
II. A Brief History of Personnel Verification

In 1988, the Western European Union (WEU) prepared a paper² which examined the experiences of a number of agencies established in the past for the purpose of verifying agreements to restrict conventional forces and armaments. The discussion below draws on the main findings of the WEU paper with respect to each of the agencies' work in the area of verification of personnel, as well as on other sources.

The Interallied Control Commissions of 1920-1926

To oversee the application of the Versailles Treaty of 1919 and to prevent rearmament in Germany, Interallied Control Commissions (military, naval and air) were established. The Military Commission had the task, *inter alia*, of verifying personnel levels. The Military Commission, which is of most interest for this study, was unable to carry out its duties, chiefly because of the resistance of the German government and citizens. Other reasons for failure included:

"The complexity of personnel controls and the near impossibility, without complete freedom of action and a large inspection staff, of determining during inspections whether illicit elements were or were not present;

"The existence of paramilitary and the "Schutzpolizei" organizations which made it possible to conceal personnel or to speed up the training of new recruits;

...

"The varied legal obstacles resulting from either the interpretation of the Treaty or conflicts it provoked with existing laws. These gave rise to obstacles to the right of inspection even though this right had been accepted;

"The refusal to supply accurate statements on personnel numbers and equipment which could serve as a basis for verification."³

The German and Italian Armistice Commissions of 1940-1942

Following the capitulation of France in 1940, Germany and Italy set up Commissions to monitor certain military clauses of the Armistice agreements, under which military activities of France were to be severely controlled. The Commissions failed for reasons very similar to those responsible for the failure of the Interallied Commissions after the First World War, notably obstruction by