

**Forging a New Heimat:
Expellees in Postwar West Germany and Canada**

Pascal Maeder

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Abstract

‘Forging a New *Heimat*’ compares experiences of expellees in both post-war West Germany and Canada. Making extensive use of autobiographies and recorded oral histories, this dissertation goes beyond the customary analysis of German-Canadian subgroups and sheds light on an expellee collective which, I argue, in Canada shared a common identity similar, albeit distinct to their better known counterparts in West Germany. Based on their ethnicity, in both countries expellees moulded their experience of expulsion, resettlement and integration into the national identities of their respective home countries and, thereby, generated discourses with distinct boundaries and meanings. On the one hand, in West Germany expellees sustained a national identity which strengthened the image of an ethnically homogenous society, whereas in Canada they adopted a pluri-cultural white national identity in line with Canada’s gradual turn toward the celebration of a multicultural society. Secondly, by using the comparative method, this dissertation assesses the expellees’ level of integration in both West Germany and Canada. Except for the initial reception in occupied Germany, over all expellees fared fairly similarly and gradually became settled, thus closing the gap between themselves and the local population. A number of variations between the two countries have nevertheless been detected, notably with regard to the expellees’ labour force distribution. Finally, this dissertation also puts into bold relief human agency, using Anthony Richmond’s multivariate systems model of international migration. Besides emphasizing the active role expellees had to direct their lives and form their own identities, this dissertation thereby expands the spectrum of the expulsion experience.

Contrary to the usual narratives, which highlight the often brutal events in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of World War II, this study illustrates the multiple facets of the expulsion and includes the experiences of expellees such as the Sudeten-German refugees in Canada. Having fled the Nazis in 1938, these refugees felt as much expelled from their homeland as expellees who were chased away from their homes in the wake of Nazi Germany's downfall. Shedding light on the experiences of these refugees, this dissertation therefore clearly sets the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe against the backdrop of the rise and fall of Nazi Germany.

For Vivienne

Acknowledgements

This thesis has moved, like some of the subjects it investigates, back and forth across the Atlantic. The origins go back to Switzerland when I first started to research expellees for my master's thesis. The shape and structure came from the time of my course work as a doctoral student at York University in Toronto. I wrote most of the dissertation in the United Kingdom and completed it, finally, back in Switzerland. Along the way, I have benefited from the advice, help and assistance of numerous people and organizations and it is to them that I would like to express my gratitude.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Dedication.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
List of Abbreviations.....	xi
List of Maps and Charts	xii
Introduction.....	1
I. ‘Stranded Germans’	32
Inside the Rubble	36
Beyond the Sea	61
II. ‘Distressed Outsiders’	83
Emigration Fever	89
Relief Frenzy	114
III. ‘Willing Migrants’	142
Into the ‘Economic Miracle’	147
The ‘North American Way’	171
IV. ‘Professional Expellees’	200
Clamorous Organizations	203
Distant Echos.....	224
V. ‘Fellow Citizens’	253
‘German Provincials’	257
‘Euro-Canadians’	277
Conclusion	304
Appendix.....	322
Bibliography	343

List of Abbreviations

ADSC	Alliance of the Danube Swabians in Canada
AO	Archive of Ontario
APS	Assisted Passage Scheme
ASG	<i>Archiv der Seliger-Gemeinde im Archiv der sozialen Demokratie</i>
AWD	<i>Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands</i>
BAKo	<i>Bundesarchiv Koblenz</i>
BdV	Federation of Expellees – Union of the Homeland Societies and State Associations (<i>Bund der Vertriebenen - Vereinigte Landsmannschaften und Landesverbände</i>)
BHE	Bloc of Expellees and Deprived of Rights (<i>Block der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten</i>)
BRC	Baltic Relief Committee
BvD	League of Expelled Germans (<i>Bund vertriebener Deutscher</i>)
CARE	Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe
CBIAS	Canadian Baltic Immigrant Aid Society
CCCRR	Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees (outside the mandate of the IRO)
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CDU	Christian-Democratic Union
CIAS	Catholic Immigrant Aid Society
CLWR	Canadian Lutheran World Relief
CMBC	Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization
CNR	Canadian National Railways
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railways
CSG	<i>Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft</i>
CSGR	Canadian Society for German Relief
DP	Displaced Person
DSAP	German Socialist Workers' Party of Czechoslovakia (<i>Deutsche Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei der Tschechoslowakei</i>)
EBL	Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany ('West Germany')
GDR	German Democratic Republic ('East Germany')
ICEM	Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration
IdGL	<i>Institut für donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde</i>
IGB	<i>Institut für Geschichte und Biographie</i>

IGCR	Inter-Governmental Committee for Refugees
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRO	International Refugee Organization
LSSK	Homeland Society of the Transylvanian Saxons in Canada (<i>Landsmannschaft der Siebenbürger Sachsen in Kanada</i>)
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MHSO	Multicultural History Society of Ontario
NABICS	North American Baptist Immigration and Colonization Society
NAC	National Archives of Canada
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PAAA	<i>Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes</i>
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SdP	Sudeten-German Party (<i>Sudetendeutsche Partei</i>)
SPD	Social-Democratic Party of Germany (<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>)
SudAr	<i>Sudetendeutsches Archiv</i>
TCA	Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians
TG	Loyal Society of Sudeten-German Social Democrats (<i>Treugemeinschaft sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten</i>)
UN	United Nations
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UTARMS	University of Toronto Archives & Records Management Service
VdL	Association of Homeland Societies (<i>Verband der Landsmannschaften</i>)
VOL	United East German Homeland Societies (<i>Vereinigte Ostdeutsche Landsmannschaften</i>)
WKAGSD	Western Canadian Working Community of the Sudeten Germans (<i>Westkanadische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sudetendeutschen</i>)
ZvD	Central Association of Expelled Germans (<i>Zentralverband der vertriebenen Deutschen</i>)
ZVSDO	Central Association of Sudeten-German Organizations in Canada (<i>Zentralverband Sudetendeutscher Organisationen</i>)

List of Maps and Charts

Map 1: Resettlement of Ethnic Germans to the Reich (1939-1943).....	36
Map 2: Evacuation and Flight Movements	42
Map 3 and Chart 1: Expellees in the FRG, per 1000s and federal states (1946 and 1970).....	150
Map 4: Country and Regions of Expellee Origins (German settlement in Europe in 1937).....	322

Introduction

This thesis sheds light on the transnational resettlement of expellees in the aftermath of World War II. Specifically, it compares the way expellees fared in Canada and what in 1949 became West Germany or, officially, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). For much of the post-war period the expulsion of just over twelve million Germans from Central and Eastern Europe played an important role in West German scholarship and public opinion. On the one hand, public officials and academics widely publicized the issue and widely viewed expellees as victims along with Jews, Poles, Roma or other groups which were systematically persecuted by the Nazis. Amid the plethora of scholarly works on expellees – by 1989 they had reached well over 4,600 titles¹ – the government-sponsored *Documents on the Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern-Central-Europe* profoundly shaped this perception. Published in the 1950s and edited by the country's leading historians, it documents at length the often cruel events of flight and deportation that expellees experienced at the end of the war and immediately thereafter. It consists of five substantial volumes and eleven books.² On the other hand, since the late 1950s public officials and academics have put as much effort into celebrating the successful incorporation of eight million expellees into West German society. In 1959,

¹ Gertrude Krallert-Sattler, *Kommentierte Bibliographie zum Flüchtlings- und Vertriebenenproblem in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, in Österreich und in der Schweiz* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1989).

² In all, this adds up to 4,998 pages. A shorter version also appeared in English in four volumes (and books) or 1,518 pages, see Theoder Schieder et al., eds., *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa*, 5 vols. (Bonn: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, 1953-1961); and idem, *Documents on the Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern-Central-Europe*, 4 vols. (Bonn: Federal Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and War Victims, 1956-1961).

for example, the West German government sponsored a major three-volume publication which underscored the achievement of their integration. It was prefaced by Theodor Oberländer, the Federal Minister of Expellees, Refugees and War Victims. As he noted, besides the rapid economic recovery no other development in contemporary West German society had found as much international recognition as the incorporation of millions of destitute expellees.³ In effect, what in the immediate post-war years seemed nearly impossible, proved feasible and became part of West Germany's celebrated 'economic miracle.'⁴

However, since the 1980s scholars have been critically assessing these perceptions. In the 'quarrel of the historians' [*Historikerstreit*] of the mid-1980s a number of leading German historians, including Martin Broszat, Hans Mommsen and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, took issue with some of their colleagues' interpretation of Germany's Nazi past and the Holocaust. While they were particularly incensed by Ernst Nolte's claim that Nazi death camps were a defensive reaction to the Soviet regime and thus constituted the lesser horror compared to the Soviet gulags, they also criticized Andreas Hillgruber's publication of *Two Kinds of Collapse* which juxtaposes the destruction of European Jewry to Nazi Germany's downfall and the ensuing expulsion of

³ Theodor Oberländer, "Zum Geleit," in Eugen Lemberg and Friedrich Edding, eds. *Die Vertriebenen in Westdeutschland: Ihre Eingliederung und ihr Einfluss auf Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft und Geistesleben*, vol. 1 (Kiel: Ferdinand Hirt, 1959), V.

