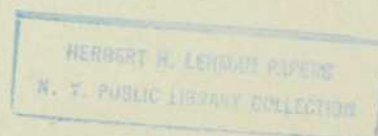


# The Failure of AMG in Italy

By  
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*For Governor and Mrs. Lehman  
from Maurice Neufeld*



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# The Failure of AMG in Italy

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THE fall of the Parri government in Rome in the autumn of 1945 and the spectacular rise of Giannini's Common Man Party were the culmination of a pattern of administrative errors which began with the Allied Military Government in Sicily and continued through the occupation of North Italy. The resignation of a democratic and representative government and the resurgence of fascism, under a new name, were as much due to Allied administrative chaos and confusion as to Italian political inexperience, governmental ineptitude, and economic ruin.

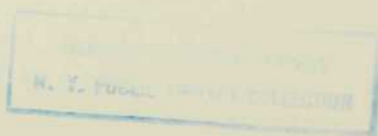
The Allies, with the United States as senior partner in popular esteem, have chosen to enter occupied areas with a philosophy of lofty intentions couched in benign and democratic phraseology. They have had, however, no clear-cut program or administrative techniques designed to fulfill these ends. They have governed, even at the highest levels, with inexperienced men of limited political and administrative vision. By continuing, on the world scene, to act upon the American fiction that industrious individuals with good intentions, regardless of circumscribed professional training, education, or point of view, can be competent at high levels of governmental policy-making or in specialized and difficult fields of operation, we have created confusion and uncertainty. American prestige, once a symbol of hope, has dwindled, although the peoples of Europe and Asia still cling to the dream of disinterested good which our power evokes.

AMG has failed in Italy because it has proved impossible, with the governing

techniques we adopted, to effect the intentions we announced. AMG was crippled from within, at the start, by the very structure and philosophy of its administrative existence. This led to a cumbersome military chain of command ill suited to the management of civil affairs; to the subjection of AMG to the declaration of policy and judgments by the military mind of the regular Army; and to a limited concept of AMG responsibility which affected the scope of the original plans made in Washington and hampered effective action in the field. In addition, the personnel of AMG was deficient in numbers, training, and political understanding. From without, the role of AMG was handicapped because its constructive accomplishments were blurred by incomplete and often erroneous reporting of the Italian scene by American journalists. AMG was also hampered in achieving the announced intentions of the Allied governments by the passive, and perhaps unavoidably negative, role of the State Department.

## *The Basic Administrative Weakness*

THE planners of the philosophy and administrative structure of AMG, studying the past, found the dead American experience of the Civil War and the occupation of the Rhineland during World War I a welcome and convenient pattern by which to formulate policy. The basic concept, repeated in Army manuals and in Army classes, assumed that the chief function of AMG would lie in the task of securing the rear lines of communication of the Army, of maintaining order in those areas through



which the Army had passed. From this idea flowed the corollary that military governors should be part of the Army. It was realized, of course, that the problems of modern occupation would be more complex and vast than those encountered previously in our limited experience and that for this reason AMG should probably not be wholly subjected to the Army. However, this was an exceedingly difficult idea to sell to the Army. The resulting administrative framework had the misshapen form of compromise. Modern verbal plywood was superimposed upon the old timbers of Army notions about occupation. A separate civil affairs division was created in the War Department and another G added to Army administration, G5. This lent to the function a semblance of independence which was deceptive; actually, AMG and its officers remained subordinate to the Army in all important matters of policy. Even the paper separation, however, made AMG suspicious and strange to the minds of regular Army officers. It seemed to be part of the Army, yet it was never accepted as such.

The confusion stemmed from the outmoded philosophy of military government inherited from the past. Whether this philosophy has validity in modern warfare, whether it is possible to administer at all on such a narrow scale, and whether the concept is consistent with American foreign policy, democratic aims, or humane intentions were questions left to be answered by the process of trial and error. Actually, the chief concern of AMG never remained for very long the narrow preoccupation with the Army's rear lines of communication; the day-to-day problems of governing made this impossible. Yet the chain of command and the whole administrative structure were built upon the older notion.

