

**“How did the British imperial practice of Indirect rule inform
both the occupation policy in the British zone of Germany,
and the future of Germany in 1945-1949”**

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Contents

Introduction

Section One- Why indirect rule?

Chapter one- "Politically they are amongst the most backwards" Ideological motivations for indirect rule in the British zone

Chapter two- Practical motivations

Section Two- Britain's new colony: The policies of indirect rule

Chapter three- Indirect rule up to the *regierung* level

Chapter four- Indirect rule at a federal level

Chapter five- Indirect rule and central administration

Section Three- Germany reformed?

Chapter six- Democracy through indirect rule?

Chapter seven- Indirect rule and the Security of Europe

Chapter eight- Transformation of Germany

Conclusion

Introduction

The second world war will always be remembered as one of if not the most important war of the modern era. The loss of military and civilian life was unprecedented, the horrors of the war unimaginable. The actions of the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler will never be forgotten marking as they did the most abhorrent behaviour of mankind. Despite many setbacks, and periods where defeat seemed inevitable the Allied powers of the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France as well as numerous other countries emerged victorious. On 7th May 1945 General Alfred Jodl the chief of staff of the *OberKommando der Wehrmacht* signed the instruments of the unconditional military surrender of the German armed forces to the western allies in Reims, France.¹ A day later Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel signed the unconditional military surrender to the Soviet Union and other allied representatives in Berlin.² The war was finally over but there remained the question of the occupation of Germany. The failure of the entente powers at the end of the first world war to effectively occupy Germany and shape the future of the nation were perceived as being the underlying causes for the Second World War. All the allied powers agreed that the mistakes of the inter-war period had to be avoided and that the threat of Germany and in particular the threat of German military resurgence had to be addressed. The allied powers benefitted from the fact that unlike the First World War, they planned not only to invade Germany proper, but to occupy the entire country after hostilities had ended. The division of Germany into four occupation zones was agreed after the unconditional surrender of Germany in July 1945 at the Potsdam conference.³ The aims of the occupation for all the allies was ostensibly the denazification and demilitarization of Germany alongside attempts to reform German society. For the Western allies this meant introducing democracy to the German people. For the Soviet Union, this meant shaping Germany along socialist lines, and ensuring that their zone of occupation could be economically exploited in the short term as well as amenable to Soviet interests, with a socialist regime leading it for the long term.

There were many methods by which the victorious powers could govern their respective occupation zones. One of these was through indirect rule. Indirect policies as a whole can be considered to involve, the following main strands: Support for pre-existing elites within society, the placing of elites that favour the occupying or colonising power or suit the occupier or colonisers policy in positions of power, maintaining laws and norms and values deemed acceptable or beneficial by the occupying power, focusing on giving indigenous populations control of local affairs, and to some degree listening to advice from local rulers and elites on how to shape subsequent policy. The driving force behind the decision to employ indirect rule relates both to influence of pre-existing imperial thought processes and the application of an imperial frame of reference, as well as practical reasons for controlling large populations (This will be explored further later). In the British zone indirect rule practices and policies that had been formed through the colonial experience were enacted by the Military Government to seek not only to govern Germany but also to reform its society.

The policies of all the victorious powers shaped the destiny of not only their individual zones but of Germany as a whole. A direct result of the occupation was the partition of Germany between

¹ R. Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2009), p. 130

² Ibid, p. 131

³ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People: Germans under the British* (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen Publishing, 2001), p. 13

the Federal republic of Germany (FRG) in the West and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East.⁴ All too often scholars have focused on the role of America alone when discussing the occupation, this is due both to the fact that American sources were made available earlier than the sources for the other occupying powers, and also due to the fact that America was seen as being the key Western nation leading the occupation. Throughout the Cold War and beyond, America was perceived as having the most influence due to their cultural and economic dominance.⁵ However, this neglects the vital contribution of the British to the occupation and to the shaping of the future German state. Key parties in the FRG like the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) had centres of power in the British zone. Indeed, Konrad Adenauer the first chancellor of the FRG had worked in the British occupation zone. Other key individuals in the Adenauer administration such as the Minister of the Interior Robert Lehr had worked directly for the British in their zone of occupation.⁶ Historians agree that both the British and the Americans shaped the nature of the FRG through early support of conservative figures, experienced administrators and traditional elites over often more overt Anti-Nazi groups who were too socialist or linked to closely to the Soviet Union.⁷ This practice of supporting elites and more conservative individuals (establishment figures) to preserve stability alongside working within any existing or pre-existing system of governance or laws closely echoes the British imperial practices of Indirect rule. Despite this the impact of British Indirect rule policies and practices has not been extensively studied in regards to the occupation of the British zone in Germany.

This thesis is seeking to answer the question “How did the British imperial practice of Indirect rule inform occupation policy in the British zone of Germany and the future of Germany in 1945-1949?”. The questions of why imperial practices were adopted, if indeed they were will be answered. The imperial background of the key individuals in the British zone alongside those of the institutions will be explored. Most importantly the practices of indirect rule will be identified and British policies will be evaluated to see if they were similar to those of indirect rule. Finally, the impact and success of the policies will be examined, and their role in shaping the FRG divulged. Through answering all of these facets a comprehensive overview of how indirect rule informed the occupation policy in the British zone of Germany can be provided. Before answering these questions previous study of the British zone in Germany must be explored. More pressing though is to prove the validity of comparing Imperial practices to those of Occupation, considering that each are traditionally considered to be quite distinct. This will build on the cutting-edge work of Camillo Erlichman, by exploring in greater depth all the facets of indirect rule in Germany.

Occupations are viewed as being essentially temporary in nature.⁸ The victorious power occupies land when hostilities are still ongoing, before vacating it after the conclusion of peace. If a nation remains in territory it did not previously own, it is considered to have annexed it. There have of course been exceptions to this rule during history. Two examples stand out, the occupation of

⁴ F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), pp. XXXII-XXXIII

⁵ R.L. Boehling, *A Question of Priorities: Democratic Reform and Economic Recovery in Post-war Germany* (New York, Oxford: Berghahn books, 1996), p. 9

⁶ C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise? Indirect Rule in the British Zone of Germany and in Western Europe during the Long 1940s* (under review with Central European History), pp. 23-24.

⁷ See the conclusion of R.L. Boehling, *A Question of Priorities* for the impact of American policies and I.D. Turner ‘Introduction the British Occupation and its impact on Germany’ in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 1989). As well as C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?* For the impact of British policies

⁸ P.M.R. Stirk, *The politics of Military Occupation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 42-43

France from 1815-1818⁹ and the occupation of the Rhineland from 1918-1930.¹⁰ In both cases the victorious powers occupied territory that was not their own after the cessation of hostilities. However, these occupations were still always considered to be temporary. The Occupation of France was mandated to last for a maximum of five years, the Rhineland occupation for fifteen. In both cases the occupations ended early. Also, these occupations were at least ostensibly only military in nature. While occupation is considered to be temporary, Empire was considered to be long-term, for some individuals they perceived it as an everlasting situation. Using 'Terra Nullis' European powers annexed vast swathes of the world in order to exploit them, or for geopolitical gain.¹¹ While Britain expressed the view that they would grant independence to their colonies, and indeed gave commonwealth status to white settler colonies, there was no end date for empire. For all intents and purposes colonies were annexed to the metropole for perpetuity.

This creates the impression then that imperial practices cannot be applied to the study of the occupation of Germany, after all Germany was never annexed into the Allied powers and that had never been the wish of the allies themselves (an exception could be made for France and the Saar).¹² The occupation of Germany though was uniquely distinct from anything that had come before it. Its distinctiveness arose before the occupation even took place, indeed before Allied troops had even entered German territory. The occupation of Germany was based around the concept of unconditional surrender, as set out by the United Kingdom, Soviet Union and United States of America at the Yalta conference.¹³ This had not been used before, the allied powers would wield supreme authority in their occupation zones and there would be no central German government (although some practical German central administrative bodies would remain). The allied powers would however make use of Germans at a local and regional level. This emphasis on unconditional surrender and the lack of a central German government went against the Hague convention act 1907 covering occupation.¹⁴ Indeed, the nature of the occupation of Germany, seems to have more in common with empire, with the distinction of course that the return of self-governance to the German people was always a priority. But the emphasis on only using trustworthy Germans at local and regional level, as well as the aspirations to reform German society in the image of the individual allied powers, relate closely to imperial practices especially those of indirect rule. Due to the unique nature of the occupation the allied powers had to draw upon their experiences, in the British case they drew upon their vast colonial archive, as inspiration to provide tools for how to administer their zone of occupation. The distinction between empire and occupation in Germany was therefore blurred. The long-standing distinction between empire and occupation has however meant that the

⁹ For a good overview of the army of occupation in France see T. D. Veve, 'Wellington and the army of occupation in France' *International history review*, vol 11:1 (1989), pp. 98-108.

¹⁰ For an overview of the occupation of the Rhineland see M. Pawley, *Watch on the Rhine: the military occupation of the Rhineland* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007).

¹¹ P.K. Nayar, *The postcolonial studies dictionary* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2015), pp. 153-154

¹² For an in-depth analysis of France's policy in the Saar, see J. Freymond, *The Saar conflict 1945-1955* (Stevens: London, 1960).

¹³ 'Statement by Churchill on the Principle of unconditional surrender' HC Deb vol.407, col.423, 18th January 1945 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954* (Oxford University Press: London, 1955).

¹⁴ It is commonly held that the occupation was in breach of Article 43 of the Hague convention 1907: Art. 43. The authority of the legitimate power having in fact passed into the hands of the occupant, the latter shall take all the measures in his power to restore, and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety, while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/ART/195-200053?OpenDocument> [accessed 25/05/2017] see also P.M.R. Stirk, *The politics of Military Occupation*, pp. 42-43

study of how one informs or may shape the other is only marginally explored, not just in regards to the Occupation of Germany but even more broadly.

It would seem then that the imperial aspect of the occupation should be one that has been tackled by scholars considering the British zone of occupation. This is not the case. While authors considering the British occupation, zone will nearly always mention in passing the imperial attitudes of the British occupiers, their analysis rarely goes further. Patricia Meehan briefly explores the effect that imperial attitudes had on relations between the occupiers and the German people¹⁵ but not to any depth. Only Camillo Erlichman has explored the relationship between Indirect rule policies and the British occupation.¹⁶ In his yet unpublished article, Erlichman identifies the policies and broad aims that Britain used in their occupation that had their roots in empire. These range from the use of political officers, to more broad policies of supporting pre-existing elites and groups that were perceived as being best placed to preserve order and stability. He also identified the result of indirect rule as shaping the future of politics in Europe during the post-war period, along elite-led lines, where establishment parties founded and consisting of elites held power. His work does not in great depth cover why indirect rule was used, the broader spectrum of indirect policies employed, or whether indirect rule was successful in terms of the British objective of democratisation. Indeed this study will cover these areas and the impact of indirect rule beyond the fact that it shaped post-war politics will also be investigated. Overall previous studies have used 'empire as an analytical lens in order to explain the use of indirect rule in Germany, sometimes drawing upon links to previous imperial experiences.

While the imperial aspect of the occupation is understudied, this is not the case for the British occupation and the broader historiography must be referred to gain a more complete understanding of the course and results of the British occupation. Before the 1980's little work was produced considering the British zone of occupation besides the official histories of the occupation by F.S.V. Donnison.¹⁷ This was both due to the lack of available British sources, as material had not yet been released to the public, and because most research considered either the Americans or the Soviets over the British. As an official history Donnison's work is undoubtedly biased. The occupation is in effect framed as a successful and necessary event that had to occur to ensure that Germany would not return to its aggressive ways. The work predominantly considers how the occupation was organised, rather than any of the effects of the occupation. Donnison makes it clear that the British relied much more on civil administrators than military individuals, as well as making it clear that for ostensibly practical reasons, Britain wished for greater German self-government as soon as possible, as well as the fact that Britain wanted an allied high commissioner to govern Germany over military rule. Indeed, an allied high commission was installed in 1949 to oversee the continuation of the occupation after the formation of the FRG.¹⁸

After the 1980's work considering the British zone moved away from merely considering how the occupation was organised towards exploring the effect of the occupation, without considering the particular effect that imperial policies may have had. Much of this work focused on the effect of certain policies and how successful they were such as denazification, or on the impact of the

¹⁵ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People: Germans under the British* (London and Chester Springs: Peter Owen Publishers, 2001).

¹⁶ C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?*

¹⁷ F.S. V Donnison C.B. E, *Civil Affairs and Military Government Central Organization and Planning* (London H.M Stationary Office, 1966). see also *Civil Affairs and Military Government, North-West Europe, 1944-1946* (London: H.M stationary Office, 1961).

¹⁸ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p. 265.

occupation on relations between the British occupiers and the German people and how those relations changed overtime.¹⁹ Work also considered the effect of the British on the development of democracy in Germany. Here many links are made not only with the fact that the British often supported conservative or elite elements shaping the nature of political parties in the FRG, but that Britain also wished to shape democracy in their zone along British parliamentary lines, due to an arrogant belief in the supremacy of the British system of governance.²⁰ Of course, the British were not highly successful in these aims, German democracy does not seem to be fully shaped along British lines in any meaningful way. This may not have been a failing of British policy, but more due to the fact that the major powers of the USA and USSR, exerted more overall influence, especially influence on German democracy after the occupation had ended, when both the FRG, and the DDR were the frontline of the Cold War in Europe.

Clearly there is much scope to further explore the impact of indirect rule and empire on the occupation of Germany. Initially it must be defined what exactly is meant by the term indirect rule, and what indeed was its relevance to the British empire. This must be understood before any judgements on the impact of such terms can be made. The idea of Indirect rule was not new to the colonial archive of Britain. Elements of indirect rule had existed in British colonies since the conquering of the Raj in the 18th century by the East India Company. To facilitate the governing of such a vast area of land the East India Company and later the British Raj depended on the help of friendly local rulers: the so-called princely states. While Indirect rule had been in the British colonial archive for over a hundred years, it was in Nigeria, under the governorship of Fredrick Lugard that it reached its zenith. Lugard used the existing sultan of Sokoto and the other lesser Emirs of Northern Nigeria alongside settler administrators to govern Northern Nigeria. He took his experiences from his governorship of Nigeria to write a seminal text on Indirect rule- the Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa.²¹ This work served as guidance for further British rule in West Africa and beyond. Within the tome, the various ways in which imperial rule can be discharged in Africa are outlined, with indirect rule proclaimed to be the best. For Lugard indirect rule meant that “native chiefs” were an integral part of the administration with status equal to that of British administrators, who would be responsible for local level administration, predominantly following laws that pre-existed British rule while being guided and influenced by the overarching British colonial authorities. Lugard also describes the limits that indirect rule placed on native rulers, such as the fact that they couldn’t raise their own military forces, enforce their own taxes or hire non-natives to their administration, etc.

This understanding of indirect rule consisting of native rule alongside British administration, with a necessary support of pre-existing elites friendly to Britain, is shared by scholars of empire. Michael Crowder, one of the most important historians of West African colonialism, describes indirect rule as “the use of indigenous political institutions for the purposes of local government”²², while also making the distinction that there were two types of indirect rule. The first was interventionist indirect rule which aimed to develop indigenous political institutions to make them more effective, and so they could adapt to the changing situation under colonial rule, resident political officers would play a key role in this through guiding local rulers.²³ The second type of indirect rule was non-

¹⁹ See P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, and I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 1989).

²⁰ I.D. Turner ‘Introduction the British Occupation and its impact on Germany’ in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*.

²¹ F. Lugard, *the Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1922).

²² M. Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule* (Hutchinson and Co.: London, 1968), p. 169

²³ *Ibid*, p.169

interventionist, where the focus was on minimal interference in local affairs.²⁴ Even authors critical of indirect rule agree that its focus was on using existing institutions, or at least working through existing elites in order to carry out local administration.²⁵ For this work when indirect rule practices are referred to it is related to what Crowder identified as interventionist indirect rule. The British aimed to shape local German administration through friendly Germans in their zone of occupation.

