

# **THE PARADIGMATIC AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF GERMANY**

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Paradigmatic American Occupation of Germany. (May 2015)

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The purpose of this study is to determine why the occupation of Germany after the Second World War was so successful and why we view it as the quid essential example of an occupation. It will examine the three major factors that helped the American forces, both military and civilian, facilitate the occupation of Germany. First is that Germany was completely demolished after WWII; the cities were turned to rubble, the money was useless, its political system was in shambles and its leaders were all in prison. Second, the foundation of the country's infrastructure was still intact and many of the political leaders from the previous regime were willing to fill the void. Finally, the everyday personal interactions between the local populace and the occupying forces; in Germany, the Americans were able to build personal relationships with Germans, leaving a positive memory of the occupying force for future generations. Through these factors, the occupation of Germany became a great success, one of the only in history, and allows the US and other countries to maintain, positive and peaceful relations with Germany.

In June 2008, President George W. Bush gave the graduation speech to the Air Force Academy's Class of 2008. In that speech he told the future leaders of the military that they should look to the occupation of Germany as they prepared for the challenges they would soon face both in Afghanistan and Iraq. Military and civilian leaders looked to Germany as the basis and example to follow when the United States and NATO invaded Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the rampant fraternization between American forces and the German populace that led to success in Germany was not found in Iraq and Afghanistan. The occupation of Germany after World War II has become the paradigm of what an occupation should look like. Today we, as a people, view Germany not only as an ally and a friend, but also as a country that we raised from the abyss created by the Nazi regime. What made the American occupation of Germany such a success?

Germany was defeated in May of 1945 and military governments of the Allied nations quickly filled the vacuum left by the defeated Nazi regime. Germany itself was split into zones to be governed by the allies and the country was demilitarized to stop further fighting. The German people were thoroughly defeated by the Allied forces and the country was in no state to resist the power of the Allied forces. The American military government quickly set up directives to govern the conquered country. Leaders on the ground made critical decisions that affected the role played by the American occupation forces and the future of relations between the Germans and Americans. Furthermore, the average soldier had a key role to play in the building of strong relations between Americans and Germans. The American soldiers stationed in Germany were able to interact with the Germans on a day-to-day basis that strengthened bonds between the two peoples. These interactions often led to long term relationships ranging from friendships to

marriages. There is no singular reason for the success of the occupation of Germany, but these factors, the destruction of Germany, the military decisions by key leaders, and the everyday contribution of the average American soldier, came together to create a success story that has held the Americans and Germans close for the many decades after the end of World War II.

# CHAPTER I

## THE DESOLATION OF GERMANY

At the end of WWII, Germany was a wasteland. The United States Army had pushed its way through Bavaria and crushed all resistance that lay in its path. Joseph Goebbels's propaganda machine had promised the Allies the fight of their lives. He said that Werewolves would be around every corner, waiting to kill as many American soldiers as possible. As the Americans moved through Bavaria, most of the resistance they faced came in the form of the *Volkssturm*, a collection of old men, teenagers and children, often forced into service by the Nazi officials in the area.<sup>1</sup> The stiffest resistance came from the *Schutzstaffel's* (SS) military wing, the *Waffen-SS*. These soldiers were fanatics, brainwashed to fight to the death for the Third Reich.

Although the Nazi command believed in prolonging the war as long as possible, the German people were ready for an end to the fighting. The Nazi regime believed that they could keep up their guerilla campaign until the Allies broke down due to infighting and disagreement. The German military, especially the *Waffen-SS* leadership, wanted the German people to view every village as a final bastion of defense, a last castle. The high command wanted all German units to hold position and not fall back. Even though the German hierarchy held the belief of a people's army fighting off the invaders in a unified effort, many civilians were against the prolongation of the war. Most German civilians had a family member fighting or one who had already been killed during the war. These people did not want to see their young children and grandparents

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<sup>1</sup> "The German Volkssturm." *Intelligence Bulletin* III, no. 6 (1945).

die needlessly defending a town on the road to an inevitable Allied victory.<sup>2</sup> Those people who lived in areas ravaged by war or the aerial bombardments of Germany wanted the war to come to a quick end so they would not have to suffer anymore from this war, especially since most had lost their homes and livelihoods already. They had very little motivation to continue the fight. On the same token, the people who lived in areas relatively untouched by the war, found themselves hoping for a quick end because it increased the likelihood of surviving.

In contrast, one of the major problems faced by the opponents of a prolonged war was the German military forces. While there was a danger of civilians being killed by American forces, the major threat to German citizens was other Germans.<sup>3</sup> Those in power wanted to see the continuation of fighting in the area and therefore were inclined to force men and young boys into service, and sometimes even women. Another major tragedy that threatened the lives of the local German population was the possibility of German soldiers taking vengeance on those who refused to fight. On many occasions, German officials and soldiers would execute civilians who refused to take up arms or planned to surrender to the Allied troops, by shooting or hanging them. They also executed mothers who refused to allow the Germans to arm their children in defense of the Reich.<sup>4</sup> While most of these murderers believed that they were helping the German people by making an example of the cowards within the populace, they only succeeded in alienating the rest of the population to them. Those who were on the fence about fighting the Americans would be forced into service through fear and intimidation, instead of a will to fight and defend Germany.