Because there was no imaginative projection of specific problems into the administrative machinery created on paper, delays were inevitable. AMG in Sicily had

to await the approval of Allied Force Headquarters, then located in Algiers, for basic policy and decisions in the operation of important phases of the social, economic, and political life of Italy. For example, we proclaimed, almost upon landing, that labor was free. But directives on the formation of labor unions and provincial labor offices were still not approved weeks after submission. Finally, the provincial officer of Palermo issued a directive of his own without awaiting headquarters approval. At a later period, when AFHQ was located at Caserta, a regional commissioner wanting a change or interpretation of decrees concerning the control of movement of persons and vehicles had to write first to Rome, where the Allied Commission was seated. (AC served both as headquarters for all AMG regions and as advisers to the Italian government for those areas already turned back to the Italians.) AC, in turn, where fundamental issues were involved, had to write to G5 of AFHQ, the military government section of headquarters at Caserta. G5 then had to ascertain the views of the appropriate agencies scattered among the various G's of Army administration. Often AFHQ had to communicate with the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington before a decision could be made.

When AMG in the Rome region had organized transport and the collection of grain to a sufficient extent to feel that it could recommend an increase of the bread ration from 150 to 200 grams a day, Lt. General Noel Mason MacFarlane, the most gifted and able chief commissioner ever to head AC, asked Caserta for approval. The decision was delayed, possibly even discussed for weeks. In desperation, because he realized the plight of the common people in Rome, who could not buy their main staple at fantastic black market prices, General MacFarlane authorized the increase of the ration on his own authority. On his own authority, too, when Rome was taken, he accepted the political judgment of the

Italian leaders of the Committee of Liberation in regard to Badoglio and the King.

Under Army control such independence of action was the exception rather than the rule and was not countenanced. The delays under which AMG had to function forced the Italians themselves, in the absence of procedures which were promised but never announced, to act outside the academic rulings we imposed. The prestige of the Army never suffered, for few Italians or Allied personnel knew where the difficulties of administration lay. But American policy and our personnel in the field, who took the direct hits of public opinion, were made to seem feeble and incompetent. Intelligent Italian officials and citizens questioned repeatedly, although politely, the widespread myth of our efficiency.

This situation, of course, reflects a problem which assails us in all fields of public administration—the extent to which local and regional offices should be empowered to make rapid and independent decisions, even at the cost of over-all consistency. In Italy, where AMG had to work under emergency conditions, the disastrous results of administrative delays became obvious much sooner than comparable lags in the United States under normal circumstances.

The whole experience has proved what some realized from the start: that the administrators of AMG should never have been part of the Army. Wars are no longer, and probably never were, purely military, even from the start of hostilities or the first second of occupation. The problems which spring at the AMG officer, from the moment he wades up onto the beachhead or enters a village, are those of life itself, intensified by the thrusts of war, in all its civilian magnitude and diversity. Administratively, the personnel of civil affairs should have been, from the beginning, civilians, responsible to a civilian theater commander. Only one way has been found historically to combat the intricacy and

slowness of Army methods and procedures. Civilians with great authority must counterbalance the military. Civilians head the War and Navy Departments in Washington and the War Ministry in London. In each theater of war, because modern war on both the home and the battle fronts is a vast labyrinth of economic, social, and political forces, the supreme commander should be a civilian of great capacity and experience. The civilian theater commander should, of course, be surrounded by eminent military figures to help him to decide purely military matters, with appeal always to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On civilian matters, he should have available the best administrative and scientific talent. In the event of a dispute on civilian matters between the civilian theater commander and his military advisers, there would also be the right of appeal to Washington. This method of dealing with civil affairs in occupied countries would not only tend to simplify the chain of command but would also insure faster decisions by people familiar with the problems under discussion.

Such a fundamental reform in the structure of our military machine no doubt requires discussion and thought. But that the reform is needed is indisputable. Even now, civilian experts should replace military commands in Germany and Japan. This change was actually called for in Germany by General Eisenhower as early as the summer of 1945 and has been intimated for Japan. The shift has not yet taken place. In February, 1946, Secretary of State Byrnes announced that at the moment his department was unable to assume the task in Germany of supplying civilian specialists. In other words, the principle is recognized as sound; we happen not to be prepared to act upon sound conclusions. That is an administrative failing.