In terms of the sources that will be used, there is unsurprisingly a vast quantity of primary material concerning the British zone of occupation. Most sources that will be used in this paper will be foreign office papers, particularly those originating from the Control commission for Germany (British element). These papers range from specific reports on political developments or the nature of the administration to correspondence between MP's and the authorities in Germany. To support these sources other Foreign office papers from different departments will also be used. Aside from the foreign office material in the 1955 published collection of primary material "Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954". While this volume holds relatively little British documents it is useful, as it contains many of the laws passed by the Allied control commission, as well as correspondence concerning the formation of the FRG, and several specific statements made by Ernest Bevin (Foreign secretary) made to the House of Commons concerning the occupation. Due to language constraints and a lack of access to German sources, or those of the other occupying powers, this research focuses solely on the British zone, through the eyes of British sources. Where possible the opinions of Germans concerning British policy are referred to, especially those of Konrad Adenauer. By only using British sources the focus of the research is narrower, but still allows insight into the practices of indirect rule in the British zone.

Before the policies of indirect rule are investigated, the reasons why the British decided to apply policies and more generally imperial thinking to the occupation will be considered. Two threads of reasoning behind the choices Britain made in their occupation zone between 1945-1949 can be identified, these relate to ideological factors and practical factors which swayed British planning and official thinking to indirect rule along imperial lines.

²⁴ Ibid, p.169

²⁵ P. K. Tibenderana, 'the irony of indirect rule in Sokoto Emirate, Nigeria, 1903-1944', *African Studies Review*, vol. 31:1 (1988), pp. 67-92

“Politically they are among the most backward”²⁶

Ideological motivations for indirect rule in the British zone.

It is undeniable that part of the reasoning for the British to employ indirect rule onto their zone of occupation in Germany, was that they applied imperial thinking in regards to the German character and German political life. It is apparent the major driving force behind the promulgation of the British empire was to guarantee free trade and British dominance within a free trade system. However imperial thinking centred to an extent on the superiority of Britain compared to other cultures also underpinned empire. Imperial thinking as used in this thesis refers to the way that the British perceived their own place in the world hierarchy. How they perceived native populations as being inferior to Western civilisation and indeed of needing to be transformed and reformed to a greater or lesser extent, through a form of ‘liberal imperialism’ that was not centred on merely exploiting local populations.²⁷ This imperial thinking cast the German character as being somehow more backwards and predisposed to violence, cunning, and demagogue worship. German political life was seen as backwards, undeveloped, and extremely weak. This was coupled with an innate belief in the cultural superiority of Britain, particularly in regards to systems of governance. The low opinion of the German nation and people, as well as the belief in British superiority was in part a response to the Second World War, and indeed the First World War, both were conflicts where Britain, along with its allies emerged victorious over the Germans. This belief in the inferiority of the local population, expressed through seeing them as emotional, prone to aggression, and in need of being educated in ways of governance, was prevalent in the British empire. It can be inferred that as many of those who played a role in the British administration of their zone in Germany had personal experience of the empire. This implicitly imperial way of perceiving Britain’s role in Germany, led to the use of indirect rule. Britain applied the practices and policies which they used to govern and shape their colonies, to attempt to shape the future of a state in the heart of Europe. Other ideological motivations must also be explored that may have influenced the decision to use indirect rule in Germany.

Firstly, perhaps the key way in which imperial thinking influenced the British decision to use indirect rule to control their occupation zone in Germany was due to the Imperial background of the many of the most senior figures involved not only in the Control Commission for Germany (CCG (BE)) but also the military within the British zone of occupation. Field Marshal Montgomery, the first commander-in-chief of the British army of the Rhine, who exerted considerable influence in the opening months of the occupation, had extensive experience within the empire. During the inter-war era, he served in Ireland during the war of independence, he then undertook a tour of duty in India between 1931 and 1937, before commanding the British forces that crushed the Palestinian Arab revolt in 1938-1939.²⁸ While of course Montgomery’s colonial experience was predominantly that of conflict it is likely that he would have absorbed the overall colonial experience when serving abroad, particularly the experience of colonial governance. It was not just Field Marshal Montgomery who had colonial experience. Air Vice-Marshal Hugh Champion de Crespigny had commanded air forces in India, and was overall commander of air forces in Iraq during the Second

²⁶ The National Archives, Kew, FO 1049/45, HQ/2149 (SEC), *Report- The German Character*, March 1945, p.1

²⁷ B. Porter, *British Imperialism: What the Empire wasn’t* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), pp. 37-39.

²⁸ See chapter three in Field Marshal B. Montgomery, *The memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery* (London; Collins, 1958), pp. 38-49.

World War. After he retired he was the regional commissioner for Schleswig-Holstein.²⁹ A position he held until 1948. Civilian administrators also had imperial backgrounds, W.H Ingrams who was a senior civil servant, responsible for heading the administrative and local government branch of the CCG (BE),³⁰ also had an imperial background. In a meeting discussing administrative, local and regional government, he directly refers to his experience as a colonial administrator in order to come to a decision in regards to political meetings in the British zone.³¹ Indeed Ingrams successfully brokered a peace agreement between warring Bedouin tribes in 1936.³² The reason that having key figures involved in the occupation coming from an imperial background meant that their knowledge of population control, and of reshaping a society and its institutions came from an imperial frame of reference. It was almost unavoidable that they would use the same frame of reference in regards to Germany, because that was what they were used to and because imperial thinking and the practices and policies of indirect rule must have been at the forefront of their minds. As key figures had imperial backgrounds they viewed the occupation through an imperial lens, and therefore applied imperial solutions. It could also be viewed that an imperial background would lead to the imposition of indirect rule for practical reasons, as it was the system of governance that colonial soldiers or administrators were used to working under. This would mean that they would make the conscious decision to use indirect ruling practices, as they pulled on the practical experience of governance that they wielded. As a whole then having imperial and colonial experiences created an ideological and practical impetus for the British to govern their occupation zone of Germany via indirect rule.

The influence of imperial thinking led to the British perceiving the German character in a negative light, as something that needed reforming. Imperial thinking created a divide between the superior character of the British compared to the local population. Both within the Control CCG (BE) and the broader British government and Military there was the perception that the German people were not truly Western or even Eastern European, instead forming a culture that was a mixture of the two, unique yet somehow inferior. A long treatise on the German character describes the Germans as extremist, emotional, two-faced, lacking a sense of morality, and harbouring a deep-seated sense of inferiority, most damningly claiming that the “German character is in many ways primitive”.³³ This report encapsulates the British thinking of the German character as being malign, and in need of reform. The links between such descriptions of the German character, and the racist views of indigenous populations in Africa or Asia is clear. The result of an imperial frame of reference resulting in the German character being seen as inferior was the belief that the Germans had to be guided by the British, that their negative character traits had to be reformed. The fact that the British in 1945 viewed the German character and society as essentially inferior, and in such a negative fashion, a view that they also applied in regards to the indigenous populations of empire, surely impacted the decision making in regards to what policies should be used to control Germany, and shows that they were being influenced by imperial thinking.³⁴ As the British viewed the Germans and indigenous populations as being inferior, this shows how imperial thinking coloured the British perceptions of how to control Germany. They applied imperial thinking, with its explicit vision of

²⁹ TNA, FO 938/100, *Draft letter to John Dugdale M.P.*, Undated, p.1.

³⁰ C. Knowles, 2014, “WINNING THE PEACE: THE BRITISH IN OCCUPIED GERMANY, 1945-1948”, the degree Doctor of Philosophy, Kings College London, [viewed 03/07/2017], https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/33449326/2014_Knowles_Christopher_1069327_ethesis.pdf, p. 101.

³¹ TNA, FO 1049/82, *working party to discuss amendments to Mil Gov Directive on adm. Local and regional govt*, 13th December 1945, p.2

³² G. Rex Smith, “‘Ingrams Peace’, Hadramawt, 1937-40. Some Contemporary Documents’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol.12, No.1, (April, 2002), pp1-30.

³³ *Ibid*, pp.1-5.

³⁴ F. Lugard, *the Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, p. 68-69.

Britain being superior to other races and nationalities to the German situation. By applying the same frame of reference to Germany as to empire, it is unsurprising that they then used imperial indirect rule techniques to rule Germany.

Imperial thinking also revealed itself in the belief that the Germans had to be re-educated especially in the field of politics. Britain applied the imperial framework that they had used in their empire. This framework emphasised that local populations had to be taught to self-govern whether that was through existing power structures or ones that had been changed. The perception that the Germans were democratically unaware and naive was pervasive within the CCG (BE). A draft speech written by a political division officer, which was to be disseminated to the German people, described how elections at a local level were only just being held, because "Thirteen years of dictatorship had robbed the German people of any experience they may have had in the art of self-government"³⁵. This had made the imposition of unelected councils by the British a necessity. Clearly the British held the view that the Germans had simply been unable to govern themselves democratically, meaning they needed to be ruled indirectly by the British. The Germans were also described as politically backward.³⁶ As a whole the discourse emerging from the CCG (BE) when considering German politics, and how Germans viewed democracy was extremely paternalistic. It was framed in a way that made the German seem like children in regards to democracy.³⁷ Such a framing makes it clear why the British considered that indirect rule was the best way of governing Germany, and more importantly of achieving the occupation goal of democratization. Only through local politics, and indirect rule from British masters could the German people hope to learn and absorb Western democracy. The German people were simply incapable of governing themselves, especially at the highest level. They would have to learn the lessons of democracy firstly through local government and then through progressively higher levels of government, until they were deemed capable of fully governing themselves. It could be argued that the British saw their duty in Germany to be an almost civilising mission. Although as Germany was an already highly advanced country and society, they saw it as a civilising mission in terms of promulgating democracy.

Aside from particular views held in regards to the German people themselves, the British were pre-disposed towards Indirect rule due to the belief in the innate superiority of the British system of governance. A strong trend in imperial thinking was that Western or European society and institutions were superior to others.³⁸ This imperial thinking was applied in regards to Germany, the British way of life was perceived as superior, while the German system of governance was portrayed in a negative light, even the Weimar republic era was seen as a sign of the inferiority of German governance.³⁹ The British truly believed that the ways of British governance were the best and that they should be enacted in countries abroad. There are many examples of such thinking within the CCG (BE). The quality of local governance in England is often spoken of, local councils are described as having done an excellent job for hundreds of years.⁴⁰ In addition the British focus on local councils

³⁵ TNA, FO 1049/2210, Captain W.D. Tracy, *Draft speech concerning local elections, "Why vote at all under Military occupation"*, German Political Branch Political division CCG (BE), 5th August 1946, p.1.

³⁶ TNA, FO 1049/45, HQ/2149 (SEC), Report- The German Character, March 1945, p.1

³⁷ For a clear example of this see: TNA, FO 1049/2210, Captain W.D. Tracy, *Draft speech concerning local elections, "Why vote at all under Military occupation"*, German Political Branch Political division CCG (BE), 5th August 1946, p.3.

³⁸ M. Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule*, pp. 70-71.

³⁹ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp.189-190.

⁴⁰ TNA. FO 1049/2119, *Political Background, Appendix A to HQ to HQ/09234/SEC P* 13th May 1946, P.2.

is also given the credit of preparing MP's amongst other for the roles of central government.⁴¹ It is explicitly claimed that the lessons of British local government should be related to the German situation.⁴² In public speeches the same points are made, the positives of the British way of governing are continually raised.⁴³ It is clear that the British believed that indirect rule with a focus on promulgating self-government at the local level, would mean that German democracy would form along British lines, a result that was considered to be the best for Germany. The British sincerely believed that their system of government, especially local government was the best in the world, and Indirect rule, was therefore identified as the best way of shaping German democracy to be more like British democracy. This of course is similar to the influence of imperial thinking in empire, where it was again seen that the societies across the world should be shaped along British lines.⁴⁴ The difference is that the British considered the Germans to be an advanced nation, with the exception of politics, and so the aim was that Germany was to be made fully democratic, a policy not pursued in Empire.

However, within the discourse of the occupation, despite these colonial views, the British themselves tried to distance the extent to which they pulled on imperial beliefs, creating the impression that perhaps they were not heavily influenced by imperial thinking. In a handbook to be given to Kreis resident officers, comment is made on the "incurable British colonising nature" in regards to indirect rule, but it is then claimed that Germany must not be treated as a crown colony.⁴⁵ This seems to create the impression that while Britain may have been holding the ideology of empire, and indeed this ideology is portrayed as being unchangeable, they should not act on it. Of course, the handbook itself accepts that there is indirect rule in Germany, the section the above quote comes from is titled "indirect control"⁴⁶. It is merely creating a distinction between the ideological reasoning for introducing Indirect rule, which is linked to empire, and the practical reasons underpinning the introduction of indirect control. The fact that it is termed indirect control instead of indirect rule, does seem to show an attempt to distance the policies of empire from the policies used in Germany. Control is a more neutral term than rule. The British authorities are claiming that they are not acting on colonial ideological grounds. Of course, this seems rather hollow. Considering the discourse emanating from the CCG (BE) and foreign office was undeniably characterised by imperial views of the Germans, and bearing in mind the imperial backgrounds of the key participants. Even though the British to some extent tried to distance themselves from colonial ideology, it would appear the imperial background of the key participants certainly did influence their decision to use Indirect rule to control Germany. It is here that it becomes clear that the British simply could not escape the imperial frame of reference even if they did to some extent attempt to.

Other ideological reasons also motivated the use of indirect rule to some extent in Germany. After all it was not just the British that utilised some form of indirect rule, as the Americans also did so. One of the ideological reasons was the wish to democratise Germany. This was shared between

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² TNA, FO 1049/423, *Working party Working party to discuss amendments to Mil Gov directive on Adm, Local and Regional govt, Minutes of the sixth meeting held at headquarters, 26th January 1946, Appendix E- Political Re-education, 21st January 1946, pp.1-2.*

⁴³ TNA, FO 1049/2210, Captain W.D. Tracy *Draft speech concerning local elections, "Why vote at all under Military occupation", German Political Branch Political division CCG (BE), 5th August 1946, p.3.*

⁴⁴ M. Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule*, p.217.

⁴⁵ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1, Undated, pp. 34-35*

⁴⁶ Ibid, p.34

the British and Americans, as historians such as Marshall⁴⁷ and Boehling⁴⁸ have highlighted. Within the CCG (BE) it was made very clear that the democratisation of Germany was key. Not only that but indirect rule was identified as the best way to do so. This is clearly shown in the KRO handbook, which describes how in the first year of occupation the British “re-created the machinery of democratic government in Germany”⁴⁹ but that they still had to “educate the Germans in its use and give the maximum encouragement and freedom in the use of these democratic institutions.”⁵⁰ Indirect rule meant that the British could build the machinery of democracy, while guiding and teaching the Germans to become democratic. The British made it clear that more direct rule would “stifle the growth of German individualism and democratic re-education by ‘mothering’ them in the interests of administrative efficiency”.⁵¹ Clearly then the ideological motivation of democratising Germany could be best met via indirect rule, as it would allow the British to exercise some control over the German population, while still leading to the democratisation of their zone. The American use of indirect rule was for similar reasons, they too were motivated by a wish to democratise Germany, while still maintaining some control over their zone.

the inter-ideological conflict between the West and the Soviet Union provided further ideological motivation for the use of indirect rule. While in 1945 relations between the Allied powers had not deteriorated completely, there was already signs of tension. Therefore, there was an ideological motivation from the perspective of both Britain and America to ensure that their zones of occupation absorbed Western liberal beliefs and that Western zones would become democratic, to stop the spread of communism in Europe, especially after 1946 when cooperation with the Soviet Union no longer seemed likely.⁵² Indirect rule was the best system of governance to satisfy these ideological motivations. Field Marshal Montgomery in his memoirs detailed how he believed that the four pillar of proving Germany with food, a stable economy, and a clear definition of what geographically Germany would constitute, as well as giving Germans some control over their affairs, were vital to prevent Germany from looking east towards the Soviet Union and becoming a security problem.⁵³ It was Montgomery’s view that indirect rule along the lines he had begun to introduce would be key to this. Indirect rule would allow the occupying powers to influence the nature of governance in their zones without having to exercise direct control, which would have led to an alienation between the occupiers and the Germans, and was identified as being impractical for the occupation by the British.⁵⁴ Indirect rule would also allow the quick revival of Germany, while insuring that the Western zones would remain favourable to the Western allied powers. The Kreis Resident Officer (KRO) handbook plainly stated that Germany had little “natural aptitude for Western ideals or government”, and that therefore they couldn’t create democracy unguided and would need “constant guidance” through KRO’s and indirect rule.⁵⁵ Christopher Steel even proclaimed that a common struggle against communism would be the best way of assimilating

⁴⁷ B. Marshall, ‘British Democratisation policy in Germany’ in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp. 192-194.