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<sup>2</sup> Fritz, Stephen. "'This Is the Way Wars End, With a Bang and Not a Whimper': Middle Franconia in April, 1945." *War & Society* Eighteen, no. Two (2000): 135.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 127

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 141

On April 3, 1945, Himmler issued an order to all German forces that any man found flying a white flag in their home was to be shot on sight. In the town of Seenheim, *Luftwaffe* Major Erich Stentzel found a miller flying a white flag on April 12, 1945. The officer promptly executed him. The miller was flying the flag because American forces had already come through the town and moved onto the next, and he believed that the war was over for him. Unfortunately, MAJ Stentzel and his companion happened upon him, which was not an uncommon occurrence. Executions like this happened throughout the country during the closing months of the war.<sup>5</sup> The *Gestapo*, the secret police force of the Nazi regime, also played a major role in the execution of civilians; they often sent agents to cities to make sure that the *Burgermeister* were following the policies set forth by the Nazi state. In one particular instance, in the city of Bad Windsheim, the Gestapo Headquarters in Nuremburg dispatched *SS-Untersturmfuhrer* Karl Schmid to take control and execute members of the *Weibersturm*, a women-led protest against the refusal of the local government to evacuate the town. Upon arrival in Bad Windsheim, the local *Burgermeister* informed Schmid that Christine Schmotzer was the leader of the protests. After learning this, Schmid made his way to Christine's home where, in front of her husband and children, he shot her in the neck and then proceeded to calmly shoot her in the mouth and left eye.<sup>6</sup> Before leaving, Schmid put a sign on her dead body to tell everyone that she had been executed for being a traitor. These executions happened with growing frequency as the war drew to a close. The regime became more and more fanatical as the population began to lose its will to fight.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 136

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 141



The real problem for the German forces defending Bavaria was the simple fact that the German Army had ceased being a cohesive fighting force. Most of the men in this area were forced into the *Volkssturm* with little to no training.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, most of the units were running low on equipment, ammunition, food and supplies, but most importantly fuel. The armored divisions that made up the backbone of the German Army had trouble functioning due to the lack of fuel to keep their vehicles running. The German commanders that used these makeshift units, consisting of German military and *Volkssturm*, knew full well that they were sending their men into a meat grinder that most would not return from. The German Army was no longer a match for the US Army units, who had a plethora of equipment and supplies. The US Army had so many goods, that cigarette cartons and rations became common trading commodities with the local population.

The American forces that pushed through the area were very hesitant in the way they attacked towns. They valued protecting the lives of their soldiers, even if that meant sacrificing German civilians. The Americans used air superiority and artillery to soften positions before they moved in with ground troops.<sup>8</sup> Close air support and artillery did not differentiate well between combatants and civilians. Furthermore, when American forces came upon a town that they took fire from they would often pull back out of range and bombard the town with artillery in order to neutralize the threat before the infantry cleared it. This strategy of destroying everything that threatened them allowed the US Army to move through Germany without losing more men than was necessary, but it also led to the death of civilians and the destruction of German property and

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<sup>7</sup> "The German Volkssturm." *Intelligence Bulletin* III, no. 6 (1945).

<sup>8</sup> Fritz, Stephen. "'This Is the Way Wars End, With a Bang and Not a Whimper': Middle Franconia in April, 1945." *War & Society* Eighteen, no. Two (2000): 146.

homes. These tactics also portrayed the mindset of American commanders near the end of the war. They wanted a quick end to the war, but they were tired of losing their men fighting from town to town. By sacrificing German civilians, they protected and preserved as many of their men as possible.

Allied commanders showed a willingness to sacrifice civilians in order to bring a swift end to the war throughout the conflict. The bombing campaigns against the Third Reich were a constant threat to the local population. During most of the war, the German industrial centers were located in their large cities. However as the war carried on, these cities had been so heavily bombed, that the German government began moving these factories into the rural areas of Germany hoping to disguise them from American and British bombing missions. One of the major problems with this tactic was it made almost every village and town large enough to support this type of factory a target. Furthermore, the Americans had no intentions of focusing solely on industrial centers. The Allied bombing campaign was based upon destroying the fighting capabilities of Germany.<sup>9</sup> This included destroying the morale and willpower of the German people to carry on the fight. Air Marshal Arthur Harris, famously nicknamed “Bomber” Harris, stated in a letter written to his superiors in 1943 that,

The aim of the Combined Bomber Offensive...is the destruction of German cities, the killing of German workers and the disruption of civilized community life throughout Germany. It should be emphasized that the destruction of houses, public utilities, transportation and lives, the creation of a refugee problem on an unprecedented scale, and the breakdown of morale both at home and at the battle fronts by fear of extended and

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<sup>9</sup> Siebert, Detlef. "British Bombing Strategy in World War Two." BBC History. February 17, 2011.

intensified bombing, are accepted and intended aims of our bombing policy. They are not by-products of attempts to hit factories.<sup>10</sup>

He very blatantly states that the intended purpose of the Allied bombing campaign was to disrupt human life in Germany. It meant that even though the major targets were still factories, collateral damage inflicted on civilian centers was an extra benefit towards the war effort.

Since the Allies had little issue bombing civilian areas, it added to the civilian death toll and the destruction of civilian centers in areas that were previously untouched by warfare. Moreover, the Allies had almost complete air superiority by April 1945. This allowed bomber command to send out reconnaissance aircraft with little to no harassment by the *Luftwaffe*. This in turn allowed them to locate areas that were manufacturing arms, or areas where remnants of the *Heer* and *Waffen-SS* were coordinating from, therefore opening the areas up for bombing and artillery bombardments. What is truly fascinating about the aerial campaign against Germany was that it accomplished very little in terms of its main objectives. The American military leadership set the disruption of military productivity as the main objective of the campaign, but the German war industry did not reach its height until the closing stages of WWII in late 1944 and 1945.<sup>11</sup> What this means is that the American concept of daytime precision bombing in order to protect civilian centers proved ineffective. While day-time bombing allowed them to prioritize specific targets rather than the night-time area bombing that the British preferred, the technology of the time was not dependable enough to make the bombing precise.<sup>12</sup> As Air Marshal Harris said, the destruction of German morale was a major target of the bombing campaigns. As the bombing

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<sup>10</sup> Sokolski, Henry. *Getting MAD: Nuclear Mutual Assured Destruction, Its Origins and Practice*. Darby, Pennsylvania: Diane Publishing Company, 2004: 36.

