

CHAPTER VIII

NAZI GOVERNMENT RESETTLEMENT POLICY

A. GENERAL

1. Because of the complexity of the problem, the information given below is limited to basic facts. The whole resettlement programme was contained in a number of decrees and directives issued by the Nazi Government, which established a policy that in practice was carried out by various agencies who interpreted the orders differently. In view of this, it is intended that only an overall picture will be given here, omitting many of the details on how the programme was carried out locally in the various areas.

2. The main purpose of the Nazi Party Resettlement Programme was political. Ethnic German resettlers (DEUTSCHE VOLKSZUGEHÖRIGE) who formed minorities in many of the countries in Europe after having been made German nationals, were to colonize the various territories conquered by the German war machine.

3. The concomitant policy in these newly-acquired territories was to eliminate the native populations as a potential danger. This was done by Germanizing those who were considered racially valuable and politically susceptible to the Nazi ideology, and by deporting and exterminating those who, it was considered, had anti-German attitudes or who were considered racially inferior. This policy was carried out in Poland and other countries and would undoubtedly have been extended to all other parts of Europe had not the German war machine been defeated.

4. This ideal was expressed in November 1939 in a memorandum of the Race Policy Office (RASSENPOLITISCHES AMT) of the Nazi Party, which stated, "This aim comprises three closely-linked tasks :—

First : the complete and final Germanization of those parts of the population which are considered suitable for it.

Second : the deportation of all groups of alien races not suitable for Germanization.

Third : the colonization (Neuansiedlung) by Germans.

5. This long-range programme had a two-fold objective of weakening and eventually destroying other nations and, at the same time, strengthening Germany at their expense, territorially and biologically, in order to secure German domination, first of Europe and finally of the world. In view of the determination of the Nazis to make this plan come to fruition, it is extremely difficult to determine whether or not individual resettlers left their homes voluntarily, even though the orders stated that the programme was carried out on a voluntary basis.

6. As stated in paragraph 1 above, the orders given were frequently ambiguous, overlapping and occasionally countermanding each other; in many instances they were interpreted differently by the various party officials and agencies charged with putting them into effect. Moreover, local conditions in the regions earmarked for resettlement programmes varied, and therefore a different handling of the problem had to be adopted. Much depended on the personality of the party official in charge as to how much pressure,

if any, was brought to bear upon individuals and groups who had been scheduled for resettlement.

B. AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR RESETTLEMENT OF ETHNIC GERMANS

7. In order to establish an organisation to carry out the policy mentioned in "A" above, an immigration office which had been set up in 1939 for the resettlement of Germans in the Southern Tyrol was transferred under Himmler's direct control and was known as the Office of the Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of Germanism (REICHSKOMMISSAR FÜR DIE FESTIGUNG DEUTSCHEN VOLKSTUMS).

8. Himmler, in his capacity as RKFDV, had jurisdiction over all matters and agencies connected with the consolidation of Germanism, such as the resettlement, racial screening, deportations, confiscations and the like.