Civilian administrators for Germany and Japan, when they are selected, should be responsible, no matter by what governmental agencies they are hired or borrowed,

to a single federal authority, presumably the State Department. The single federal authority would have the duty of coordinating and enunciating clear-cut policy. If we are to occupy the role expected of us in world affairs, we cannot lightly assume this immediate burden in occupied countries. The responsibility for recruiting of personnel must be placed, as in wartime, in the hands of the government, working through the various learned societies of specialists and scientists. The alchemy of change from autocracy to democracy cannot be entrusted to GI's aching for home, to regular Army officers without real interest in the social and political transformation they are witnessing, or to civilians who will accept foreign assignments because they offer better salaries than they could hope to achieve at home. Only our most able experts can solve the most fundamental problem in the world today: the building of democracy and peace. Perhaps professional groups will once again, as in wartime, have to exert great pressure to emphasize the gravity of the situation and the immediate need for trained administrators and specialists.

#### *Army Attitudes and Practices*

THE transfer of the control of occupied countries to civilian administrators would not correct the situation completely. Even if the administration of occupied countries were freed from the Army, our civilian administrators would meet military habits of thought and action every day in the course of doing their job. There are hundreds of points at which the work of the one group, however independent, would converge upon that of the other. There are scores of instances in which cooperation would be necessary. For example, in all city areas a base section of the Army must be established to meet the needs of military personnel and operations. Inevitably, the Army must deal with civilians and rub against civilian problems. For

these reasons, reform in the education of Army officers and enlisted men is indicated. With a fuller understanding of the background of civilian problems, many of the unfortunate events which have damaged our prestige in occupied countries could have been avoided.

A few examples of such incidents in Italy underline this point. In Naples, a resident Army general, stationed with the base section, had in his office a notorious fascist employee who served also as his constant social companion. Italian trade unions and civic leaders called the attention of AMG to this strange relationship. AMG collected the facts and presented them to the general. His own staff collected facts. These were again presented to him at a joint meeting of his staff and AMG. At the end, he said, in the face of overwhelming evidence: "Well, there's no doubt he is a scoundrel, but he's my scoundrel, and he's going to stay." (His language was actually more expressive.) The employee's continued presence in the general's office created unnecessary political embarrassment in a trying enough situation. Again, in Rome, the day following the occupation of the city, an Italian hostess of the aristocracy, who had also entertained the Germans, invited American and British officers to lunch. Without thinking about the identity of the woman or the ideas she represented, they accepted. They were all considerably embarrassed when, in the middle of the luncheon, the Counter Intelligence Corps arrested some of her Italian guests who had been high-ranking Fascists or Nazi collaborators. One of them was the chief propagandist of the fascist Rome radio. His good-looking and titled American wife was also present and must have charmed the Allied officers. That was her business. The incident shocked anti-fascists; we were held up to ridicule, and rightly.

The independence of civil affairs administrators cannot solve problems like these. To meet such situations, Army education

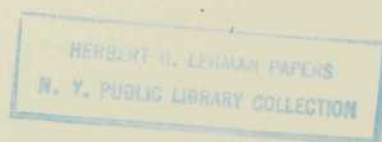
needs to be reformed at the level of West Point and the service schools for officers. They should be educated to appreciate not only the complexity of world problems but also the principles of democracy in action. A broader education, aimed at comprehension rather than obedience, focused toward varied knowledge rather than thinking by manual and precedents, would aid the Army in serving the greatest democracy in the world. Intensive training in American history, portraying the great contributions of all racial and national groups to our civilization, world history and literature, economics, political science, and public administration (not merely Army administration) should take high places in the curriculum, along with the necessary technical and specialized training Army men must have. Our young officers should be prepared to understand a changing world moving to the left. Wherever they are, whether at Army posts at home, in Washington, at the embassies abroad, they should be men of understanding, since they represent the United States in the minds of millions. Important, too, is the fact that enlisted men, by and large, represent and reflect the habits of thought of their officers. Education at the GI level in the Army failed because few officers had the time or interest to effect the plans and courses outlined in innumerable bulletins.