⁴⁸ R.L. Boehling, *A Question of Priorities*, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁹ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p.33

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.33.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.35

⁵² A. Deighton, ‘Cold-War Diplomacy’ in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, p. 21.

⁵³ Field Marshal B. Montgomery, *The memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery*, pp. 371-372.

⁵⁴ TNA, FO 936/236, *Appendix to SCOPC/P (46)9 THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BRITISH ZONE*, undated, p.2.

⁵⁵ TNA, FO 1071/91, *Handbook for Kreis resident officers Part 2 technical pamphlet number 1 Local government Section II- the K.R.O. and the Administration, Draft*, February 1947, p. 2.

Germany into “the liberal and truly tolerant social system of the West”⁵⁶, indirect rule would insure that Germans sharing this perception of the Soviet Union would hold positions of authority, and that Western ideals were absorbed by German politicians and the general population. This would help to assimilate Germany into the Western system, and provided an ideological ally for the fight against communism.

Overall it is evident that those within the CCG (BE) introduced indirect rule in Germany, for ideological reasons, these reasons related to the character of the staff of the CCG (BE), as well as being due to how the British viewed the German people, particularly in terms of their ability to be democratic. Coupled with the innate belief of the superiority of the British character and political system, this led to the imposition of indirect rule. The British viewed the Germans and the solution to the issues of governing Germany through their imperial lens, even though they did try to distance themselves from empire. Other ideological motivations such as the wish to expand democracy and to the ideological rivalry between east and west also led to the utilisation of indirect rule. The influence of imperial thinking shaped the form of indirect rule that was used to a great extent. Of course, ideological motivations were not the only cause for the use of indirect rule, there were practical considerations that made Indirect rule the most appealing option

⁵⁶ TNA, FO 1049/1473, *Letter to Military Governor from C.E. Steel*, 3rd August 1948, p. 2.

Practical reasons for Indirect rule in the British zone

While ideology and the imperial frame of reference had always been driving forces behind the British empire and the use of indirect rule in the British empire as well as in the British occupation zone in Germany, there had always been practical considerations which had led to indirect rule being used. Indirect rule with its emphasis on the use of local rulers to govern populations, had always been the most practical way for the British to govern vast areas of land, and vast numbers of people. Similar practical considerations underpinned the use of indirect rule in Germany. Practical factors included; the lack of appropriate Germans to fully govern themselves, the financial constraints affecting Britain, a lack of British administrators and the nature of German society.

A reason for the British use of indirect rule was that there was simply not enough suitable and trustworthy German politicians or administrators for the Germans to govern themselves. This was especially true for the higher levels of governance. The vast majority of officials within Germany had been tainted by their links or membership of the NSDAP or other fascist organisations. The Control Council directive number 24 concerning all the allied zones meant that members of the Nazi party or its affiliated organisations were banned and removed from public or semi-public office, if they had been more than nominal participants in its activities during the Nazi regime after 12th January 1946.⁵⁷ This meant that there was a lack of qualified officials who could run the German government. A report from June 1945 acknowledges the Germans must exercise some degree of their own control but that “the supply of suitable Germans for this task is necessarily limited.”⁵⁸ This lack of suitable officials meant that indirect rule would be better. By using indirect rule Germans could be trained at a local level, gradually taking more responsibilities, negating the issue of a lack of skilled personnel.

This lack of skilled personnel was also more pronounced in terms of administrative and political roles than it was for technical jobs. As many historians have identified, the occupying powers including the British were willing to overlook past Nazi tendencies or membership in order to fill vital positions in technical fields. The best example of this was in the coal mining field, where after several major accidents denazification was halted to allow all skilled workers to return to the industry. Denazification was also much more lax for workers at the Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg.⁵⁹ This was not the case for administration or political roles where it was considered to be unacceptable to allow those with concerning links to the Nazi past a role in shaping Germany’s future. A good example of this is the British rebuttal to the nomination of Dr Fritz Schuster. Dr Schuster was nominated to the Central German administration position of posts and telegrams, in part due to his experience as head of the *Feldpost* under the Nazi administration. His nomination is refused owing to his membership of several Nazi organisations and his clear support of the NSDAP, as well as the fact that he is charged with being an opportunist and untrustworthy.⁶⁰ It is then

⁵⁷ Extracts from Control Council directive no.24: removal from office and from positions of responsibility of Nazis and person’s hostile to Allied purposes, 12th January 1946, CC, Official Gazette, No.5, 31 March 1946 p. 98 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954* (Oxford University Press: London, 1955).

⁵⁸ TNA, FO 1049/31, I.A. Kirkpatrick, Political officer British, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, *Despatch No.8*, 18th June 1945, p.4.

⁵⁹ F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, pp. 311-312

⁶⁰TNA, FO 1049/718, W. Allchin, P.SO. II FOR D.I.G, *Dr Fritz Schuster*, 15th July 1946, pp.2-3

explicitly stated that he was “being considered for an administrative post not a technical one and therefore it is not sufficient to be even a nominal Nazi”⁶¹

Of course, it could be considered that the lack of skilled personnel did not mean indirect rule was used, and that it instead led to the imposition of direct rule for a period during 1945-1946. Since there were relatively few administrative personnel, the British could not use local intermediaries and therefore had to govern directly themselves. The use of direct rule in the early stages of the occupation is accepted by most historians,⁶² indeed Field Marshal Montgomery acknowledged that in the short-term control would be exercised directly by the British (in particular the British Armed forces), with the long-term goal of the control being exercised along more indirect lines.⁶³ Despite the fact that in the short term a lack of skilled personnel meant that direct control was used for a period of 1945, it did not last for a long period, the British moved towards indirect rule rapidly by September 1945 there were 250 senior German administrators in the British zone,⁶⁴ highlighting that there was already indirect rule to some degree before the end of 1945. The move to indirect rule was also certainly motivated by the lack of skilled, trustworthy German administrators, for which giving them control of local affairs to in effect train them for regional or central roles was perceived to be the best course of action.

A further example that indirect rule was more practical due to a lack of skilled administrators, is the lack of skilled administrators or untainted political figures that could be used for central government, beyond departments that had been relatively un-politicised such as post or telegram services. In order to have held high government posts under the Nazi regime, one usually had to be a committed Nazi. For example the application of Dr Fritz Schuster was rejected in part due to the promotions he received up to the rank of *ministerialdirigent*.⁶⁵ This was the second highest civil service position in the Nazi administration.⁶⁶ Even if senior officials had not been a committed Nazi they would have likely been highly conservative, or authoritarian in outlook. This vacuum of trustworthy high-level officials, coupled with the fact that while administrators existed at lower levels there was still a lack of them meant that indirect rule was clearly the best policy in the British eyes to follow. It would negate the lack of senior officials, as British civilian and military administrators would fulfil their roles, while Germans received experience at lower levels.

Perhaps the most important practical reasoning for the use of indirect rule in the British zone of occupation was the issue of cost. It is well established fact that Britain’s war effort to defeat the Nazi scourge had essentially bankrupted the country. On top of that the Labour government was committed to vast increases in domestic spending to provide a pioneering welfare system. The financial burden on the British state cannot be understated. Due to the financial situation, the British simply couldn’t afford to maintain high troop levels in Germany, or to attempt to govern the country directly for protracted length of time. Indirect rule, giving the German people a measure of self-control had the potential to save the British government money, while still living up to the commitments agreed before and during the Potsdam conference. This issue of cost was raised

⁶¹ Ibid, p.3

⁶² C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?* pp. 17-18

⁶³ TNA, FO 1049/72, Field-Marshal Montgomery, *Talk to Control Commission*, Undated, p. 2

⁶⁴ TNA, FO 1049/60, Brigadier C.E.D. Bridges, Director, Adm. & Local Govt. Branch, *Senior German Adm Officials- British Zone*, 26th September 1945. Pp. 1-6.

⁶⁵ TNA, FO 1049/718, W. Allchin, P.SO. II FOR D.I.G, *Dr Fritz Schuster*, 15th July 1946, pp.2-3

⁶⁶ Who’s who in Nazi Germany, 1944, *Central Intelligence Agency*, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/WHO%27S%20WHO%20IN%20NAZI%20GERMANY%201944_001.pdf [accessed 07/06/2017], p. 4.

within the Houses of parliament. In 1946 Viscount Swinton raised the issues of the costs of £80,000,000 that Britain was annually paying to maintain the occupation army and feed the German people.⁶⁷ Comment on “the burden of financing the occupation” is also made by Mr. Bracken, relating to comments made by the chancellor of the exchequer.⁶⁸ It is clear that those in Parliament, perceived the occupation to be a great expense, one that Britain could not truly afford. Indirect rule would enable the creation of an acceptable German government, beginning at low-level, and gradually increasing the powers and responsibilities it held while also saving money on administrators and military personnel. Undoubtedly then, the practical concern of cost was a motivator for the British in deciding to use indirect rule policies.

Much like the lack of skilled and suitable German administrators led to the use of indirect rule over giving the German people more control of their own politics and administration, the lack of British administrators and personnel led to the use of indirect rule. In a similar way to the British control of areas like Northern Nigeria, the size and especially the population of Germany meant that there was simply not enough British administrators and skilled staff to directly govern the German people, even if ideologically that had been the British wish. This was especially true for the local levels, even more so if finding personnel with a knowledge of German was considered. There were 26,500 applications for civil affairs roles between July 1943 and December 1946, related to service in Africa and Europe, as many as a third were excluded in preliminary vetting, and only a third of remaining applicants were selected for training.⁶⁹ Clearly there was a lack of British personnel. The handbook for Kreis Resident Officers, key actors in indirect rule describes how Britain had “neither the manpower or the resources” to maintain “totalitarian methods of martial law and Military Government”⁷⁰ even if they had wished to. It was for that reason the handbook states that the Germans were given some control over their own affairs. It should be mentioned that just because direct rule was not practical that did not mean that Britain would implement indirect rule or that indirect rule would be practical. However when considering that there were not enough German administrators for Germany to govern themselves, or indeed the political will for Germany to govern themselves, indirect rule represented the most practical solution.

The nature of the German state and society also made indirect rule, a more practical proposal than exercising direct control. German society was seen as being capable of self-governance as long as the German people were re-educated.⁷¹ This means that although the structures of power and politics in Germany had to be reformed, the German people were considered to be highly capable of governing themselves and the British were clear that as much German self-governance as possible should be a guiding principle.⁷² Indeed the British were aware that the Germans would not accept even indirect rule for a long period.⁷³ Direct rule would have led to even greater alienation between the occupiers and the Germans. The CCG (BE) were explicit in acknowledging that direct rule could not be used to control the German population. A report on the evolution of government in the British zone stated that direct rule was “not suitable for a race which

⁶⁷“Germany and European Security” HL Deb, 16th April 1946 vol 160, cc. 804.

⁶⁸ “Finance (NO. 2) Bill” HC Deb, 16 May 1946, vol 422 cc. 2237.

⁶⁹ F.S.V Donnison C.B.E, *Civil Affairs and Military Government Central Organization and Planning*, p. 293

⁷⁰ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p.35

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 35.

⁷² TNA, FO 1049/82, Field Marshal Montgomery, *Evolution of Government in the British zone*, 3rd December 1945, p.3.

⁷³ TNA, FO 1049/2176, *Reports periodical to the F.O.- Report Control Commission Germany (British Element)*, 9th April 1949, p. 6

has attained the standard of educational and technical development of the Germans”⁷⁴ Indirect rule would be the most practical solution, in that it would give the Germans a measure of self-control which with their social structure they were highly capable of carrying out, while simultaneously allowing Britain to shape the democracy and political institutions that had to be created and rebuilt during the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Nazi regime.

Indirect rule was also attractive for practical reasons as it could help the British achieve their goal of decentralising power within Germany.⁷⁵ Clement Attlee stated that it was the British wish that Germany would not be dismembered but that it would be a federal nation.⁷⁶ All the Allied powers including Britain believed that the centralisation of power had long been an issue within Germany, it was seen as driving the second world war, due to the centralisation of power behind Hitler and Berlin.⁷⁷ Emphasising government on a federal level rather than a central level was therefore a key aim of the Allied powers. Indirect rule was a useful tool to achieve this aim. German administration would be run within each province, with lower levels of administration in each region, all under the oversight of the CCG (BE) and specific Military Government officers.⁷⁸ This would not only ensure that German experience of democracy was shaped not through central power but through regional power, but also it would ensure that the regional institutes would be more established and stronger than any future central institutes that would be introduced when Germany gained its full sovereignty. Therefore, indirect rule was practical as it could make achieving the aims of the occupation easier.

Overall it is clear that practical reasons did underpin the British decision to use indirect rule policies. This was partially due to practical constraints that meant that direct control, especially for the long term was not feasible. The impact of the war meant that Britain couldn't afford to exert complete control themselves, especially when considering the occupation forces that would entail. A chronic shortage of administrators, both German and British especially in the early stages of the occupation, also led to the use of indirect rule. Beyond that the nature of German society, being highly developed meant that direct control would have been unacceptable. Indirect rule also had the benefit of making the achievement of the occupation goals possible. What becomes clear through exploring the reasons why Britain chose to use indirect rule is that much like in the empire, it was a blend of often racial ideological reasoning tied into perceptions of British superiority alongside practical, grounded reasons. These myriad factors made the imposition of indirect rule seem like the logical solution to wielding control over Germany and shaping the destiny of the German nation. In this the CCG (BE) and the wider British establishment seemed united, within government there was very little criticism of the use of indirect rule, indeed no other policy ideas were advanced. Having divulged and explored the reasons that drove the British decision to implement indirect rule within their occupation zone of Germany, the policies that were used at each level of German governance should be explored.

⁷⁴ TNA, FO 936/236, *Appendix to SCOPC/P (46)9 THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BRITISH ZONE*, undated, p.2.

⁷⁵ TNA, TNA, FO 1049/2210, Captain W.D. Tracy, *Draft speech concerning local elections, "Why vote at all under Military occupation"*, German Political Branch Political division CCG (BE), 5th August 1946, p.1.

⁷⁶ TNA, FO 1049/2119, *Political Background Guidance Appendix A*, 10th July 1946, p. 2.

⁷⁷ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, p. 195.

⁷⁸ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, pp. 33-34.

Indirect rule up to the Regierung level

Unsurprisingly indirect rule at the local-level (when used here meaning the *Kreis*, *Gemeinde* and *Regierung* administrative areas) was a priority of the British. To truly shape Germany along democratic lines, the Germans had to rule themselves in their towns and villages. However, they would always be guided by the British, taken down a path aping that of British local councils and local controls. There were numerous indirect rule policies instigated at the local level, all of which had their roots in equivalent polices used across the globe by Britain to maintain control and influence over local populations. These included the use of Kreis resident officers, local administration through conservative and elite individuals and local committees to run denazification. At the slightly higher local level of the council there was also the role of *Regierungsbezirk* councils.