9. The agencies which worked under Himmler in the resettlement programme were as follows :—

- (a) VOMI (Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle — Repatriation Office for Ethnic Germans) was an agency of the SS charged with the following tasks : Evacuation of ethnic Germans from their homes, their transportation into VOMI camps, their care in the camps, and their indoctrination with Nazi ideology. Frequently resettlers were kept in these camps for months and even years awaiting the promised resettlement. In the middle of 1944 there were still one million ethnic Germans and Poles in these camps.
- (b) EWZ (Einwandererzentralstelle — Immigration Central Office) was an agency of the Chief of the Security Police and SD. This agency was established in October 1939. Its task was to register the resettlers, examine them medically and as to their racial value and, upon examination, issue identification cards (Rückkehrerausweise) to them. EWZ also took care of naturalizations and decided where people were to be resettled. EWZ had its headquarters first in Gdynia and later on in Litzmannstadt (Lodz). There were several branch offices in German-occupied territories, as, for instance, in Paris, and also numerous mobile detachments (Fliegende Kommissionen) to process resettlers staying in VOMI camps.
- (c) UWZ (Umwandererzentralstelle — Migrants Central Office). This Organisation, also an agency of the Chief of the SIPO and SD, was in charge of the evacuation of undesirable foreign populations (Fremdvölkische) who were deported from their native countries and their land and property given to Germans and ethnic Germans.
- (d) DUT (Deutsche Umsiedlungstreuhandstelle) was a clearing organisation charged with the transfer of property of ethnic Germans who were to be resettled.
- (e) HTO (Haupttreuhandstelle Ost) confiscated the property of Poles and Jews who were subsequently deported to the Gouvernement Général, many of whom were sent to extermination and slave labour camps.
- (f) RuSHA (Rassen- und Siedlungshauptamt), the Main Race and Settlement Office of the SS, was in charge of the racial screening of ethnic Germans and persons considered for Germanization.
- (g) Lebensborn Society, an organisation which was created on 12 December 1935 and which took care of various categories of children, including children of German fathers and foreign mothers and children whose parents, ethnic Germans or not, had been executed for anti-German activities. These children were

examined by the racial examiners of RuSHA and, if found racially valuable, they were turned over to Lebensborn. Lebensborn maintained children's homes where these children were brought up as Germans and indoctrinated with the Nazi creed. Later on they were turned over (through various of their divisions, such as the National Socialist Welfare Organisation—NSV for short) to German foster parents, as, for example, the children from Lidice, only a small minority of whom have been found to date. Children found racially undesirable were sterilized and used as slave labourers or taken to concentration camps. The Lebensborn Central Office, Munich, which was responsible for Lebensborn children from foreign countries, used the following terminology in their files :—

- (i) Ost Kinder—children from the Gauselbstverwaltung in the Warthegau, which was located in the Polish incorporated territory.
 - (ii) T Kinder—children from Czechoslovakia, Lidice and Lezaky.
 - (iii) Süd-Ost Kinder—children from the South-East, mainly from Yugoslavia.
- (For further details on the Lebensborn Society, see Lebensborn Report, prepared by ITS, U.S. Zone Headquarters in April, 1948).

C. MAJOR MOVES OF ETHNIC GERMANS

10. The following list of the major groups of ethnic Germans and other populations who left their native countries in the course of the resettlement programme is included in order that it might serve as a guide in the determination of the status of individual cases :—

- (a) German nationals and ethnic Germans from the South Tyrol, based on agreements with Italy of 23 June 1939, 21 October 1939, 17 November 1939 and 31 January 1940. The individuals (an estimated 185,000 such persons were moved, of whom approximately 52,000 are now in Austria) concerned were free to decide whether or not they wanted to be resettled. Persons choosing to be repatriated were settled in several provinces of former Austria (Tyrol-Vorarlberg, Styria, Carinthia, Upper Danube, Salzburg). They received German citizenship by way of a simplified naturalization procedure (Abgekürztes Einbürgerungsverfahren).
- (b) German nationals and ethnic Germans from the Baltic countries, based on treaties with Estonia of 15 October 1939, and Latvia of 30 October 1939. About 63,000 (Estonia 12,000; Latvia 51,000) of them chose to be repatriated and were processed and naturalized by EWZ. O-cases (see pp. 49 and 50) were settled in the Warthegau and the Gau of Danzig-West Prussia in the Incorporated Eastern Territories. A-cases were settled in Germany proper. About 12,000 ethnic Germans in the Baltic countries did not apply for repatriation, most of them for personal reasons. However, a small minority holding key positions in the economic life of their native countries stayed upon advice of German authorities in order to use their influence for the benefit of German trade relations.

When the Baltic countries were taken over by the Russians, these 12,000, as well as many Baltic nationals, left for Germany. However, with the exception of the above-mentioned group of key people, they were not accepted as resettlers. They were given the status of "refugees", not entitled to the rights of "bona fide" resettlers, and assigned to work in Germany. Some of the Baltic nationals were, however, given some privileges and were not considered as "slave labourers".