In the specific field of supplies, civilian administrators would be dependent upon the Army, especially in the early months of occupation. Here again, the improvement of Army understanding and point of view would help to resolve difficulties like these which arose in Italy and elsewhere. The inefficiency and dishonesty of a small percentage of crucially placed officers and enlisted men affected the fulfillment of promises given to the Italian people by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, and adequate supplies to the Army itself were jeopardized. The present Army method of dealing with inefficiency

and corruption left AMG with little remedy. The Army tends to protect officers whenever violations are not so flagrant that they become public scandal. This situation will continue as long as the office of the inspector general of the Army is military. Despite the theory of independence of investigation, it is common knowledge in the Army that a general of an outfit under investigation can influence a lower-ranking officer of the inspector general's office. The office of the inspector general should be civilianized and placed under Congress, like the independent office of the comptroller general. There will be outcries against this untraditional solution to the problem of inefficiency and corruption; cases will be cited where the old system worked. But any apologist will find it difficult to explain the corruption at the port of Naples—at one time the greatest port, in volume, in the world; to explain the vast sums of money sent home by officers and enlisted men, sums exceeding many times their annual pay (in Italy, early in 1946, a pay control system was instituted—a step which admitted that existing conditions needed correction); to explain the huge quantities of American food on the black markets of every country in Europe. It seems clear that only an independent civilian agency can solve the problem.

#### *Bungled Administration in Important Fields*

THE limited concept of occupation responsibilities and duties with which the Washington planners of AMG evolved their organizational charts and directives led to chaos at AC headquarters and in the regions. This is a strong indictment, but no impartial investigator could fail to render it. The importance of four basic fields of operation were not foreseen in Washington with enough clarity to stress their predominance in the administrative scene. After fumbling in Sicily and Naples their position was modified, but it was too late.



*Labor.* Labor was left out entirely in the original Washington plans and was included only at the insistence of an officer who had had considerable administrative experience in public life and understood the importance of a vital labor movement in a democratic society. The entire labor staff in the early days of Sicily consisted of one officer. Labor officers numbered fewer than ten for all of Italy in the summer of 1945. Few had had actual labor experience. The head of the subcommission on labor was for a long period an officer who, in civilian life, had administered unemployment relief for the Labour Ministry. He was naturally helpless in strike negotiations because he had never participated in them before. His successor was an American with an anti-labor bias and no knowledge of the fundamentals of the trade. He had to be eased out of responsibility. Another officer had taught English. Another had been a professor of sociology. He appointed to direct regional and provincial labor offices in the most highly industrialized and the most politically conscious area of Italy men with such distinguished fascist records that the regional headquarters was forced to dismiss them as soon as their history was discovered through the protests of indignant Italian labor leaders of all political persuasions. With this kind of Allied staff, the labor movement of Italy, one of the key blocks of the new and promised freedom, was to have been redemocratized. It is a great tribute to Italian character and political democracy that their labor organizations are as alive and democratic as they are. They were not helped much by us because we never foresaw an obvious and fundamental field of occupational activity.

*Food and Transportation.* Food and transportation were administrative stepchildren in Sicily; a handful of officers, with no specific experience in these fields, directed the work. Even after the mainland was reached and the problem became the central difficulty of our administration,

these two subcommissions remained understaffed, and with inexperienced officers. If transport had been planned and organized well by men with actual trucking, railroad, and shipping experience in the United States and Great Britain, the black market in foodstuffs would have been considerably curtailed, and the black market in transport could have been almost completely eliminated. The organization of coastal schooner transport, supervised by Allied officers, under an Italian agency, Cogen, became an open scandal. This schooner service was essential, with trucks and trains at a premium, in bringing the agricultural and mining products of Sicily and Sardinia to the mainland and furnishing manufactured goods to the islands. Despite the documented evidence provided to AC headquarters, suggesting Allied and Italian corruption, no action was taken for over a year. Finally, Italian administrators were dismissed and Allied officers put under investigation. In the long months of their reign, however, wine came to the mainland, but not the Sicilian salt desperately needed by city dwellers and the farmers.

The food subcommission confused administration with the issuance of rules, regulations, and restrictions which created even greater shortages in a country where neither the Allies nor the Italians, with a small and demoralized police force, could begin to enforce regulations. The British members of the subcommission should have realized that they were not dealing with a disciplined people like the British who understood the issues of the war and their share in accepting necessary sacrifices. The Americans merely continued abroad an administrative pastime they had learned in the United States—the salving of conscience and easing of responsibility by the publication of unenforceable rules without thought to the daily problems of control.