The most obvious indirect rule policy implemented by the British was that of the Kreis Resident Officers. This is one of the only specific polices discussed within the wider historiography.⁷⁹ The KRO's had their root in the Colonial Resident Officers. These were officers who essentially served as advisors to local rulers and elites within the empire. They were there to represent Britain's interests to local rulers, and ensure that the decisions and polices made and implemented by local rulers were in line with British interests and goals for that area. It is no exaggeration to say that the colonial resident officers were the cornerstone of the system of British indirect rule as used in Empire. They could be described as being missionaries of empire. Instead of seeking to convert local populations to Christianity they sought to convert local rulers and populations to the British way of governing, extolling to them the benefits of British indirect rule. From the name alone the KRO's were clearly drawing upon the British colonial archive. The role that KRO played also closely echoed that of colonial resident officers. In the KRO handbook they are described as being "Missionaries of democracy"⁸⁰, there to extol the benefit of democracy, as well as to serve as a guiding hand in helping the formation of democratic institutes at the Kreis level. The KRO's are described as being the direct representatives of the CCG (BE) at a local level, whose duties are to insure the cooperation of the German administration in terms of implementing CCG orders.⁸¹ This may initially seem to be direct control, with the KRO's essentially playing a direct role in local governance. However, the handbook for new officers makes it clear that the KRO's should advise the local authorities, and rarely if ever give direct orders to them.⁸² Their main task then was to watch and advise, to act as a paternal figure for the Germans, ensuring they were always meeting local figures and providing a softer public face to the occupation for the average German citizen and German administrator.⁸³ N. Pelham Wright, a KRO for a Kreis in *Niedersachsen* gave an interview discussing this work in 1949. He describes the fact that the KRO "takes the guise of advisor, missionary and reporter", and the tasks that they carried out including "attending council and committee meeting, interviewing politicians and burgomasters, receiving complaints"⁸⁴ etc. Pelham Wright though is critical of the German

⁷⁹ C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?* pp. 19-22.

⁸⁰ TNA, FO 1071/91, *Handbook for Kreis resident officers Part 2 technical pamphlet number 1 Local government Section II- the K.R.O. and the Administration, Draft*, February 1947, p. 1

⁸¹ TNA, FO 1071/91, *Handbook for Kreis resident officers Part 2 technical pamphlet number 1 Local government Section I The Kreis resident officer Draft*, February 1947, pp. 1-2

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 1

⁸³ *Ibid* pp. 1-2.

⁸⁴ N. Pelham Wright, 'A K.R.O.'s Retrospect', *the Spectator*, 10th June 1949, pp. 6-7, <http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/10th-june-1949/6/a-kros-retrospect> [accessed 14th August 2017].

character, and pessimistic about what has been achieved,⁸⁵ but what he describes is undeniably a quintessential example of indirect rule. The British used the KRO's to influence German policy, and the shape of German institutions, like councils and schools at a local level, through individuals that did not order but instead advised. The KRO's were used to indirectly rule at a *Kreis* level, ensuring that British goals and aims were achieved by the Germans themselves.

Beyond the general role of KRO's in terms of advising local administration, they also played a role in indirectly shaping all facets of local life, more along British lines. A good example of this is the KRO's role in terms of education. Education had been earmarked as a key area by the British, they believed that the population had to receive more civic and political education for both children and adults. Noel Annan (who had been a part of the CGG (BE)) comments on the importance of education to the British in Germany.⁸⁶ There was also the fact that the British believed that education had to be controlled to ensure that a new less militaristic and more positive German society could form. The KRO's role in education was to ensure that the local educational committees at Kreis level which were managing the education within that area were not suffering from "intrusion of political interests"⁸⁷, with the point being repeated that those on the committee were civil servants who should not be politically active. Not only that but the KRO should ensure that local councils and authorities are convinced of the importance of education, and once again the importance of education being free from political bias.⁸⁸ A final task of the KRO in regards to education is to ensure that it is being run effectively. A long checklist is printed in the handbook detailing that the KRO should check for issues regarding the teachers, pupils, buildings and equipment. These included checking the personalities of the teachers, the health and well-being of the students, that the buildings were clean and had sufficient sanitary facilities, and that the staff were insuring that there was enough equipment such as textbooks, even if they were makeshift.⁸⁹ Once again the KRO's role in education highlights that the use of KRO was a policy of indirect rule. The KRO's are there to indirectly influence the education system, particularly in terms of ensuring that it remained politically neutral, in contrast to the highly-politicised system that the Nazi's used. Not only that but indirectly, the KRO's task of ensuring that the schools are well maintained or run effectively is also indirect rule, they are ensuring that the German administrators are running the system in the way that the British desire. The role of the KRO highlights that British indirect rule extended to all facets of life in their zone of occupation. The KRO's heavy involvement in education, is also related to the overarching British goal of democratisation, the KRO's could ensure that democratic principles are being absorbed via the school system, helping to build ground support for the democratisation policies and aims of the CCG (BE).

The use of elites and establishment individuals was also a long-used technique in indirect rule in the British empire. The Princely states of India had been integral to governing the country during both Company rule and the Raj.⁹⁰ Lugard in northern Nigeria also used this indirect rule policy of using elites and establishment figures to help govern the country.⁹¹ Elites and establishment

⁸⁵ Ibid, pp. 6-7 [accessed 14th August 2017].

⁸⁶ Lord Annan, *Changing enemies the defeat and regeneration of Germany* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 159-162.

⁸⁷ TNA, FO 1071/91 *Handbook for Kreis Resident Officers Part 2: Technical Pamphlet number 3 Education*, August 1948, p.12

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 12

⁸⁹ Ibid, pp. 13-14

⁹⁰ B. M. Ramusack, *The Indian Princes and their states* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 48-50.

⁹¹ M. Crowder, *West Africa under colonial rule*, pp. 217-221.

individuals were used both because they would command the respect of the local population, but also because they would not be radical and would tend to support the status quo, or at least support the preservation of stability. It must also be remembered that only elites and establishment figures that were favourable towards the British would be placed into governing roles. Those that were not would be removed. In the occupation zone of Germany at the local level of the Kreis there was a similar use of elites and establishment figures in order to aid the CCG (BE) and provide indirect rule. An example of the use of elites at the local level (i.e. at the *Regierungsbezirk* level) is shown in a letter detailing a request to allow an individual called Heini Muller, who had been an ardent Anti-Nazi before he fled Germany and had links to the trade union movement to return to Germany from his role as a refugee camp official in Denmark. This was in order to take a role in the local administration of Jugend. Muller can be considered a local elite holding a senior role in the refugee camp, and personally knowing the *regierungs-präsident* of Jugend.⁹² Another example is that in December 1945 of the over 30 *Oberbürgermeister s* in the British zone, 17 held doctorates and one was a friar.⁹³ There were however some major differences between the use of elites and establishment figures within empire and within Germany. One was that local councils in Germany were democratically elected. This obviously meant that the CCG (BE) couldn't appoint those elites and conservatives that may have been favourable to British rule to positions of power. However, elections were not held until 1946, this meant that for a period the British were able to directly install Germans into local nominated representative councils.⁹⁴ This meant that although elections were held, the elites or establishment figures benefitted massively as they already had power and were therefore more likely to maintain it. Boehling details this in regards to the American zone, and the result was almost certainly the same within the British zone of occupation.⁹⁵

The handing of responsibilities considered to be politically volatile, that had the potential to embarrass the CCG (BE) to the German population often occurred during the occupation. This could be seen as similar to empire, where the use of indigenous leaders allowed Britain to claim reduced responsibility for certain actions, even if the local leaders had been acting along British wishes. A good example of this occurring during the occupation of Germany concerns the issue of denazification. Denazification was a key tenant of occupational rule for all the allied powers. Some of the first control council laws passed concerning all occupied zones dealt with the issue.⁹⁶ Considering the crimes of Hitler's regime, the Allies wished to purge Germany of any trace of the old regime, so that they could build a new Germany. While the Americans and the Soviets were morally and ideologically committed to rather extreme denazification, the British were less so, taking a more pragmatic approach that focussed more on using Germans where possible over strong moral or ideological compunctions over using ex-Nazi party members to some extent within government.⁹⁷ That is not to say that they were not committed to denazification to some extent but they certainly took a more pragmatic line. As already mentioned this is perfectly highlighted by the suspending of denazification in the mining industry. Denazification also represented an issue for the CCG (BE) in

⁹² TNA, FO 1049/744, A.L. pope political executive officer, *Report to German political branch, subject: Heini Muller*, 27th June 1947, p.1.

⁹³ TNA, FO 1049/60, Brigadier C.E.D. Bridges, Director, Adm. & Local Govt. Branch, *Senior German Adm Officials- British Zone*, 26th September 1945, pp. 1-6.

⁹⁴ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p. 33

⁹⁵ R.L. Boehling, *A Question of Priorities*, pp. 207-209.

⁹⁶ See Control Council Proclamation No. 2: certain additional requirements imposed on Germany and Control Council law no.2, providing for the termination and liquidation of the Nazi organizations in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954* (Oxford University Press: London, 1955).

⁹⁷ F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, pp.299-300.

that it was a definite source of potential tension between the British occupiers and the German people.

While it was reasonably simple to identify high level Nazi's, it became more complex in dealing with low level members, especially considering the fact that membership of the party was practically compulsory, especially in order to work in certain industries or government. Being seen to be too heavy handed would upset the local population, while equally being too lenient could upset more democratic forces in Germany, as well as being against popular opinion in Britain itself. The American's solved this problem by holding elections early, then giving control of denazification to the Germans, the Soviets as an authoritarian regime did not have the same fears about upsetting popular opinion, and could carry out whatever denazification they wanted with little fear. Considering the British were not as ideologically wed to process as other occupying powers, they made the decision to set up small local committees appointed as sub-committees of the nominal representative council to help with the process of denazification at lower levels under the auspice of the Military Government directive no. 28.⁹⁸ A report details that in one *Stadt-Kreis* 33 small committees were set up covering every trade, industry and part of the administration.⁹⁹ This was partially to help streamline the process, after all local people would know who were committed Nazi's, or who should be removed or prevented from holding office. The CCG (BE) was also explicit in acknowledging that the use of local committees would give the Germans more responsibility for denazification, which would have the benefit of saving the Military Government "from criticism not only by the Germans themselves but in our own parliament as well".¹⁰⁰ This then is a good example of indirect rule policies, of using the local population to carry out policies, agreed upon and based on the responsibilities of the occupying power, in order to remove personal blame. This policy was arguably made even more indirect, when in October 1947 complete control of the denazification process was handed over to the land governments of the British zone.¹⁰¹

Now that more generalised indirect policies have been covered at the local level, the example of governing at the *Regierungsbezirk* level should be investigated. *Regierungs* are the equivalent of counties in Britain. When the British were first given control of their zone after the surrender of Germany, they already began to employ direct rule at the *Regierung* level. Before the war, the decision had been made to deploy civil affairs officers at the *Regierungsbezirk* level in order to do day to day administration work.¹⁰² At first glance this would appear to be a form of direct control, and a British report later went into more detail. This report written in June 1945 not long after the German surrender earlier that year, made it clear that the 'RB' detachments of civil affairs officers would be controlling the administration of the *Regierungspräsidenten*.¹⁰³ Here administrative control was being deployed directly by the Military Government. This seems to create a picture that indirect rule was not being used. However the report does detail that *Regierungspräsidenten* did wield power, and were used to govern themselves, as well as making in clear that even by June 1945, there had been a move away from direct control. The *Oberpräsidenten* of the *Länder* (a higher administrative unit than that of the *Regierungsbezirk*) was the direct superior of the *Regierungspräsidenten*, and was in turn junior to British administrators, while still wielding a number

⁹⁸ TNA, FO 1049/69, Chief of the Political division, *Political guidance*, 20th December 1945, p. 2

⁹⁹ Ibid, p.2

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p.2.

¹⁰¹ F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, p. 312

¹⁰² TNA, FO 1049/32, *record of an informal meeting held at the foreign office on 12th January 1944*, 15th January 1944, p.2.

¹⁰³ TNA, FO 1049/69, Dr Friedmann, *Administrative reorganisation under Military Government*, 12th June 1945, p. 1.

of responsibilities and powers.¹⁰⁴ So the British by June 1945, while exercising more direct control, still used German intermediaries, so the roots of indirect rule policies were forming.

By 1946 indirect rule policies at the level of the *Regierungsbezirk* had begun to take a clearer shape, and be more identifiable as traditional indirect rule policies. The best example of this was the formation of *Regierungsbezirk* councils. These were councils formed of local Germans, modelled along the lines of English county councils. They were not at the *Kreis* or *Gemeinde* level, instead they were formed at the slightly higher level of a governmental district.¹⁰⁵ This though was still at local level, being below the level of the individual state governments forming in the British occupation zone. A *Regierungsbezirk* council was an attempt to move local administration away from public officials to politically representative and elected figures. The council was essentially meant to shadow the regional administration. So, for every major function of the regional administration there would be a sub-committee of the council. The chairmen of each committee would form an executive with the *Regierungspräsident* as its head. The chairmen of the sub-committees would also be political.¹⁰⁶ This can certainly be considered to be an indirect rule policy, the CCG (BE) were using the local population to provide government at a local level, while overall control or at least final say in matters of control rested in the hands of the British. This link to imperial indirect rule is further strengthened by the fact that the committee members would be appointed and approved by the Military Government until elected councils were established.¹⁰⁷ This shows that the British were directly appointing local administrators to govern for them, even if later they were replaced by elected officials.

It could be argued that perhaps the *Regierungsbezirk* councils were not indirect control, especially when they were formed via election. This is because although the British had oversight of the policy formed, and in the first place had installed the members of the councils, they were still German run affairs, dealing directly with the German population. While they had to follow the broad strokes of British policy, they themselves had large amounts of control over the policies they could implement. This though ignores that the British still maintained overall control, and also does not take into account the fact that *Regierungsbezirk* councils still were covered by British civil administrators who would provide advice, in fields such as education, in a similar way to the KRO's attempt to guide at a *Kreis* level.¹⁰⁸ It also should never be forgotten that the British were still exercising overall sovereignty for their zone, the *Regierungsbezirk* councils were merely indirectly governing for the British at a more local level.

Overall then it becomes clear that at a local level from *Kreis* up to *Regierungsbezirk* the CCG (BE) used indirect rule to govern the German population. This ranged from seeking to indirectly influence local control through KRO's to relying on the well-established indirect rule policy of seeking support from elite and conservative elements of society. The use of councils modelled on those found in Britain, also removed direct control at a local level from the British, placing it in the hands of the Germans. That these German officials were often appointed by the British, and used to deal with uncomfortable issues within Germany show clear examples of indirect rule put into practice. It could be argued that perhaps these were not policies that had their roots in empire and instead

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p.1

¹⁰⁵ See TNA, FO 1049/32, *record of an informal meeting held at the foreign office on 12th January 1944*, 15th January 1944, p.2. for importance placed on administration at level of the *Regierungsbezirk*

¹⁰⁶ TNA, FO 1050/18, I.A & C Division Military Government, *Instruction no. 47: Control of administration at Regional level*, January 1946, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p.1.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.1.

were policies that simply were expedient to use. This though is not true. All the policies implemented at a local level, did build on and draw upon the colonial archive. Similar if not nearly identical policies were implemented throughout the British empire.

Indirect rule at federal level

While the local level (up to the *Regierung*) had been identified by the British as the appropriate place to foster democracy, and had therefore been a target for creating indirect rule, the land level (level of the federal states that would form the FRG) was also seen as a key arena for which to establish indirect rule, and German led tools of government. The British perceived the land governments to be key to establishing a federal Germany, through which the pitfalls of the centralisation of power which led to Hitler's regime could be avoided. The decentralisation of Germany was therefore key and the establishment of German control at land level was considered to be highly important. German led land governments were also indicative of indirect rule, while Britain still maintained central control of the zone overall, they were using the local population to exercise this control, to work alongside the British to advance CCG (BE) goals. There were several ways that indirect control was exercised, and that facets of indirect rule were used. Chief among these was the creation of a German administration at the *Länd* level, including *Länder* government, that would work alongside the British military and civilian rule. This administration like German administration at the smaller *Regierungsbezirk* and *Kreis* level relied on the use of elites. The fact that *Länders* could produce legislation themselves from 1947 onwards should be considered, as well as the fact that land government support was often sought or needed by the CCG (BE). Indirect rule was certainly used to maintain control at a federal level but were these indirect rule policies stronger or weaker than at local level, and did that mean that the Germans themselves or the British wielded more power at this key level of the administration of Germany.