<sup>11</sup> "By the Numbers: War Production." The National WWII Museum New Orleans.

<sup>12</sup> "Strategic Bombing Campaign Against Germany." Australian War Memorial.

campaign moved its focus to the rural areas where the Nazi government was attempting to hide its factories, the morale of these areas began to drop drastically. In short, people began to realize that nowhere in Germany was safe from the Allied war machine.

One of the greatest psychological fears for the Allied forces entering Bavaria was Operation *Werwolf*. Throughout the invasion of Germany, the Nazi propaganda machine, under Goebbels, was hard at work issuing an order to the German people to stand up and fight a prolonged war of harassment and sabotage against the Americans using the Alps as their base of operations.

Goebbels, the minister of the *Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* (RMVP), came up with the concept of Werewolves in order to present the invading forces with a fear that every German citizen could secretly be a Werewolf who would attack them in the night.<sup>13</sup>

Goebbels immediately began to broadcast radio messages across Germany calling upon the people to rise up and resist the invaders. In these radio transmissions he told them to organize themselves into Werewolf groups and to hide out in the Alps.<sup>14</sup> The Alps were a perfect staging ground for the Werewolf operation because the fighters could find relative safety in the mountains where the motorized and mechanized advantage of the US Army could be neutralized by the rough and steep terrain. Furthermore, the relatively isolated villages deep in the Alps and Black Forest offered sanctuary from the main path of the Allied advance.

Bavarians, to Goebbels and the rest of the Nazi leadership's chagrin, generally wanted to see the end of the war in Bavaria, and most were not opposed to surrendering to the Americans. It was

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<sup>13</sup> Lessner, Erwin, MAJ. "Hitler's Final V Weapon." *Collier Weekly*, January 27, 1945: 14.

<sup>14</sup> Biddiscombe, Perry. *The Last Nazis: SS Werewolf Guerrilla Resistance in Europe 1944-1947*. Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2006.

well known among the German populace that surrendering to the American and British forces was far more pleasing than being occupied by the Red Army. Knowing that the Russians were nearing Berlin and pushing their way towards Bavaria, most people did not want to prolong the fighting for fear that Russians would beat the Americans to their village. Furthermore, because the *Werwolf* plan was hastily put together at the end of the war, there was no real organization to it and it quickly lost momentum.<sup>15</sup>

In one circumstance, the town of Bremen was reported to have organized a Werewolf group only two days before US forces entered and occupied the town. There were few men of fighting age left to join this group after the *Volkssturm* had recruited so many of them. This left only a handful of young children and older men being forced into service. They were unable to acquire any weapons or supplies before the Americans entered the town. MAJ John Schwartzwalder, an officer in the US Army Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), stated in his 1946 book,

The only remaining fraction of the *Werwolf* that was of any importance was a residue of veterans of the last war who were physically ineligible for service in this one and who had weapons concealed here and there. These were not too hard to dispose of.<sup>16</sup>

Schwartzwalder believed that the *Werwolf* project was all but nonexistent. By the end of the war, there was no military force or leadership that had the manpower to train, organize, and supply a force like Goebbels and Himmler imagined. It was a stretch for the Nazi regime to believe that anyone would be able to, or willing, to fight a guerrilla war after the destruction and catastrophe that had befallen Germany.

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<sup>15</sup> Biddiscombe, Perry. *Werwolf!: The History of the National Socialist Guerrilla Movement*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

<sup>16</sup> Schwartzwalder, John. *We Caught Spies: Adventures of an American Counter Intelligence Agent in Europe*. New York, New York: Duell, Sloan & Pierce, 1946: 262.

The existence of Werewolves in any large numbers is still very controversial, however most of the clues point towards Werewolves being merely a figment of the Goebbels propaganda machine. During the post-war occupation period, Werewolf resistance fighter continued to be an issue for the American forces. However, the issues presented by the Werewolf threat were not in the form of actual guerrilla attacks against the occupying force or the “collaborators,” including those who had recently been placed in office by the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS). OMGUS was the US military occupational government that controlled Germany until December 1949. It’s main function was to oversee regions under American control and make sure that the local populace was following the policies and guidelines set forth by the American occupational government and the US Group Control Council, Germany (USGCC). They placed US officers in control of areas and villages, where they often acted as law keepers and governors.

Kreis Bruckenau was one of the Landkreise under American control. On July 30, 1945, in the town of Oberriedenberg, the local American commander, Captain Harry P. Clark, Jr., commander of Military Government Detachment 121A3 in control of Kreis Bruckenau, filed a report regarding an incident involving alleged Werewolf activity on the evening of July 27, 1945.<sup>17</sup> At 1745, a fire broke out due to an explosion of an ammunition train of captured German explosives that was parked in the town of Oberriedenberg on its way to be decommissioned by American forces. The fire that broke out in Oberriedenberg resulted in the destruction of forty-two ammunition railway cars; nine homes, twelve barns, and nine sheds that

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<sup>17</sup> Military Government Detachment 121A3, Company A, 3<sup>rd</sup> ECAR, U.S. Army. *Report on Fire – Oberriedenberg (N515935) Kreis Bruckenau*. By CPT Harry P. Clark, Jr. 383.1. 1945. 1.

were completely burned to the ground; more than fifty percent of the railway station was heavily burned and three civilians received slight burns before being given medical treatment. The damage caused to personal German property in the town was estimated to be between three and four hundred thousand dollars, which was substantial for the war torn country.<sup>18</sup>

After the incident, CPT Clark proceeded to question the local villagers near the scene and the US soldiers guarding the rail cars. The guard on duty, from locally stationed CO I, 395<sup>th</sup> INF, reported that he had seen two men near the train cars, which he had mistaken for local farmers working in the fields. He went on to say that there “might have been a hand grenade” thrown into one of the cars by these men.<sup>19</sup> From this eyewitness report, the guard had seen a group of Germans sabotaging munitions in transit by the US Army; a group attempting to do something like this would clearly fall under the category of Werewolf resistance fighters.

