Allied Forces, Supreme Headquarters, Manual for the Control of German Information Services (1945)

Abstract

The *Manual for the Control of German Information Services* was drafted by the Psychological Warfare Division of the SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force) in 1944. It was adopted in May 1945, immediately after the end of the war in Europe, by the newly formed Information Control Division. The Manual offers instructions on the de-Nazification of the German media and the creation of a "democratic" media culture. This selection is programmatic, detailing both immediate military and long-term political goals. The Manual also explains how to recognize Nazis, sympathizers, and so-called fellow travelers, so that occupation authorities could decide to whom they would grant print and radio licenses. It also contains an appendix on the Nazi propaganda system. With the rise of the Cold War, the emphasis on de-Nazification was eventually supplanted by an anti-communist campaign that excluded many leftists and socialists from licensed media positions.

Source

**CHAPTER I
GENERAL POLICY**

1. Mission
Information services in Germany will be controlled to further military and political objectives.

2. Responsibility
Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, is responsible for policies governing the control of German information services in the area of responsibility of the Supreme Commander. Army Group Commanders are responsible for the control of German information services within the areas of their command in conformity with directives from Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.

3. Definition
Throughout this Manual the term «information services» is used to denote the following media of news and opinion dissemination in Germany: newspapers, magazines, periodicals, books, pamphlets, posters, printed music and other printed or otherwise mechanically reproduced publications, sound recordings, motion picture films, news and photographic services and agencies, radio broadcasting and television stations and systems, wired radio transmission, audio-frequency distribution systems, theatres, cinemas, opera houses, film studios, film laboratories, film exchanges, fairs, circuses, carnivals and other places of theatrical or musical entertainment and the production or presentation of motion pictures, plays, concerts, operas and other performances using actors or musicians.
(The term «information services» does *not* include such services as post, telegraph and telephone or messages carried by such media. The activities of War Correspondents and the problems incident to the transmission of their copy to Allied countries, are *not* within the scope of this Manual.)

4. Tasks

Tasks in the control of German information services are:

a. Short-term (primarily military).

b. Long-term (primarily political).

5. The Short-Term Task

To facilitate the military occupation of Germany by assisting in the immediate prohibition of all German information services and by setting up such other information services as will assist the military commanders in maintaining order by:

a. Publicising rules and regulations.

b. Countering rumors with announcements and information.

c. Supplying a selected world news and information service such as will serve to clarify the relation of the individual German to the occupying forces, to the community and to the world at large.

d. Supervising the resumption by Germans of cultural and largely non-political activities (such as music and the theatre) which the military situation requires.

6. The Long-Term Task

To eliminate Nazism and German militarism from any influence on German information media by:

a. The destruction of all that remains of the Nazi and militarist influence.

b. The re-establishment of German information services initially under close Allied supervision –completely purged of both these influences.

7. While the primary responsibility for the short-term task will be that of the Supreme Commander, the primary responsibility for the long-term task will rest with the multipartite Allied Control Council. It will be the duty of Information Control personnel to ensure that the foundations laid in the period of responsibility of the Supreme Commander provide a sound basis for the work of the Control Council. In particular, care will be taken in the early stages of the occupation to avoid prejudicing the long-term political task.

8. Phasing

a. Information services control operations will be conducted in three phases:

(1) Phase I Prohibition of German information services.

(2) Phase II Use of Allied information services and reconnaissance of German information services.

(2) Phase III Gradual transition, varying from region to region and from medium to medium, to German information services directed by Germans under Allied supervision.

b. The interval caused by the prohibition of all German information services will be utilized for the purpose of:

(1) Emphasizing the destruction of the Nazi machine.

(2) Giving time to conduct the reconnaissance necessary for the licensing of German information services run by Germans.

(The interval during which there will be no German licensed information services will vary from medium to medium. It probably will be most prolonged in the case of media such as radio and press. On the other hand, once it has been possible to disentangle genuine German cultural activities, such as the theatre, opera and music, from the political uses to which they have been perverted under Nazi control, they will be licensed to reopen at such time as the military situation requires.)

9. Phase I. – Prohibition of German Information Services

Military Government law provides the authority for the complete destruction of the Nazi propaganda machine. It

(a) prohibits the operation of all German information services, and (b) empowers us to remove from the control of the printed word, radio, music, the theatre and motion picture, the forces and persons who have used that control to fashion the Nazi propaganda machine.

10. It must be clearly understood that no considerations of convenience or expediency will be permitted to weaken the principle of total elimination of Nazis and militarists from positions of influence and control. In the field of information services no exceptions can be permitted, since every such exception prejudices the long-term task to which the military occupation of Germany is only a means.

11. Phase II. – Use of Allied Information Services and Reconnaissance of German Information Services
Allied information services will:
a. Fill the void created by the total destruction of the Nazi propaganda machine.
b. Mark as sharply as possible the end of the Nazi Regime by ensuring that the daily news comes to the German individual not only from non-Nazi but from non-German sources. Here will be a daily reminder in unarguable form of the disappearance of the Old Order.
c. Provide to the German an example of what an objective news and information service means. In Germany, Allied information services will continue the work – begun by the Allied radio originated outside of Germany – of teaching Germans to trust straight news in contrast with the Nazi propaganda to which they have been subjected.

12. Media to be Employed
Two media are of first importance in this phase – radio and press. Both will be operated for military purposes and carry the stamp of the occupying armies. The only publications will be Allied. Radio stations operating inside Germany will announce themselves as stations of the Military Government. The sole responsibility, therefore, for what is printed and said in press and radio will be that of the occupying armies; nevertheless we shall utilize fully German non-editorial personnel and resources. Allied information services may be extended to media other than the press and radio as required by the military situation.

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17. The Political Problem.
a. The above procedures will be sufficient to ensure that military security and policy requirements are safeguarded during the period of military occupation. But that period, though it may be of long duration, will be short in terms of the long-term political objective – the destruction of the spirit of German aggression. By the terms of unconditional surrender the Allies can eliminate the physical ability of the Germans to *commit* acts of aggression. But no surrender in itself can destroy the spirit of aggression. That can be achieved only by long-term education.
b. This long-term education can be accomplished only by Germans themselves. And those few Germans willing and able to do it can be successful only if, under our supervision, media of information are opened to them and closed to those in whom the spirit of aggression survives. It lies with us, through the fact of victory, to place the control of opinion-forming instruments where we will. The success or failure of our information services control will be determined finally by the contribution which it makes to the task of eliminating Nazis and militarists from the control of German information services and of placing that control in the hands of Germans who can be trusted to use it well.
c. Because this German leadership is pitifully small in influence, in numbers and in self confidence, it will have to work for a long time under Allied supervision.

18. Nazis and Militarists
It is vital that Information Control personnel avoid accepting the obvious Nazi as the only enemy. There are two

enemies in Germany – the Nazi, including the Nazi sympathiser, and the German militarist. Neither must be admitted to any position of control in the German information services. The detection of the obvious Nazi will be the less difficult. He can be recognised by his affiliation with the Party. However, many less ardent Nazis and most militarists are not so easily recognized, because they may be affiliated with practically any form of political or social organisation, or even be non-partisans. Broadly speaking, Information Control personnel can well 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. Anyone who has a record of success under the Hitler regime, whether a Party member or not, is also suspect. (See Chapter VI.)

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Source: Allied Forces, Supreme Headquarters, *Manual for the Control of German Information Services*. Place of publication not identified, 1945, pp. 1–3, 5–6.