Imagine that the United States is an occupied country and that well-meaning conquerors have established a liberal rule.

At the same time they publish an order saying that the industrial east is to be divided into two parts at the Mason and Dixon line. North of that line the prices that prevailed on April 3, 1945, are to be in force. South of that line current, inflated prices are to exist. Furthermore, no free commerce between the industrial north and the agricultural south is to be allowed until rules of trade are established, leaving the field open to contraband operations. For months no rules are announced. Suppose that our friendly conquerors had allowed us to form a government of our own. How long could that government exist, subject to the economic nonsense just described?

That is precisely what the Allies did to the Parri government in Italy. When the north was liberated by the Italian patriots, the economic section of AC drew an arbitrary line across the upper peninsula, dividing the north from the south. Price and trade restrictions were established. Unfortunately, neither the Italians nor AC price experts of the Foreign Economic Administration knew what April 3 prices were nor how they could be determined. For months they dallied with this problem and, after strikes and wage increases, agreed to raise prices. But to determine the new price level, they devised an administrative procedure so cumbersome that it could never work in Italy, and it has not worked. On the books there was price control; actually, there was none throughout the length and breadth of Italy.

Also, across the dividing line, no free commerce of articles from the industrial north was to occur. Apparently no officer at AC was concerned about the possibility of enforcing this regulation. Yet, even if carabinieri had been available to stack four abreast across this economic *cordon sanitaire*, prevention of the flow of goods could hardly have been enforced. And of course they were not available; after the corruption of fascism, years of war, and the erosion of Allied occupation, the Italian police

system is severely crippled. Naturally, the black market flourished. Yet this action of AC was described in the *New York Times* in terms of a battle which saved the economy of Italy, and its author was praised for his economic and administrative wisdom. No Allied local administrator who had to attempt to enforce this unenforceable regulation was in agreement. The Italians not only disagreed but subjected the idea and our inefficiency in enforcing our own laws to the jibes of the music hall.

When a respectable manufacturer or merchant came to AMG headquarters in Milan asking for permission to transport goods to the needy south, and this permission was refused because AC had forbidden such commerce but had not as yet devised legal trade relations, the Allies not only looked foolish but inefficient and curiously like fascist bureaucrats in Italian eyes. These Italians knew and named dishonest merchants and manufacturers who were transporting products every day without permission and with impunity. AMG was aware of this situation and knew, too, that it could not enforce the AC ukase. Protests, after months, resulted in an unworkable and elaborate set of industrial and price committees which served only to shackle the economy of Italy still further. And the black market continued to operate profitably.

Internal trade in Italy was controlled. International trade was also subject to the approval of Allied officials. After months of negotiations between Swiss and Italian trade experts, an agreement was reached which would have provided Italy with 90,000,000 Swiss francs of credit and Switzerland with essential and needed products which Italy could spare. Despite the public declaration by AC that Italy was free to negotiate such treaties, this vital agreement was vetoed by the economic section. At long last, in February, 1946, AC once again declared that the Italian government was free to make trade agreements.

In September, 1773, Benjamin Franklin published in London a pamphlet called *Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One*. He cited two rules which always work: (1) perplex commerce with infinite regulations; (2) don't treat colonies in any way except as though they were about to revolt. In Italy, the Allies have followed Franklin's ironic advice implicitly. If we intended to render Italy impotent, we should have said so simply and directly. If we want Italy, which lies athwart Europe, to be democratic, we had best make possible stable, democratic, and anti-Fascist government. The L'Uomo Qualunque movement which caters to the dissident of all classes is not merely the creation of Giannini and the conservative interests behind him; it is also our own negative creation.