- (c) Ethnic Germans from Wolhynia, Galicia, and the Narew territory, based on an agreement with the USSR of 3 November 1939. There were approximately 30,000 in this group and they were processed and naturalized by EWZ. O-cases were to go to Danzig-West Prussia, the country of Wichenau in East Prussia, and to Upper Silesia (Incorporated Eastern Territories). A-cases were to go to the Reich. There is no information available as to whether all persons in this group were actually resettled. There is a possibility that only part of them had been resettled, with the remainder being caught in the VOMI camps by the end of the war. The same applies to the other groups mentioned below. 9,000 of these, however, are to be found in Austria.
- (d) Ethnic Germans from Lithuania; by agreements made in 1939 there were an estimated 40,000 who were processed and naturalized by EWZ. They were resettled in the provinces of Danzig-West Prussia and East Prussia (Incorporated Eastern Territories) and the Reich proper. Approximately 2,000 of the persons mentioned here and in (b) above are in Austria. However a few may have come to Austria under the 1941 agreement (see (i) below).
- (e) Ethnic Germans from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, based on a treaty with the USSR on 5 September 1940. An estimated 138,000 were processed and naturalized by EWZ. They were earmarked for resettlement in the Reich proper and the provinces of Danzig-West Prussia, Wartheland, and Upper Silesia (O-cases) and the Reich proper (A-cases).
- (f) Ethnic Germans from Southern Bukovina and Dobruja. Based on agreements with Rumania of 5 September 1940 and 22 October 1940, an estimated 70,000 were processed and naturalized by EWZ. O-cases were to go to Incorporated Eastern Territories; A-cases to the Reich proper. Of the two groups mentioned in (e) and (f) approximately 7,000 are now in Austria.
- (g) Ethnic Germans from the Gouvernement Général (from the districts of Lublin and Cholm) who were transferred to the Incorporated Eastern Territories in exchange for Poles who were deported to the Gouvernement Général. They were processed and naturalized by EWZ. The numbers involved are not known, but are included in the 30,000 figure quoted in paragraph (c) above.
- (h) Ethnic Germans from Gottschee and other districts in Yugoslavia. Based on agreement with Italy in 1941. They were processed and naturalized by EWZ and resettled in Lower Styria and Carinthia. Slovenes living in these districts were evacuated to the Gouvernement Général.
- (i) German nationals and ethnic Germans from Lithuania, by agreement with the USSR on 10 January 1941. Processed and naturalized by EWZ and slated for resettlement in Danzig-West Prussia and East Prussia. A-cases went to Germany proper. The documentation and travel arrangements for these persons, while made by the Germans, were assisted in by the Lithuanian Kulturverband.
- (j) Ethnic Germans from Occupied France (mainly Alsace and Lorraine) were processed by EWZ. Persons considered politically reliable and racially valuable were allowed to go to Alsace and Lorraine (if they came from other parts of France), which had been incorporated into the Reich. Individuals considered as good racial prospects but doubtful as to their pro-German attitude were marked for resettlement in the Reich.
- (k) Later during the war, ethnic Germans from the Black Sea (Schwarzmeerdeutsche) were processed and naturalized by EWZ and resettled in the Incorporated Eastern Territories. In this group were to be found, in addition to the Germans, some Mennonites.

D. GERMAN CLASSIFICATIONS FOR POTENTIAL RESETTLERS

11. DVL (Deutsche Volksliste—People's List)

(a) The DVL procedure was established by an ordinance dated 4 March 1941 in the Incorporated Eastern Territories in order to classify all Polish nationals who might be considered as of German origin. This also included certain persons who were pure Poles and members of certain minorities other than German.

(b) All persons considered eligible for the Volksliste were compelled to register. Those eligible persons who did not make the necessary application within seven days, or refused to register, were liable to detention in concentration camps. Persons not eligible for any of the categories of the Volksliste were usually expelled to the Gouvernement Général or taken as forced labourers to Germany.