Firstly, the British exercised indirect rule at the federal level through the creation of land governments. When the British first invaded, and began to administer their zone of occupation, at the land level they relied on direct control through civil administrators in 'P' detachments (the 'P' corresponds to *Provinz* the name used by the Prussians for that level of government).¹⁰⁹ While direct control was utilised, German administrators did remain in some capacity, represented by the *Oberpräsidenten*.¹¹⁰ In 1946 when the decision to form local councils was made, a simultaneous decision was made to form governments at the land level. These governments would be formed of Germans and would be responsible for the governing of the land region. These governments would conform to a cabinet government system, "ministers" would be appointed for each main administrative function. A report then described how "collectively the "ministers" will form a cabinet under the presidency of the *Oberpräsident* or equivalent official at the *Länd* level".¹¹¹ In the period before elections were held these would be directly appointed by the Military Government, and would have to be politically representative of the area, meaning that they would consist of members of different parties.¹¹² Overall sovereignty would still be held by the Military Government and the CCG (BE). Indeed, the British still held considerable oversight over the devolved *Länd* and *Provinz* governments. They held the final say on the appointment of any members before elections were held, and maintained that oversight for non-elected administrators, and existing head of departments, explicitly stating in a report that "Mil Gov will exercise to the full its right of removing

¹⁰⁹ TNA FO 1049/69, Dr Friedmann, *Administrative reorganisation under Military Government*, 12th June 1945, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.2.

¹¹¹ TNA, FO 1050/18, I.A & C Division Military Government, *Instruction no. 47: Control of administration at Regional level*, January 1946, p.1.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p.1.

heads of removing existing heads of departments and nominating new ones".¹¹³ They could also directly recommend individuals to be hired to the regional governments. The practice of installing regional governments, was clearly a practice of indirect rule. Much of the daily governance at the equivalent of the current German federal state level was carried out by the Germans, with the British maintaining overall control and oversight. The British were indirectly governing at a state level through a German administration.

Perhaps though the extent to which the creation of *Länder* governments can be seen as a practice of indirect rule is overstated. The argument could be made that in truth it merely represented German governance, distinct from British control. By 1947, Britain had also lost some control over the governments, due to the fact that they now consisted of elected members rather than those chosen by the CCG (BE). Indeed, British control over fields like education had also passed to the land governments in 1947.¹¹⁴ The British could be considered to no longer be governing through German institutions, instead the German institutions were governing themselves. This argument gains increased justification when considering the fact that by 1947, the *Länd* governments were given the ability to develop their own laws.¹¹⁵ The fact that the regional governments were autonomous enough to enact their own laws, seems to show that they had regained some sovereignty, and must be considered to cast aspersions on the claim that indirect rule was used at the state level. However, this ignore the basic fact that while the Germans were increasingly responsible for matters of governance, over all control was still maintained by the CCG (BE). Even more importantly the British still were maintaining their role in seeking to shape the nature of the German regime, not through the imposition of British demands, but through dispensing advice to the German government. Advice that still shaped how the zone was governed. For example the preparation for the answer to a parliamentary question, makes it clear that the Germans still relied on the British educationalists for advice, and also that the direction of education policy was still a concern to Britain.¹¹⁶ more generally then education, the activity of the Military Government is described as being "confined to ensuring that the relevant legislation conforms to certain broad principles necessary to maintain a democratic system of local government" in a letter to an MP.¹¹⁷ This makes it clear that while the British were no longer initiating policy, or exercising any kind of direct control in regional and local matters, they were still seeking to indirectly shape the nature of German government.

The argument that new governments at a federal level represented separate German control rather than indirect rule, falls flat, when it is considered that the British still held oversight and still wielded considerable influence over the German administration, and indeed continued to advise it. It is also worth considering that even in their actual colonies, the British would allow the continuation of most pre-existing laws (so long as they were palatable to the British governor), while still exercising indirect rule. This does not seem far removed from allowing the *Länder* governments to enact their own laws, strengthening the argument that indirect rule was used at the state level. Indeed regional commissioners still had to approve any legislation submitted by the regional

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ TNA, FO 938/5, *Parliamentary Question, Notes for minister*, 19th February 1947.

¹¹⁵ "Statement on Administrative questions by the British deputy military governor Lieut.-General Sir Brian Robertson, before the Zonal Advisory Council, Hamburg" CCG (BE), Press Release, 23rd October 1946 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*.

¹¹⁶ TNA, FO 938/5, *Parliamentary Question, Notes for minister*, 19th February 1947.

¹¹⁷ TNA, FO 938/100, *Draft letter to John Dugdale M.P.*, Undated, p.2.

governments.¹¹⁸ The only change caused by the creation of elected land governments was that the German people held increasing responsibilities, but this had always been an aim of the CCG (BE), if *Länder* governments overstepped these responsibilities or failed them, the CCG (BE), could intervene. Despite the greater agency afforded to German-led government, overall indirect rule was used in the British zone as a means of governance.

Much like at the *Kreis* level, the British often relied and sought out the support of more conservative and elite members of society at the federal level, as well as establishment individuals who had previous experience of governance pre-dating the Nazi state. An example of this is Dr Robert Lehr. Dr Lehr was *Oberpräsident* of the North Rhine region, being appointed to that position by the British in 1945. Lehr was undoubtedly a conservative and an elite. Before the war he had been a member of the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* (DNVP), a party that had merged with the NSDAP, although a British report claims that he had not actively supported that merger.¹¹⁹ Now only that but the British acknowledged his conservative nature outright stating that he was “frankly conservative, probably authoritarian”, and strongly belonging to “the old conservative order”.¹²⁰ Lehr was not just a conservative but also a true elite, his father had been a general, and up until 1933 he had been *Oberbürgermeister* of Dusseldorf, which according to the British had been one of the most highly paid administrative appointments in the pre-war German state, not only that but as *Oberbürgermeister* Lehr had also cultivated extensive lucrative business connections.¹²¹ Why did the CCG (BE) use him in the administration, especially since he did not seem to fill the criteria of being even remotely democratically inclined. Partially because of his skills, he was described as being an exemplary administrator. He was also friendly towards the British occupiers. Lehr despite his conservative nature was not unduly tainted by any links with the Nazi regime, and represented an elite who was friendly towards the British and useful as an administrator. Lehr was not the only conservative elite to hold the role of *Oberpräsident*. The *Oberpräsident* of Westphalia, Dr Amelunxen, was described by the British as “being efficient and autocratic in manner... it is generally agreed that he is a good administrator”, justifying his role in government.¹²² The German conservatives and elites also had a reason become part of the British system of indirect rule. It would often allow them to reclaim their position in society that had been lost during the Nazi regime, Lehr is a good example of this, he was able to return to a senior administrative position, twelve years after been removed from his role, on politically motivated charges of intending to misappropriate public funds.¹²³ It also allowed more conservative members of society to exert control, to try to prevent German society from being fully transformed, and preventing more ‘radical’ elements taking control of administrations. Overall, both the use of Lehr and Amelunxen in the administration is indicative of broader trend of the British to support as a policy of indirect rule the use of conservatives and elites as they did in the empire. The reasoning although not explicitly stated, would be because elites were willing to work with the CCG (BE), and they shared the interests of wanting to preserve Germany’s stability whilst facilitating the eventual withdrawal of the occupation. Overall the use of conservatives and elites is indicative of indirect rule, as these members of society were perceived by the British as being the most capable of governing as

¹¹⁸ “Statement on Administrative questions by the British deputy military governor Lieut.-General Sir Brian Robertson, before the Zonal Advisory Council, Hamburg” CCG (BE), Press Release, 23rd October 1946 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*.

¹¹⁹ TNA, FO 1030/401, *Appreciation of Dr Lehr*, 3rd June 1946, p.1.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p.5.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, pp. 2-3.

¹²² TNA, FO 1049/2114, *Dr Amelunxen, Oberpräsident of Westphalia Region*, Undated, p.1.

¹²³ TNA, FO 1030/401, *Appreciation of Dr Lehr*, 3rd June 1946, p.2.

effective agents of the CCG (BE). There is clear evidence of the indirect rule policy of supporting conservative and elite members of society and giving them a role in government, being put into practice at the state level in the British zone.

As a whole, it becomes evident that at the key federal level for indirect rule was carried out due to the British aim of reforming Germany along federal lines. Separate *Länder* governments were formed, often consisting of establishment focused and elite members of society. This allowed the British to govern indirectly, the *Länder* governments would carry out the tasks of daily governance under British oversight, and often with British advice. Unlike at the more local level of the *Kreis*, there was not the same level of oversight, for example there was no equivalent to KRO's at *Länd* level, so indirect rule should be perceived as being more strictly enforced at lower levels, but assuredly indirect rule was carried out at the federal level.

Indirect Rule and central administration

Unlike at the local and *Länd* level, there is less evidence of indirect rule policies and practices at the zonal level especially in regards to a central administration. Central administration run by the indigenous populations of the Empire did not really exist considering that many of the territories ruled by the British were amalgamations of smaller previously existing states. This meant that there was less precedence for British policy to be influenced by. Aside from administrative bodies concerned with telecommunications or postal services, there were no German institutions for governance at the zonal level. However there is still some evidence of indirect rule to some extent. This includes the maintenance of pre-existing institutions relating to infrastructure and the continuation of German responsibility for the Judiciary, as well as the use of and rebuilding of institutions that were establishment focussed, and likely to serve as responsible stakeholder that would further British aims. Often when pre-existing institutions or practices were returned to it was not the Nazi model that was continued but the Weimar model. This is different to the maintenance of pre-existing institutions in the Empire, where they did not return to older institutions but the uniqueness in the German case is due to the allied prerogative of denazification.

A key policy of British indirect rule in the empire, for example in Northern Nigeria, was that pre-existing judicial systems, if they existed would be maintained, albeit any laws deemed unsuitable to the British would be repealed or removed. In empire, the laws repealed often related to slavery. Judicial systems were maintained as it created a sense of continuity and stability for the British governors and local rulers. It also helped entrench indirect rule, by allowing local rulers to govern in a similar way to pre-British colonisation, reducing the likelihood of a local population becoming alienated. In Germany, there was a removal of offensive Nazi legislation, mostly related to racial legislation but also in regards to the liquidation of Nazi special courts, the return of rights to the accused and the strengthening of the independence of the judiciary.¹²⁴ Alongside the reform and repeal of the Nazi Judiciary, the control council also reinstated the Weimar judicial system.¹²⁵ This echoes the indirect rule policy of maintaining pre-existing judicial systems. The allied powers did not maintain the Nazi judicial system, but instead they removed unsuitable laws and practices, and returned to a pre-existing judicial system. Of course, it should be mentioned that this was not British policy, but that of the control council as a whole, but it undoubtedly is evidence of indirect rule, at the central level of government.

A more specific example of indirect rule at the zone level through the judicial system is the fact that as early as 1945 the British made it clear that while the Military Government would put legislation into force, the legislation itself would be drafted and sponsored by the German authorities.¹²⁶ Authorities which received guidance and advice from officers in the CCG (BE). So, for example legislation that had been under the auspices of the ministry of justice such as laws related to procedure in courts would be prepared and sponsored by the German authorities taking the place

¹²⁴ "Control Council Proclamation NO.3: Fundamental Principles of Judicial reform 20th October 1945", CC. Official Gazette, No. 1, 29th October 1945, p.6 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*.

¹²⁵"Control Council Law No. 4: Reorganisation of the German Judicial System 30th October 1945" CC, official Gazette, No.2, 30th November 1945, p. 26 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*

¹²⁶ TNA, FO 1049/82, *The structure of German government* 17th December 1945, p.1.

of the ministry of Justice in the British zone.¹²⁷ This is indicative of indirect rule, the British were guiding the Germans in their responsibilities in regards to the judicial system. The German authorities held sole responsibility for drafting laws, under the oversight of the British. It could be argued that because the Military Government put legislation into force, it appears to be an example of direct rule, but the fact that the German authorities wrote the laws seems to show indirect rule. The British put the legislation into force because of the lack of a comprehensive central administration, but the fact that the Military Government put legislation into force does not mean that the judicial system was not controlled by the British via Indirect rule at a zonal level rather than direct rule.

Much like at the local and state level, the use of Germans to facilitate British rule did occur at zonal level through a central administration. The extent of indirect rule was much smaller at this level though. Unlike at other levels of government, within the central administration the Germans were only responsible for departments related predominantly to infrastructure, i.e. Post, telephone networks, transport as well as finance etc.¹²⁸ Within these departments, indirect rule did occur, the British Military Government was only responsible for appointing personnel, wielding veto power to block appointments.¹²⁹ Unlike at the state and local level, the central administration departments did not receive the same level of guidance and advice from the British authorities either. There were no separate Military Government detachments like the 'RB' and 'P' detachments at that level. This was likely due to the fact that relatively few changes were made within the central departments that remained under German control. Because of the nature of the departments they were not politicised, and were not in the British eyes integral to their attempts to reform society.

Looking more broadly at the zonal level and ignoring the few departments that can be considered to be examples of the use of indirect rule, as a whole at the highest level indirect rule was not used. The British exercised control over economic issues, foreign policy (to the extent that it existed), and in other top level responsibilities. With the merging of the British and American zone economically in 1947, the British and Americans shared economic policy control.¹³⁰ Which meant that essentially America exercised overall economic control, in such a way preventing any real indirect rule to be exercised by the British in their own zone, even if they had wished to. While there was a German presence at this level it was predominantly advisory, the best example being the Zonal Advisory Council, a council consisting of German elites, which provided the German viewpoint on issues decided at concerning the zonal level.¹³¹ This cannot be considered indirect rule. However, while at the zonal level, especially in regards to a central administration, there was clearly not indirect rule, this did not undermine indirect rule at the lower levels. As already mentioned, the British wish to federalise Germany meant that most of the day to day governing was carried out at the lower levels, where control was undoubtedly exercised via indirect rule.

A strong element of indirect rule was the use of pre-existing power structures to help create support for British rule and to control the local population. As previously mentioned at the local and regional level this most often involved the use of more conservative and elite elements of society, as well as elements of society that could be described as establishment. At the zonal level, it involved not individuals but organisations and institutions that were perceived to be key societal institutions

¹²⁷ Ibid, p.1.

¹²⁸ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p. 29.

¹²⁹ TNA, FO 1049/718, W. Allchin, P.SO. II FOR D.I.G, *Dr Fritz Schuster*, 15th July 1946.

¹³⁰ 'Comment by the British Military Governor, Sir Sholto Douglas on Sokolovsky's statement' CCG (BE), *Monthly Report*, February 1947, p.6. in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*

¹³¹ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p. 33

within Britain, and therefore as good means of helping to exercise control in Germany. The two strongest examples of this were the British use of trade unions and the Churches. Camillo Erlichman comments on this.¹³² The British very clearly sought to gain the support of the Churches and trade unions in Germany. Most historians not just Erlichman agree that the British favoured the Church and trade unions as organisations suited to helping them advance indirect rule.

The Churches were deemed to be highly important, they represented an independent power network that could be used by the British to maintain control. The KRO handbook highlighted the importance of Churches in the views of the British, declaring that as reconstruction had to be spiritual there had to be a “preponderating role of the Christian Church in any system of reconstruction which aims at conserving our Western tradition... the Church is the only institution which is in possession of a vital message, a message of love and forgiveness”¹³³ The British sought to use the Churches to help maintain their rule of the British zone, and they emphasised the need to earn the support of the churches. This is shown in the fact that the churches received special privileges compared to other groups and individuals. In 1947 churches were given special privileges in regards to international telecommunications,¹³⁴ not only that but in May 1947, the censorship of churches international mail was also ended.¹³⁵ The British themselves explicitly stated that “it has always been the policy of the control commission to help churches as much as possible”.¹³⁶ The Churches represented a unique body reasonably untouched by the Nazi regime that could be used to help British indirect rule. It is also worth remembering that due to the great destabilisation of German life and the German economy, the Church represented a stable power network, that in the eyes of the British and the German churches themselves, could be used to provide a peaceful ideology for the masses, including the youth to prevent a return to National Socialism.¹³⁷ They were the only real pre-existing body that could exert control over the population, and insure that stability was preserved in the British zone, especially as they were viewed as being inherently anti-communist.¹³⁸ This is clearly an indirect rule policy as the British used the Churches, whose support they brought by giving them special privileges to help maintain control and preserve stability in their zone of occupation.

