

The Swaggering Eagles of Sicily

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

When the Serpentfall smashed Europe, what was left of the US military on that continent ended up in Sicily. The geography helped a good deal; in particular, the angle of the falling World Serpent spared Palermo, which rapidly became the rallying point for American troops in the Mediterranean. US Navy and Marine forces quickly also established full control over Sardinia, and helped cement 'understandings' with both British Malta and Free French Corsica. Today, the remaining American forces in Sicily are the ones who managed to avoid being reassigned somewhere else; there is a general opinion that the region has many possibilities for an ambitious man.

It's a *dangerous* region, though. The body of the Serpent produces the usual monsters, of course, which makes sea travel in the western Mediterranean perilous outside of a few heavily-patrolled sea routes. Naval forces based out of the Big Four (Sicily, Malta, Sardinia, and Corsica) keep those routes free, for a hefty fee; they also get paid off by various factions of the French to act as a buffer state between Communist-dominated European France and *Action Francaise*-controlled French North Africa. And, of

course, *Generalissimo* Franco in Spain is always happy to offer work to staunch anti-Communists who are willing to get their hands dirty for a good cause -- not to mention for good, golden Spanish *pesetas*.

But the Americans in Sicily are not **pirates**. The American Military Government of the Occupied Territories (usually called AMGOT, or even 'Amgot'), under administrative head General Charles Poletti, regularly hangs pirates; although Poletti recently issued orders for pirates to start being chained to Palmero's harbor quays in the old style. The 'old style' is very much coming back into play, among Amgot's sailors and marines. They've kept the uniforms and the weapons, and the discipline necessary to fight ships and storm seaforts; but there's an increasing swagger visible. Most American troops left in Sicily now sport the sailor's traditional gold earring, and their off-duty clothing and manner shows both a good deal of variation, and a tendency to peacock. Some Amgot ships even choose their own captain! Which then gets duly retroactively approved by the General. After all -- and again -- Amgot ships *hunt* pirates.

Amgot also aggressively patrols for slavers, Serpent Cultists -- and smugglers who have not come to their own arrangement with the civilian Sicilian government. Which

is to say, with Vito Genovese and his 'business associates.' Genovese has three priorities; keeping the Americans happy, keeping the trade routes open, and keeping his beak wet. It's all surprisingly legal, too! That's a perk one gets, when running the government. Of course, Mr. Genovese has his own little jobs available for a captain with a quick ship, a good crew, and a healthy ambition to get ahead.

Indeed, there's a lot of work in Sicily generally for people like that. And it's usually no more than just a little bit shady, too. Too much blood and venom, and it gets very bad for business, understand?

- Moe Lane

- <http://www.moelane.com>