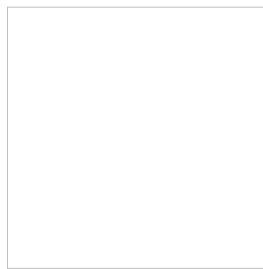


# The US Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944-1946.

ARMY HISTORICAL SERIES

## THE U.S. ARMY IN THE OCCUPATION OF GERMANY 1944-1946

*by*  
*Earl F. Ziemke*



CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY  
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### **Foreword**

Long before the dust settled on European battlefields in World War II, the US Army had to face the difficult tasks of occupying and governing war-torn Germany. Its leaders and troops were called upon to deal with a series of complex challenges in political, economic, financial, social, and cultural affairs, tasks beyond the traditional combat roles of soldiers.

This volume provides an authoritative account of the role of the US Army in military government and occupation of Germany from the inception of planning

until the relative separation of military government and tactical troops in 1946. In the process it offers an in-depth study of the first year, the formative period of the occupation, a most eventful phase in the shaping of post-war Europe. The story ranges from Washington and theater headquarters down to military government detachments in the field, and covers the varied national and international civilian and military apparatus that evolved. Illustrating the diverse approaches of the Americans, British, and Russians, it analyzes efforts to combat hunger, disease, and crime, preserve cultural artifacts, re-establish industry and utilities, and resolve thorny problems involving currency, housing, education, newspapers, elections, and displaced persons. 'I, he account shows the pitfalls and difficulties in planning, organizing, and executing such a complex undertaking.

While this volume is part of the Army Historical Series, it continues in effect the history begun in the largely documentary volume of the US Army in World War II series, *Civil Affairs: Soldiers become Governors*, as well as in the narrative volumes on the European conflict in the same series. Besides being of particular interest to that large number of men, still surviving, who participated in the events depicted here, Dr. Ziemke's volume will constitute for the Army an important source for lessons learned in planning, training, and organization for civil affairs and military government. For the scholar this book should provide a most valuable addition to the literature of the occupation, and for the general reader an enlightening and interesting account of a remarkable episode in the history of the US Army and of Germany.

Washington, DC  
30 June 1974

JAMES L. COLLINS, JR.  
Brigadier General, USA  
Chief of Military History

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## The Author

Earl F. Ziemke received an M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the University of Wisconsin, where he did his undergraduate work. He served in World War II with the US Marine Corps in the Pacific theater. In 1951 he became a member of the staff of the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University. In 1955 he joined the staff of the Center of Military History, US Army, where he became Deputy Chief of the General History Branch. Since 1967 he has been Professor of History at the University of Georgia.

Dr. Ziemke is author of *The German Northern Theater of Operations, 1940-1945*, and of *Stalingrad to Berlin: The German Defeat in the East* (Washington, 1968). He is a contributor to *Command Decisions* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), to *A Concise History of World War II* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964) and to *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison: University of

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## Preface

The post-World War II occupation of Germany was a huge and diverse undertaking spanning almost eleven years, conducted in conjunction with three other members of the wartime alliance and involving in various degrees a number of US governmental departments and agencies. The occupation was, moreover, a major event in German history and in the history of the postwar world; and for the Army it was a mission second only in scope and significance to the war itself. The subject of the present volume is that Army mission, its origin, the manner in which it was defined, and its execution to June 1946 in the period of primary Army responsibility.

The narrative begins in the 1930s, before the outbreak of war in Europe, and concludes in mid-1946, a little more than a year after the victory. Although the likelihood of US military forces occupying Germany appeared infinitesimal in the late 1930s and only slightly greater in the first two years of the 1940s, the actions taken in those years were in some ways more significant than the subsequent mission-oriented plans and preparations. It was, of course, most important that the Army, albeit somewhat reluctantly, had recognized the need for civil affairs-military government doctrine and training before the requirement to administer occupied territory was placed upon it. This recognition was a true innovation in the conduct of military affairs.