⁴ Mary Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918 - 2000: The Divided Nation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 147-151; Hanna Schissler, "Writing about 1950s West Germany," in Hanna Schissler, ed. *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 3-16.

Germans from Central and Eastern Europe.⁵ Wehler, for one, criticized Hillgruber's juxtaposition as a blatant attempt to equate the fate of expellees with that of Jews and thus minimize the Holocaust.⁶ More recently, expellee organizations have similarly drawn parallels between the expulsion and Nazi Germany's destruction of European Jewry, calling for the creation of a 'Centre Against Expulsion' alongside the Holocaust Memorial opened in May 2005 in Berlin. This, not surprisingly, has again stirred up controversy. Scholars from Germany and elsewhere have been protesting against the construction of such a centre.⁷

Nevertheless, since the 1990s a series of studies have successfully compared expellees with other refugees of Jewish, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Roma or Italian ethnic background. These studies have shown that the expulsion of Germans was part of a massive population movement taking place between 1938 and 1948. Before Central and Eastern European states expelled Germans in the aftermath of World War II, Nazi

⁵ Andreas Hillgruber, *Zweierlei Untergang: Die Zerschlagung des Deutschen Reichs und das Ende des europäischen Judentums* (Berlin: Siedler, 1986).

⁶ The most important texts of the 'quarrel' are reproduced in Rudolf Augstein et al., eds., *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler? Original Documents of the Historikerstreit, the Controversy Concerning the Singularity of the Holocaust* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1993); for Wehler's critique, see specifically his *Entsorgung der deutschen Vergangenheit? Ein polemischer Essay zum 'Historikerstreit'* (Munich: Beck, 1988).

⁷ Norman Naimark, "Europäische Geschichte im 20. Jahrhundert und die Problematik eines deutschen 'Zentrums gegen Vertreibungen'," in Bernd Faulenbach and Andreas Helle, eds. *Zwangsmigration in Europa: Zur wissenschaftlichen und politischen Auseinandersetzung um die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten* (Essen: Klartext: 2005), 19-29; Karl Schlögel, "Europa ist nicht nur ein Wort: Zur Debatte um ein Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen," *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 51: 1 (2003), 5-12; Jürgen Danyel and Christoph Klessmann, "Unterwegs wie die Flüchtlinge und Vertriebenen: Zur Debatte über ein europäisches Zentrum gegen Vertreibung," *ibid.*, 31-35; Philipp Ther, "Erinnern oder aufklären: Zur Konzeption eines Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen," *ibid.*, 36-41.

Germany and the Soviet Union deported Jews, Poles, Ukrainians and others. Moreover, with studies comparing the expulsion to the deportation of natives and others in North America, further comparative studies have helped qualify the significance of the expulsion on a European, if not global scale. In terms of magnitude they were, incidentally, paralleled by the Indo-Pakistani population transfer of 1947/48, which involved at least eleven million people.⁸

Similarly, comparisons have also been fruitfully used to assess the successful integration of expellees in the FRG. This has been particularly important in view of newer studies which questioned the widely acclaimed rapid and successful integration of expellees and drew attention to the hardship that expellees initially experienced.⁹ Moreover, the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 also opened up access to new sources for comparative studies, in particular with the German Democratic

⁸ Anja Kruke, ed., *Zwangsmigration und Vertreibung: Europa im 20. Jahrhundert* (Bonn: Dietz, 2005); Thomas Urban, *Der Verlust: Die Vertreibung der Deutschen und Polen im 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 2004); Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak, eds., *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944-1948* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001); Edita Ivanickóva and Jiří Pešek, eds., *Erzwungene Trennung: Vertreibungen und Aussiedlungen in und aus der Tschechoslowakei 1938-1947 im Vergleich mit Polen, Ungarn und Jugoslawien* (Essen: Klartext, 1999); Michael G. Esch, *Gesunde Verhältnisse: Deutsche und polnische Bevölkerungspolitik in Ostmitteleuropa 1939-1950* (Marburg: Herder Institut, 1998); and Wolfgang Höpken, ed., *Zwangsmigrationen in Mittel- und Südosteuropa* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitäts-Verlag, 1996). For a more global perspective including comparisons with North America, see Nandor F. Dreisziger, "Redrawing the Ethnic Map in North America: The Experience of France, Britain, and Canada, 1936-1946," in Steven B. Vardy and Hunt T. Tooley, eds. *Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 45-62.

⁹ See, notably, Paul Lüttinger, "Der Mythos der schnellen Integration: Eine empirische Untersuchung zur Integration der Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland bis 1971," *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 15 (1986), 20-36; and Marion Frantziöch, *Die Vertriebenen: Hemmnisse, Antriebskräfte und Wege ihrer Integration in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1987).

Republic (GDR), where expellees represented almost one in four residents in 1950,¹⁰ and Poland which similarly had to accommodate a host of refugees from the Ukraine. In marked contrast to the FRG, both the GDR and Poland introduced sweeping political and economic reforms which benefited the integration of the expellees. In the GDR, for example, where the communist authorities deemed the integration of expellees complete in the early 1950s, landless farmers, including expellees, benefited from the collectivization of large estates and widely obtained small plots of land to farm on. However, political repression and limited economic opportunities also led to the mass migration from the GDR across the ‘German-German’ border to the FRG. Until 1961, when the GDR built the Berlin Wall, some three million Germans arrived in West Germany.¹¹ On balance, consequently, most researchers agree that expellees fared better in the FRG than in the GDR.¹²

¹⁰ Gehard Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 1 (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, 1986), 59.

¹¹ Helge Heidemeyer, “Vertriebene als Sowjetflüchtlinge,” in Dierk Hoffmann, Marita Krauss and Michael Schwartz, eds. *Vertriebene in Deutschland: Interdisziplinäre Ergebnisse und Forschungsperspektiven* (Munich: Oldenburg, 2000), 237-249.

¹² Philipp Ther, *Deutsche und polnische Vertriebene: Gesellschaft und Vertriebenenpolitik in der SBZ/DDR und in Polen, 1945-1956* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); Elke Melmert, “Ankunft in Deutschland – Vertriebene versus Umsiedler: Ostdeutsche Perspektiven auf ein Kapitel gesamtdeutscher Nachkriegsgeschichte,” *Ost-Westliche Spiegelungen* (2005), 95-104; Michael Schwartz, *Vertriebene und ‚Umsiedlerpolitik:‘ Integrationskonflikte in den deutschen Nachkriegs-Gesellschaften und die Assimilationsstrategien in der SBZ/DDR 1945-1961* (Munich: Oldenburg, 2004); Dierk Hoffmann, ed., *Geglückte Integration? Spezifika und Vergleichbarkeiten der Vertriebenen-Eingliederung in der SBZ/DDR* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1999); Manfred Wille, ed., *50 Jahre Flucht und Vertreibung: Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede bei der Aufnahme und Integration in die Gesellschaften der Westzonen/Bundesrepublik und der SBZ/DDR* (Magdeburg: Block, 1997).

Comparative studies in and of themselves imply the existence of a phenomenon in at least two or more settings or units of research. Following Marc Bloch, Charles Tilly, Heinz-Gerhardt Haupt and others comparative studies have three functions: (1) a heuristic, (2) an individualizing/contrasting and (3) a generalizing/analyzing function. The heuristic function serves the purpose of establishing research agendas and revealing phenomena that are known in one but not in any another setting. For example, the eminent *Annales* historian Marc Bloch successfully researched France's little known landowning structures by taking his cue from Britain's vast scholarship on enclosures.¹³ The individualizing or contrasting function of comparative studies focuses on specific characteristics of each case under scrutiny, spells out differences and similarities and weighs the findings against the totality as known in the literature. Although widely used among historians, Heinz-Gerhard Haupt rightly suggests that this function is ill-suited for the examination of causal links. As he notes, "if one measures the economic development in Italy in the 19th century using as a yardstick the conditions that promoted industrialization in England, one can only determine that these conditions were lacking in Italy, but cannot identify the specific conditions for the economic growth that took place there."¹⁴ This deficit, however, is the strength of the generalizing or analyzing function. Studies using this function test theories, hypotheses or the strength (or weakness) of particular symptoms in variable or similar settings. They seek to establish that "every

¹³ Marc Bloch, "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes," *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1925), 15-50.

¹⁴ Heinz-Gerhardt Haupt, "Comparative History," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences* (New York: Elsevier, 2001), 2400.

instance of a phenomenon follows essentially a specified rule.”¹⁵ They help determine causal relationships and allow for the analysis of various settings in time and space, although at the risk of reducing lived reality into ahistorical units of analysis. As Fernand Braudel notes, taking up the research of his mentor, Lucien Febvre, atheism, for example, may be an empirically verifiable notion in the 18th but not in the 16th century when secular trends were still strongly bounded to religious beliefs.¹⁶ Hence, generalizing/analytical comparisons are inappropriate when researchers mistakenly assume similarities in phenomena that, in reality, are different in nature and constitution.¹⁷

By comparing the experiences of expellees in the FRG and Canada this dissertation pursues three aims. Above all, prompted by the vast German scholarship on expellees and following the heuristic function of comparative studies, it puts expellees on the research agenda of Canadian historiography. There is only one comparative case study that offers any insight into the way expellees fared in West Germany as compared to Canada. Hans Werner’s study looks at ethnic German immigrants in Winnipeg and Bielefeld and finds that these immigrants experienced greater tensions in Germany than in Canada. This, he argues, was primarily due to the expectations these ethnic German

¹⁵ Charles Tilly, *Big Structures Large Processes Huge Comparisons* (New York: Sage, 1984), 96.

