



CIVIL AFFAIRS: THE FIRST 100

BY DR. TROY SACQUETY

2018 marks 100 years since the beginning of a modern Civil Affairs capability in the U.S. Army. What began as a small, *ad hoc* staff section created in 1918 for the post-World War I occupation of Germany has since grown into an Army Branch. In that span of time, CA created a heritage that deserves to be remembered and celebrated. However, the question is still asked: What was the path that led to the creation of a permanent CA capability?

This essay walks the reader through the impact that the occupation of Germany had on the formation of CA doctrine, staff sections and units leading up to World War II. It also addresses why, even though the U.S. Army conducted CA and CA-like functions in prior conflicts, the modern U.S. Army Civil Affairs Corps does not predate the post-World War I occupation.

The U.S. Army has long conducted roles and tasks similar to Civil Affairs/military government.⁰¹ Examples include Major General Winfield Scott's occupation of Mexico City (1847 to 1848), post-Civil War Reconstruction in the American South (1865 to 1877), military government in Puerto Rico (1898-1900) and the Philippines (1899 to 1913) after the

Spanish-American War, Haiti (1915-1934) and the Dominican Republic (1916-1924). Yet, these experiences did not lead to a permanent U.S. Army capability. Again the question is why. The answer lies in documentation, reflection and action. Those experiences did not generate after action reports that inspired change and promotion of the concept of whether the Army should create a permanent CA capability comprised of dedicated CA professionals.

That does not mean that efforts at documenting the Army's prior efforts in CA/MG were non-existent. After the Spanish-American War, then-Secretary of War, Elihu Root, directed that the Army's efforts during the military occupations of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines be captured in a report.⁰² Undertaken by Charles E. Magoon in the Bureau of Insular Affairs, the mind-numbing 808-page report delved into narrow topics. Examples listed in the table of contents include: "In the matter of the application of the board of harbor works of Ponce, Puerto Rico, to the Government of the United States in securing the payment of a claim asserted by said board of harbor works of Ponce against the Government of Spain for 27,503.06 pesos," and "In the matter of the contract for a market house at Sancti Spiritus, Cuba, and the rights thereunder of Primitivo Gutierrez, a Spanish subject."⁰³ Although a great resource, it was largely written in legal jargon, and therefore not an easily digestible report that sparked greater interest by a larger audience. In short, it did not lead to change.

Likewise, in 1908, the Army Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, published *Military Government*.⁰⁴ It was a compilation of papers presented by the class of 1908, including future General and Army Chief of Staff, then-First Lieutenant George C. Marshall. However, it again did not lead to change. Being produced by the Department of Law, the majority of the papers concern legal aspects of military government. This is further evidence that the Army viewed CA/MG largely as a legal issue rather than as a basic Army capability.

The true beginning of modern U.S. Army Civil Affairs lies the post-World War I occupation of the German Rhineland by the Third U.S. Army from December 1918 until 11 July 1923. The lessons from that experience caused the Army to develop CA doctrine, professional education and create specialized CA/MG units. Furthermore, World War I was the last major conflict in which the U.S. did not have a CA element prior to the end of hostilities.

In the words of Major Truman Smith, the main author of the final report on the post-World War I

occupation, “despite the precedents of military governments in Mexico, California, the Southern States, Cuba, Porto [now Puerto] Rico, Panama, China, the Philippines and elsewhere, the lesson has seemingly not been learned. In none of the service schools devoted to the higher training of officers, has a single course in the nature and scope of military government been established.”⁰⁶ He went on to write that because of this, “the American Army of occupation lacked both training and organization to guide the destinies of nearly 1,000,000 civilians whom the fortunes of war had placed under its temporary sovereignty.”⁰⁶ As incredulous as it sounds, the Army created a Civil Affairs apparatus only after the end of hostilities, while the Army was on the march to occupy Germany. The Army had been so focused on fighting the war that it gave no thought to what would occur afterward. Only when forced into the reality that it would become an occupation force did the Army develop an apparatus to properly handle the civil administration of Germany.

