OMGUS Finance Division Records Regarding Investigations and Interrogations, 1945–1949

Cynara Robinson prepared the introduction and arranged these records for microfilming.

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Cover title.
“Cynara Robinson prepared the introduction and arranged these records for microfilming” – Cover.
“These records are part of Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Record Group (RG) 260” – P. 2 of cover.

**INTRODUCTION**

On the eight rolls of this microfilm publication, M1923, are reproduced bank investigation reports, interrogations of Nazi financiers, and related records of the Office of the Finance Division and Finance Advisor in the Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany) (OMGUS), during the period 1945–1949. These records are part of Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Record Group (RG) 260.

**BACKGROUND**

The origin of the Office of the Finance Adviser and its predecessor, the Finance Division, can be traced to February 14, 1944, when the reorganization of the Civil Affairs Division of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) created a German Country Section with a finance division as one of its component parts. Six months later, European Theater of Operations United States Army (ETOUSA) established the United States Group Control Council for Germany (USGCC). The rapid growth in staff and in activities due to the changing military situation in Europe, however, required further redefinition of finance functions and responsibilities, and on November 25, 1944, Finance became one of the 12 independent divisions set up within USGCC.

At this early stage, the Finance Division concentrated on planning for the denazification of German finance, discovery and control of German foreign exchange assets (Project “Safehaven”), freezing and blocking of property, decentralization of German financial agencies and institutions, elimination of discriminatory laws and practices, and acquisition of financial intelligence. Decentralization of banks and other financial institutions was necessary to sever the close ties of those institutions with the giant German industrial concerns, an association that had been vital to the German war effort.

Following the surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945, the Division financially disarmed and denazified Germany through the decentralization and restructuring of the German financial system. It assumed full responsibility for policy formation, administration, and control, and facilitated financial transactions involving U.S. occupation forces. With regard to property, the Division prevented certain specified transactions, and controlled, administered, and accounted for tangible property required to be deposited with the Military Government (MG) under MG Law No. 53. This included foreign exchange assets, such as jewelry, precious metals, coins and stamps, securities, and foreign currencies.

The Division undertook investigations based both on captured German records and on interrogations of German officials. These investigations sought to locate German assets concealed abroad in “safehavens” secured through secret arrangements between the Nazis and German industrialists that would fund party operations in case of the defeat of Germany. The Division continued to block and freeze those assets in order to prevent their possible use in funding underground Nazi activities from within postwar Germany.
The reorganization of the military government included a redistribution of functions based on Military Government proclamations. To implement the reorganization, the Finance Division was dissolved effective March 1, 1948. Established were, among others, an Office of the Finance Adviser (OMGUS) (OFA) and a Property Division (OMGUS). The OFA retained from the former Finance Division the power of review regarding policy changes and proposals; the interpretation of those multipartite agreements, programs, and policies with implications for subjects other than finance; and the review of policies requiring Länder implementation. Responsibilities for foreign exchange, the blocking and freezing of property, and external assets were transferred to the Property Division (OMGUS). The Finance Adviser provided advice regarding monetary and financial policies and procedures, represented OMGUS in Allied Control Authority and other multipartite negotiations, and was the U.S. member of the Allied Banking Commission.

On April 7, 1949, the Finance Division was reestablished. The transition from military to civilian occupation administration was initiated by the Presidential appointment of the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG), who assumed his duties on September 2, 1949. On September 3, 1949, the functions, personnel, equipment, and records of both the OFA and the Finance Division were transferred to the newly created Finance Division in the Office of Economic Affairs of the High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG), which assumed responsibility for the field of finance. The transition was completed by September 21, 1949, the same day of the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany. OMGUS was formally abolished on December 5, 1949. Most of the OMGUS records, including the records of the Finance Division, were retired to an Army record center in Kansas City until they were accessioned into the National Archives in the early 1960s.

**RECORDS DESCRIPTION**

Two major tasks, investigations and interrogations, of the Finance Division are included in this microfilm publication.

**Records Regarding Bank Investigations, 1945–1949** [A1, Entry 557],¹ is arranged alphabetically by subject and consists primarily of memorandums, letters, cables, reports, exhibits, newspaper clippings, and civil censorship intercepts on the financing of the German war effort and German financial institutions. The records include reports on Nazi gold, the use of Swiss banks, and links between German and Swiss banks, inclusive of Commerzbank, Deutsche Bank, Deutsche Golddiskontbank, Dresdner Bank, and Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft. The investigations contain information regarding Aryanization, bank operations outside of Germany, industrial ties, liquidation proposals, and the restitution of Hungarian property.

¹ Textual record series designators usually consist of the series title with a date span, the finding aid notation, and the Master Location Register (MLR) entry number, shown here in brackets.
Records Relating to Interrogations of Nazi Financiers, 1946–1947 [A1, Entry 558], is arranged alphabetically by subject and consists of interrogation reports and transcripts, exhibits, and questionnaires. Names included are Bernhard Berghaus, Alois Alzheimer, August von Finck, Eduard Hilgard, Kurt Schmitt, and Franz Schwede-Coburg. Also among these records are files relating to Carlowitz & Company and Japanese firms operating in Germany.