To conclude the account in the middle of 1946 may appear less defensible. The occupation went on, with the Army as the executive agency for military government until 1949, and the Army continued to provide the occupation force until 1955. A good reason for stopping short of either of those two years, certainly, is space. The whole story could simply not be told in a single volume with anything like the treatment it deserves. A better reason, the author believes, is that, being a part of the Army Historical Series, the volume should concern itself with the Army experience. While military government is not the sole subject of the volume, it is one of the main subjects, and after March 1946 control of military government passed to the Office of Military Government in Berlin, which, although it was headed by an Army general, regarded itself as predominantly a civilian agency. In the field, by the end of June 1946, the military government detachments were divorced from the tactical commands, much reduced in strength, partially civilianized, and limited to observing and advising German governmental agencies. Military government as it was conceived during the war and installed in Germany in 1944 and 1945 had ended. The occupation forces had also changed. The troops that had fought the war and occupied Ger-

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many after the victory had gone home. They had been replaced by another army of occupation, and military government continued for three more years; but that is another story better told elsewhere since much of it lies outside the area of direct Army concern.

In the text, references occur in several places to Department of the Army Field Manual 27-5, *Military Government*, first published in July 1940. Over the years, FM 27-5 was revised several times and eventually superseded by other volumes, the most recent of those being FM 41-10, *Civil Affairs Operation*, published in October 1969. The purpose of those publications was and is to provide a procedural and doctrinal framework within which the Army could conduct civil affairs and military government should the need arise. FM 27-10, *The Rules of Land Warfare*, issued in October 1939 and also subsequently revised, provided guidance concerning the rights and obligations of occupation forces. Without attempting in any way to shape history to fit the field manuals, the author has assumed that the most useful purpose his work could serve would be to present a true description in one instance of the manner in which the Army actually carried out an occupation.

Although the discussion of plans has been limited to those that determined or influenced what was done, or in some instances not done, in the occupation, plans along with policy development and other preparations still figure heavily in the narrative. The chief reason why so much of the planning, more specifically the Army's involvement in it, is included is that it has not been covered elsewhere. To make the account comprehensible it has been necessary to treat matters that in combat operational histories would be left to be dealt with separately in volumes on strategy, organization, or procurement and training. The range, therefore, has had to be broad and include, in particular, plans developed over a relatively long period of time at several levels in Washington, in London, and in Germany.

At the risk of, perhaps, belaboring the obvious, it should be pointed out that geographically as well as chronologically, the volume does not purport to be a history of the whole occupation. It is concerned with those parts of Germany US forces held prior to July 1945, with the considerably less than one third of the country that became the US zone in July 1945, and with aspects of quadripartite control pertinent to an understanding of the Army's mission in Germany. The British share in the occupation has been dealt with in two volumes of the British official World War II history: F. S. V. Donnison, *Civil Affairs and Military Government Central Organization and Planning* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1966) and F. S. V. Donnison, *Civil Affairs and Military Government North-West Europe, 1944-1946* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1961). Official or, for that matter, any other kind of systematic histories of the occupation have been published neither in France nor in the Soviet Union. The reader interested in

events in the French zone and the Soviet zone will need to consult two works, one American and one British: F. Roy Willis, *The French in Germany, 1945-1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962) and J. P. Nettl, *The Eastern Zone and Soviet Policy in Germany, 1945-1950* (London

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Oxford University Press, 1951) . Although somewhat dated, the best comparative treatment of the early occupation period in all four zones is W. Friedmann, *The Allied Military Government of Germany* (London: Stevenson and Sons Ltd., 1947) .

The author is indebted to General Lucius D. Clay and Professor Oron J. Hale who read the manuscript and contributed insights from their personal knowledge of the occupation. He is likewise grateful to his former colleagues at the Center of Military History, Dr. Stetson Conn, Dr. Maurice Matloff, Col. John E. Jessup, Jr., Dr. Robert W. Coakley, Mr. Charles B. MacDonald, Mr. David Jaffé and Mrs. Christine O. Grubbs, who gave the benefit of their expertise in writing American World War II military history. The author also wishes to express his appreciation to the staff of the former National Archives World War II Records Branch in Alexandria, Virginia, who made the months spent there both pleasant and profitable.

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Athens, Georgia  
30 June 1974

EARL F. ZIEMKE

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