MILITARY GOVERNMENT

WEEKLY INFORMATION BULLETIN

OFFICE OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT FOR GERMANY, U. S.
CONTROL OFFICE APO 742 U. S. ARMY
A n important link between the German people of the US Zone and the outside world during the current occupation has been through DANA, the news service created, developed and controlled by US Military Government. All German-language newspapers, radio stations and other informational media in US occupied areas are provided by DANA with news of the world as well as news of developments within Germany.

The value of DANA was voiced by Brig. Gen. Robert A. McClure, Director of Information Control, OMGUS, on the first anniversary early this month of the origination of the name for the news service, when he said it "has played an effective part in the creation of German newspapers which would be responsible, democratic and truthful vehicles of public information."

"The press and news agencies of no country are perfect instruments of information," added the OIC Director. "They are subject to all the hazards which attend accurate and objective news-gathering and news-distribution. Critics of the German press and news agency are prone to forget this, sometimes, and they overlook, too, the background of destruction and the difficulties which attended the rebirth of the German press.

"It is the hope and the belief of Military Government that DANA and the forty licensed German newspapers ... will continue to serve as vehicles of truthful public information and courageous opinion in the months and years to come."

ORIGINALLY GNS

The name of DANA is nearly three months younger than the organization which was originally set up as the German News Service. Rather than translate the original name directly into German, DANA was devised by the GNS staff on 6 September 1945 from the initials of the Deutsche Allgemeine Nachrichten Agentur, meaning German General News Agency.

DANA, with its main offices in Bad Nauheim, near Frankfurt, and bureaus in all the important cities of the US areas, is staffed by a small group of Americans in key...
supervisory positions and nearly 150 German writers and editors, most of whom received their journalistic training while working with the service. Its development has reached the point where negotiations have been initiated to organize it as a licensed enterprise owned and operated on a cooperative basis by the publishers of the newspapers in the US Zone.

The 40 licensed German newspapers, the US official zonal newspaper Die Neue Zeitung and the six radio stations are serviced by a news file of approximately 15,000 words a day over the Heilschreiber, a German-type radio teleprinter. They also receive a supplementary feature service and picture service.

UNBIASED NEWS PRESENTATION

From the beginning, DANA has sought to instill in the German press the idea of complete, factual reporting through unbiased presentation of the news, to replace the traditional German style of mixing fact and opinion and of writing news stories in a leisurely, discursive fashion which made objective accounts rare. US editors of DANA insisted on the use of American newswriting techniques such as the lead which tells the who, what, how, when and where of a story, and the building-up of detail so that a story can be trimmed from the bottom without losing essential information.

This policy did not find favor at first among the Germans, but gradually German editors and readers accepted these news techniques as conducive to greater objectivity. Pursuance of this policy was strengthened by the fact that public opinion surveys showed that the German people, wearied by years of tendentious writing, desired newspapers with news rather than opinion.

There was no news and informational service in Germany at the end of the war. That of the Hitler regime, the DNB (Deutsche Nachrichten Buero), had been completely naziified and integrated into the propaganda machinery. The personnel, because of its Nazi affiliations, could not be retained. Facilities had been destroyed, scattered and lost.

Into this void late in June 1945 moved a small group under direction of the Psychological Warfare Division of SHAEF, later the Information Control Division, to set up a news service. In this group were two US Army officers who had been with PWD during the war, six experienced American newsmen who had been specially trained in New York and London for this operation, and half a dozen bilingual enlisted men who had newspaper experience.

The group set up the German News Service in a single top-floor room in a hotel building in Bad Nauheim. Some of the newsmen were sent out to establish bureaus in Munich, Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. One moved to Berlin with the first American entry into that city. Equipment was scarce, communications were almost nil and additional experienced personnel was slow in arriving. The most important news operations for the Germans at the time was the Publishing Operations Section of PWD which was supervising the US Army-established and operated German-language newspapers in various cities and towns of the US occupied areas. The activities of these newspapers ceased as soon as German newspapers were licensed in the same cities.

SOURCES OF NEWS

POS and GNS cooperated in exchanging news and coordinating operations. Local German news was brought generally to Bad Nauheim from the GNS bureaus by Army courier. World news was obtained from the Allied Press Service, a joint British-American news operation in London, and later from the United States Press Service in Luxembourg and in New York. Arrangements also were made to obtain German news from other occupied zones.

To keep American and Allied MG personnel informed on the news being furnished the German press, GNS established the “News of Germany,” a four-page paper issued three times a week. This was published at first on a mobile printing plant which had moved with Psychological Warfare

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units from North Africa, through Sicily, Italy and France and finally into Germany. Later publication was shifted to a German printing plant in Bad Nauheim.

When the Frankfurter Rundschau began publishing late in July 1945 as the first licensed newspaper in the US Zone, it was serviced with news copy by motor courier. However, shortly afterwards the Hellschreiber was set up with a reclaimed German transmitter. Each newly licensed newspaper was equipped with a Hellschreiber receiver and the flow of news copy was speeded. More bureaus were established in Nuremberg, Stuttgart and Heidelberg, and they initiated their own systems for collecting news reports in their territories. Late in the fall of 1945 a teletype circuit was constructed connecting the bureaus with the main office, whose operation expanded until it occupied the entire hotel building in Bad Nauheim and adjoining buildings. Most of the stories were written at first in English and translated into German, but now the bulk of the daily file is written originally in German.

WORLD NEWS FILE INCREASED

To increase the world news file, arrangements were made with the Associated Press, United Press and International News Service, leading American news wire services, to furnish DANA with the news reports in exchange for German news from DANA. Recently these agencies were given permission to negotiate directly with the German licensed newspapers. AP and now UP are serving a number of the papers. INS and Reuters are serving DANA.

One of the major difficulties experienced by the American editor of DANA was the finding of politically acceptable German personnel who could be depended upon to carry out the standards and techniques of DANA. The German press had been thoroughly nazified under Hitler and Goebbels. Almost every person who had been connected with newspaper work during the 12 years before the advent of occupation had Nazi affiliations which automatically barred him from continuing in any capacity with informational services.

A few experienced German newspapermen who had opposed Nazism had not been following their profession during most of the Hitler regime. Others had been living in foreign countries and out of contact with internal German conditions for a long time. Some had suffered in concentration camps and were in poor health. The individual newspapers were in need of trained personnel as much as the wire service.

EX-PW’S AMONG PERSONNEL

DANA found some of its most promising Germans among returned prisoners of war. Some of these had not been Nazis, as they had been in the army during much of the Nazi rule. Also they had had opportunity to study democratic ways and become oriented in the policies and practices instituted by Military Government. However, the majority of applicants for work with DANA had no experience in reporting or editing. They had to be taught the fundamentals of writing as well as American techniques while they were working on the central office desks or in the various bureaus.

The American editors and bureau chiefs, all of whom had many years of experience in reporting and editing on American newspapers, became teachers in addition to their administrative and news-gathering duties. They also had to overcome the differences in languages to make themselves sufficiently explicit to see that copy was handled in the manner in which MG policies and American newspaper practices dictated it should be handled.

Even with the approach of the licensing of DANA to the German publishers, the work of the American personnel is continuing. About 15 of them, with some 15 months of experience in building up and training the German personnel of DANA, will become press control supervisors to see that their German successors carry out the policies and practices that have been instituted.