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*American
Military Government
in Germany*

By

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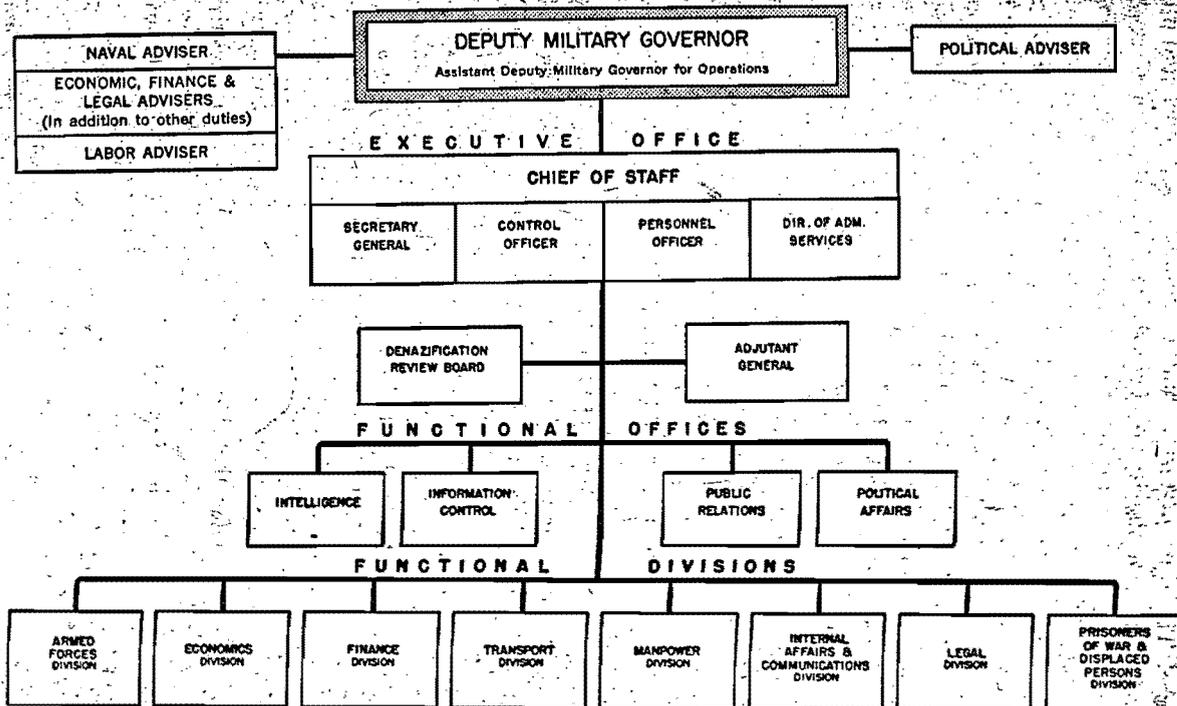
ican military government headquarters. Despite the impressive beginning made by G-5 of USFET, later renamed the Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone, it was eventually decided to concentrate general responsibility for both planning and control in the older unit. However, this was not done until the US Group CC for Germany had become OMGUS. It was not until early 1946 that Berlin was made the military government headquarters of the United States in Germany and most of the staff of the Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone moved from Frankfurt to Berlin.

In the fall of 1945 the US Group CC for Germany ceased to exist and the Office of Military Government for Germany of the United States came into being. In reality this involved little more than a change in name. The commanding officer of the US Group CC for Germany became the commanding officer of OMGUS and the military and civilian personnel of the former went over to the latter. By this time the preliminary planning had been more or less completed and emphasis changed to the control angle. The OMGUS served as the staff of the American military governor who was also the United States representative on the Allied Control Council for Germany. It was immediately under the American deputy military governor who occupied the seat of the United States on the Coordinating Committee. Officers assigned to OMGUS served on the working committees and secretariat of the Allied Control Council and performed staff duties for military government in the American Zone.

In order to obtain anything like a clear picture of military government in Germany it is necessary, beyond the US Group CC for Germany-OMGUS, to differentiate the period prior to July, 1945 from the later period. A further subdivision of the period following the midsummer of 1945 into two phases will also be helpful.