The Army also neglected to prepare personnel for the inevitability of occupation. As a 1938 Army War College study noted, “Personnel trained in civil administration and possessing knowledge of the German nation was lacking. Adequate, accurate and timely information pertaining to the German governmental system, of its functions, limitations or channels of communications was not available to staffs and unit commanders.”⁰⁷ Clearly, in what was at the time the U.S. Army’s most severe test of its expeditionary capability, it had failed to learn from its previous experiences at conducting CA/MG. The reason is that the Army had not established a connection to prior efforts, and had not developed a CA/MG capability. The Army’s experience in the post-World War I occupation of Germany changed that trend. Thus, the post-World War I occupation constitutes the origins from which modern CA evolved.

Colonel Irvin L. Hunt, the officer in charge of Civil Affairs for American Forces in Germany (Third U.S. Army), did his best to ensure that the U.S. Army would not have to rediscover, yet again, that it needed a CA capability in the next war. A visionary, he oversaw the production of a critical after action report on his tenure during the occupation. Titled *American Military Government of Occupied Germany 1918-1920*, it was largely written and edited by Major Truman Smith, but was thereafter dubbed, ‘The Hunt Report.’ The report laid out a succinct and understandable account of how the U.S. Army conducted its CA/MG duties in Germany. Colonel Hunt did not intend for the report to be filed as a footnote. He

COLONEL IRVIN L. HUNT

Born in California on July 11, 1877, Second Lieutenant Irvin L. Hunt, Infantry, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1899. He served in Puerto Rico and the Philippines with the 5th and 19th Infantry Regiments and commanded a company of Philippine Scouts. From 1903 to 1907, he was an instructor and an assistant professor of law and history at West Point. Then-Captain Hunt served with the 6th Infantry and again in the Philippines. In 1912, Major Hunt served in the War Department as Assistant to the Chief, Bureau of Insular Affairs, traveling to Puerto Rico and Santa Domingo to consult with civilian officials.



In 1916, Hunt transferred to the Judge Advocate General’s Department. When the U.S. entered World War I, he was made the Judge Advocate of the Northeastern Department. However, he soon became the Judge Advocate of the 80th Division, Fort Lee, Virginia, and deployed to France in May 1918. Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on Aug. 11, 1918, Hunt transferred to the staff of the Commanding General, II Army Corps. As a staff officer in II Corps, Lt. Col. Hunt served as a liaison officer with the British Second Army Headquarters. Later, when II Corps was attached to the British Fourth Army, Lt. Col. Hunt served during the Second Battle of the Somme. While serving as the Executive Officer, Operations Division, General Staff, Lt. Col. Hunt was promoted to Colonel on Nov. 8, 1918.

With the signing of the Armistice on Nov. 11, 1918, Col. Hunt was posted to the newly-created U.S. Third Army. He drafted plans for how to conduct military government in the sector of Germany assigned by the Allied Command to be occupied by the Americans. Arriving at Coblenz, Germany, Col. Hunt was made the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, American Forces in Germany, serving until April 1920. It was in this position that Col. Hunt secured his legacy by overseeing the production of, *American Military Government of Occupied Germany: 1918-1920*.

