18/18613, 17/7780, 8/8639, 10/5844, 19/757, 27/11/11358, 12/28602, 5/17343, 18/8723, 6/13131, 5/21494, 37/SV/2403, 17/7482, 6/18681, 05/5647, 1V/9445, 12/796, 6/15356, 12/18019, 17/6828, 019/3095, 10/9566, 6/9517, 6/5610, 05/5955, 13/10240, 37/SV/794, 011/845, 37/12/34002, 37/SV/228, 37/SV/2903, 19/5766, 19/13509, 4/7516, 10/3903, 13/6756.

<sup>49</sup> StAL EL902/20 case file numbers 019/266/10, 5/11797, 17/10116, 9/14521, 6/16871, 7/4396, 9/14277, 18/30067, 15/17069, 16/13817, 8/18859, 16/13157, 17/9738, 5/20843.

<sup>50</sup> HStA EA11/101 Bü 1899. For more regarding the history program, see Chapter 5.

STUTTGART TRIBUNAL CASE FILES FILED UNDER THE LETTER “R”

Year of Birth	Random		Teachers <sup>1</sup>		Professors		Military Men <sup>2</sup>		Other <sup>3</sup>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1871-1880	3	1	1				1		1	
1881-1890	4	2	2		1		1		1	
1891-1900	5	2	2	2						
1901-1910	8	2	1	2	1					
1911-1920	7	1	5	2			1			
1921-1930	3	2		1						
<b>Totals</b>	30	10	11	7	2		3		2	

<sup>1</sup>Includes four sports teachers

<sup>2</sup>All deceased

<sup>3</sup>One Gausportwart (district sports manager) and one banker identified in newspaper articles

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No. 845

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President's Personal File (PPF)

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GLA 356 Zug. 1969-10 Bezirks-/Landratsamt Heidelberg: Generalia / 1804-1953

GLA 356 Zug. 1977-31 Bezirks-/Landratsamt Heidelberg: Generalia / 1821-1973

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GLA 481 Präsident des Landesbezirks Baden / 1906-1954

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