The SHAEF Period

During the period of the combined Anglo-American headquarters known as SHAEF, which covered all of the combat phase and some two months of transition following V-E Day, G-5 of SHAEF had the general responsibility for military government operations as delegated by the Supreme Commander. G-5 of SHAEF had both planning and operations staffs, but G-5 OPS (Operations) took



OFFICE OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY (OMGUS)
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precedence. The difficulty of securing specialist personnel and the failure of those in authority to perfect a well rounded organization led to serious weaknesses in G-5, SHAEF, especially in the planning area. Incredible as it may seem, no provision was made, at least until the final weeks, for any agency to deal with such a major problem as German regional and local government and civil service. Comparatively little provision was made for such fields as education, public welfare, and public safety. The influence and size of the legal and financial divisions was out of all proportion to the role of these functions. Even more serious in limiting the effectiveness of G-5, SHAEF must be placed the old problem of military jealousy. Though obviously closely related in purpose to the German Country Unit and the US Group CC for Germany, G-5 of SHAEF was not anxious to maintain effective working relations with these agencies. Even more serious was the gap which separated G-5 of SHAEF from the military government organizations in the field which it theoretically supervised and which should have looked to it for basic policies.

Immediately below G-5, SHAEF in the military government setup were the G-5 staffs of the Army Groups—the Twelfth and Sixth Army Groups holding the center of the scene in American military government operations. Under the strict rule that military government must follow the command channel, the relations between G-5, SHAEF and the G-5 staffs of the Twelfth and Sixth Army Groups,¹ instead of being direct, followed a devious route through the chief of staff of SHAEF to the commanding generals of the two Army Groups and thence through their chiefs of staff to the G-5 staffs of the Army Groups. All G-5, SHAEF supervision of the military government organization in the field had to be done through the Army Groups under the rigorous Army insistence on strictly following the lines of Army organization. Yet the basic military government operations were not in the hands of the Army Groups but in the control of the Armies. Consequently G-5, SHAEF, having to proceed by command channels to G-5, Army Groups, was still not in

¹ In the case of the Sixth Army Group the command-channel rule was enforced less than in the Twelfth Army Group. Despite the formal decision to use command channels in military government rather than permit the technical channels specified in the earlier handbooks, the Sixth Army managed to maintain close relations with G-5 of SHAEF, though it was forced to follow command channels with the Seventh Army.

senior military government officer commanded each of these detachments. Each detachment had a deputy to the commanding officer, an executive officer, administrative officers, and functional officers to deal with the various administrative agencies of the German government supervised, along with officers to handle displaced persons and to attend to enemy property taken over for conservation.

Depending upon the area to be taken over, these large detachments included experts on mining, forestry, oil refining, fisheries, and various technical fields, along with specialists on public safety, public health, government and administration, food, agriculture, public finance, banking, insurance, public works, public utilities, courts and legal system, education, religious affairs, intelligence, transportation, communications, monuments, fine arts and archives, and trade and industry. The expertness of the specialist officers naturally varied, but many of the original assignees at least displayed a very high degree of competence. In the case of religious affairs lack of adequate recognition usually made necessary a side-line assignment to the education officer. Monuments, fine arts, and archives also did not receive the attention merited, largely because comparatively few experts in that field had been recruited. As the detachments doubled and tripled in size after V-E Day, the general level deteriorated because of the use of tactical officers and others with little or no specialized military government training, but even so professional expertness remained at a reasonably high level.

The B (later F) detachment did not differ materially from the A (E) detachments in size. Originally consisting of approximately twenty-five officers and something less than twice as many enlisted men, they, too, increased rapidly in strength after V-E Day and at the high water mark frequently had from fifty to seventy-five officers assigned or attached. These detachments, designed to take over *Regierungsbezirke* (districts) or corresponding governmental units and large *Stadtkreise* (cities), permitted a considerable amount of specialization on the part of their officers, though not quite the degree provided in the A (E) detachments. They had a commander known as a senior military government officer, a deputy, executive and administrative officers similar to those noted in the largest teams, and numerous functional specialists.

The C (later G) detachments marked a considerable drop in strength and specialization over the A (E) and B (F) teams. They