(c) Eligible persons who thus registered were screened politically and racially by RuSHA and assigned to one of the following four Volksliste categories :

- (i) Volksliste I—included those persons who, before 1 September 1939, had been engaged in pro-German activities. They were generally of German ethnic origin, *i.e.* offspring of two parents of German origin. To this group belonged members of various German associations which were named in the instructions issued on 13 March 1941, such as :

Deutsche Vereinigung
Jungdeutsche Partei
der Deutsche Volksbund
der Deutsche Volksverband, etc.

Those who obtained this status acquired full German citizenship (*Deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit*) as from 1 September 1939 (persons residing in the area of the former Free State of Danzig) and 26 October 1939 (persons residing in the Western Polish Provinces incorporated into the Reich), irrespective of the date they were enlisted in the Volksliste. They were issued with *blue* identity cards. They also received all the political privileges of a citizen of the German Reich. Persons registered on Volksliste I were also admitted to the Nazi Party, although persons on Volksliste II were not generally thus admitted.

- (ii) Volksliste II—included those persons who, although they had not been engaged in pro-German activities, had preserved their German culture and were considered, and considered themselves, as Germans. The identity documents and citizenship status of these persons was exactly the same as those who were on Volksliste I.
- (iii) Volksliste III—included those persons who had lost their German background and had become Polish in their way of life. This included members of Polish organisations, unless they had participated in anti-German activities. To this category also belonged persons whose mother tongue (*Haussprache*) was not German, members of certain minorities such as Slonzaks, Kashubs and the so-called Wasserpoien, as well as Poles who were married to Germans. Persons belonging to Volksliste III were issued with *green* identity cards and acquired German citizenship which could be revoked within a period of ten years (*Staatsangehörigkeit auf Widerruf*).
- (iv) Volksliste IV—included persons who were considered as of German origin but had been engaged in anti-German activities, as well as Poles who were not considered as "politically conscious" but in respect of whom it could be assumed that they might eventually be Germanized. Persons on Volksliste IV were "protectees" (*Schutzangehörige*) of the German Reich and were issued with red identity documents which did not bear any remark as to citizenship status.

All persons submitted to the DVL procedure who had Polish names had to change (Germanize) them. Persons registered in DVL categories 1 to 3 were subject to conscription in the Wehrmacht and the Waffen SS.

12. CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PERSONS IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN POLAND.

(a) Persons who came from areas other than the Incorporated Eastern Territories were differently classified by RuSHA. Resettlers considered politically reliable and racially valuable were designated as O-Fall (O-case). Persons who were deemed less valuable from a political and racial point of view were classified as A-Fall (A-case). Generally the criteria used by RuSHA in determining whether or not a given person fell in O-case or A-case was similar to the criteria used in the DVL procedure explained above. O-cases from the Baltic States, Yugoslavia and other countries were resettled in the Incorporated Eastern Territories. A-cases who were less dependable were resettled in Germany proper and were issued with an over-printed certificate marked "GÜLTIG NUR FÜR ALTREICH" (valid only for the old Reich). People who were considered as undesirables were classified as S-cases and sent to the Gouvernement Général, which was used as a dumping-ground for undesirable elements moved from other areas in order to make room for all German and ethnic German resettlers.

(b) The re-Germanization procedure (WIEDEREINDEUTSCHUNGSVERFAHREN) affected Poles in the Gouvernement Général and Slovenes who had been deported to the Gouvernement Général from Styria and Carinthia. These people were racially and politically examined by UWZ as to whether or not they were fit for Germanization; persons thus considered were sent to work in Germany. Here they had certain privileges which the ordinary slave labourers could not have; they did not have to wear badges identifying them as slave labourers and they were subject to special courses of indoctrination with Nazi ideology. It was planned to give them German citizenship at the completion of these courses. They had special alien passports (FREMDENPASSE) bearing the mark "nationality undetermined". Persons who, upon racial examination, were considered as not suitable for Germanization were also sent to Germany but as slave labourers.