Returning to the U.S. in 1920, Col. Hunt transferred to the Quartermaster Corps. He served in several high level assignments, including Executive Officer, Transportation Service, Office of the Quartermaster General, and under the Assistant Secretary of War as Chief of the Planning Branch for industrial mobilization in war. In 1924, he graduated from the Army War College. From 1925 to 1929, he served as the commandant of the Quartermaster School in Philadelphia. Then, from 1930 to 1931 he was the Corps Area Quartermaster, Second Corps Area. He passed away on 21 August 1933, while serving on the Army General Staff in Washington, D.C., and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

All information comes from the Hunt’s obituary, published in the Sixty-Fifth Annual Report of the Association of Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York (Newburgh, New York: Moore Printing Company, 11 June 1934), 207-210.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL TRUMAN SMITH

Lieutenant Colonel Truman Smith was born at West Point, New York, on Aug. 25, 1893. After graduating from Yale University in 1915, he started graduate work in history at Columbia University. His academic career ended when he accepted a commission in March 1916 as a second lieutenant in the 12th Infantry Regiment, New York National Guard. He then joined the Regular Army on Dec. 6, 1916 and served along the Mexican border. When the U.S. entered World War I, he deployed to France, serving with the Third Division in the Aisne and Argonne-Meuse Campaigns. Due to officer casualties, from Oct. 15-27, 1918, Capt. Smith commanded 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, and led that force in clearing the Bois de Foret. He was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions, but that was downgraded to a Silver Star Medal.



Smith's entry into Civil Affairs came immediately after the November 1918 Armistice when he was by name selected by Colonel Irvin L. Hunt, the Officer in Charge of Civil Affairs, American Forces in Germany, to serve as a Civil Affairs officer in the occupation. He supervised German civil administration of the Rhine Province and in the city of Coblenz. Working in the Office of the Chief of Civil Affairs for the U.S. Third Army, he drafted notices and declarations that went out to the German authorities. However, his greatest contribution was that he was the lead writer (8 of 17 chapters) and chief editor of the report *American Government of Occupied Germany: 1918-1920*.

In 1920, Smith began a lengthy period working in the diplomatic circuit. He first served as Assistant Military Attaché to the Netherlands and as a Military Observer to Germany. In 1921, he was designated the Assistant Military Attaché to Germany, with concurrent duty as an assistant Military Attaché to Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. In May 1924, he returned to the United States for assignment in the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2. He then commanded the Service Company, 18th Infantry Regiment, Fort Hamilton, New York, until reporting to the Infantry School for the 1926-27 Advanced Officer's Course. After completing the Command and General School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, he returned to the Infantry School to serve as an instructor. In 1933, he received a posting to Hawaii, serving as a battalion commander with the 27th Infantry until 1935. Smith then received orders to go to Berlin, Germany, for duty as Military Attaché for air, serving concurrent duty as Military Attaché to Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands. One of his biggest achievements in this period was in convincing famed aviator Charles A. Lindbergh to visit Germany to attend the 1936 Olympic Games. Smith scored an intelligence coup when the Luftwaffe eagerly allowed him and Lindbergh access to aviation factories, military aircraft and technological development.

Returning in 1939, Smith was posted to the Military Intelligence Division in the War Department, Washington, D.C. On Jan. 31, 1942, Lt. Col. Smith was medically retired from the U.S. Army; however, on Feb. 23, 1942, due to his expertise on the German military, he was recalled to active duty in the temporary rank of Colonel to serve on the Army G-2 staff. He was later assigned to the Military Intelligence Service as a German Specialist, and routinely briefed General Marshall. For his service, he received the Distinguished Service Medal. Lt. Col. Smith retired after 30 years of service on April 20, 1946. After retiring, he continued as an expert on the German military and helped establish the Bundeswehr. He died on Oct. 3, 1970 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

All information comes from the Truman Smith Service Record, the National Personnel Records Center, Saint Louis, MO.

specifically saw the need for the Army to internalize the lessons learned during the occupation and to create an organization that could perform that mission. In the foreword, he wrote, "It is hoped thereby, that a complete record of our administration in the Rhineland may be preserved, as a basis for the technical study of military government by the general staff of our Army as well as for future historians."⁸