¹⁶ Fernand Braudel, *On History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), 17-18.

¹⁷ On comparative studies in historical research, see also Jürgen Kocka, “Comparison and Beyond,” *History and Theory* 42 (February 2003), 39-44; Nancy L. Green, “The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism – New Perspectives for Migration Studies,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12 (1994), 3-21; Anton A. van den Braembussche, “Historical Explanation and Comparative Method,” *History and Theory* 28 (1989), 1-24; Raymond Grew, “The Case for Comparing Histories,” *American Historical Review* 85 (1980), 763-778.

immigrants had: arriving in Bielefeld in the presumed ‘homeland,’ they anticipated no major adjustment; in Winnipeg, conversely, they were poised for change and thus openly adapted to Anglo-Canadian culture. Nevertheless, although of interest, Werner’s findings fall short of fully comparing the expellee experience in the FRG and Canada, as only in Winnipeg does he examine expellees in the post-war period; in Bielefeld he focuses on so-called *Aussiedler* [resettlers], who came from the Soviet Union and Poland to the FRG in the 1970s and so integrated into West German society under substantially different social and economic conditions than expellees in the early post-war period.¹⁸

Beyond Werner’s study there are only non-comparative works which deal with expellees. These works, like Werner’s study, focus on distinctive subgroups and, with the notable exception of one oral history study which examines the acculturation of expellees,¹⁹ do not fully examine the way expellees lived their identity as refugees. This body of research includes Marlene Epp’s gender study on Mennonite expellee women²⁰ and also the ethno-cultural and ethno-religious studies on Danube Swabians, German Balts, Sudeten Germans, Germans from Russia and Romania as well as Mennonites and Baptists.²¹ In addition, a number of works examine expellees as part of ethnic survey

¹⁸ Hans Werner, “Integration in Two Cities: A Comparative History of Protestant Ethnic German Immigrants in Winnipeg, Canada, and Bielefeld, Germany, 1947-1989,” Ph.D. Thesis University of Manitoba 2002, 319.

¹⁹ Sylvia Brown, “Voices from the Borderlands: The Problem of ‘Home’ in the Oral History of German Expellees in Canada,” in Heinz Autor, Sylvia Brown and John Considine, eds. *Refractions of Germany in Canadian Literature and Culture* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2003), 33-57.

²⁰ Marlene Epp, *Men Without Women: Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1999).

²¹ Key works include: Mathias Kuester, *Bricks and Mortar to a History of the Baltic Germans for Canadians* (Edmonton: private publication, 1997); Katherine Stenger Frey,

studies and more specialized migration, social mobility or language maintenance studies. However, as in some of the non-comparative works, these studies investigate expellees as members of Canada's German immigrant community and therefore similarly fail to fully shed light on expellees per se.²²

Secondly, and characteristic of the individualizing or contrasting function of comparative studies, this dissertation seeks to elucidate the specifics of the West German versus the Canadian expellee experience. After all, unlike most other comparative studies on expellees, this dissertation juxtaposes two quite different capitalist democracies which were allied in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the real and imagined threat from world communism. At the outset, the social and economic conditions markedly differed. The FRG emerged from the ruins of World War II economically bankrupt and burdened by a mass of eight million impoverished

The Danube Swabians: A People with Portable Roots (Belleville: Mika Publishing, 1982); Willi Wanka, *Opfer des Friedens: Die Sudetensiedlungen in Kanada* (Munich: Langen Müller Verlag, 1988); Fritz Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Sudeten Club Forward, 1982); Fritz Wieden, *Kanadas Siebenbürger Sachsen* (Stuttgart: Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, 1986); Fritz Wieden and Michael Benzinger, *Canada's Danube Swabians* (Windsor: St. Michael's Church, 1992); Frank H. Epp, *Mennonite Exodus: The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites since the Communist Revolution* (Altona: D.W. Friesen & Sons, 1962); on Baptists, see William J. H. Sturhahn, *They Came From East and West: A History of Immigration to Canada* (Winnipeg: North American Baptist Immigration and Colonization Society, 1976).

²² See in particular the more recent publications by Alexander Freund, *Aufbrüche nach dem Zusammenbruch: Die deutsche Nordamerika-Auswanderung nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: V & R Press, 2004); Gerhard P. Bassler, "Germans," in Paul R. Magosci, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Canada's People* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 587-612; Gerhard P. Bassler, *The German-Canadian Mosaic Today and Yesterday: Identities, Roots and Heritage* (Ottawa: German-Canadian Congress, 1991); Andrea Koch-Kraft, *Deutsche in Kanada: Einwanderung und Adaptation mit einer Untersuchung zur Situation der Nachkriegsmigration in Edmonton* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Brockmeyer, 1990); Manfred Prokop, *German Language in Alberta: Maintenance and Teaching* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1990).

expellees; politically, it was dependent on the Western Allies and, morally, Nazi Germany's crimes against humanity cast a long shadow over German society. Canada, meanwhile, prospered and represented itself as a land of immigration, freedom and democracy which had gone to war against Nazi Germany and fascism. Expellees were comparatively few and their fate condoned, though only half-heartedly, by the Canadian government.²³ Consequently, how the expellee experience evolved under such different economic, social and cultural premises will therefore qualify West Germany's achievement in integrating expellees against the record of a self-proclaimed homeland for newcomers.

Thirdly, following the generalizing/analytical function of comparative studies, this dissertation supports the agency of people to form viable identities within the framework of nation-states. On both sides of the Atlantic, this thesis posits, expellees proactively forged a new *Heimat* by acting upon the conditions imposed on them and negotiating, correspondingly, new national identities. This last aim has been the focal point of recent debates which emphasize the transnational role of social agents. Critics of various stripes criticize comparativists in particular for their prevalent use of the nation-state as the main unit of analysis. Comparisons, they claim, sustain mythic national discourses by producing historical knowledge that allegedly highlights genuine and empirically verifiable particularities of specific nation-states. Theories such as the

²³ Unable to influence the USSR, the USA or the UK, officials in Ottawa agreed quite reluctantly to the expulsion of Germans in Central and Eastern Europe, fearing its implications for a peaceful post-war European order, see Angelika E. Sauer, "Future Orders: Canada and Post-Hostilities Germany," in Hans Braun and Wolfgang Kloos, eds. *1945 in Canada and Germany: Viewing the Past through the Present* (Kiel: L& F, 1996), 37-50.

‘German *Sonderweg*’ [special path], ‘American exceptionalism’ and the ‘Canadian mosaic’ are but three such examples.²⁴ While dismissing the use of such comparative approaches, historians have called for a shift in historical inquiry toward the study of people, ideas, institutions and cultures above, below, within and around nation-states. They seek, in short, a *transnational* or *relational* perspective centred on actors crisscrossing multiple settings, spaces and boundaries.²⁵

²⁴ In the German case, Nazi Germany’s rise and its dire consequences brought historians to develop comparative historical narratives that explained the country’s plunge into the catastrophe and its presumed late arrival into the ranks of unified nation-states and western-style liberal democracies. For the USA historians have widely contributed to a longstanding tradition of comparative works going back to the foundation of the country and setting out a range of unique or ‘exceptional’ national traits. For Canada, meanwhile, John M. Murray’s publication of the *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* in the late 1930s paved the way for a new national idiom that has since profoundly marked Canadian historiography and public policy by highlighting the cultivation of distinctive pluri-cultural traits in Canadian society in opposition to the legendary American ‘melting pot.’ See Jürgen Kocka, “German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German *Sonderweg*,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 23 (1988), 3-16; Daniel T. Rodgers, “Exceptionalism,” in Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood, eds. *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 21-40; Robert F. Harney, “‘So Great a Heritage is Ours:’ Immigration and the Survival of the Canadian Polity,” *Daedalus* 17: 4 (Fall 1988), 51-98.

²⁵ Micol Seigel, “Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn,” *Radical History Review* 91: 1 (2005), 62-90; Philipp Ther, “Beyond the Nation: The Relational Basis of a Comparative History of Germany and Europe,” *Central European History* 36:1 (2003), 45-73; Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, “Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung: Der Ansatz der *histoire croisée* und die Herausforderung des Transnationalen,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28 (2002), 607-636; Michel Espagne, “Au delà du comparatisme,” in Michel Espagne, *Les transferts culturels franco-allemands* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999), 35-49; Nancy L. Green, “The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism: New Perspectives for Migration Studies,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 13 (1994), 3-21; Bruno Ramirez, “The Perils of Assimilation: Toward a Comparative Analysis of Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in North America,” in Valeria G. Lerda, ed. *From Melting Pot to Multiculturalism: The Evolution of Ethnic Relations in the United States and Canada* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1990), 143-167.