RELATED RECORDS

Textual Records in the National Archives

GENERAL RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Record Group (RG) 59
Division of Economic Security Controls
Safehaven Subject File, 1945–1947 [A1, Entry 369B]

RECORDS OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI), RG 65
FBI Headquarters Investigative Records; Classified Subject Files
Headquarters Files from Classification 112 (Foreign Funds) Released Under The Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Disclosure Acts, 1940–1946 [A1, Entry 136AH]

RECORDS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, RG 84
U.S. Embassies, Legations, Consulates, and Political Advisors
Brazil: Rio de Janeiro Embassy
Safehaven Files, 1944–1948 [UD, Entry 2137]
Switzerland: American Legation, Bern; Economic Section
Safehaven Subject File, 1942–1949 [UD, Entry 3221]
Safehaven Name Files, 1942–1949 [UD, Entry 3223]
Turkey: Ankara Embassy
Safehaven Files, 1945–1948 [UD, Entry 3290]

RECORDS OF THE FOREIGN ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION, RG 169
Office of Budget and Administrative Planning
Records Analysis Division
Historical File on Office of Economic Warfare (OEW) and Predecessor Agencies: Material on the “Safehaven Project,” 1943–1945 [PI-29, Entry 170]

RECORDS OF U.S. OCCUPATION HEADQUARTERS, WORLD WAR II, RG 260
OFFICE OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT, U.S. ZONE (Germany) [OMGUS]
Economics Division
Decartelization Branch (held by HICOG)
Printed Material Relating to German Industries, 1944–1950 [A1, Entry 238]
Includes investigation reports on Dresdner and Deutsche Banks
Property Division
Property Control and External Assets Branch, External Assets Investigation Section

Office of Finance Adviser
Financial Intelligence Group
  Records Regarding Intelligence and Financial Investigations, 1945–1949 [A1, Entry 574]

Berlin Sector (OMGBS)
Finance Branch

U.S. Element, Allied Control Authority
Finance Group
Public Finance Branch
  Miscellaneous Reports and Publications, 1944–1949 [A1, Entry 1917]
    Includes the OMGUS investigation reports on Dresdner, Deutsche, and Commerce Banks

National Archives Microfilm Publications
M1933, Safehaven Reports of the War Crimes Branch, 1944–1945 (RG 153, 9 rolls)

National Archives Publications
Researchers should also consult Holocaust-Era Assets: A Finding Aid to Records at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, compiled by Greg Bradsher (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1999). This finding aid includes information on specific areas within military records, such as War Department and Occupation records, as well as civilian records, such as those of the State Department, that contain information on looted assets.

Additional information concerning the Holocaust may be located on our web site at www.archives.gov.
## Roll List

### Roll 1

**Records Regarding Bank Investigations, 1945–1949**

- [A1, Entry 557]
- Censorship Requirements and Submissions, 1945–1947
- Censorship Submissions – CCD, USFET, Apr. 16, 1946–Aug. 9, 1947
- Censorship Submissions – CCD, USFET, Aug. 10–Oct. 1, 1947
- Commerzbank, Report on the Investigation of
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 1–24
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 25–30
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 31–61
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 62–90
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 91–113

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- Commerzbank Report: Principal Document No. 114
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Document No. 115
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Document No. 116
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Document No. 117
- Commerzbank Report: Principal Documents Nos. 118–142
- Deutsche Bank Report, Annex to
- Deutsche Bank Report: Exhibits 7–185b (with gaps)
- Deutsche Bank Report: Exhibits 200–249
- Deutsche Bank Report: Exhibits 296–350 (with gaps)

### Roll 3

- Deutsche Bank Report: Exhibits 351–399
- Deutsche Bank Report: Exhibits 400–439
- Deutsche Golddiskontbank Report: Part A and Part B
- Deutsche Golddiskontbank Report: Part B (cont.)
- Deutsche Golddiskontbank Report: Part C: Annexes 149–228 (with gaps)
- Deutscher Reichsanzeiger re J. Dreyfuss & Co. and Merck, Finck & Co.
- Dresdner Bank, Lists of Needed Documents for Report on
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 1–15
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 16–30

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- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 31–45
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 46–60
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 61–80
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 81–90A
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 92–112 (with gaps)
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 113–130 (with gaps)
- Dresdner Bank Exhibits 131–150 (with gaps)

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2 Civil Censorship Division in the U.S. Forces, European Theater.
ROLL CONTENTS

4 Dresdner Bank Exhibits 151–170 (with gaps)
   (cont.) Dresdner Bank Exhibits 171–187 (includes Trial Brief on the Spoliation of Western Europe)

5 Dresdner Bank Exhibits 188–200 (with gaps)
   Dresdner Bank Exhibits 201–217
   Dresdner Bank Exhibits 218–238
   Dresdner Bank – Additional Exhibits
   Hungarian Restitution – Release of Assets
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   Hungarian Restitution – Restitution Pending
   Legal Division: Selected Opinions, Jan. 1–Mar. 31, 1949
   Names of Persons and Industrial Groups Affected by the Application of the Denazification Program to Banks
   Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft, Investigation of: Report, Exhibits, and Annexes [2 folders]

6 Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft, Investigation of: Interrogations, Exhibits, and Annexes [2 folders]
   Stock Exchange Statistics and Correspondence

RECORDS RELATING TO INTERROGATIONS OF NAZI FINANCIERS, 1946–1947 [A1, Entry 558]
   Alzheimer Interrogation, July 17, 1947
   Amend Interrogation, July 2, 1947
   Berghaus, Bernhard – Interrogation Reports: Exhibits 1–16
   Berghaus, Bernhard – Interrogation Reports: Exhibits 17–31
   Berghaus Companies: Bericht der Deutschen Revisions- und Treuhand, AG - Zweigniederlassung Wien, über die bei der Firma Sintermetallwerke Bernhard Berghaus in Mitterberghütten, vorgenommene Prüfung [Report of the German Auditing and Trust Corporation – Vienna Branch, Concerning the Previous Audit of the Company Sintermetallwerke Bernhard Berghaus in Mitterberghütten] (1943)
   Büro der Kaiserlich Japanischen Marine – Berlin, Apr.–May 1941
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