(c) Finally, various other groups of people were deported from their homelands in order to make room for German resettlers. Amongst these groups were, for example, Luxembourgers who had shown an anti-German attitude during the German occupation. They were taken to VOMI camps, where they were earmarked for resettlement in other parts of the Reich and in the East.

(d) Poles and Slovenes who were deported to the Gouvernement Général were also subjected to this treatment. Later in the war some of these persons were submitted to the re-Germanization procedure as the manpower shortage in Germany became more acute.

E. ELIGIBILITY STATUS OF GROUPS OUTLINED ABOVE

13. DVL (DEUTSCHE VOLKSLISTE).

(a) Volkslisten I and II: All persons belonging to Volkslisten I and II will be presumed to be of German ethnic origin and, aside from the other excluding provisions of Part II of the Constitution, will be regarded as outside the mandate of IRO if they are in Germany. If they are to be found in countries other than Germany, their status is in suspense, providing they do not fall within one of the other excluding categories. In this connection, it should be mentioned that any person who was a member of the NSDAP is, *prima facie*, outside the mandate of IRO.

(b) Volkslisten III and IV : While persons of other than German ethnic origin, such as Poles and Slonzaks, may be found to have been so registered, it must be remembered that by far the greatest majority of persons appearing on these lists were of German ethnic origin. Persons who are not of German ethnic origin obviously cannot be considered as Volksdeutsche and, providing they do not fall within any of the other exclusion clauses to Part II, may be regarded as falling within the mandate of the Organization under the usual conditions (they may, however, have for example voluntarily assisted the enemy forces).

2. CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PERSONS IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN POLAND.

(a) O-case : Persons who fall within this classification are to be treated similarly to those who were registered on Volkslisten I and II.

(b) A-case : Will be treated in the same way as persons appearing on Volkslisten III and IV. Again, as in the case of persons appearing on Volkslisten III and IV, a small number of people classified as A-cases were not of German ethnic origin. This is especially true amongst the Baltic Umsiedlers, who applied for this status in order to escape from their countries which were then under Russian occupation.

(c) S-case : Persons appearing on this group, while they could not be assimilated to slave labourers, were categorized by the Germans as "Renegades" or "undesirables" and were moved out of their places of habitual residence in order to make room for German and ethnic German resettlers. Other things being equal, such persons may be regarded as falling within the mandate of IRO.

F. PRACTICAL HINTS FOR THE FIELD ELIGIBILITY OFFICERS

14. In conclusion, it should be pointed out that when field Eligibility Officers are interviewing persons whom they suspect to be Volksdeutsche or German citizens, they should check with the police authorities, or in Germany with the Einwohnermeldeamt of the places in which these persons have resided, in order to assure themselves that they are not so registered. If they are registered as Volksdeutsche or German citizens, they are to be considered as *prima facie* outside the mandate of IRO unless they can give a plausible story that this status was acquired under the circumstances outlined in Chapter VI above and that they are not, in fact, of German ethnic origin.

15. If the check with the local authorities proves to be unsatisfactory, the person's particulars may be sent to the 7771 Document Centre OMGUS in Berlin, who will check with their files. The documents contained in this Centre, which have been accumulated from many sources, are the original official archives of the NSDAP and some of its most important affiliated formations and organizations. There are for example, the files of the Rassen- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS (See Section B 9 (f) above), the personnel files of SS officers, the files of members of the SA., and the files of the Einwandererzentrale, among others.

16. Indications as to whether a given refugee or displaced person falls within one of the categories mentioned above may be provided through a careful scrutiny of the documents he possesses. A section on some of the principal documents is contained in Chapter XIV of this Order. It is appreciated, however, that in the majority of cases these documents will be withheld, as the applicant will have been warned that possession of certain of them will be viewed with suspicion by Eligibility Officers. In cases where the applicant's story is not entirely plausible, recourse should be made to the suggestions contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 above.