This dissertation follows first and foremost the actions, movements and experiences that informed expellee identities. In line with recent criticism it stresses the transnational character of identities and their complex social construction. Yet, contrary to the recent calls, it sticks to the nation-state as the basic framework of analysis, using Anthony Richmond's multivariate systems model of international migration. Agency figures most prominently in Richmond's model as he draws on Anthony Giddens' structuration theory. This latter theory holds that social structures both constrain and enable human agents. As Giddens explains: "rules and resources drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action are at the same time the means of system reproduction."²⁶ Social structures, therefore, are recursively created and recreated through and by agents. They are virtual and cluster in social systems such as nation-states across time and space with varying degrees of cohesion and conflict.²⁷ Human actors and groups, meanwhile, evolve in social systems as knowledgeable agents, bounded by the unconscious and the unacknowledged conditions of action. Routines, for instance, seemingly derived from the unconscious, are but grounded in the agent's rational pursuit of personal security. "Routinized practices," Giddens writes, "are the prime expression of the duality of structure in respect of the continuity of social life. In the enactment of routines agents sustain a sense of ontological security."²⁸ Agents are thus cognizant of the conditions that they live in and so are capable of recursively

²⁶ Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984), 19.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 14-25, 256-258 and 377.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 282.

creating, maintaining and changing social structures and the markers that signify their identities.²⁹

Following Giddens's structuration theory, Richmond dismisses the conventional distinction between free, voluntary and forced population movements and instead proposes a differentiation along a continuum between *proactive* and *reactive* forms of international migrations. The decision to migrate, he argues, is subject to the structuration process like all human behaviour; 'push' and 'pull' factors, which experts widely use to explain the causation of migrations, are not absolute, but interrelated and 'constrain' or 'enable' population movements with a varying degree of intensity. Following Richmond, expellees are knowledgeable agents who were not simply expelled or forced to migrate because of the way society evolved; they had choices and decided to move, however limited their field of action was. Flight, in the last instance, was a choice over persecution or death. As he notes:

Under certain conditions the decision to move may be made after due consideration of all relevant information, rationally calculated to maximize net advantage, including both material and symbolic rewards. At the other extreme, the decision to move may be made in a state of panic facing a crisis situation which leaves few alternatives but escape from intolerable threats. Between these two extremes, many of the decisions made by both 'economic' and 'political' migrants are a response to diffuse anxiety generated by a failure of the social system to provide for the fundamental needs of the individual, biological, economic and social.³⁰

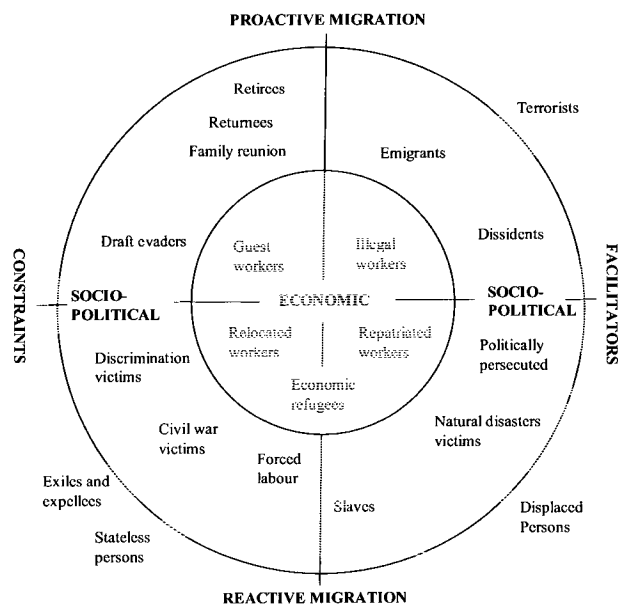
²⁹ Giddens, *Constitution*, 24-26, 280-282.

³⁰ Anthony H. Richmond, *Global Apartheid: Refugees, Racism and the New World Order* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 55; and Anthony H. Richmond, "Sociological Theories of International Migration: The Case of Refugees," *Current Sociology* 36:2 (1988), 17.

Proactive migrants, according to Richmond's differentiation, have a relatively unconstrained choice and are capable of deciding the destination, purpose, length and timing of their move. Reactive migrants, by contrast, respond to economic, social, environmental and political pressures over which they have little control. Consequently, they are limited in choosing destination, timing and length of their move.

A diagram follows which depicts Richmond's multivariate systems model of international migration.

Structuration of International Migration ('multivariate systems model')³¹



The vertical axis represents the continuum between proactive and reactive decision-making. The horizontal axis represents the interaction of economic and socio-political determinants; toward the right, these increasingly facilitate; to the left, these increasingly

³¹ Diagram as modified by the author from Richmond, *Global*, 59.

constrain. The nearer the category of international migrants falls to the vertical axis, the more important are the economic determinants. Conversely, the further the category of international migrants is situated on the periphery, the more socio-political are the determinants of international migration.³²

Besides agency Richmond's model also underscores the key variable of the expellee experience, namely: nationalism and, implicitly, the creation of – or its attempt to create – nation-states. Following the theory of structuration, nationalism, by being drawn upon, constrains and enables and thus sheds light on the origins and the outcome of the expellee experience. On the one hand, as an ideology and political movement, nationalism integrates population groups into a nation-state and thereby creates a sense of belonging and personal security. Unlike in pre-modern, largely self-sufficient cultures, where the familiarity of the local community and the continuity of social practices instilled such feelings, in the modern world individuals adopt national identities to gain a sense of commonality and bridge the gap between the private and the largely anonymous societies in which they live.³³ However, while based on purportedly shared sentiments, traditions, laws, political cultures and economic activities, in modern societies individuals adopt national identities not only to attend to their personal needs, but also to lend support to rulers and elites. These, in turn, compete between and among each other and

³² Anthony H. Richmond, "Reactive Migration: Sociological Perspectives on Refugee Movements," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 6: 1 (1993), 15; Richmond, *Global*, 59-67.

³³ Anthony Giddens, *Social Theory and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 178; Ernest Gellner, "Adam's Navel: 'Primordialists' versus 'Modernists'," in Edward Mortimer and Robert Fine, eds. *People, Nation and State: The Meaning of Ethnicity and Nationalism* (London: Tauris, 1999), 31-36.

employ educators, writers, officials, police officers or soldiers in order to control the loyalty of a people within a given territory or state.³⁴

On the other hand, nationalism and nation-building also lead to reactive migrations when individuals and population groups do not comply with or indeed oppose the conditions imposed upon them. Nationalists and nation-builders encroach on the daily lives of individuals and homogenize society at the expense of sub-cultures. As Ernest Gellner writes, “nations as a natural, God-given way of classifying men, as an inherent [...] political destiny, are a myth; nationalism, which sometimes takes pre-existing cultures and turns them into nations, sometimes invents them, and often obliterates pre-existing cultures: that is reality.”³⁵ Thus, since the emergence of the nation-state in Europe in the 16th century, countless people have moved across borders in order to escape nationalist and nationalizing groups and governments. In the early modern period, these were primarily religious minorities in Spain, Portugal (Jews, Muslims), France, the Low Countries (Protestants) and England (‘dissenters’). Although small in number, they generally affected two to five percent of the local population, although in the Low Countries, where just over 120,000 Protestants moved, they made up 15 percent of the population.³⁶ During the 18th and, especially, the 19th century, reactive

³⁴ John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, 2nd edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 3-5; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 1-8; and Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 9-10.

³⁵ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 49-49.

³⁶ Aristide R. Zolberg, “The Formation of New States as a Refugee-Generating Process,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 467: 1

migrants were mostly individuals persecuted for political reasons, including opponents of the *ancien régime*, French royalists during the French Revolution, socialists, freemasons and Polish and German liberals. Although few in numbers, they found asylum in countries with an affinity for their political persuasions or a degree of acceptance toward them.³⁷

The 20th century, meanwhile, has been dubbed ‘the century of refugees.’³⁸ As in previous centuries, reactive migrants continued to cross international borders to avoid persecution, wars and revolutions. From the Soviet Union, for instance, several million people fled the communist revolution and the subsequent dire repression, especially under Stalin’s terror regime.³⁹ However, the triumphant spread of ethnic nationalism in the early 20th century gave birth to new types of reactive cross-border migrations. Indeed, going back to the writings of German romantic poets and philosophers in the early 19th century, ethnic nationalists have sought to establish or maintain relatively homogenous nation-states based on common language and descent and thereby generated reactive migrations of considerable proportions. In international law it was endorsed by the post-World War I peace treaties which incorporated the right to self-determination of ethnic groups and sanctioned the creation of 14 new nation-states in Central and Eastern Europe. Hence, while such former minority groups as Poles, Latvians or Czechoslovaks

(1983), 24-38; Klaus J. Bade, *Migration in European History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 1-32.

³⁷ Bade, *Migration*, 129-164.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, xii; Franz Nuscheler, *Internationale Migrationen: Flucht und Asyl*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2004), 31-33; Michael R. Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 54.