However, CPT Clark dug deeper than simply taking the US GI at his word. He interviewed the local population as well and found that they had a much different story to tell. Both Mathilde Strauch and Gertrude Richter told CPT Clark that they had often seen “soldiers burn ammunition...and wondered if this would happen.”<sup>20</sup> CPT Clark’s report continues to say that many other villagers reported a similar opinion to this. This incident clearly illustrates the lack of a resistance in Germany after the war had ended. The soldiers had been burning ammunition for fun because there was not much to keep the boredom away while pulling security. The childish antics of the private had clearly gotten out of hand when he accidentally set the train car

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 2.

on fire. In order to cover up his mistake, he blamed it on the believable fears that American soldiers had in Germany, the Werewolves.

The Second World War saw the fall of the Nazi Third Reich and ushered in a change for Germany. For the second time they had lost a major war and their country was in shambles. The American occupation of Germany would become the cornerstone for American foreign policy in Europe and established the friendship and cooperation that has been the standard for German-American relations over the past half-century. One of the keys to the success of the American occupation was the lack of German resistance, both at the end of the war and during the occupation itself. Germany was demolished, the cities bombed to rubble, the factories bombed out craters, the men either dead or disarmed and the German will and morale completely crushed. As the Americans fought their way through Bavaria, they were only met with fanatical resistance from the SS and *Volkssturm* forces, which were all but annihilated. By the close of the war, the German people had no interest in continuing the fight; they were equally disdainful of an armed resistance. This lack of resistance allowed the Americans to have an open occupation where soldiers and government officials could live among the population without fear of reprisals or attacks. It fostered a positive working relationship between OMGUS and the newly emerging German leadership. This was a cornerstone of success in Europe; a cornerstone that's foundation was soaked in the blood and tears of the German people.



## CHAPTER II

### THE MILITARY RESCUES GERMANY

On February 4, 1945, the three leaders of the Allied countries, United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and the Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin, met in the Livadia Palace, near Yalta in Crimea.<sup>21</sup> These leaders met to discuss what would happen to Germany and the other countries liberated from Nazi occupation after the war. One of the major points established during the Yalta Conference was the division of Germany and Berlin into four zones of occupation by the main Allied forces. Southern Germany, mainly Bavaria, was placed under American occupation, the Northwestern part of Germany including Hamburg and Bonn, were placed under British Control, the Northeastern portion was under Soviet control, and finally two sections in the Southeast were given to the French. Berlin, the capital of Germany and a major political and cultural symbol for the German people, was also split into four zones mirroring the rest of the country.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the Yalta Conference also agreed that the four powers would set up a Control Commission based in Berlin, which would be composed of the commanders of the four powers, US, USSR, UK, and France. This control commission would allow for coordination between the major powers governing Germany.

On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally to the American and British forces, thus ending the armed resistance of German forces against the Allies. At this point, the zonal control agreed upon by the major powers was enacted. In order to support the American zone of control

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<sup>21</sup> Stalin, Joseph, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston S. Churchill. "The Yalta Conference." *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*. February 11, 1945.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

in southern Germany and Berlin, the Office of Military Government, United States (OMGUS), was created on October 1, 1945, and it was placed under the command of General Lucius D. Clay.<sup>23</sup> OMGUS was responsible for the command and control of the American zone. It was a military organization that worked closely with civilian contractors to administer the large area controlled by the Americans. OMGUS was mainly responsible for the “reparations and restitution” of Germany, following the Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany (JCS 1067), which was sent to General Dwight D. Eisenhower in April, 1945. JCS 1067, also known as the Morgenthau Plan, was established in order to reduce the living standards of the German people and seek reparations for the war.<sup>24</sup> In his novel, *Decision in Germany*, General Lucius Clay wrote about the policies of JCS 1067,

The German economy was to be controlled only to the extent necessary to meet the needs of the occupation forces or to produce the goods which would prevent disease and unrest, which might endanger the occupying forces. The Nazi party and its affiliates were to be dissolved, Nazi laws and regulations annulled...The German armed forces were to be disbanded and arms, ammunition, and implements of war were to be siezed and destroyed.<sup>25</sup>

While JCS 1067 was not the Morgenthau Plan in its entirety, it shares a lot of commonalities, including the industrial disarmament of the German nation.

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<sup>23</sup> "Military Agency Records: Records of the Office of the Military Governor, United States (OMGUS)." The National Archives.

<sup>24</sup> Department of State. "Directive to Commander-in-Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany; April 1945 (JCS 1067)." U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany. April 1, 1945.

<sup>25</sup> Clay, Lucius. *Decision in Germany*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1950: 17.