*Education.* In the administration of conquered Italy, education was never recognized as the vital and revolutionary force it is. Carleton W. Washburne, the present head of the education subcommission of AC, describes the main task of his agency in the October, 1945, issue of the *Educational Record*: "Fundamentally, the job was to prevent unrest and to control the population so that the combat army would not be bothered by disturbances in the rear and so that 'the kids would be kept off the streets.' As a corollary, fascism was to be eliminated, since the Fascists were our enemies. There was no military program for re-education of youth (or adults), nor was it proposed that anything be substituted for the eliminated fascist elements of the program." Gradually, and inevitably, more constructive activities crept into the work, and some long-range programs have begun to be developed. But these activities and programs, which would seem to democratic Americans to be one of the most fundamental parts of our mission in Italy, have crept in almost as though they were afterthoughts.

The education subcommission from the beginning had few officers. In a 99 per cent

Catholic country, some of the officers were openly anti-Catholic. This attitude resulted in protests from the Vatican and created problems which should never have existed. In Sicily, one officer actually placed on the Italian advisory committee an Italian who was not only an anti-Catholic but also an avowed atheist. Because of the negative approach to education, the job of eliminating fascism from the schoolbooks was tackled by cutting offending pages and, later, by printing new books without the fascist references. Nothing positive and constructive was substituted. The reeducation of teachers, trained for twenty years under fascism, could not be assumed because of the lack of officers. Yet this was the real job. The offending pages might have remained in the books and reeducated teachers might have been able to point out the fallacies, in the light of historical events, of the doctrines taught. This policy was adopted in relation to slogans of Mussolini painted on the sides of buildings all through Italy. We announced that these slogans could remain. Nothing was more ironical or educational than the slogan *Win Win Win* on the one remaining wall of a completely destroyed village. If the reeducation of Italy along democratic principles is delayed for years, we must accept full responsibility.

#### Personnel

THE personnel of AMG were selected on the basis of criteria which were faulty. As a result, just as the administrative structure and recognition of key problems suffered from the limitations of the master concept, so personnel were chosen who proved inadequate for the job as it developed in the field.

The first two classes of the Military Government School at Charlottesville contained a number of elderly senior officers of the Army, which, understandably enough, seems to have assumed that AMG was a God-provided spot for respectable officers who had served their country faith-

fully but who had outlived their day. They could now retire to an active and dignified position not unlike that of elderly British officers in India or the Sudan.

Full responsibility for accepting and keeping these individuals must be laid at the office doors of the directors of the school and the War Department. No one who has not served with AMG in the field can possibly appreciate the inability of these gentlemen to earn their keep. AMG was always understaffed for the wide scope of the work to be done and the responsibilities assumed. These high-ranking officers occupied top places on the table of organization which should have gone to talented and efficient public administrators. Their rank necessitated assignment to positions of high responsibility. Their political inexperience and conservatism were fatal to the vigorous administration of American policy abroad.

Many AMG specialist officers were of high caliber. However, the selection of personnel was faulty in failing to provide top policy-making administrators with experience. While officers with training in social welfare, public health, or education could be used in these limited fields both at headquarters and in the regions, it was difficult to find able regional and provincial commissioners and administrative heads of subcommissions and sections at AC headquarters. Here, too, the fault lay in assuming that high-ranking Army personnel could do this job. Much of the blundering of the AC, its inability to make quick decisions, and the administrative chaos at headquarters, including the failure to find even important correspondence, can be ascribed to the failure to provide for the job of policy-making and directing administrators. The AC had a real chief commissioner only once, Lt. General MacFarlane. Its important subcommissions were headed for the most part by persons with little administrative ability or experience; often the subcommissions went for months with acting heads who were equally unqualified.

The conglomeration of diverse and dubious talent which comprised the staff of AMG and AC lacked, with few exceptions, insight into the moral issues of the war and our role in Italy. This curious lack can be illustrated by an incident in Naples, where a prefect had to be chosen. AC had ruled, contrary to the practice in Sicily, that it had to approve all prefects before final appointment by the regional commissioner could be made. After a long search for the right man of anti-Fascist history and unquestioned ability, a distinguished jurist was discovered in the mountains of a far-off province. He was a brilliant lawyer, had served with a small and respected group in the resistance movement in Naples, and had edited the chief underground newspaper. His anti-Fascist record was clear. When his name and curriculum vitae were presented to one of the top three at AC headquarters for clearance, that regular Army officer scanned the record and said: "It would be a curious thing to appoint a man to a governmental post who has spent his life in fighting his government." The fact that George Washington could have been accused of this disloyalty apparently never entered his mind, possibly because American history or any history was beyond his interest. That same officer regularly associated with those elements of Roman society whose political affiliations during fascism were subject to considerable discussion in anti-Fascist circles.