³⁹ Bade, *Migration*, 186.

formed new nation-states, former majority groups, in particular co-ethnics of the defeated Middle Powers, turned into beleaguered minority groups or, as in the case of Austrians, into ethno-national groups whose right to self-determination the victorious Allied Powers denied. For example, even though Sudeten Germans wished to be included into an amalgamated German-Austrian state after the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, Czechoslovak troops seized control of the area which later came to be known as the 'Sudetenland.'⁴⁰ Similarly, against the will of the predominantly German population, the Allies made Danzig (Gdansk) a semi-sovereign state under the supervision of the League of Nations and allocated most of the former Prussian provinces of West Prussia and Posen to Poland and thereby cut off East Prussia from the rest of Germany.⁴¹

As a result, in the aftermath of World War I an estimated five million people are thought to have moved across borders to find refuge in nation-states of fellow ethnics and escape often ruthless attempts by the new successor states of the fallen empires to 'nationalize' ethnic minorities.⁴² Around one million Germans fled to Germany from

⁴⁰ Rudolf Jaworski, "Die Sudetendeutschen als Minderheit in der Tschechoslowakei," in Wolfgang Benz, ed. *Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus dem Osten: Ursachen, Ereignisse, Folgen*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1995), 33-44; Josef Kalvoda and David Crowe, "National Minorities in Czechoslovakia, 1919-1980," in Stephen M. Horak et al. eds. *Eastern European National Minorities, 1919-1980: A Handbook* (Littleton: Libraries Unlimited, 1985), ch.3.

⁴¹ Richard Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles: The Germans in Western Poland, 1918-1939* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 9-31; Norbert Krekeler, "Die Deutsche Minderheit in Polen und die Revisionspolitik des Deutschen Reiches, 1919-1933," in Benz, *Vertreibung*, 16-32.

⁴² Jochen Oltmer, "Migration and Public Policy in Germany, 1918-1939," in Larry E. Jones, ed. *Crossing Boundaries: The Exclusion and Inclusion of Minorities in Germany and the United States* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 2001), 50.

France, the Baltic, the USSR and, in particular, Poland. Around 800,000 ethnic Germans came to Austria from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia and other territories of the former Habsburg Empire, making up ten percent of Austria's population in the 1920s. Similarly, 500,000 ethnic Hungarians came to Hungary from Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia. Moreover, 1,250,000 ethnic Greeks moved from Anatolia to mainland Greece and, conversely, over half a million Turks in the opposite direction.⁴³ Most of this latter movement proceeded under international supervision following the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 which formally settled World War I in the Middle East. It set a pivotal precedent and has since justified the action of radically nationalistic governments to 'unmix' multi-ethnic populations or 'cleanse' ethnic minorities from their territories.⁴⁴

Nazi Germany followed the trail blazed by the Treaty of Lausanne and concluded 14 bilateral agreements to resettle scattered ethnic German minority groups from the Soviet Union (USSR), Italy or the Baltic States in the Reich.⁴⁵ However, Hitler's fanatic ethnic nationalism went well beyond internationally agreed population

⁴³ Oltmer, "Migration," 50; Marrus, *The Unwanted*, 96-106.

⁴⁴ Michael Mann, *Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 24-29; Myron Weiner and Michael S. Teitelbaum, *Political Demography, Demographic Engineering* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 2001), 65-75; Rogers Brubaker, "Aftermath of Empires and the Unmixing of Peoples: Historical and Comparative Perspectives," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18:2 (1995), 189-218; Ulf Brunnbauer, *Definitionsmacht, Utopie, Vergeltung: 'Ethnische Säuberung' im östlichen Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Lit, 2006); Hans Lemberg, "'Ethnische Säuberung': Ein Mittel zur Lösung von Nationalitätenproblemen?," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B46 (1991), 27-38.

⁴⁵ Mathias Beer, "Die Vertreibung der Deutschen: Ursachen, Ablauf, Folgen," in *Flucht und Vertreibung: Europa zwischen 1939 und 1948* (Hamburg: Ellert & Richter Verlag, 2004), 24-63.

exchanges as he set out to annex neighbouring territories and incorporate ethnic German groups into the 'Third Reich.' In early 1938 Nazi Germany took control of Austria and, following the 'Munich Crisis' in the fall of that year, also the 'Sudetenland,' where the local German population actively assisted the breakdown of the Czechoslovak state.⁴⁶ In early 1939 Nazi Germany annexed the *Memelland* (western Lithuania) and on September 1, 1939, under the same pretext of coming to the assistance of local German ethnic groups, it attacked Poland and thus triggered World War II. Within the expanding 'Greater German Reich' the Nazis set out to make the country '*judenfrei*' ['free of Jews'] and prompted the departure of almost half a million Jews from Central and Eastern Europe.⁴⁷ During the war and especially after the onslaught on the USSR, Nazi Germany set out to realize the 'General Plan East' and brutally resettled seven to eight million Eastern Europeans. In addition, in its bid to redraw Europe's ethnic map and create the *Lebensraum* for the German 'master race,' Nazi Germany resorted to means beyond mass deportation. For the 'final solution' of the 'Jewish question' it murdered six million Jews and deliberately starved and worked to death at least as many ethnic Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Russians and others.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Jaworski, "Die Sudetendeutschen," 33-44; Kalvoda/Crowe, "National Minorities," ch.3.

⁴⁷ Bade, *Migration*, 204-205; Claus-Dieter Krohn, Patrick von zur Mühlen, Gerhard Paul und Lutz Winkler, eds., *Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration, 1933-1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998), 3-61.

⁴⁸ Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933 - 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 75-197; Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung*, 4th ed. (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 2001); Mechtild Rössler, *Der 'Generalplan Ost': Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und*

After 1945 and the end of the hostilities, the victorious Allies replicated the basic principles enshrined in the post-World War I peace treaties. Firstly, in the Potsdam Agreements of August 1945, Britain, the U.S.A and the Soviet Union (USSR) upheld the nation-state as the primary form of statehood and re-instated Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Secondly, drawing on the previous practice of internationally approved population exchanges, they stipulated the population transfer of Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to occupied Germany. In marked contrast to the post-war World War I order, which explicitly regulated the rights of minorities, after 1945 the Allies sought to remove minorities altogether in an attempt to get rid of a problem that they perceived to have led to the outbreak of World War II. As Churchill explained to the British House of Commons in December 1944, “there will be no mixture to cause endless trouble [...] a clean sweep will be made.”⁴⁹

Nevertheless, by the time British, U.S. and Soviet officials convened in Potsdam in August 1945, the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe was already well under way. By the end of 1944 partisans in Yugoslavia brutally assaulted and dispossessed the remaining German population, which in November 1944 was officially stripped off its Yugoslav citizenship.⁵⁰ Ten days after the official ceasefire in Europe, the Czechoslovak government, which in exile in London had been lobbying for the expulsion since the early 1940s, likewise dispossessed its three-million strong

Vernichtungspolitik (Berlin: Akad.-Verl., 1993); Czesław Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan* (Munich: Saur, 1994).

⁴⁹ Winston Churchill, *His Complete Speeches, 1897-1963*, vol. 7 (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974), 7069.

⁵⁰ Mathias Beer, “Umsiedlung, Flucht und Vertreibung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus Südosteuropa am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs,” in *Flucht und Vertreibung*, 172-183.

German minority and nationalized its assets and properties. In early August, before the Potsdam Agreements came into force, the Sudeten Germans also lost their Czechoslovak citizenship.⁵¹ Similarly, with the surrender of the German army in Königsberg in April 1945, the Soviet Union annexed the north-western part of East Prussia (Kaliningrad Oblast) and dispossessed, deported and imprisoned what was left of the 300,000 German residents. Moreover, in the wake of the Red Army's advance, the Soviet Union forced the westward shift of Poland's borders and population and confronted British and U.S. officials in Potsdam with a *fait accompli* about Poland's future territory. Already in May 1945 the new Polish authorities ('Lublin Committee'), which the USSR endorsed against the will of the USA and Britain, incorporated, in addition to Danzig (Gdansk), German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers into the new Poland and started to expel the local German population. This included the remainder of East Prussia, parts of Brandenburg, Pomerania and Upper and Lower Silesia.⁵² In effect, all British and American officials were left to do in Potsdam, whilst sanctioning the national interests of the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia was to include officially the expulsion of Germans from Hungary and to insist that the agreements contain a clause stipulating that the population transfers be humane and orderly. As it turned out, these were anything but

⁵¹ Detlef Brandes, *Der Weg zur Vertreibung: Pläne und Entscheidungen zum 'Transfer' der Deutschen aus der Tschechoslowakei und aus Polen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2001); Niklas Perzi, *Die Benes-Dekrete: Eine europäische Tragödie* (St. Pölten: Niederösterreichisches Pressehaus 2003); Tomas Stanek, *Verfolgung 1945: Die Stellung der Deutschen in Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien* (Wien: Böhlau, 2002).