During the early part of the occupation, OMGUS followed the rules and regulations placed down by the Morgenthau Plan, which were overseen by men referred to as the Morgenthau Boys. Most of these men worked for the United States Treasury, since Henry Morgenthau was the United States Secretary of the Treasury.<sup>26</sup> Many of the military leaders that worked in Germany were against the implementation of JCS 1067. These opponents included General Lucius Clay and one of his chief advisors, Lewis Douglas. Douglas said about JCS 1067, “This thing [JCS 1067] was assembled by economic idiots. It makes no sense to forbid the most skilled workers in Europe from producing as much as they can in a continent that is desperately short of everything.”<sup>27</sup>

Fortunately for the Germans, Clay did not agree with the policies set in place by JCS 1067. In fact, throughout 1945 Clay advocated for changes to be made and for the policies to be declassified. At the Potsdam Conference, JCS 1067 was changed slightly in order to give Eisenhower and Clay greater discretion to make decisions that affected the people on the ground in Germany. One of the major effects of this policy change was in the economic sector, where commanders in Germany had more power to make decisions than those in Washington. Clay mentions in his novel about Germany, that the German people would most certainly starve unless amendments to JCS 1067 were made immediately.<sup>28</sup> There was, at this time, no German government remaining to implement these required changes. Moreover, he could not take their

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<sup>26</sup> Petrov, Vladimir. *Money and Conquest; Allied Occupation Currencies in World War II*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.

<sup>27</sup> Murphy, Robert. *Diplomat Among Warriors*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1964: 251.

<sup>28</sup> Clay, Lucius. *Decision in Germany*.

place and implement the changes himself since JCS 1067 forbid OMGUS from taking such actions. In order to remedy the situation, he dispatched Lewis Douglas to Washington to lobby for changes to be made to JCS 1067 as quickly as possible. Douglas was however only partially able to gain revisions to the financial controls section of JCS 1067 in late June 1945. Shortly afterwards, Douglas resigned as Clay's financial advisor, which Clay attributed to Douglas's belief that, after his failure to secure major changes, the situation in Germany had become futile in the economic field.

Clay often received orders from Washington, which contradicted other policies already set in place. One example of this was in the restitution of property and reparations. In JCS 1067, the directive required the US occupying forces to enforce programs of restitution of stolen property from other countries, specifically art work and cultural items, and reparations to countries affected by the occupation and military operations conducted by the German government and military. In Clay's report for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 1945, he states, "For your information it was our understanding that United States policy prohibited the export of captured property from Germany unless there were exceptional circumstances and that such property would be held for ultimate disposition by the Allied Control Authority."<sup>29</sup> He continues by saying that OMGUS was not aware that property should be treated unilaterally and had assumed that such orders and requests would need approval by the Reparations Commission. Miscommunications like this reiterated the fact that Washington did not always understand JCS 1067, nor did it understand what was really happening on the ground in Germany.

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<sup>29</sup> Clay, Lucius. *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay*. Edited by Jean Smith. Vol. One. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1974: 45-46.

The American government did not always understand the extent of destruction seen in Germany. On June 10, 1945, Ambassador Edwin W. Pauley, the US representative, Allied Commission on Reparations, made a public statement to the *New York Times* that he did not believe Germany would ever pay reparations to any of the countries, including the United States. He mentioned that 70 to 75 percent of Germany's industry was still intact and could be restored quickly in order to begin paying the reparations required by the Allied occupation.<sup>30</sup> However, in Clay's letter to McCloy on June 29, 1945 about the conditions in Germany he showed the situation of Germany in a much different and more realistic story. He agreed with Pauley's estimation that only 30% of Germany's physical industrial base had been destroyed in the war was true, however, he goes on to say that just because the physical material was there, the logistical needs to get the German industry up and running were far beyond what Germany could possibly support.<sup>31</sup> The transportation and communications had ceased to exist along with the German economy. Without a transportation network with usable roads and railroads in order to ship goods it would be impossible to jump start German industry.

Furthermore, industry is dependent on an operating economy where money can flow in and out of the industry. Without this, there was no way for the Germans to kickstart paying reparations until their economy was on its feet again. Clay goes on to use the French as an example to support his argument. "...after a year under no political restrictions, France has achieved only a very limited return to its normal economy. Under political restrictions and with far greater destruction, the return in Germany will be much more difficult."<sup>32</sup> He goes on to argue that there

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<sup>30</sup> Clay, Lucius. *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay*. Edited by Jean Smith.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 41

is no way for the Germans to rebuild their economy or transportation system while they toil from “early in the morning until late at night” attempting to simply “till the soil and clean up the debris” around their country. They did this in order to survive the coming winter, which Clay mentions will be even harder on them because he is under a directive to only help the Germans in order to keep his own troops from starving and catching diseases.

In October of 1945, General Clay personally traveled to Washington to lobby for significant changes to JCS 1067 in order to sufficiently support the survival of the German people and the continuation of a peaceful occupation of Germany. General Clay was surprised to find that most of the representatives from the departments in Washington hearing his request continued to follow the same lines of thinking they did when the directive was originally issued, despite all of the opposition coming from Clay and his advisors. In fact, the State Department representative, James Riddleberger, promised to have a revised directive to General Clay within the only a few weeks. However, this revision was not completed until July 1947.<sup>33</sup>

The implementation of JCS 1067 lasted more than two years until it was finally changed in response to the economic needs of the rest of Europe. Germany, as well as the other countries, needed the support of the powerful German industry to help rebuild the country. JCS 1067 was replaced with JCS 1779 by the government on July 10, 1947, thanks to the support for the new directive by Secretary of State George Marshall. JCS 1779 ordered that OMGUS support the

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<sup>33</sup> Clay, Lucius. *Decision in Germany*.

reconstruction of Germany and the renewal of its industrial works in order to stabilize the German economy.<sup>34</sup>

Through the support of OMGUS, the American Zone in southern Germany was the most successful at setting up an operating democratic government under the oversight of the American Occupying forces. At the beginning of this democratization program in Germany, the main goal was to set up local governments that could run and administer the town and cities under the watchful eye of the Americans.