Most of the regular Army officers in AMG, and those from civilian life who enjoyed greater incomes, comforts, and power in the Army, never wanted AMG or AC to cease functioning. Both knowingly and unconsciously they sought always to continue the life of military government. Requisitioned villas, cars, and companionship would end with the end of AC. Most of them would have to return to army post life, military attaché assignments, or second-rate civilian jobs. They saw the bogeys of communist rebellions, disorders, and the

inability of the Italians to rule themselves more clearly than those in the field working with the people. The effect was disaster. Although promises had been made to Parri that the industrial north would be returned to the Italian people in October, although AMG officers in Milan had recommended, on the basis of knowledge, transfer in September, that transfer did not occur until December 31, 1945. This delay could only serve to weaken the Parri government in a country where political gossip is accepted as truth. Italian politicians are not so different from American politicians that they did not use such indirect facts as the absence of transfer on the appointed date to imply that the British and Americans had no faith in Parri's government. Faulty administrative structure and poor selection of personnel may not often lead to the fall of governments, but in Italy American governmental chaos was a large contributing factor.

#### *Journalistic Reporting*

THE responsibility of the press in its approach to the reporting of governmental activities should be given more attention by both journalists and public administrators. Methods must be devised to insure understanding of administrative techniques and problems as they affect governmental action in order that criticism of public programs shall be directed at those areas where reform is desirable and practicable and not at points unrelated to the program. This requires knowledge by journalists of the intent, ends, and function of an administrative program and hard work by administrators in helping journalists to educate themselves in specialized and technical fields.

To report adequately on military government one should have knowledge of government, as well as of the country and its language. A sports writer or a young, inexperienced reporter cannot measure up to the responsibility of the job. An English journalist has stated privately that, in his

opinion, the early fiasco in Greece arose, in part, from the poor quality of the journalists sent in. The British underestimated the magnitude of the occupational problem and the intensity of the political forces set loose by the withdrawal of the Germans. They expected little trouble and sent in only second-bench reporters. These reporters did not comprehend the social upheaval they were witnessing. The result of this misunderstanding is part of the unhappy history of Allied occupation.

Most journalists in Naples, for example (the situation remained the same in Rome and later in Milan), waiting around for the Army to advance toward Rome, were looking for sensational news in the interim of the war doldrums. They were shocked by the sight of dirty children without shoes, forgetting our own urban and rural areas of squalor and poverty. They took little trouble to inform themselves as to the habits of Neapolitans, or to find out where water would come from in a bombed city, where soap could be obtained, or whether children in southern Italy were ever shod during the summer and fall. It meant nothing to them, for purposes of a human interest story, whether it was the function of AMG, in the directives laid down by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to raise the living standards of the Italians, or whether shipping space, at that crucial period of hostilities, was available. What they succeeded in doing was to short-sell Americans in their own eyes by belittling the accomplishments of their representatives abroad. Because they were uneducated for the task, they missed real criticism at those points where criticism was justified and might have effected change in top policy. What they accomplished was the criticism of hard-working AMG officers in the field, who, with little direction from headquarters, were improvising on their own and trying to help the people of their provinces with the meager resources they possessed. The American people cannot afford, either for

foreign or for domestic information, to depend upon people unfitted by education and experience to understand what they see. The profession of journalism must set standards for its representatives. We cannot expect dozens of Anne O'Hare McCormicks or Herbert Matthews, but we do have a right to expect correspondents who think and read in the natural course of their literate profession.