⁵² Brandes, *Der Weg*, 410-417; and Klaus-Dietmar Henke, "Der Weg nach Potsdam – Die Alliierten und die Vertreibung," in Benz, *Vertreibung*, 58-85.

humane. In the process of moving Germans, between 500,000 and two million from across Central and Eastern Europe are estimated to have died.⁵³

In the post-World War II decades expellees drew on their experience of the expulsion and, following the structuration process, thereby inevitably reproduced elements of the ethnic nationalism that they were imbued with during the first half of the twentieth century. While before 1945 expellees were imbued with Nazi Germany's celebration of the 'German *Volksgemeinschaft*,' after 1945, this dissertation maintains, expellees continued to define nationhood in ethnic terms. In the early FRG this meant that expellees went well beyond a national identity which focused, as some historians argue, on the German people's suffering before and after the end of World War II.⁵⁴ Dispossessed and impoverished, expellees primarily saw themselves as victims as they struggled to survive and fought for compensation amid a bankrupt and divided society. However, by the mid-1950s, as the newly established West German state passed legislation for reparations, most expellees were somewhat settled and began to adopt an

⁵³ Until recently, casualties related to the expulsions of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe were estimated at around two million people based on census data differentials. However, using a random sample of death certificates, Rüdiger Overmans revised the number down to a more realistic maximum of half a million casualties, see his "Personelle Verluste der deutschen Bevölkerung durch Flucht und Vertreibung," *Dzieje Najnowsze* 26, 2 (1994), 51-65.

⁵⁴ Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 3-7. See also Robert G. Moeller, "Remembering the War in a Nation of Victims: West German Pasts in the 1950s," in Schissler, *The Miracle Years*, 83-109; Brenda Melendy, "Expellees on Strike: Competing Victimization Discourses and the Dachau Refugee Camp Protest Movement, 1948-1949," *German Studies Review* 28: 1 (February 2005), 107-121; Michael L. Hughes, "'Through No Fault of Our Own: West Germans Remember their War Losses,'" *Germany History* 18 (2000), 193-213; Daniel Levy, "Remembering the Nation: Ethnic Germans and the Transformation of National Identity in the Federal Republic of Germany," Ph.D. Thesis Columbia University 1999, 30-55.

identity that matched the country's rapid economic recovery. In light of this other historians have argued that expellees adopted a national identity centred on West Germany's widely acclaimed 'economic miracle.'⁵⁵ Although this is a valid contention, it fails to take full account of their social and cultural heritage. Rather, alongside locals expellees carved out ethno-regional identities which allowed them to take pride in their economic achievement and lay claim to the lost homeland without guilt about the war and Nazi Germany's dire legacy. As Celia Applegate notes, after Hitler's downfall the ethno-regional heritage of Germans or the *Heimat* represented the least objectionable expression of the nation.⁵⁶ Thus, while local West Germans became Hessians or Hamburgers, expellees embraced seemingly neutral identities as Silesians, Sudeten Germans or Danube Swabians.

In Canada, meanwhile, the structuration process meant that expellees, faced with the anti-German feelings as a result of two world wars, did not simply assimilate along with other German immigrants to the predominant Anglo-Canadian culture and

⁵⁵ Alexander von Plato, "Fremde Heimat': Zur Integration von Flüchtlingen und Einheimischen in die neue Zeit," in Lutz Niethammer and Alexander von Plato, eds. "Wir kriegen jetzt andere Zeiten: 'Auf der Suche nach der Erfahrung des Volkes in nachfaschistischen Ländern," vol. 3 (Bonn: Dietz, 1985), 211. On the 'economic miracle' as a marker of West German national identity in general, see also: Fulbrook, *History*, 235-256; and Gerd Knischewski, "Post-War National Identity in Germany," in Brian Jenkins and Spyros A. Sofos, eds. *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (London: Routledge, 1996), 125-154.

⁵⁶ Celia Applegate, *Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 240-245. On the use of regional identities as conveyors of German national identities in general, see also Alon Confino, *The Nation as Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

focus on material well-being and upward social mobility.⁵⁷ Nor did it mean that expellees restricted themselves like other immigrant groups or sub-groups to “limited identities” under the broad umbrella of the nation.⁵⁸ On the contrary, they clung to the source of identification that had shaped the course of their lives during the first part of the twentieth century. Similar to their counterparts in the FRG, they forged a national identity based on ethnicity and willingly embraced the emerging celebration of Canada’s ‘cultural mosaic’ which championed the right of immigrant groups to preserve their ethnic heritage alongside the self-styled charter groups of British and French descent.⁵⁹ Specifically, drawing on the common European heritage of most immigrants in the early post-WWII period, expellees, as I argue in this thesis, adopted a Euro-Canadian identity and celebrated the harmonious co-existence of multiple ethnic groups as the ‘third force’ in Canadian society.

In order to demonstrate the origins and development of these national identities, I first started my investigations in Canada. As a result, I found that most of the relevant source material, which shed light on the life of expellees before, during and, especially, after the expulsion, consisted of oral history sources and autobiographies. In the past, researchers used oral history sources primarily as a tool to reconstitute the lives

⁵⁷ For such claims, see Gerhard P. Bassler, “German-Canadian Identity in Historical Perspective,” in Angelika E. Sauer and Matthias Zimmer, eds. *A Chorus of Different Voices: German-Canadian Identities* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 72-89; Bassler, *German-Canadian Mosaic*; Koch-Kraft, *Deutsche*; Prokop, *German Language*; and more recently Manfred J. von Vulte, *Where have all of Toronto’s Germans gone?* (Ottawa: Borealis Press, 2003).

⁵⁸ Ramsay Cook, *Canada, Québec, and the Uses of Nation*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 230.

⁵⁹ Harney, ““So Great,”” 51-98.

of ordinary people who otherwise would have left no significant records. However, more recently, historians have also been using oral history sources as discursive artefacts which reflect prevailing social and cultural trends.⁶⁰ Building on these two aims, I follow Giddens' judgement that human beings are essentially knowledgeable agents and hence are discursively capable of describing what they do and for what reasons.⁶¹

A series of interviews taken in the late 1970s and early 1980s and held by the Multicultural History Society of Ontario (MHSO) in Toronto provided the starting point for this study on expellees in the FRG and Canada. The MHSO recordings covered expellees in the age cohort born between 1905 and 1925 who originated from across Central and Eastern Europe, including present-day Poland, the Czech Republic or the former Yugoslavia. With a few exceptions, all of the interviewees resided in southern Ontario, predominantly in Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener and surrounding rural areas. For a comparable set of oral histories in Germany I therefore selected recordings that matched a) the period when the interviews were taken and b) the age cohort, origins and the relatively high level of industrialization at the place of residence of the interviewees. Two sets of records available in the FRG match these criteria.⁶² One is based at the

⁶⁰ Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); and Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson, eds., *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006); Dirk Hoerder, *Creating Societies: Immigrant Lives in Canada* (Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 2000), 15-26.

⁶¹ Giddens, *Constitution*, 280.

⁶² Note that the vast body of autobiographical texts published in the FRG frequently focus only on the expulsion. The government-sponsored *Documents on the Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern-Central-Europe* is a case in point. It consists of diaries and ex-post-facto accounts which have been curtailed to detail specifically the movements of German civilians in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the war and immediately thereafter. The prelude to these events has purposefully been eclipsed. On the editorial

University of Hamburg and provides the source material for an important ethnological study on expellees.⁶³ The other comparable set of records is based at the Institute for Biography and History (IGB) at the University of Hagen in Lüdenscheid. The latter's archival material is vast and therefore provided the base for this comparative study. From the Institute's numerous records I have examined interviews and autobiographies from five collections which focus on a) life histories in West Germany's industrial heartland, the Ruhr area, b) elites in North-Rhine-Westphalia, c) expellees in the rural district of Lüchow-Dannenberg, Lower Saxony, d) unpublished autobiographies and diaries and e) donations from the Kempowski Archives.⁶⁴

Guided by records and collections available in Canada, I have also followed the experiences of two specific regional expellee groups: German Balts and Sudeten-German social democrats. In doing so, I have researched pertinent autobiographies, letters, diaries, community newsletters, newspapers and organizational records of each

policy, see in particular Mathias Beer, "Im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Zeitgeschichte: Das Grossforschungsprojekt 'Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa'," *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 46 (1998), 345-389.

⁶³ Albrecht Lehmann, *Im Fremden ungewollt zuhaus: Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene in Westdeutschland, 1945-1990* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1991).

⁶⁴ The Ruhr project provided the source material for several monographs and marked the breakthrough of oral history and its German variant of the *Alltagsgeschichte* [history of everyday life] in German historiography. See Lutz Niethammer, eds., *Lebensgeschichte und Sozialkultur im Ruhrgebiet 1930 bis 1960*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Dietz, 1983-85). The expellee project in Lüchow-Dannenberg provided the source material for an exhibition in Wustrow in the late 1980s on "strangers in the rural district" [*Fremde im Landkreis*], see the guide book to the exhibit, Dagmar Brodmann, ed., *Fremde: Flüchtlinge im Landkreis Lüchow-Dannenberg 1945-1950* (Hanover: Niedersächsischer Landtag, 1989). Meanwhile, Walter Kempowski has made a name in Germany for his extensive publications drawn from unpublished autobiographies and diaries. In accordance with the Institute's statutes this study has anonymized all references to autobiographical texts and interviews from its collections.

respective group which, despite their relatively small size, were the only ones outside the ethno-religious group of the Mennonites to have left any significant amount of records in Canada for a comparative study with the FRG. This is particularly the case with the German Balts who have gone to great lengths to collect and preserve personal and organizational records.⁶⁵ For both groups the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa holds considerable collections including relevant organizational and/or personal documents. The corresponding records for the FRG are held by separate institutions across Germany, namely in Munich (*Sudetendeutsches Archiv*) and Bonn (*Archiv der Seeliger-Gemeinde im Archiv der Sozialen Demokratie*) for the sub-group of Sudeten-Germans and in Lüneburg for the German Balts (*Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft*).