Staying true to the American morals, the governments were set up in order to mirror the types of governments seen in the US, freely elected, however also fitting the previous model of the German system. Germany was formed into *Landkreis*, which are equivalent to American counties, and *Stadtkreis*, which were city governments. Every *Landkreis* had its own administration that would help run the local government and the county. By July 1945 most of the *Landkreis* in Germany saw the return of their administrative systems, even though the final control still rested in the hands of the local American military government officials from OMGUS.<sup>35</sup> However, the detailed work was slowly being given back to the German people, allowing them to begin the regrowth of their government system.

One of OMGUS's goals was to increase the control of the local governments to the next level. In order to do this, the Germans would need to have states, similar to the Americans. However,

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<sup>34</sup> Selig, Robert. "America's Long Road to the Federal Republic of Germany (West)." Channeling Reality. May 20, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> Clay, Lucius. *Decision in Germany*.

this meant that the German states needed to be redrawn since the creation of the zones did not follow the borders of the old states and many states were in both the American and Soviet zones. The Soviets did not want a freely elected democratic government in control of their zone, but instead a communist style government based on the Soviet system.<sup>36</sup> Once this was completed the process of creating state administrations could begin in order to facilitate the governing of the *Staat*, the equivalent of an American state, by the Germans.

From this grew the creation of political parties and by 1946 there were two major parties that had begun to flourish in the American occupied zone. The *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (CDU) and the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) became two of the most powerful parties in West Germany and remain so today in modern Germany.

JCS 1067 was created during the Second World War and was influenced by a prevalent belief in the United States that Germany and her people at large were responsible for the destruction of Europe. Due to this, the American government, and Henry Morgenthau in particular, wanted to see the end of German industrialization, the end of German military power, and the suffering of German people in order to, as stated by General Clay, “make the German people realize the consequences of a war which they caused”.<sup>37</sup> The first years of the occupation saw many issues, most prevalent being starvation. These sufferings were induced and supported by directives like the Morgenthau Plan.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Clay, Lucius. *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay*. Edited by Jean Smith: 24.



Fortunately for the German people, many of the American officers in Germany, especially the commanding general, General Lucius Clay, understood the folly of these policies and opposed them. They saw the reality of what was happening on the ground in Germany and understood that at some point Germany would have to become a working country again, with a proper economy and government to help rebuild itself and Europe. They also understood that if policies like the Morgenthau Plan, continued to corrupt the future relationship between the occupying countries and the German people, then there would be consequences when Germany once again entered the international stage as a sovereign state. It is in many ways ironic that the army, which had crushed all resistance in Germany, leveled its cities and displaced its people, was, inevitably, the one that came to its rescue following the end of the war.

## CHAPTER III

### FRATERNIZATION BUILDS BONDS

When World War II came to a crushing halt in May 1945, there were over 3 million US soldiers in Europe. The US government planned to transfer many of them to the Pacific front to fight the Japanese, however, they still required a large number to stay in Germany and oversee the occupation. Shortly after the war, Germany was split into occupation zones by the major powers, and the US Army took control of modern day Bavaria and other parts of southern Germany. There were, at this time, no permanent plans to keep the American forces there longer than necessary. Therefore, the US Army began occupying civilian homes, government buildings and industrial sites in order to house their soldiers posted the country.

In order to help control the occupying American military, the chiefs of staff issued JCS 1067, which forbade any contact between German civilians and American soldiers. The period of nonfraternization began on September 12, 1944 and lasted until October 1, 1945.<sup>38</sup> This period is considered today to be “one of the most controversial phases of the entire occupation of Germany.”<sup>39</sup> At its creation, the non-fraternization orders were designed for operational security for the Army. Since the war in Europe was still very much raging when the order was disseminated to unit commanders, this rule was established to keep vital information from being passed on to the enemy, as well as to keep the American soldier focused on the mission and not building relationships with the occupied populace. This policy created a barrier between Allied forces and the Germans, which ensured that the German people could not conduct a propaganda

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<sup>39</sup> Potter, Harold. *The First Year of the Occupation*: 81.

campaign “to divest Germany of war guilt and as a measure to promote respect for the Allied armies.”<sup>40</sup> Finally, the policy against fraternization was created to avoid campaigns against the war at home and to stop unfavorable opinions.

Although anti-fraternization laws were set in place in 1944, the US military did not have many cases until the end of the war. Most of the combat troops did not have enough free time to fraternize with the population, especially as most units were constantly being shifted and transferred to areas where the US Army needed reinforcements and there was a constant threat of German military operations in the area.<sup>41</sup> At the close of the war, the occupational forces were no longer needed to fight the German forces, and were therefore free of the constraints, which allowed them to mingle with the local population, especially as the occupation drew on and the troops realized they would be in Germany for a while longer. At this point OMGUS began to see a startling increase in fraternization cases against soldiers who began to interact with the local population. This was also attributed to the large number of German women and the very low number of German men left after the close of WWII.

Fraternization between American troops and the German populace was considered to be any interaction that might be considered mingling, intimacy and friendship. American soldiers were prohibited from physical contact with the population; this even included shaking hands, which in German society is considered to be very important and extremely rude if not observed.<sup>42</sup> In fact, the fraternization laws also included official dealings with the Germans, including business and

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 84.

military occupation matters. For example, if a German was to see a post commander in Germany, they would not be allowed to shake hands, nor would the American officer be allowed to get to know this person on any familiar basis, as it would jeopardize the fraternization directive and put his career in danger. This became a major issue for OMGUS as anti-Nazi Germans, even some who had been imprisoned by the Nazi regime for political dissidence, to offer their services in support of the Allied occupation and democratization policies that were being set in place. Many of these people were strong political advocates who could have helped promote the Allied occupation and changes, or would have made strong and reliable mayors or governors. However, OMGUS commanders were forced to coldly turn them away because not only were they not allowed to fraternize with the Germans, they were not yet allowed to hire or employ them as well. One of the consequences of this policy was to turn down people who could have helped, and most of these people refused to offer their services again when the policies finally changed.