Unlike prior studies, *American Military Government of Occupied Germany, 1918-1920* was a clear, concise and abbreviated account. He was correct in asserting that it presented, "the subject of military government for the first time in our history in such form as to be of real value to military students."⁹ The report, though critical of elements of the U.S. CA/MG effort in World War I, also offered ways to improve future efforts. For instance, an entire chapter analyzed how the U.S., British, French, Belgian and Germans conducted CA/MG, especially with regard to organization.¹⁰ It highlighted successes and failures, providing a future point of study. Col. Hunt's efforts, though not complete in his lifetime, bore fruit.¹¹ In part because of the Hunt Report, the U.S. Army began to study the necessity of employing principles of CA/MG in war planning, and considering the possibility that it should become a permanent staff section.¹²

Although other institutions, such as the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, also looked at military government, the most important to the eventual development of a CA capability were studies conducted at the U.S. Army War College, the Army's academic center for studying warfare.¹³ By 1924, the U.S. Army War College began forming committees to explore if the Army should create a separate Civil Affairs staff section; and if so, what form or where in the general staff such an element should reside. Not surprisingly, one of their main sources of information to study the problem was The Hunt Report.

The 1924 committee, chaired by Col. Hunt, looked at the military governments established in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, Haiti and Santa Domingo. However, the most recent experience, Germany, received the most attention. The officers observed that, in contrast to how the French Army handled military government, "at no time did we apply the principles of general staff control to our military government, as did the French, but gradually approached the British system, without, however, appreciating as fully as did they the vital necessity for a staff system to deal with the vast number of problems of government."¹⁴ Other committees also looked at the problem, and came to the same conclusion, that the Army had a

capability gap. As one officer succinctly put it; “There exists no definite policy for the administration of civil affairs should it be necessary to occupy enemy territory in the future.”¹⁵

As such, follow-on committees increasingly recommended the advisability of creating a CA staff section, although they differed on where it should be placed. Courses of action included placing it within the general staff at the War Department; within a general staff element, such as the G-1, at lower levels; forming it as its own general staff element; or as a separate technical staff element under the Chief of Staff. Furthermore, the committees began to create a role for CA/MG in war plans. Although not very well developed, it was a step towards preventing the scenario that had typified the U.S. Army’s *ad hoc* approach to postwar CA/MG through World War I.

In addition, the committees began to see a requirement for specially trained personnel, instead of simply using whomever was available, or in the case of post-World War I, anyone who spoke German. One member of the 1926-1927 committee forcefully disagreed with the rest of his cohort by urgently recommending the need for a CA staff section and for trained personnel, writing, “There will be a required staff for civil affairs. And that staff will require officers not only of great judgement but of skill and a clear appreciation of the relation of civil affairs to the military.”¹⁶ He continued, “The fact remains that though many of the questions that arise will be such that they necessarily will be considered by the commander, he will require some individual or some group to study them and to prepare a digest of the problem.”¹⁷

Col. Hunt also continued to advocate for the creation of a peacetime Army office that would prepare for CA in times of war staffed with, “properly qualified officers.”¹⁸ He returned to the War College in 1933 to lecture on military government. From experience, Col. Hunt reasoned that:

“The general staff with troops is created very properly for carrying on operations. It is not designed for carrying on military government nor are officers of the general staff selected for that purpose. Therefore, there is no existing division of the general staff which is prepared by training or experience to supervise the vast and complicated machinery of civil government . . . The supreme commander must have a suitable number of specially selected officers available to assist him in handling problems that arise in civil affairs.”¹⁹

Both Col. Hunt’s efforts, and those of War College students advocating for a permanent CA capability, were successful, albeit slowly. First the Army had to create doctrine. While it had not codi-



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fied it into a permanent capability, there had been previous progress in this area.

The first major step occurred during the Civil War, when, in 1863, the Army implemented General Orders No. 100, *Instructions for the Government of Armies, of the United States in the Field*, otherwise known as the Lieber Code after its author, Francis Lieber. While not doctrine, it was revolutionary in that it provided the U.S. Army with overall guidelines that regulated the just treatment of civilians and property in the occupied South.²⁰ After the war, General Orders No. 100 served as the foundation for the development of laws dictating how the U.S. Army operated in occupied territory. As important as the Lieber Code was, it was just another step towards developing formal CA/MG structure, doctrine and training.