Trade unions were also seen as being highly important. Sir Brian Robertson detailed their importance in providing advice to the British Military Government.¹³⁹ They were also perceived in some quarters to be more important to the formation of democracy than political parties. A report boldly claiming that “it is with the Trade Unions, rather than purely party political activity that much

¹³² C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?*, pp. 22-29.

¹³³ TNA, 1071/91, *Handbook for Kreis resident officers Part 2 technical pamphlet Number four: Religious Affairs*, February 1947, p. 1.

¹³⁴ TNA, FO 1050/1546, V. Dickson Central Secretariat, *International Telephone Communications for Church Leaders*, 25th November 1947.

¹³⁵ TNA, FO 1050/1546, R.W. Hallam for Major General Chief Intelligence Division, *Privileged Communications-Church dignitaries*, 30th May 1947.

¹³⁶ TNA, FO 1050/1546, V. Dickson Central Secretariat, *International Telephone Communications for Church Leaders*, 25th November 1947.

¹³⁷TNA, FO 1050/40, Rev. Arthur Cotter, *Report on the Visit of the delegation of the British council of Churches*, Undated, pp. 12-14.

¹³⁸ C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?*, p. 26.

¹³⁹ “Statement on Administrative questions by the British deputy military governor Lieut.-General Sir Brian Robertson, before the Zonal Advisory Council, Hamburg” CCG (BE), Press Release, 23rd October 1946 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*.

of Germany's political and ideological fate rests".¹⁴⁰ Unlike the churches, whose power structures had escaped relatively unscathed from both the years of the Nazi regime, and the denazification process that followed, the trade unions were reformed by the British, as well as the other occupying powers, due to the fact that traditional unions had been co-opted by the Nazi regime. The Trade Unions under Nazi rule were disbanded, and the role of trade unions played by the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (DAF).¹⁴¹ Owing to the labour government in power in Britain, trade unions were seen as being a key cornerstone for the new Germany, and a perfect potential power structure for indirect rule. Trade unions were also incredibly important as a means of helping the British control the zone, and prevent the spread of more radical views such as Communism taking hold, due to the highly industrialised nature of the British zone, which contained the cradle of German industry in the Ruhr.¹⁴² Trade unions were clearly identified by the British as a means of both serving as local actors to help the British govern their zone of occupation, and also as a key organisation for increasing understanding of and support for democracy. This is a strong example of an indirect rule policy, while the trade unions were not part of governmental bodies they were used by the British to help maintain control, Erlichman details how they deflected criticism away from the British for issues such as shortages.¹⁴³

Overall it becomes clear that as a whole at the zonal level and amongst the central administration indirect rule did not occur to the same extent as at lower governmental levels. This though did encourage indirect rule at more local levels. It should also be considered that indirect rule policies, such as maintaining pre-existing judicial systems, under the control of the local population, and identifying conservative and elite groups, as well as pre-existing organisations of control did occur at a zonal level. Indeed it occurred at a higher and more broad level than in British colonies. These indirect rule policies, allowed or helped the implementation of indirect rule policies and practices at the lower levels of German governance.

¹⁴⁰ TNA, FO 1049/2111, *Draft for information for KRO- The aims of the Political parties in Land North Rhine/Westphalia*, 20th June 1947, P.3.

¹⁴¹ S.J. Silvia, *Holding the shop together: German Industrial relations in the post-war era* (Ithaca: ILR press, 2013), p.17.

¹⁴² P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p.13.

¹⁴³ C. Erlichman, *Occupation in Imperial Guise?*, p. 23.

Democracy through indirect rule?

Clarification has been made on why the British chose to use indirect rule in their occupation zone in Germany, and also on what indirect rule entailed in the British zone. The question remains though of what the impact of indirect rule was for not only Germany but for Europe as a whole. The progressive, positive cornerstone of the occupation was that it was striving to introduce a strong democracy in Germany through creating a new democratic culture as well as stimulating popular support for democracy as a whole. For the British this was to be achieved through the creation of new democratic institutions at local level, with indirect rule guiding the institutions and peoples towards democracy. How successful were the British attempts to advance democracy in Germany? To some extent they can be seen as successful, elections were held, parties formed, political figures from the British zone reached the highest levels of German governance and as a whole the Federal Republic of Germany was a democratic state, and after unification Germany remains a democratic state. But how much of this was due to British actions, or are historians of the American zone correct in framing the Americans as the key to the creation of democracy in Germany.

On one hand, there is a strong argument that indirect rule did succeed in its goal of spreading democracy in Germany. During 1946 free and fair election were held at the *Kreis* and *Gemeinde*,¹⁴⁴ a year later they were held at a regional level.¹⁴⁵ These elections were for local councils, and the regional cabinet based governments. Such elections were a result of indirect rule policies, it was the British wish not to exercise direct control at the levels where elections were held. If they had instead exercised direct control then elections would not have been held. Indirect rule meant that the British could still exercise influence and advise these new governmental bodies whilst respecting their independence and the democratic way in which they were formed. As early as 1946 Field Marshall Montgomery, was expressing positive views on the impact of indirect rule up to that point, proclaiming that “good work is being made with the formation of political parties and trade unions”.¹⁴⁶ Montgomery did identify the issue that the German population could not become too discontented though, as that could lead to hostility against Britain, showing that there was still work to be done to strengthen the democracy forming.¹⁴⁷ Perhaps the highest pinnacle of the success of installing democracy in Germany was the passing of the basic law, the democratic constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany which is still in force today, a law passed under the indirect guidance of the occupying powers.¹⁴⁸ It could be argued that the strength of the democracy instilled by indirect rule is further shown by the fact that Konrad Adenauer, who had built his post war political career in the British zone became the first chancellor of post war Germany.¹⁴⁹ If indirect rule had not helped democracy and fostered the skills of democratic politics on individuals in the

¹⁴⁴ TNA, FO 1050/18, I.A & C Division Military Government, *Instruction no. 47: Control of administration at Regional level*, January 1946, p.1.

¹⁴⁵ B. Marshall, ‘British Democratisation policy in Germany’ in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, p.200.

¹⁴⁶ Field Marshal B. Montgomery, *The memoirs of Field Marshal Montgomery*, p. 370.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.371

¹⁴⁸ Aide-memoire concerning the basic law presented by the military governors to the president of the parliamentary council at Bonn, CCG (BE), Monthly report November 1948 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*

¹⁴⁹ K. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945-53*, Trans. B. Ruhm von Oppen (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1965), p.47.

zone Adenauer may not have become Chancellor. Although It should be considered that the British had removed Adenauer from his role as *Oberbürgermeister* of Cologne, and that the relationship between Adenauer and the Military Government remained strained.¹⁵⁰ Meehan talks about the positive way in which indirect rule helped foster democracy through the use of KRO's and the supervision of schools to teach local governance. This was alongside the committees of indirect rule, which gave practical governance experience, and brought together Germans of different political beliefs.¹⁵¹

However, this argument is too simple. Just because elections are held does not mean that democracy had been accepted by the majority of the population. In 1949, just after the creation of the FRG, the British themselves were doubtful over how far democratic feeling had been fostered on the German population. They describe that "Democracy has indeed not yet re-established its reputation in Western Germany"¹⁵² further to that its alleged that the current local party system was not achieving German demands and aspirations.¹⁵³ This is a fairly damning report as a whole that clearly shows that indirect rule had not fully achieved its goal of democratising the British zone, despite the creation of systems of local government, and the holding of elections. The fact that a flagship aim in indirect rule is creating democratic local government was still not working three years after its inception casts a negative light on the impact of indirect rule. In a letter to the British military governor the president of the governmental sub-committee Christopher Steel raises a view that Germany in 1948 is imperfectly democratised, and that Britain cannot remain in Germany as a benevolent colonial authority, indeed tutelage needs to end.¹⁵⁴ Clearly Steel, saw indirect rule policies by 1948 as actually negatively impacting democratisation in Germany. This is important considering, Steel was a senior civilian administrator within the CCG (BE), intimately involved in political developments in the British zone,¹⁵⁵ and he himself saw indirect rule as not having the desired effects that the British wished.

Most critical of all were the views of the Germans themselves. A British report detailed the opinion of a *Senat Syndic Harder*, who is described as alleging that democracy was failing in Germany, due to the economic woes¹⁵⁶ and in direct condemnation of the British indirect rule that "democratisation begun by the British and carried on by the politicians and to a lesser extent the trade unions is producing such a disintegration and decomposition of sound democratic authority that soon any form of authoritarianism will be welcomed with relief"¹⁵⁷. This paints a picture of the utter failure of indirect rule to foster any democratic belief and that any form of democracy in the British zone was hollow and doomed to fail. Harder's claims seem to an extent melodramatic, although the central point of criticising the British attempts at democratisation hold water. The claims that authoritarianism would be welcomed by the German population soon were overstating the situation, especially considering that there was no wide spread support for authoritarian right wing parties or for the authoritarianism of the Russian zone. This was shown by the fact that the conservative but not authoritarian CDU won the first elections held in the FRG, with the SPD

¹⁵⁰ Lord. Annan, *Changing enemies the defeat and regeneration of Germany*, pp. 167-168.

¹⁵¹ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p. 260.

¹⁵² TNA, FO 1049/2176, *Reports periodical to the F.O.- report Control Commission for Germany (British element)*, 9th April 1949, p.5.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁴ TNA, FO 1049/1473, *Letter to Military Governor from C.E. Steel*, 3rd August 1948, p.5.

¹⁵⁵ Lord. Annan, *Changing enemies the defeat and regeneration of Germany*, p.151.

¹⁵⁶ TNA FO 1049/1473, Regional Commissioner, *Disintegration of Democratic Authority*, 11th March 1948, p.1.

¹⁵⁷ TNA FO 1049/1473, Regional Commissioner, *Disintegration of Democratic Authority*, 3rd March 1948, p.1.

becoming the opposition.¹⁵⁸ Indeed, Sir Brian Robertson the British military governor identified Germany's overall hatred of communism and of Russia in general as being tools to help them democratise.¹⁵⁹ It seems as though, while indirect rule had achieved in imposing democracy onto the population of the British occupation zone, it had not achieved its goal of fostering positive views of democracy on the German people. The form of democracy that had been created was fragile, and had the potential of failing. Indeed, the use of indirect rule, with its attendant imperial attitudes, seemed to alienate the British from the German population in many ways.¹⁶⁰

Adenauer was also critical of the effect of indirect rule on democracy. This was not because he viewed the democracy as being weak but because he believed that the British were to some extent subverting democracy through favouring the SPD. In his memoirs, he alleges the British Military Government of carrying out "undemocratic discrimination against the CDU" using the evidence of the fact that the SPD received too much representation in provincial councils, in a way which did not represent the true political feeling on the ground.¹⁶¹ Adenauer argued that indirect rule, in the period before free elections (which led to a CDU majority in many areas), worked against democracy by favouring a party which the electorate did not.¹⁶² This seems to show indirect rule working against democracy. Of course, it should be remembered that Adenauer as CDU chairman would perhaps be paranoid that opposition parties would be favoured by the British, but many authors in the historiography agree with his claims. Annan¹⁶³, agrees that the SPD were focused on by the British during the early period of the occupation, which could have damaged democracy in the British zone to some extent, although he stops short of considering them favoured. Marshall however does disagree arguing that British policy inadvertently favoured the CDU, by banning civil servants from political activity.¹⁶⁴ What is clear is that Indirect rule certainly did not lead to equal opportunities for political parties, which had implications for the form of democracy that indirect rule formed.

Beyond the fact that by 1949 the democracy that was created via indirect rule was still perceived as being weak, there is also a strong argument advanced within the historiography that the democracy that formed in during and in the wake of the occupation was one centred around the establishment. This meant that the democracy that formed was not truly transformative. Indirect rule with its focus on preserving stability, through working with elites and pre-existing power centres certainly contributed to the shaping of democracy in this way. Good evidence of this is the fact that aside from the main zonal parties of the SPD, CDU, *Zentrum* and KPD,¹⁶⁵ smaller parties could only stand in regions, and had to be allowed to field candidates by the Military Government. An example of this were the *Vaterstädtischer* and *Republikanische Partei Deutschland*, both regional parties that were only allowed to field candidates in Hamburg. The R.P.D had wished to form more local party branches, however this was a request that was categorically denied by the British authorities, although they perceived no issues with the party itself.¹⁶⁶ This would clearly benefit the pre-existing

¹⁵⁸ K. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945-53*, Trans. B. Ruhm von Oppen, p. 176.

¹⁵⁹ TNA, FO 1049/1473, *Letter from B.H. Robertson to Sir William Strang*, 6th August 1948.

¹⁶⁰ P. Meehan, *A Strange Enemy People*, pp. 259-260.

¹⁶¹ K. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945-53*, Trans. B. Ruhm von Oppen, pp. 154-156.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, pp. 154-156.

¹⁶³ Lord. Annan, *Changing enemies the defeat and regeneration*, pp. 183-186.

¹⁶⁴ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp. 210-211.

¹⁶⁵ TNA FO 1071/91, *Draft Handbook for Kreis resident officers Part 2 technical pamphlet Number 2: Political Parties, February 1947*, pp. 2-6.

¹⁶⁶ TNA, FO 1050/19, *Hamburg Parties*, 15th July 1946.

parties and as the SPD and CDU remain the two main parties in Germany clearly the policy had long lasting effects in terms of German democracy. The use of Weimar era officials also contributed to this. Weimar era officials returned to the same or similar roles that they had occupied before the NSDAP. It was a British policy to allow émigré Weimar officials to return, to resume roles in the administration, a policy which once again allowed establishment figures, and old elites to regain power and some control over society.¹⁶⁷ This undoubtedly benefitted establishment politics, and forged more establishment focused administrations at local and regional levels in turn leading to an establishment biased administration forming at the central government level. The British use of indirect rule had meant that they favoured pre-existing administrators and those with political experience, albeit untainted by Nazism, which in many ways led to a democracy that was surprisingly traditionalist in its outlook. This was contrary to British goals in terms of fully transforming German democracy and society. Many historians including Erlichman,¹⁶⁸ have made the conclusions that the democracy that formed in the FRG, was elite dominated, formed along traditional lines and therefore preventing a truly transformative democracy from arising. Marshall makes similar conclusions to Erlichman on the nature of democracy that formed, and its reliance on the rebuilding of the apparatus and the return of old members of the political parties of the Weimar republic.¹⁶⁹

The establishment centred democracy that formed within the British zone, which clearly effected the nature of democracy in the FRG as a whole, was not a unique outcome in areas governed indirectly by the British. A similar outcome to democratic initiatives occurred in the American zone. Boehling argues strongly that American policies repressed true local democratic initiatives, especially when the American focus became centred on the prevention of the spread of communism and left wing rhetoric and feeling not only in Germany but across Europe as a whole.¹⁷⁰

The proliferation of any kind of democratic feeling and of democracy as a whole can also not be solely credited to indirect rule. Democracy spread as a whole throughout the Western allies zones of occupation. Indeed, in the historiography it is the Americans in their zone of occupation who are considered to be the instigators of the spread of democracy. The Americans like the British introduced free and fair elections in their zone.¹⁷¹ Unlike the British, the American rhetoric around spreading democracy was free of imperial undertones. Elections in the American zone were also held in 1946 but after the end of direct rule, American oversight could be described as less enforced than that of the British, meaning that rather than indirect rule the American zone was more German government, under American oversight at the highest levels.¹⁷² The Americans also were less stringent in their attempts to reform and reconstitute German society and political life. This could be seen to have led to greater democratic feeling in the American zone than in the British, something that shaped democracy in the FRG overall.

