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MEMO TO: Secretary Rumsfeld

DATE: July 25, 2003

CC: **AMB Bremer**
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FROM: **Paul Wolfowitz** *PW*

SUBJECT: History of Post-War Germany

The attached timeline from 1945 suggests that the “highly successful” effort in Germany – for which we had 4 years to prepare – was constantly calling “audibles” during the first 9 months.

08-M-3065
07-M-0997

Denazification and Reconstruction Policy Changes in Allied Occupied Germany Post World War II

POLICY TIMELINE

Denazification

- March 1945 – Initial Policy
SHAEF G-5 informally established 1933 as cut-off date for Nazi membership mandatory removal
- June 29 – Clarification of policy
Term “public office” widened
New considerations: Size of business and amount capital
- July – Shortcomings of policy become apparent
Decision to give Germans a voice made
- August 15 – Further clarification of policy
Included any member of prominent standing in the community.
- September – Pace of internment increases
82,000 suspects held in internment camps
- September 26 – Further dissatisfaction with policy leads to change (Law No. 8)
Prohibited employment of Nazi party members in any capacity other than common labor
- October 1 – Germans assigned partial responsibility for enforcing Law No. 8
- November- December - German appeals board begins hearing cases
Boards rejected 22% of appeals and the detachment of another 12%.
Two/three appellants returned to jobs and recover their property

War Crimes

List of suspects eventually grows to 150,000 -- recognition that it would take months just to put into usable form.

Third and Seventh Armies began sorting out and segregating 15,000 suspects and hostile witnesses.

- June 2 - Concentration camp commandants and guards to be tried as war criminals

- Aug 8 - London Agreement reached; four categories of crimes recognized
- September – US Forces European Theater (USFET) to try all lesser offenders in all four categories (war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes against peace, membership in criminal groups)
- November 20 - Military tribunals begin trials
- December - Control Council Law No. 10;
London Agreement, which established criteria for four categories, recognized as uniform basis for prosecution
- December
Decision that USFET War Crimes Group would retain responsibility for trying lesser offenders

Reconstruction

- May-August – Infrastructure begins to benefit from occupation
Detachments put streetcars into shape to transport 400,000 people a day
- July – Nazis used to aid reconstruction effort
Discharged Nazis with knowledge of art/architecture used to sort through rubble for fragments of old stone and ironwork.
- November – Reconstruction a lengthy process
Detachment’s public utilities experts finally able to restore gas service to Munich that had been out since July 1944

Plan for Reorganization and Withdrawal

President Truman said that he wanted control in Germany to be switched over to civilian hands as soon as possible because “it was in the American tradition”

- April - First outline for military government proposed
- May – Need for change in government; organizational directive issued:
organization must become civilian in character
- June 25 – Initial plan for downsizing roll of military government devised;
combining staffs into one office of military government suggested
- September-October- Preparation for the end of occupation
Directives ordered armies to cease all military government activity Dec 31

- October 1- Office of Military Government (U.S.) formed
Objective - convert military government civilian operation and separate it from military forces as soon as possible.
- October 23 – Decision that shift to single department to occur no later than June 1, 1946
- November 6 – New German legislative bodies begin to function
- Mid-November – Go ahead with withdrawal of control from local governments given
- November 21 – Laender governments (state-level) granted initial powers
USFET grants full executive, legislative, and judicial authority to Laender governments
- December 31 - U.S. orders issued via Laender Governments to general public
Information to pass to lower elements through German channels

Selected Statistics Related to Denazification and Reconstruction

Population of Germany

U.S. Zone, not including Bremen and Berlin was about the size of the state of Kentucky, but with five times the population. Zone was 41,000 square miles. October 1946 population 16.9 million for Hesse, Wuerttemberg-Baden, and Bavaria and .5 million for Bremen.

Officially the allied occupation of Germany lasted from 1945-1949

The original, 1945 denazification and war crimes policies were amended, clarified, redefined, or completely overhauled seven times before the end of the first year.

Major Shifts in Denazification Policy in 1945

- June 29
- August 15
- September 25

Major Shifts in War Crimes Policy in 1945

- June 2
- August 8
- December (changed twice)

Shifts in Reorganization Governmental Structure in 1945

- May
- September/October
- October
- November

Pace of Reorganization Efforts

- Gas service (out since July 1944) restored to Munich in November
- Newly formed German government bodies first began to function in November (6 months after VE Day)
- By mid November go ahead for withdrawal from local governments was issued

Problems Faced in Reconstruction

- Looting of Museums and Other Such National Treasures
- Vandalism
- Lack of Skilled Workers

- Media Portrayal of Reconstruction Efforts
- Dissent Within US Military Ranks (e.g., Patton opposes denazification)

Nazis/War Crimes Suspects

- 150,000 war crimes suspects to be tried
- 314,000 found by Military Government to be active Nazis by May 31, 1946

Of 3,623,112 persons considered chargeable under the Law for Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism, 887,252 were tried before the German Spruchkammern by 30 June 1948 with the following results

			Maximum Sentence Permitted	Sanctions Imposed
	Charged as	Found as		
Major Offenders	20,306	1,284	5-10 years	404
Offenders	318,189	18,979	Up to 5 years	7,981
Lesser Offenders	180,263	97,260	1,000 Reichsmark or more fine	75,390
Followers	365,160	445,163	Less than 1,000 Reichsmark fine	463,645
Exonerated	3,334	16,148		
Proceedings Dismissed		298,418		
Total	887,252	887,252		547,420 ²

What Happened to the Nazis Not Convicted?

When the Germans began to hear cases they chose to interpret the term “denazification” as an avenue for rehabilitation rather than a right to punish

Most were able to recover their businesses and property and assimilate back into the German society from which they had previously been removed

Source:

Earl F. Ziemke, The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944-1946 (Washington: Center of Military History US Army, 1975). Chapters XXI (Reckonings With the Past), XXII (The Turning Point), XXI (Conclusion)