### *Lack of Official Policy*

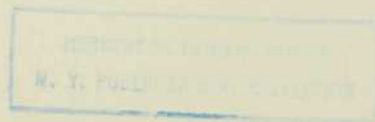
THE State Department, through the embassy in Rome and through the consulates in Italy, neither interfered with nor aided AMG. It seems obvious that representatives of the State Department should have been attached to AMG units from the beginning. But no leadership in policy-making was provided. In effect we had no foreign policy in Italy; no one could tell AMG what we planned for Italy. This affected our prestige and the daily job of AMG and AC headquarters in dealing with concrete problems which arose. Representatives of the Foreign Office and the State Department who were finally attached to AC headquarters and to Caserta dealt in hushed and high-level matters which never trickled down to the administrative vineyards. With the exception of a few able and experienced individuals, the staff of the embassy, like their counterparts in most places in the world, live in a closed, and often vicious, circle of inbred contacts with the American set or, at most, the British set. When they see Italians, they tend to follow the same instincts our officers followed. Their reports to the State Department must necessarily be as limited as their actual contact with all classes of people in Italy. It has been suggested that both the pre-war Foreign Office and our own State Department suffered as a result of the kind and quality of information they received from their embassies—reports upon which foreign policy had to be based. The State Department would do well to select and

train individuals with administrative and political experience (the latter kind of training is essential now with the coming of a new and hard-boiled trend in international dealings as revealed in the Bevin-Vishinsky colloquies) and with the kind of personal outlook which the cultural relations attaché of the American Embassy in Rome possesses. His four-point cultural exchange program, announced in the early part of 1946, was an encouraging sign that some Americans understand our function in occupied countries.

The failure of AMG in Italy started at the planning level. The plans lacked vision of what the basic problems would be and insight concerning the type of administrative structure AMG would need to accomplish its mission well. Errors of this kind, mistakes of judgment, are understandable in the early preliminary days of preparation under emergency conditions. Why drastic reform was not demanded by the War Department when once the inadequacies of administration, program, and personnel were known is a chapter of occupation history more difficult to comprehend.

### *Larger Factors Behind Failure*

AMG, LIKE our federal and state governments, lacked administrator-politicians capable of creating realistic and humane policies and carrying them through under trying circumstances. For years now we have emphasized the techniques of controls, budgeting, and personnel. Our profession can boast the best technicians of any present-day society. They were never lacking in Italy. But where could we turn there, or here, for the high-level administrator-politician who understands what he is driving at with the elaborate means at his command, who understands people and social forces as well as the proper numerical paraphrasing of administrative orders? Where are they being trained, and how? Certainly they were not trained at Charlottesville or Shrivensham. Chance was, and still is, the



deciding factor in the most important segment of public administration: policy-making and the training of policy-makers. We left to chance the highest responsibility we have undertaken in the outside world.

The making of supreme policy for the administration of occupied territories, so vital to a peaceful world, was never guided by the most experienced and able administrator-politicians America could produce. Men with Army training or lawyers with Wall Street experience, highly placed in the War Department, actually formed the narrow and unrealistic policies under which AMG in every occupied country functioned. This first failing led to the formulation of an administrative program in Italy which was inadequate from the first day we landed in Sicily to cope with the most rudimentary problems. From restricted vision

of what our responsibilities were and what our program should be, came limitations of personnel, both in numbers and ability, especially at policy-making levels. Blurred insight, too, led inevitably to the adoption of military techniques and channels of operation which constrained and checked the successful performance of even limited duties. Improper initial policies and plans could result only in improper programs, personnel, and methods.

The troubling thought in the appraisal of AMG administrative failure in Italy is the realization that the same pattern of error has extended to all countries occupied by Americans. The logical inference is that it must represent a lack of administrative ability in the United States, at policy-making and directing levels, more general than we care to admit.

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Now supposing promotions were made because of mere reputation, then ministers would be estranged from the sovereign and all officials would associate for treasonable purposes. Supposing officials were appointed on account of their partisanship, then the people would strive to cultivate friendships and never seek employment in accordance with the law. Thus the government lacking able men, the state will fall into confusion. . . . Therefore, the intelligent sovereign makes the law select men, and makes no arbitrary regulation himself.—Chapter 6 on “Having Fixed Measurements,” *The Book of Han Fei* (d. 233 B.C.)

The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution. It is possible that through negligence, or ignorance, or design artfully conducted, ministers may suffer one part of government to languish, another to be perverted from its purposes, and every valuable interest of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without possibility of fixing any single act on which a criminal prosecution can be justly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the state, far from being foreign to the purposes of a wise government, ought to be among its very first and dearest objects.—EDMUND BURKE, *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*.