The next step was when the War Department published the *Rules of Land Warfare* (1914), which guided how the Army would conduct itself at war. General Orders 100 clearly influenced the *Rules of Land Warfare*. The preface states that, “It will be found that everything vital contained in General Order 100 . . . has been incorporated into this manual.”²¹ However, not until the publication of an updated *Rules of Land Warfare* in 1934, did the document contain a section on military government and establish the need for a CA/MG capability.

The academic efforts since World War I became more concrete as the threat of global war again emerged. Fortunately, the 1934-1935 Army War College Committee

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Civil Affairs instruction at the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia during World War II. U.S. ARMY PHOTO COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



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recommended that the Army create a field manual for CA/MG, and drafted a proposed manual. This was again recommended by the 1938-1939 committee. While never adopted, the proposed manual provided an outline to the Army for CA/MG doctrine.²² Formal recognition came on July 30, 1940, when the War Department published its first CA/MG doctrinal publication, FM 27-5: *Military Government*.²³ Its publication, along with its Dec. 22, 1943 revision, guided U.S. Army and Navy CA efforts in World War II and after.

With doctrine came the need for specialized education and training. On Jan. 6, 1942, General George Marshall approved the creation of a school to prepare officers for CA/MG duties. Since many of the tasks paralleled civilian functions, a university was considered the best place for such a school. Being only a few hours away from Washington, D.C., the Army staff saw the University of Virginia as an ideal location. When the university offered to rent facilities cheaply, the Army Provost Marshal, then in charge of CA/MG, agreed. The result was the first formal U.S. Army Civil Affairs training program. The School of Military Government at the University of Virginia began instructing classes in May 1942.²⁴

The school instructed officers in staff-level military government functions. However, because the School of Military Government could not meet the growing demand for trained CA personnel, the Army exported the program to other civilian universities throughout the United States. Since they could not meet the growing need, the Army also taught CA courses at Fort Custer, Michigan; the Civil Affairs Staging Area at Fort Ord/Presidio of Monterey, California; and in a number of overseas schools. All of these personnel required a CA/MG staff section to develop policy and guidance.

To manage its CA/military government efforts, the Army created the Military Government Division, established in July 1942 under the Office of the Provost Marshal General. However, it was small in size and lacked influence. That, compounded by the sheer number of CA/MG matters experienced by Lt. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower after the invasion of North Africa on Nov. 8, 1942, prompted the formation of the Civil Affairs Division under the War Department in March 1943. Led by Maj. Gen. John H. Hilldring, it formulated policy for CA/MG units. These units ranged in size from the European

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With millions of refugees, the Korean War once again highlighted the need for U.S. Army Civil Affairs. U.S. ARMY PHOTO COURTESY OF THE USASOC HISTORIAN OFFICE

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The patch of the European Civil Affairs Division. The ECAD had 7,800 soldiers organized into three regiments.

Civil Affairs Division, with three regiments (7,800 personnel), to nine-man CA Detachments spread throughout combat units. In addition, the Army activated numerous Military Government Groups for service in the Far East.

These elements worked closely near or with combat forces, helping both to address the concerns of civilian populations and stabilizing rear areas so that combat commanders could remain focused on the enemy. After World War II, CA/MG elements proved to be of great utility in helping to stabilize post-war Germany, Austria, Italy, Japan and Korea.

Despite the progress made and a clear need defined, CA/MG units nearly disappeared from the Army with the post-war draw-down. The June 25, 1950 invasion of South Korea by the Communist North, however, reversed this trend. CA elements proved of such utility during the Korean War that the Army finally recognized the requirement for a permanent peacetime capability.²⁵ On Aug. 17, 1955, the U.S. Army Reserve established the Civil Affairs/Military Branch. This was formal recognition, first begun by the post-World War I Hunt report, that CA was a necessary Army function.