The policy against employment of German civilians was one of the first to change. Originally, the occupation forces planned to use workers from allied countries like France, Belgium and the Netherlands to conduct work for OMGUS in lieu of Germans. This quickly proved impossible as people from these countries proved unwilling to find work in Germany when there was work in their home countries, especially since their home cities needed to be rebuilt just as badly as Germany's. The US Army authorized 141 occupations that could employ German civilians; these occupations included skilled, semi-skilled trades, clerical and hospital jobs. The caveat to this new order was that they could only be employed in these areas as long as their only interaction with soldiers was with those supervising them. This was quite difficult when they

were working in close proximity to American soldiers and on American compounds or buildings. The law, therefore, was almost impossible to uphold. By September of 1945, the US Army was employing Germans as military vehicle drivers, members of bands, and as domestic servants in the officer billets.<sup>43</sup>

It quickly became apparent to General Lucius Clay, commander of OMGUS, that the directives against fraternization were impossible to enforce and threatened to end the careers of most of his soldiers if the Army decided to charge all those who had fraternized with the Germans. By July of 1945 General Clay was frequently asking for the anti-fraternization directive by Allied Supreme Command. In a message to General Eisenhower on July 12, 1945, Clay writes,

In view of the rapid progress which has been made in carrying out Allied denazification policies and in removing prominent Nazis from all positions of responsibility in German life, it is believed desirable and timely to permit the personnel of my command to engage in conversations with adult Germans on the streets and in public places.<sup>44</sup>

By midnight on July 14, there was a new regulation for the American forces in Germany allowing them to interact with Germans on a friendlier basis.<sup>45</sup> This was not the end of non-fraternization regulations in Germany, however it was a positive step towards the beginning of open relations with the occupied Germans.

The German people quickly sought out American soldiers because they saw them as a resource for survival. The German people had very little to nothing at the close of World War II. With

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>44</sup> Clay, Lucius. *The Papers of General Lucius D. Clay*. Edited by Jean Smith: 53.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

their cities destroyed there was no production of any kind within the German border. Many Germans were homeless and their families were fragmented; many had missing or killed family members or the war had separated them from one another leaving people to fend for themselves. Furthermore, there was no infrastructure that supported the reunification of families. The foreign occupiers in contrast had more provisions than they needed. With excess food, cigarettes, and candy, the American GI was willing to barter with these items for goods or services. Many soldiers used cigarettes or candy to pay for laundry and sewing. The German diet at the time was closer to 1550 calories, although some areas were as low as 700 calories.<sup>46</sup> In contrast the American soldier had more than enough rations, which allowed them the opportunity to barter with the German citizens.

Before the close of the war, on V-E Day, the issue of fraternization was considered an internal military problem that could be solved by censoring much of the information that flowed to the public during the war period. Following V-E Day, there was a huge shift, and the issue of fraternization moved into the limelight, as it became a major public relations issue.<sup>47</sup> Since the Army retained its policy of non-fraternization, in order to appease the opinion of Americans at home; Americans quickly began to view the term ‘fraternization’ to represent the sexual interactions between American soldiers and German women, especially in “illicit and adulterous sex.”<sup>48</sup> In the 1940s, the American concept of sex and relationships between men and women was based upon the Christian view of marriage. For men to have sexual relations with women out of wedlock was frowned upon. This sentiment was inflamed as the sexual relations between

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<sup>46</sup> Biddiscombe, Perry. "Dangerous Liaisons: The Anti-Fraternization Movement in the U.S. Occupation Zones of Germany and Austria, 1945-1948." *Journal of Social History*, 2001: 615.

<sup>47</sup> Pfau, Ann Elizabeth. "Fraternization and the Uncensored Occupation." 2008: 1.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

American soldiers and German women became more commonplace in occupied Germany.

American soldiers often blamed their spouses or partners in the United States for being unloyal and were therefore forced into the arms of German women.<sup>49</sup> This was, however, not an accepted excuse in the United States.

As the sexual activities between German women and American soldiers became more prevalent, the American military began to take steps to dissuade soldiers from such activities. They printed leaflets that were issued to soldiers occupying Germany in order to inform them about the Allied policy of non-fraternization.<sup>50</sup> They also began to show soldiers films that gave information and statistics on the effects of venereal diseases (VD), which was easily transferred between sexual partners. These films were designed to scare the American soldier and dissuade them from forming sexual relationships with the local women. It quickly became common for American soldiers to have German girlfriends, however they had to keep the relationship secret since it violated JCS 1067.

Although many German women had relationships with American soldiers, almost twenty percent of them, at some point in time, engaged in some form of prostitution.<sup>51</sup> Rations and cigarettes became commonly referred to as “fra’bait” since it was used to pay for sexual activities or casual sex with German women. The term combines the often-used German word “*Fraulein*,” which is the German word for a young lady. Today, the word, in American society, has become associated with prostitution.

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>50</sup> Potter, Harold. *The First Year of the Occupation*: 84.

<sup>51</sup> Biddiscombe, Perry. "Dangerous Liaisons: The Anti-Fraternization Movement in the U.S. Occupation Zones of Germany and Austria, 1945-1948." *Journal of Social History*: 617.