The issue with discussing whether or not indirect rule lead to democracy in Germany is that it is very hard to quantify. What are the thresholds for democracy? free and fair elections and representative government show democracy but don't allow analysis onto how strongly democratic ideals are held by the public, or indeed how positively democracy is viewed. Then there is the issue

¹⁶⁷ TNA, FO 1049/744. Director of Governmental Structure *Reinstatement of émigré officials dismissed from office by the Nazi's*, 11th August 1947, p.1.

¹⁶⁸ C. Erlichman, *Occupation under Imperial Guise?*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁶⁹ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp. 211-214.

¹⁷⁰ R.L. Boehling, *A Question of Priorities*, pp. 207-209.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.210.

¹⁷² *Ibid*, p. 156-160.

of identifying the cause for democracy. Indirect rule in the British zone did not occur in a vacuum. The influence of other occupying powers also led to the creation and spread of democracy in Germany. Therefore, it becomes very difficult to state whether indirect rule was completely responsible for the spread of democracy both in the British zone and in Germany as a whole. It can however be said that indirect rule did lead to the creation of democratic institutions in the British zone and that through indirect rule individuals in the British zone received 'democratic training'. The extent of this was less than the British had wished by the time the FRG was formed, but it is unequivocally clear that indirect rule did not prevent the spread of democracy, even though it may have led to the creation of a democracy more grounded in the establishment than would have otherwise been the case.

Indirect rule and the security of Europe

Beyond aiming to transform Germany, the allied occupation also had the aim of trying to insure the future security of Europe as a whole, especially as the Cold War began.¹⁷³ Germany had long been portrayed as a warmongering nation that needed to be brought into line. The occupation did not only attempt to curb Germany's war-making abilities and the martial nature of its citizens; it also helped to create a nation that by 1955 had been accepted into the most wide-reaching and influential security pact the world had seen to date: NATO. What role did indirect rule and the influence of imperial practices have on transforming Germany from a threat to a reliable partner and stakeholder in the security of Europe? Several things should be discussed: the nature of the new Germany that was created to the prevailing political and security situation at the time, what should also be considered is how indirect rule, or the occupation as a whole, helped to facilitate the demilitarization of Germany, until it remilitarized and joined NATO. When talking of a European community, this refers not only to positive relations between European countries, but also to the developing integration of European countries, which formally began with the treaty of Paris in 1952 establishing the European coal and steel community.

Firstly, before comment should be made on if and how indirect rule helped facilitate the reintegration of the FRG into a European community and European security culture, the effect of indirect rule on negating the threat of Germany should be discussed. The key impetus behind the allied occupation of Germany was that Germany had to be demilitarized and its society re-educated in order to prevent militaristic feelings from ever resurfacing to once again threaten the overall peace and tranquillity of the continent. A statement made by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin at Yalta made those aims explicitly clear, declaring "it is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world".¹⁷⁴ The British broadly achieved these goals of demilitarisation, as well as reforming the militaristic elements of German society. However, disarmament and demilitarisation was not undertaken by indirect rule, but was instead instigated directly through the Military Government, which demobilised the Wehrmacht and dismantled armament factories.¹⁷⁵ The Military Government directly chose which factories would be dismantled, often against the wishes of the population.¹⁷⁶ An example of this is the demolition of the Blohm and Voss shipyard, an event deemed contrary to international law by the Germans. This was due to the fact that the shipyard had never been under government control, and while it had repaired and constructed some military ships, it had primarily repaired and constructed merchant ship tonnage, its large docks used for predominantly for commercial liners, not for producing naval warships.¹⁷⁷ These complaints were ignored by the British authorities who

¹⁷³ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, p. 202.

¹⁷⁴ Report of the Crimea (Yalta) conference, 4-11 February 1945, 11th February 1945 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954*.

¹⁷⁵ TNA, FO 1049/2120, *Final Draft Kreis Resident Officers Handbook Part 1*, Undated, p.30.

¹⁷⁶ TNA, FO 1049/1694, *Political Division weekly summary No.5*, 16th June 1949, p.4.

¹⁷⁷ TNA, FO 1014/180, Dr Rudolf Laun-, *Excerpt from the Memorandum concerning the Blohm and Voss shipyards*, Steinwerder (Translation), 11th November 1948, pp.5-7.

deemed the Bohm and Voss shipyards to be a military factory and installation.¹⁷⁸ Clearly then to some extent demilitarisation, which helped to mitigate the threat of Germany to the security of Europe occurred due to indirect rule as it was used in the British zone, although demilitarisation was often introduced via more direct means, and certainly did not have the support of much of the German population.

However, the continuation of Germany remaining demilitarised until 1950, as well as the curbing of German militarism, can be seen to be due to indirect rule, because of the nature of the German basic law. The basic law upheld the demilitarisation of the FRG, relative to other nations. In regards to the passing of the basic law, while this undertaken by the Germans, and concerned not only the British zone, but all the Western zones, its authorisation and implantation can be seen as being carried out via indirect rule. Germans wrote and formulated the basic law, under the oversight of the Allied powers, and the German authors had to follow the advice and guidelines of the allied powers.¹⁷⁹ Indeed, the control commission made the final decision over whether the Basic law would be deemed suitable and could be placed into practice, the London documents explicitly stating that “if the constitution as prepared by the constituent assembly does not conflict with these general principles the Military Governors will authorize the submission for ratification”.¹⁸⁰ Undeniably while the constitution was written by the Germans the allies still retained overall control over passing it, a clear indirect rule practice. However, most demilitarisation occurred directly via the Allied states, and indeed often demilitarisation was deemed to be to far-reaching and to be cruel by the Germans. It is best to say that the continuation of demilitarisation to some degree before 1950, was due to indirect rule, via the passing of the basic law while the original policies were carried out directly by the British, while the bulk of demilitarisation was not due to indirect rule limiting to some extent the responsibility of indirect rule on protecting the future security of Europe. Demilitarisation itself was seen to help the security of Europe, because it curbed the threat of German militarism, and soothed the fears of other European nations that Germany would once again behave aggressively towards its neighbours

Indirect rule was not the only factor that caused Germany to be rapidly reintegrated as a reliable partner in Europe and into the security community of Europe. The prevailing political and security situation as a whole in Europe also played an undeniably key role. Before the FRG had formed, and the allied rule of Germany ended, tensions between the Western allies of Britain and the United States and their wartime ally the Soviet Union were rising. With the defeat of Fascism in Europe, communism was the new existential threat to Western democracy. Germany was clearly going to be the frontline of this conflict, split as it was by 1949 between the FRG and GDR. Even before the formation of two German states, during the occupation Germany was the frontline, the Western allies separated by only a few kilometres from the presence of the Soviet Union. This was dramatically highlighted during the Berlin airlift in 1947, the encirclement and blockade of Berlin by

¹⁷⁸ TNA FO 1014/180, *Letter from C.H. Lumley to K. Schiller*, 5th January 1949.

¹⁷⁹ Aide-memoire concerning the basic law presented by the military governors to the president of the parliamentary council at Bonn, CCG (BE), Monthly report November 1948 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*

¹⁸⁰ Document I: the constituent assembly, The London documents: Directives regarding the future political organization of Germany, drafted at the London conference of Western foreign ministers in June 1949 and handed to the ministers' president of the western zones of Germany by the military governors at their joint meeting on 1 July 1948 in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation*

the Soviets the first clear 'shots' fired in what would be known as the cold war.¹⁸¹ Due to the fact that the Soviet Union and Communism was seen as a threat, and Germany was the frontline, it made sense from a security point of view to reintegrate Germany so that they could be a bulwark against the expansion of Communism. There was also a shared threat perception between the allies and leading figures in the occupation zone and later in the FRG. For example, in his memoirs Adenauer is explicit in his views that communism was a threat, he bemoans what he perceived as a British indifference to the threat of communism in the way they treated the KPD, behaving as though the KPD was just another political party.¹⁸² This shared threat perception also helped to contribute to the reintegration of Germany into a European security community.

Although obviously indirect rule cannot be seen to have contributed to the prevailing political climate and the threat that the Soviet Union represented, it could be considered that indirect rule did help lead to the reintegration of the FRG into that security community as a side effect of the overall political milieu. This is because of the establishment nature of the democracy fostered by indirect rule coupled with the fact that more traditional figures and organisations such as the Church benefitted. This focus on the establishment and conservative individuals and strong pre-existing power bases, not only suppressed the creation of communist groups, by being organisations outside of the Military Government to represent the populace (before even political parties) but also prevented a grassroots swell in communist feeling, by providing alternate groups to support. This was especially the case in the field of labour relations with the strong indirect rule policy of supporting the creation of democratic trade unions. As well as serving to curb the establishment of communist groups, and offering alternatives to communist rhetoric, the organisations and individuals favoured by indirect rule were generally of a highly anti-communist slant.¹⁸³ Adenauer is proof of that, but others like Robert Lehr shared his hostility to communism. Indeed, the civil servants who had fled the Nazi regime to return post war, or had been anti-Nazi while serving under the Weimar republic, were likely themselves to hold anti-communist views as well considering the turmoil of the early 1930's for which the communists themselves played a prominent role, with KPD paramilitary groups often engaging in street battles with SA and other Nazi affiliates.¹⁸⁴ It almost goes without saying that the Churches were also anti-communist, bearing in mind the strong atheistic nature of communism as a movement. This meant that those favoured by the Military Government would themselves be strongly anti-communist which would undeniably influence the nature of the FRG. What this shows is that indirect rule holds some responsibility for creating an establishment focused state, which was strongly anti-communist. This helped the reintegration of Germany into Europe and into a European focussed security culture as the FRG was seen as a trustworthy anti-communist nation. The establishment nature of the FRG government and society, for which indirect rule policies definitely held some responsibility, and the prevailing political and security climate meant that the FRG was perhaps reintegrated sooner than expected, (the British had believed that they would occupy and govern Germany indirectly for a period up to twenty years) and it certainly helped to create a stronger sense of common purpose.

Aside from the anti-communism of the establishment government and society that indirect rule helped to create, its conservative nature helped to facilitate the reintegration of Germany into the European community as a stakeholder in the security of the region because it was viewed as a

¹⁸¹ A. Deighton, 'Cold-War Diplomacy' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁸² K. Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945-53*, Trans. B. Ruhm von Oppen, pp. 153-154

¹⁸³ See *ibid*, p.192 and also TNA, FO 1030/401, *Appreciation of Dr Lehr*, 3rd June 1946, p.5.

¹⁸⁴ M. Fullbrook, *A history of Germany 1918-2008: A divided Nation* 3rd edition (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2009), p.97.

trustworthy and capable ally. While there was certainly divergence of opinion between the British and political figures and parties in Germany especially the CDU, which often complained of British favouritism towards the SPD. This is clearly indicated by an argument between the CCG (BE) and Adenauer over comments he made in a radio interview concerning favouritism for the SPD.¹⁸⁵ Overall however there were not only the shared common goals in terms of foreign policy but the establishment regime was by its very nature deemed trustworthy. After all these were the individuals who had been chosen or preferred by the British or Americans in the first instance. They were clearly individuals who the governments of Europe could work with as more or less equals. Indirect rule policies meant that those who were willing to work with the British (and therefore the Western allies in general) were raised to positions of power both within local and regional government, and in extra governmental organisations. The appointment of Lehr is a good example of this, while the British criticised his authoritarian tendencies, they openly acknowledged his respect for and willingness to work with the British.¹⁸⁶

If direct rule had been used there may not have been the creation of a trustworthy administration in Germany. Indeed, direct rule would likely have alienated the German population completely and resulted in an unfriendly regime once the occupation had ended. Of course, one cannot say for certain that direct rule would have resulted in a regime that was not trusted by the West and which viewed the Allies with hostility. However, this was often the case for colonial regimes that had been governed directly by European powers, the growth of the non-aligned movement in Asia and Africa during the height of the cold war is indicative of this.¹⁸⁷ Had neither indirect nor direct rule been used, and instead control completely handed over to the Germans, there was still no guarantee that a government and administration would have formed that could have worked with the rest of Europe to insure regional stability and security. While an entirely German led government may have formed more organically, and have been more democratic and more representative, such a government may not have had the trust of the other European nations. If it was not formed by establishment figures it may have not shared the same threat perceptions as the Western allies. It may also have been susceptible to being subverted by the Soviets as all the nations of Eastern Europe were during the period.¹⁸⁸ Indirect rule then, certainly helped to create a government that could be trusted by other European nations and America to be a stakeholder in the region once more, something that may have not occurred without indirect rule.

Of course, once more it should be remembered that the British occupation zone was not the only one in Germany. In the America zone, indirect rule of a kind was still used, an establishment centred democracy certainly arose, indeed America also utilised KRO's in its zone. There was an acknowledgement at the time by the British that the Americans were also using indirect rule to govern their zone, stating "The Americans have shown a better understanding than ourselves of the principles of indirect control."¹⁸⁹ These shortcomings mainly related to the fact that administrative bodies within the CCG (BE) had become bloated and were perceived as being overmanned, sometimes by individuals lacking the skills and motivations for the job.¹⁹⁰ This means that comments on the effect of British indirect rule can be considered to have relevance for all the zones occupied

¹⁸⁵ TNA, FO 1049/802, *Telegram from Ashbury to Robertson*, 9th May 1947.

¹⁸⁶ TNA, FO 1030/401, *Appreciation of Dr Lehr*, 3rd June 1946, pp. 4-5.

¹⁸⁷ A. Acharya, *The periphery as the core: The Third World and security studies* (1995), <http://www.yorku.ca/yciss/publications/OP28-Acharya.pdf> [accessed 10/08/2017].

¹⁸⁸ A. Deighton, 'Cold-War Diplomacy' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, p. 32.

¹⁸⁹ TNA, FO 936/236, *Appendix to SCOPC/P (46)9 THE EVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT IN THE BRITISH ZONE*, undated, p.2.

¹⁹⁰ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p.63.

by the allies, as the other major stakeholder in the zones that would become the FRG utilised similar policies (albeit not as far reaching, and without the imperial undertones).

Overall it is clear, that Indirect rule did help to facilitate the rapid reintegration of the FRG into Europe, and its accession into being a responsible stakeholder for the security of the region. This was predominantly due to the establishment focused government that indirect rule helped to create, as well as the fact that demilitarisation helped to change Europeans perceptions of Germany from being a war-mongering threat. However, the prevailing political and security conditions of the time, during the beginning of the cold war, also undeniably played a role in the reintegration of the FRG. The situation at the time essentially forced the FRG and Europe together through the shared threat of the USSR and the spread of communism. Indirect rule cannot be considered to have solely led to the reintegration of Germany, but it can be argued to have sped up the process of the reintegration of Germany by ensuring that there was a stable German government which was willing to work with the allied and European powers

The transformation of Germany

The British aims during their occupation went beyond democratisation and demilitarisation. As highlighted by their imperial thinking they believed that German society, German nature itself should be changed. Indirect rule was the tool used for the job but how successful was it in doing so? Many different facets should be discussed from the aim of achieving a decentralisation of power to the creation of a new trade union movement, and the repression of anti-democratic and far-right political beliefs amongst the German people. Of course, democratisation efforts and the aim of forging Germany into a new partner in Europe were undeniably the most integral aims of the occupation but the success of these secondary aims should also be properly considered.