As this essay has shown, modern CA evolved from events started in 1918. Although an *ad hoc* effort at first, post-World War I CA/MG efforts

revealed that the Army's approach was deficient. Their efforts in producing a guiding document in the form of *American Military Government of Occupied Germany, 1918-1920*, that drove change. World War I was the last major U.S. conflict in which CA/MG efforts were an afterthought. Prior to the conclusion of World War II, and in every conflict thereafter, the U.S. Army utilized CA/MG doctrine, education and specialized units. Therefore, it is from the Army's post-World War I occupation of Germany, not efforts beforehand, that the U.S. Army saw the need to adopt a permanent Civil Affairs capability. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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NOTES 01. For the purposes of this article, the terms 'Civil Affairs' and 'Military Government' can be thought of as the same. Military government was a Civil Affairs activity. 02. Walter M. Hudson, *Army Diplomacy: American Military Occupation and Foreign Policy After World War II* (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 34. Elihu Root was a reformer and strove to professionalize the U.S. Army. 03. Charles E. Magoon, *The Law of Civil Government in Territory Subject to Military Occupation by the Military Forces of the United States* (Washington: D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), 7-8. 04. H.A. White and E.A. Kregar, *Military Government: Papers Prepared by the Class of 1908*, Army Staff College (Leavenworth, Kansas: Department of Law, Army Staff College, 1908). 05. Irvin L. 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Hunt, *American Military Government of Occupied Germany*, 333-345. 11. COL Hunt died in 1933. 12. Other sources also contributed. For instance, Henry T. Allen, *The Rhineland Occupation* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Boobs Merrill, 1927) also was a resource, but was not available until the later War College committees. 13. "Civil Affairs Studies at the Army War College, 130-1, Contained in "History of the Civil Affairs Division, War Department Special Staff, World War II to March 1946, Office of the Chief of Military History, Center of Military History, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., See also Harry A. Smith, *Military Government* (Fort Leavenworth: The General Service Schools Press, 1920). 14. J.B. 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Hunt, "Some Principles of Military Government" (lecture, U.S. Army War College, Washington D.C., 28 February 1933, located in U.S. Army War College Curriculum Archives Curriculum 1931-1932 Course Index Vol. 1 G-1, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Command (USAHEC). 19. Irvin L. Hunt, "Some Principles of Military Government." 20. A copy of General Orders 100 can be found on the internet at the Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/governarmies00unitrich>, accessed 20 June 2018. 21. War Department: Office of the Chief of Staff, *Rules of Land Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), 7. A copy of the 1914 version of the Rules of Land Warfare can be found on the internet at the Library of Congress, http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/rules_warfare-1914.pdf, accessed 20 June 2018. 22. The proposed Military Government manuals can be found in "The Army War College, Washington, D.C., Course at the Army War College, 1934-1935, G-1, Report of Committee No. 6, Subject: Provost Marshal General's Plan Military Government," 1 November 1934, file 1-1935-6, U.S. Army War College Curriculum File, USAHEC and "The Army War College, Fort Humphreys, D.C., Course at the Army War College, 1938-1939, G-1, Supplement No. 1 to Report of Committee No. 5, Subject: Military Government," 2 November 1938, file 1-1939-5B, Vol. 11, U.S. Army War College Curriculum File, USAHEC. 23. On 1 October 1940, the War Department also published a new edition of FM 27-10: *Rules of Land Warfare*. In chapter 10, "Military Occupation and Government of Enemy Territory," it also addressed CA/MG. It can be found on the internet at https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/rules_warfare-1940.pdf, accessed 22 June 2018. 24. Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944-1946* (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1975), 6-7. For more on the creation of the school, see Harry L. Coles and Albert K. Weinberg