The situation was further inflamed as German POWs began to return home and be reintegrated into society. They were frustrated because they expected to return to a destroyed Germany, but they did not expect to return to German women associating with the former enemy. In addition, they quickly realized the American soldier was preferred over a German because they had more to offer, like food, cigarettes, and money; a German POW would be lucky if he had more than the uniform he was captured in. German men put up signs around Germany berating women for picking an American over a German. One sign in Karlsruhe read,

He lies in a mass grave

She in a strange bed

He fell for the Fatherland

She for cigarettes.<sup>52</sup>

German men wanted to shame their women for their behaviour. It was an attempt to find a new enemy to focus on and the German *Fraulein* was the perfect target. It is not hard, with hindsight, to understand why German women turned to the occupying soldiers for help as they starved and struggled to survive in what was left of Germany.

While prostitution quickly became commonplace within the American Zone, it did not define the entire relationship between the occupying Americans and the local German population. The first reports of American troops disobeying the non-fraternization policy was, as reported by military officials at the time, with German children.

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 620.



All observers agree that violation of the rule of nonfraternization began with German children. Regulations to the contrary, soldiers could not resist passing out candy and gum and talking with German children.<sup>53</sup>

It was simple things like this that led to some of the most important parts of the American occupation of Germany. While prostitution was rampant and rape was certainly not unheard of, the interactions between Americans and Germans grew warmer and warmer as regulations relaxed and the tensions dissipated. By December 1946, American soldiers were finally allowed to marry German women and have legitimate relationships without fear of repercussions.

Moreover, it quickly became apparent that the American Army was there to stay. Tensions between the Americans and Russians exploded after the creation of currency in the Western Zones and the Berlin Blockade. The US Army began to build military installations that quickly became known as “Little Americas” because they were almost self-sufficient cities that mimicked the United States. Although this separation would seem counter productive, it brought a new dynamic to the growing relationship between Germans and Americans. It allowed the Americans to offer more jobs to the Germans, but more importantly, American commanders and Army wives associations began programs to introduce Germans to American society. They set up mock American homes with the latest styles and appliances and allowed Germans to tour them, which quickly grew in popularity as Germans became more interested in the “American Lifestyle.” American fashion and styles quickly became popular within Germany, and that trend continues today, especially with the introduction of television; American television is the predominant source of entertainment in Germany.

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<sup>53</sup> Potter, Harold. *The First Year of the Occupation*: 88.

American base commanders saw this growing trend as an opportunity to solidify the relationship between Americans and Germans. They opened American bases to the German population once a year in “Friendship Days.” Germans could come and meet their occupiers in a friendly and open environment. They were able to see how American soldiers lived and were able to build ties between them. The Friendship Days continued until 2006, when the major American bases began to close.

Fraternization, while a double-edged sword, proved to be pivotal in the solidification of American and German relations. It is important for governments to have close ties, but when the people grow close through interactions, this is when friendships truly form. The German people slowly, but surely, began to see the American occupiers as friends instead of the enemy. The open and friendly interactions between Americans and Germans were in great contrast to the interactions between Germans and Soviets. This is evident, through the much stronger relationship that exists between the US and Germany today as compared to the relationship between Russia and Germany. Without fraternization, whether passing out candy to German children or marrying a German *Fraulein*, the American occupation of Germany would not have resulted in the strong and lasting ties between the US and Germany that exist even today.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSION**

The American military occupation of Germany after the Second World War has come to represent a great success of democracy over the fascist regime that controlled Germany during the 1930s and 40s. It became the cornerstone of American policy in Europe during the Cold War and the actions taken by the American men and women in Germany set the foundation for the strong relationship that has flourished between our two countries. At the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the occupation of Germany became the precedent that the US government would try to follow as they approached the problems of rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan. They wanted to exemplify the success of the US Army's policies in Germany.

The success of the occupation of Germany was found in many places and in the many decisions that were made; however, the foundation for that success was formulated before the war in Europe came to a conclusion. The level of destruction that Germany witnessed was horrendous, perhaps one of the worst in history. Its government was nonexistent, its cities had been turned to rubble, and its people were homeless. At the end of the Second World War, the Nazi regime and especially the propaganda machine, under the direction of Joseph Goebbels, had promised the Allied forces a resistance group that would fight them in every city and have a bastion in the Alps. By the close of the war, the German people were so tired of the war that they had no interest in resisting the occupiers. The Werewolves became a dream of the Nazi regime and its hope for resurrection.

The success of the occupation of Germany was built off the foundation laid by the actions of combat commanders during the close of the Second World War, but the rest of the structure that began to rise out of this destruction was molded through the decisions of commanders on the ground in occupied Germany. The original plan put into motion by the American government was designed to destroy German industry and make sure that the rise of Nazi Germany could never happen again; it became known as the Morgenthau Plan. Commanders in Germany, especially General Lucius Clay, opposed these plans and quickly moved to create a more supportive environment that allowed Germany to grow back into a strong country, yet a country that was closer to the United States, both in government and relations. These decisions helped mold the German nation of today, and stopped the further destruction of Germany.

The success of the American occupation of Germany cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of military and government leadership. It was the common soldier that filled the final and much needed role. The interactions between the average American soldier and their German civilian counterparts were pivotal in the strengthening of bonds between the German people and the Americans. Many American soldiers had German girlfriends and later German wives, once OMGUS changed its policy on marriage. Furthermore, the American soldier lived in close proximity to Germans and often went shopping in German markets, as well as traded goods for both supplies and services with the German people. These everyday interactions were essential to the positive relationship that came out of the occupation of Germany. All of these circumstances came together to create a successful occupation. Although the occupation of Germany was a success, there is no guarantee that this result could be replicated in modern day due to the changes in culture, society and the advancements in technology.

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