The British aim of decentralising power, can in part be seen as corollary to the broader aim of democratising Germany. This is because it was perceived that decentralisation would be key to break the cycle of the centre of German politics holding too much power, which in the British eyes made it too easy for autocratic individuals or parties to seize power.¹⁹¹ Marshall emphasises the importance placed on decentralisation by the British, especially in terms of creating a federal state.¹⁹² Since decentralisation was so key to British aims, and it was focused not only on ensuring German democracy was strong, but also on essentially completely reforming regional government in Germany its success should be considered separately. Broadly British indirect rule helped decentralisation by the creation of *Länd* governments consisting of Germans under British supervision. These *Länd* governments were given far reaching powers, often subsuming powers previously held by central government. The powers of these *Länd* governments were confirmed in the basic law constitution, which clearly delineated power between regional and central government.¹⁹³ Indeed the allies, including Britain, had made it clear to the Germans that decentralisation must be followed, indirectly placing the process on the Germans, by insisting on conditions that had to be met in order for the allied powers to confirm the new German constitution. Clearly then indirect rule helped to achieve the aim of decentralising power in not only the British zone, but also in the FRG. Indirect rule policies and practices meant that *Länd* governments were formed, and then indirect practices ensured that a federal government was formed and enshrined in the basic law. A federal government that preserved the decentralisation of power. The nature of indirect rule in the British zone, and in the wider occupation, meant that German administration formed along federal lines, causing the FRG to become a federal nation.

Another British aim had always been the creation of a strong, democratic trade union movement. Partially this was as Unions had been identified as possible democratic actors, and as an arena where democratic beliefs and ideas could be absorbed by the German population. It was also because trade unions were seen as being a potential partner in stability, by providing an establishment alternative to communism and communist groups in the work place. A strong trade union movement had undoubtedly formed by 1949. This is shown by the fact that the unions from

¹⁹¹ B. Marshall, 'British Democratisation policy in Germany' in I.D. Turner (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-war Germany*, pp. 195-197.

¹⁹² Ibid, p.203.

¹⁹³ "Statement of the Parliamentary Council Committee of five on the federal character of the draft basic law", OMGUS, Federal constitution, p.106, 14th February 1949, in B. Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany under occupation 1945-1954*

each zone where at this point merging to form stronger unions covering the entire new FRG.¹⁹⁴ Meehan talks of the strength of the union movement, and the key role of Hans Böckler, who was key for controlling the workforce in the British zone.¹⁹⁵ Lord Annan described one of the two major successes of the British occupation as being “the creation of a responsible trade union movement”¹⁹⁶ There is also the fact that Unions as a whole remained strongly anti-communist. A weekly political report to the Foreign Office details how the chairman of the mine workers’ union issued an ultimatum to terminate the membership of any members found distributing political material. An ultimatum strongly focused on communists in the British view.¹⁹⁷ It is also explained that while the FRGB (overall Trade Union in the Soviet zone) had made overtures to the DGB in the British zone for closer contact, this had been ignored by the DGB leadership.¹⁹⁸ These serve as examples that the British had helped to create strong trade unions that would not be agents of communism or influenced by the Soviet Union. Indirect rule can be seen to be responsible for the creation of a strong trade union movement as well, after all it was an indirect rule policy to focus on trade unions. The fact that trade unions were trusted partners of the Military Government and were used by the CCG (BE) to maintain control, meant that they formed a strong power base, that the British supported rather than undermined. However, there were some flaws and weaknesses in the trade union movement. A British report of 1949 describes how often trade unions would revert to Marxist dogma, in response to issues with Military Government. Clearly then perhaps the trade union movement was not as anti-Communist as the British would have hoped. In the main however they still were outspoken against Communist parties and infiltration by those seeking to cause unrest. As a whole indirect rule certainly seems to have resulted in the creation of a strong, democratic trade union movement. A movement that the British perceived to be key for the future of Germany.

Another British aim had been the repression of right wing or neo-Nazi, beliefs in Germany. The electoral victory of the CDU during the formation of the FRG, and the fact that the SPD became the opposition party seem to show British success in this matter. However right-wing feeling did still exist, to a large enough extent that it was still seen as a strong concern for the Military Government and the CCG (BE). There was concern about the *Deutsche rechtspartei* (DRP). The DRP was a far-right German political party that advocated for the release of 23 or 24 high-ranking Wehrmacht generals including Field Marshal Kesselring and for a return to the old imperial flag, instead of the new flag of the FRG.¹⁹⁹ The British reacted in horror to the success of the party in *Kreis* and *Gemeinde* elections. In the *stadvertretung* of Wolfsburg, the DRP won 17 seats, far more than the six won by the SPD who were the next biggest party.²⁰⁰ Aside from winning seats at local elections the DRP, agitated against voting in areas where they were not allowed to stand. In Emden where they had run a campaign against voting the turnout was only 48 percent, compared to the average of 70 percent.²⁰¹ In response to these events a British member of the CCG (BE), wrote on a report “I dislike these developments. They are systematic of the general resurgence of the old right-wing forces with their own youth groups and ‘yellow’ T. Us”.²⁰² This shows that the British use of indirect rule to try and form a new democratic way of thinking, and to use KRO’s to guide the Germans away from returning to right-wing parties and militarism was failing. Most damning of all is that the DRP won seats in the

¹⁹⁴ TNA, FO 1049/1694, *Political Division weekly summary No.5*, 16th June 1949, p.7.

¹⁹⁵ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, pp. 262-263.

¹⁹⁶ Lord. Annan, *Changing enemies the defeat and regeneration of Germany*, p. 158

¹⁹⁷ TNA, FO 1049/1694, *Political Division weekly summary No. 4*, 8th June 1949, p.6.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p.6.

¹⁹⁹ TNA, FO 1049/2222, *The Future propaganda line of the DRP*, 16th November 1949.

²⁰⁰ TNA, FO 1049/2222, L. Thompson, *The Deutsche Rechtspartei*, 6th January 1949, p.1.

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.1.

²⁰² TNA FO 1049/2222, *Minutes: Deutsche Rechtspartei*, 12th January 1949.

general election held after the formation of the FRG in 1949,²⁰³ and that the DRP was manoeuvring to combine with the far-right party in the American zone.²⁰⁴ On the other hand, while the DRP had some limited electoral success this was confined only to certain areas of the country, and the British themselves may have been over emphasising the success of right-wing parties and the extent of their support. Indeed, while the DRP won a majority of seats in the *stadtvertretung* of Wolfsburg, that election result was overturned after it was discovered that a DRP candidate had stood for election in two places simultaneously.²⁰⁵ After that the British banned the DRP local party in the *Kreis Grift*, preventing more electoral success.²⁰⁶ The proposed merger of the DRP with the American zone's NDP, and the DP, also failed,²⁰⁷ and while in 1949 the DRP won seats in the Bundesrat, the party soon fractured and never received widespread popular support.²⁰⁸ So, in fact, indirect rule was largely successful in repressing far-right political beliefs and parties, albeit some smaller parties did exist. Despite this fact though contemporary CCG (BE) staff were concerned over a right-wing resurgence which led to them overemphasising that danger of the right.

Finally, it should be considered whether indirect rule helped gain popular German support for the British policies aimed at transforming society. Simply put, it did not. The Germans viewed British aims with distrust, believing that they merely wanted to dismantle Germany, they were also critical of British attempts to reform German society along British lines, even when it was done through Germans.²⁰⁹ In a report concerning the opinions of German lawyers, it is made strikingly clear that they saw the introduction of a new municipal code, heavily influenced by the British way of life and governance, overwhelmingly negatively²¹⁰. Here indirect rule and the aim of getting the local population to govern themselves along British lines, was clearly failing and not transforming German society but instead alienating it. The imperial attitudes that went hand in hand with British indirect rule also served to alienate the local population. A British administrator admitted that some of his colleagues too easily took on the role of colonial officers, while the leader of the SPD Kurt Schumacher declared that his only regret concerning the independence of India was that the Indian civil service would now turn up in Germany.²¹¹ Even more critical was his comments that "we are not blacks" in response to how he perceived the Germans were treated by the British.²¹² This shows the fundamental flaw and paradox of the use of indirect rule in Germany. While it gained some support, and largely achieved its goals, especially broader goals, it did not really transform German society, in part because it served as a barrier, isolating and often confounding the local population. This issue has been acknowledged by many historians in previous studies, for example Meehan.²¹³ There was also the issue that while indirect rule was used when it went wrong the British were blamed as they wielded overall sovereignty for their zone. A British report claims exasperatedly that there is some criticism about things such as efficiency of the administration that shouldn't be aimed at the Military Government as "most Germans do not realise how much is in the hands of their own officials and

²⁰³ D. Childs, 'The Far-Right in Germany since 1945', IN L. Cheles, R. Ferguson & M. Vaughan (eds.), *Neo-Fascism in Europe*, (Harlow: Longman, 1992), p. 70

²⁰⁴ TNA, FO 1049/2222, *Draft Letter from Mr. Wilson to A.G. Gilchrist*, Foreign Office, undated, pp. 2-3.

²⁰⁵ TNA, FO 1049/2222, *P.E. Ramsbotham, Letter to A.G. Gilchrist*, 17th March 1949, pp. 2-3.

²⁰⁶ TNA, FO 1049/2222, *Minutes concerning the DRP*, undated, p.3.

²⁰⁷ TNA, FO 1049/1694, *Political Division weekly summary No.5*, 16th June 1949, p.6.

²⁰⁸ D. Childs, 'The Far-Right in Germany since 1945', IN L. Cheles, R. Ferguson & M. Vaughan (eds.), *Neo-Fascism in Europe*, p.71.

²⁰⁹ TNA, FO 1049/929, D.S. Leskey, *British response to Dr Kohn's report*, 7th February 1947, p.1.

²¹⁰ TNA, FO 1040/929, Dr Kohn, *Report on a visit to the British zone of Germany*, November 1946, pp. 5-7

²¹¹ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p.60.

²¹² F. Taylor, *Exorcising Hitler: The Occupation and Denazification of Germany*, p. 302.

²¹³ P. Meehan *A Strange Enemy People*, p.60.

how inefficient most of these officials are. If we can show after the elections next spring, that the Land governments really are responsible for the bulk of the administration, some of the criticism now directed against us may be diverted on to the German officials where it properly belongs"²¹⁴. This shows that while indirect rule was used, the local population saw it more as direct rule and didn't realise how much was governed by the Germans themselves. Indirect rule was held responsible for issues it did not cause. Although it could be argued that if the responsible German administrators were poor that was due to flaws in indirect rule itself.

Overall indirect rule had some success in transforming German society, leading to the decentralisation of power, the formation of strong anti-Communist trade unions, and largely repressing the far right, but it never succeeded in gaining larger scale German support for British policies, which prevented truly transformative results to occur.

²¹⁴TNA, FO 1049/929, D.S. Leskey, *British response to Dr Kohn's report*, 7th February 1947, p. 2.

Conclusion

A deeper understanding of a fairly neglected aspect of the most important occupation of the twentieth century is now possible. It is also possible to answer the question of “How did the British imperial practice of Indirect rule inform both the occupation policy in the British zone of Germany, and the future of Germany in 1945-1949”. The imperial practice of indirect rule was placed at the centre of British occupation policy. It was responsible for shaping the democracy that formed in the FRG and helped to lead to the reintegration of the FRG as a positive stakeholder for the security of Europe. The use of indirect rule was partially due to the unescapable influence of imperial thinking, embedded as it was so strongly in the British psyche, as well as for robust practical reasoning. The use of indirect rule was strongest at the local level, where KRO’s became a fact of everyday life, and the British attempted to win over the common man to their goals and extol the virtues of democracy, while simultaneously supporting elites, conservatives and the establishment. At all levels establishment figures were supported in order to lend some stability to the British occupation. As the level of government increased, indirect rule decreased. It was still fairly strong at a regional level but indirect rule policies were much weaker and more general at the zonal and central level. Most interestingly though is the fact that the rather imperial policy of indirect rule actually achieved its goals and more generally can be seen as a key reason for the success of the occupation as a whole. Democracy and democratic feeling was not as strong as many wished in 1949 and the nature of the democracy was establishment focussed and not truly transformative and radical, but Germany became a trusted partner in Europe and in preserving the stability of Europe a mere six years after the FRG had formed. While it was still occupied after 1949, it was more garrisoned than occupied in truth. German society had also undergone massive changes despite the establishment nature of the governments that formed.

The lessons of indirect rule are ones that are still relevant today. The occupation of Iraq from 2003, undoubtedly failed. The emergence of IS, although now almost defeated served as the starkest example of how utterly total that failure was. Emma Sky who was intimately involved in the occupation working with the CPA in Kirkuk and later as a political advisor to US general Odierno, described it as America’s worst strategic failure²¹⁵. The Americans tried to use lessons they had learnt in Germany, but they failed. Partially of course this is due to the myriad unique issues that beleaguered Iraq, but a claim can be made that at first the US attempted to govern directly, then via Iraqi institutions, but not really indirectly. Indirect rule is uniquely capable of enabling a nation to exert control over an occupation, while simultaneously building up institutions that are centred on the local population. One should be careful due to the imperial undercurrents of indirect rule, but there are clearly lessons from indirect rule in Germany that should be learnt. Wars and occupations will always occur, and nations will always seek to reshape a defeated enemy. Previous occupations have to be understood so that what went right or wrong can be used for future reference.

In terms of occupation and imperialism, the occupation of the British zone in Germany shows that the lines between the two are blurred. The decisions that the British made in regards to their occupation zone was undoubtedly informed by the practices of indirect rule which they had used in their empire. While some times these practice and policies as used in Germany varied from their use in Empire, the logic underpinning them was the same. They overall served to identify Elites, conservatives, broadly those willing to act as agents of stability rather than of instability and change,

²¹⁵ See E. Sky, *the unravelling: High hopes and missed opportunities in Iraq* (London; Atlantic Books, 2015) for a comprehensive first-hand account of the occupation of Iraq.

and to use them to govern the local population, through laws that had been used before the British presence. This was done under the watchful eye and guidance of the British authorities. In Germany, the British had to rebuild governmental bodies to a larger degree than in empire but the broad aims and policies of indirect rule remained the same even if sometimes the practices differed. It also shows that imperial undertones, and an imperial frame of reference often proved to be reductive, and actually undermined the indirect rule policies the British were attempting to implement because they alienated the German population.

Of course, in Germany unlike in the empire, there was multiple actors at work, not merely the British and the local population. This does make it harder to make authoritative claims on the impact of indirect rule and to parse how much impact indirect rule had on the occupation as a whole. Certainly, it is undeniable that indirect rule informed British decision making. What is also now clear is that the historiography under represents the British role in the occupation. Whilst, America has to be considered to have played the major role in the occupation for the FRG and the west, Britain and indirect rule also did shape the future of Germany, perhaps in the past the influence of indirect rule has been downplayed due to the problematic imperial influence, which sometimes alienated Germans at the time from British policies and British aims. It may be that during and even in the post-cold war, America would understandably always be the locus for research. Regardless it is clear that British policies informed by indirect rule did in part shape Germany between 1945-1949, and the future of Germany after 1949. The intersection between empire and occupation and its broader impact is certainly a field of study that should receive more attention in the future, offering as it does a unique insight not only into the connection between broad governmental policies, that would seem unconnected at first, but also as it offers a new and exciting opportunity to investigate a new facet of what may make an occupation a success or a failure.

This paper then has served to show, that not only is it undeniable that the British implemented and used indirect rule to govern their one of occupation, after an initial period of direct control, but it also has divulged why the British implemented Indirect rule, what that entailed and also the results of indirect rule. It shows that while indirect rule did have some successes it also had its flaws. What is undoubtedly clear is that overall it played a fundamental role in the formation of a strong, Western focused FRG via the implementation of the Basic law and the holding of central elections, and helped to forge an integral partner for the Western allies and NATO against the perceived threat of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. What is needed to build upon this research, is a more in-depth study of indirect rule policies, that may have been used in the American zone, alongside comparing these methods to those used in both the French and Soviet zones, to not only be able to more comprehensively identify which occupying powers were more or less responsible for how the FRG was created, but also to compare the success of the Western occupation to that of the Soviet Union. Greater analysis into the German insight into British policies would also be useful, and is a limitation of this work. It should also be mentioned that this work focuses predominantly on the official view and opinion of indirect rule, from the actors on the ground. Perhaps more insight into the view of senior leaders in the metropole, and of different ministries outside of the foreign office and control commission could be needed. In particular, a stronger insight into the views of the army concerning indirect rule could be made. As a whole though, the central question has been answered, and any limitations in the research can be answered by subsequent studies that may look at slightly different aspect and from different viewpoints.

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