Besides such 'subjective' sources,⁶⁶ I also studied government records from ministries and branches directly involved with expellees. In Canada these records came in particular from the Immigration Branch and to a lesser degree External Affairs. In the FRG I consulted records from agencies such as the Federal Emigration Office (*Bundesamt für Auswanderung*), the Ministry for Expellees, Refugees and War Victims,

⁶⁵ Organized within the Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society (CBIAS), the small group of German Balts in Canada has thus far generated over a dozen autobiographies held by the local branch in London, ON, while organizational records are being kept by Mathias Kuester, member of the Alberta branch of the CBIAS in Edmonton. For this dissertation, I also looked into investigating two further groups beyond the German Balts and the Sudeten-German social democrats. These included expellees from Transylvania (Romania) and the so-called Danube Swabians from Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. However, despite several attempts, I was unable to consult the records of the main Danube-Swabian organization in Canada. As for expellees from Transylvania, their Canadian organizational records cover mostly the late 1960s and early 1970s and are incomplete, see Archives of Ontario (AO), Multicultural History Society of Ontario Fonds (F1405), Transylvania Club Kitchener Papers, MFN 306.

⁶⁶ For a more exhaustive description of these sources, see in particular Appendix IV, p. 340.

and the Foreign Office. In both countries records of relevant umbrella associations and aid organizations have also been examined, notably the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians and the Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees and, for the FRG, a catholic expellee aid organization (*Kirchliche Hilfsstelle*), the protestant aid agency (*Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands*), and the Federal Association of Expellees (*Bund für Vertriebene*). Furthermore, I have made extensive use of statistical data in order to track the movements of expellees and show the contours of their communities. The sources of the data will be discussed more fully in chapter three. Finally, in order to locate relevant references for contemporary publications and newspaper articles, a number of bibliographic finding aids have been of great value for both countries, though particularly for the FRG with its countless expellee papers, newsletters or publications.⁶⁷

This study covers the time period from the late 1930s to the 1970s and opens with a chapter that outlines the various facets of the expulsion and its immediate consequences to the persons involved. Historiography has thus far generally focused on

⁶⁷ For the FRG these are: *Ostdeutsche Bibliographie: Das internationale Schrifttum über die Heimatgebiete der deutschen Vertriebenen, das deutsche Vertriebenenproblem und mitteleuropäische Fragen*, edited by the Göttinger Arbeitskreis, 7 vols. (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1952-1972); Anton Scherer, *Donauschwäbische Bibliographie: Das Schrifttum über die Donauschwaben in Ungarn, Rumänien, Jugoslawien und Bulgarien sowie, nach 1945, in Deutschland, Österreich, Frankreich, USA, Canada, Argentinien, Brasilien und anderen Ländern*, 2 vols. (München: Südostdeutsches. Kulturwerk, 1966 & 1974); *Baltische Bibliographie: Schrifttum über Estland, Lettland, Litauen* (since 1954); *Sudetendeutsche Bibliographie; Auswahlbibliographie zur Geschichte und Landeskunde der Sudetenländer* (1955-1993); and *Bibliographie zur Geschichte der böhmischen Länder und der Slowakei* (since 1994). For Canada, see Manfred Prokop, *Annotated Bibliography of the Cultural History of the German-speaking Community in Alberta*, 2nd and updated ed. (Edmonton: Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta, 2004).

the experiences of specific expellee groups. Based on Richmond's multivariate systems model of international migration, chapter one goes beyond this focus and illustrates further facets of the expulsion. Contrary to the standard narrative on the expulsion, some expellees, for instance, left their homes in Central and Eastern Europe before Hitler's Germany started to crumble. Chapter one unveils the story of these expellees as well as those that fled in the wake of Nazi Germany's downfall. Chapters two and three both deal with aspects of the expellees' secondary migration. Chapter two specifically examines the forces and mindsets on each side of the Atlantic which pushed expellees to organize aid and immigration. It focuses on the living conditions in occupied Germany and the attempts they made to get away from misery and dearth. As it turned out, only a trickle of the masses caught by the general 'emigration fever' in occupied Germany ever landed on the shores of North America. This chapter explores the reasons for this. Chapter three takes a closer look at the 'migration boom' of the early 1950s in both the FRG and Canada. It investigates where and how many expellees moved within West Germany or to Canada and the motives expellees had to move once again. In addition, this chapter also examines the way expellees lived through this transition and adjustment. How, in particular, did expellees qualify their integration into Canada's and West Germany's labour market and society? Chapter four is entirely devoted to the political mobilization and organization of expellees. In the FRG expellee leaders enjoyed national prominence and headed a wide network of political, professional and socio-cultural organizations which, at their peak, boasted a combined membership of over two million people. As full-time lobbyists and politicians expellee leaders in the FRG soon earned a

reputation as ‘professional expellees’ [*Berufsvertriebene*]. Meanwhile, in Canada expellee leaders headed few and comparatively small organizations scarcely known to the wider Canadian public. Chapter four consequently seeks answers as to why there were only a handful of expellee organizations in a country that increasingly prided itself on its tolerance toward minorities. The final chapter finally details the main argument of this study and elucidates how and what type of national identities expellees negotiated during the course of their settlement in the FRG and Canada. As I have argued above, expellees reproduced elements of the ethnic nationalism that they were imbued with during the first half of the twentieth century. In chapter five I shall thus describe how expellees in both the FRG and Canada generated discourses that allowed them to express their cultural and social heritage into the modern world of prospering industrial societies.

I. 'Stranded Germans'

Images of expellees dropped by the trainload in occupied Germany or lining up on foot, in horse-drawn wagons, trucks and sleds in endless columns and ice-cold weather dominate the discourse on the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. The relevant literature, above all the epic *Documents of the Expulsion* sponsored by the West German government, generally divides the expulsion into three archetypical forms: flight, vigilante expulsions and organized mass transports.¹ The flight, according to this literature, involved the east-west movement of roughly five million Germans who, alarmed by the Nazi portrayal of the Soviets as brutal and gang-raping 'Asiatic' hordes, desperately sought refuge from the rapidly advancing Soviet armies in early 1945. In a war of attrition the German civilian population had been left in the dark about the military situation and thus fled in panic, joining one of the many impromptu treks that headed to safety in the western parts of the Reich overland or across the Baltic Sea. En route, according to the standard narrative, the frail and disabled succumbed to the strains of the trek, strafing Soviet planes or temperatures that plummeted well below freezing point. For the second form of the expulsion, the vigilante deportations or 'wild expulsions,' the narrative focuses on the events and developments in Central and Eastern Europe during the months immediately

¹ Schieder, *Dokumentation*, 5 vols.; Alfred M. de Zayas, *Terrible Revenge: The Ethnic Cleansing of the East European Germans, 1944-1950*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); idem, *Nemesis at Potsdam – The Anglo-Americans and the Expulsions of the Germans: Background, Execution, Consequences* (Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1977); Guido Knopp, *Die grosse Flucht: Das Schicksal der Vertriebenen* (Munich: Econ, 2001); Heinz Nawratil, *Schwarzbuch der Vertreibung 1945 bis 1948: Das letzte Kapitel unbewältigter Vergangenheit*, 4th ed. (Munich: Universitas, 1999); Benz, *Vertreibung*; Günter Bölddeker, *Die Flüchtlinge: Die Vertreibung der Deutschen im Osten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1985).

after the defeat of German troops and Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender in May 1945, when a massive wave of pillages, revenge killings, suicides, rapes and random expulsions swept over the remaining local German population. Tens of thousands of Germans were killed, rounded up, incarcerated or, for about 200,000 of them, deported to forced labour camps in the USSR. This is also when as many as 1.4 million women, or one in five, were raped.² Lastly, for the third form of the expulsion, the narratives generally recount the systematic removal of the remaining German population from Central and Eastern Europe and highlight how trains, mostly cattle cars, shipped brow-beaten Germans to occupied Germany. All in all, this third type of the expulsion involved in 1946 the transfer of 2.2 million Germans from Czechoslovakia and between 1946 and 1948 the movement of well over three million Germans from Poland, the USSR and Hungary. Thereafter, smaller transports continued to arrive in East and West Germany so that, all told, six million people were transferred between 1946 and 1955.³

In contrast to the *Documents on the Expulsion*, which claims to draw a representative picture for "every region, population group, event and destiny,"⁴ this chapter documents a wider spectrum of the expulsion experience. Most expellees affected by the three forms outlined above were women of all ages, children and elderly men. Adult single women and men between the ages of 15 and 60, unless disabled or otherwise discharged,

² Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 1/1, 61E-62E, 140E-150E; Overmans, "Personelle Verluste," 51-65; and Barbara Jahr, "Die Ereignisse in Zahlen," in Helke Sander and Barbara Jahr, eds. *Befreier und Befreite: Krieg, Vergewaltigungen, Kinder* (Munich: Kunstmann, 1992), 46-72.

³ Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 1/1, 136E-151E; Beer, "Die Vertreibung der Deutschen," 24-63; Hans Lemberg and Erik K. Franzen, *Die Vertriebenen: Hitlers letzte Opfer* (Munich: Propylaen, 2001), 108-177.

⁴ Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 1/1, IV.

were systematically conscripted and experienced their 'expulsion' quite differently. Indeed, among the eleven million German men captured by the end of the war and the tens of thousands of women forced into labour camps or deported to the USSR, those that had their homes in Central and Eastern Europe experienced their 'expulsion' generally *in absentia*, scattered in P.O.W. or forced labour camps across Europe, North Africa and North America. In addition, there were also tens of thousands of Germans who became expellees whilst in exile in Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom and elsewhere in Asia, Africa or the Americas. In Canada the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe affected in particular a group of 1,000 exiled German social democrats from Czechoslovakia, who in 1939 were among the few refugees fortunate enough to get past the country's restrictive immigration laws. Most 'German-Czech refugees,' as Canadian officials called them, initially had no intention of staying permanently in their country of exile. However, by 1945 the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia considerably altered their outlook. Well informed by the Allied media, they knew that they were to be transferred to occupied Germany. Moreover, from personal letters they learned about the wave of vindictive violence sweeping across the European continent after the downfall of the Reich. In effect, in exile, the Sudeten-German refugees realized that they, too, had become expellees and therefore made up an integral part of the group of Germans who had lost their homes in Central and Eastern Europe in the aftermath of World War II.

In lieu of the three archetypical forms this chapter therefore looks at the expulsion as an experience that involved various interrelated aspects over a prolonged period of time starting with Nazi Germany's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1930s and ending with the release of the last German prisoners-of-war in the mid-

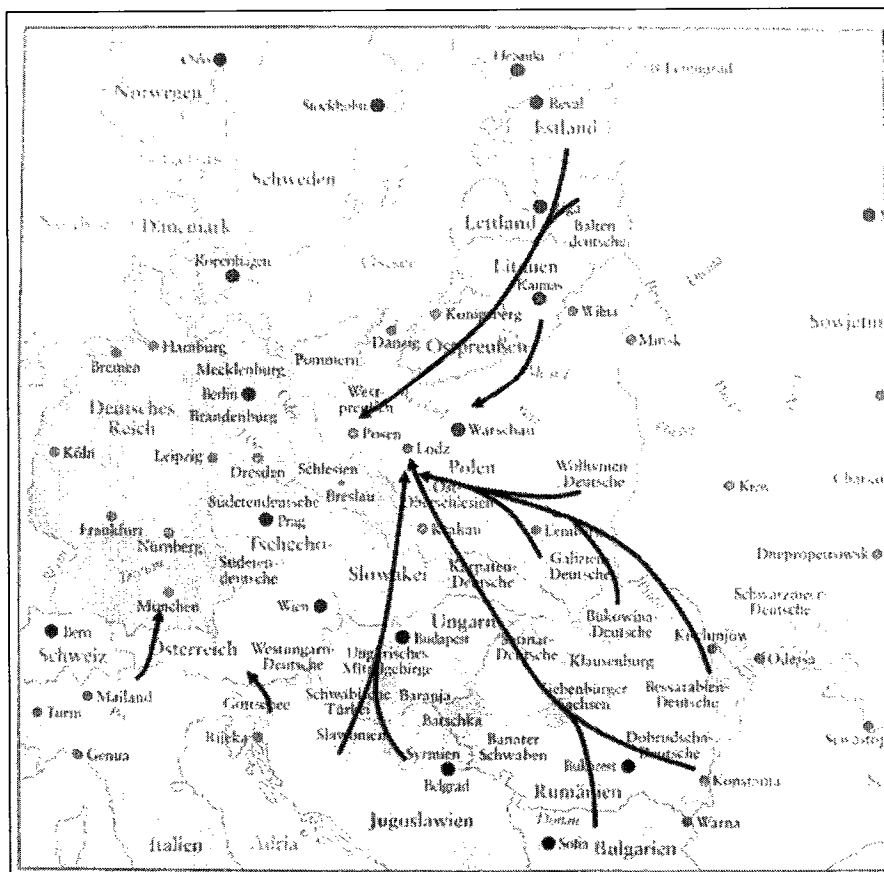
1950s. For both Canada and what became the FRG I discuss these aspects in chronological order according to their main impetus, outlining the groups involved, their size and the migration routes they employed. According to Richmond's model of international migration, there are five factors that generate reactive migrations: a) predisposing causes such as ethno-nationalism, b) precipitating events leading to panic situations such as the outbreak of war, c) enabling circumstances such as transportation or asylum laws, d) structural constraints that limit migration flows such as border controls, and e) the 'system feedback' that is, for example, the international response to reactive migrations.⁵ Each of the aspects discussed below was generated by at least one of these factors. Subsequently, I discuss in each section the initial reception and the first reactions that expellees experienced. How and under what circumstances were they accommodated? Did they realize what was happening to them? Compared to their counterparts in war-torn and defeated Germany, expellees in distant Canada no doubt lived through distinctively different experiences. It is these differences that this chapter seeks to unveil.

⁵ Richmond, *Global*, 59-67.

Inside the Rubble

Among the first expellees to arrive in the territories which in 1949 became the FRG were ethnic Germans from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Between 1939 and 1942 they had been called ‘home into the Reich’ to build up and populate the newly-conquered eastern parts of the ‘Greater German Reich.’ For example, following the partition of Poland in September 1939, Nazi Germany arranged with the Soviet Union to resettle ethnic Germans from Soviet-occupied Galicia or Volhynia to German-occupied Posen (Poznań). Similarly, in October 1939 Hitler and Mussolini agreed to resettle the ethnic German minority of Southern Tyrol in the ‘Greater German Reich.’

Map 1: Resettlement of Ethnic Germans to the Reich (1939-1943)



As the map above shows, other groups came from the Baltic States, Bessarabia (Moldavia),

Dobruja (Romania), Gottschee (Croatia), Serbia and Bosnia. Most of these resettlers, as the Nazis named them, were of peasant background, coming from largely underdeveloped, pre-industrial areas of Europe. As such, the Nazi regime glorified them as a German people presumably tied to the land and apt to colonize the newly-acquired German 'living space.'⁶

Among them were also ethnic Germans from the Baltics, one of the two groups which this study focuses on. Unlike most other resettlers, they were generally of middle and upper-class background, having held political and economic power in the Baltics until the disintegration of the Russian Empire. However, after World War I, Estonia and Latvia's newly independent governments expropriated the German-Baltic landed gentry or reduced them to small-holding farmers. In addition, although German Balts were granted considerable cultural autonomy allowing, for example, for German-language education, Estonia and Latvia actively pursued a policy of assimilation. As a result, lacking political clout and economic opportunities, a sizable number of German Balts moved to Germany during the interwar years.⁷ In 1939, when the Baltic States came under the sphere of influence of the USSR following Poland's partition between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, virtually all German Balts felt that the threat from communism dictated the option

⁶ For a detailed map on the origins of resettlers and Germans in Central and Eastern Europe in general, see Appendix I, p. 322. On resettlers, see Mathias Beer, "Die Vertreibung der Deutschen," 25-28; Markus Leniger, *Nationalsozialistische ,Volkstumsarbeit' und Umsiedlungspolitik 1933-1945: Von der Minderheitenbetreuung zur Siedlerauslese* (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2006); Wilhelm Fielitz, *Das Stereotyp des Wolhyniendeutschen Umsiedlers: Popularisierungen zwischen Sprachinselforschung und nationalsozialistischer Propaganda* (Marburg: N.G. Elwert Verlag, 2000); Doris L. Bergen, "Tenuousness and Tenacity: The Volksdeutschen of Eastern Europe, World War II and the Holocaust," in Krista O'Donnell, Nancy Reagan and Renate Bridenthal, eds. *Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 267-286.

⁷ Walter Ziegler, ed., *Die Vertriebenen vor der Vertreibung: Die Heimatländer der deutschen Vertriebenen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert - Strukturen, Entwicklungen, Erfahrung*, vol. 2 (Munich: Iudicum, 1999), 952-970.

to move 'home into the Reich.' As one German Balt wrote in his memoirs, "Hitler called, Stalin pushed."⁸ Consequently, virtually all of the German Balts left the Baltics: 23,000 from Estonia and 50,000 from Latvia.⁹

All in all, around one million ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe relocated to the Reich. Most were resettled in occupied Poland, especially in the newly incorporated German province of Posen and the Warthegau, where they frequently occupied fully furnished homes and estates of deported Poles and Jews. Indeed, the resettlement of ethnic Germans went hand in hand with the Holocaust and Nazi Germany's attempt at redrawing Europe's ethnic and racial map.¹⁰ While ethnic Germans moved into the Reich, Nazi Germany expelled the local Polish population eastwards to the remaining parts of occupied Poland, notably the so-called *Generalgouvernement*. Similarly, where ethnic Germans moved in, Jews were first dispossessed and deported to the ghettos of Lodz or Warsaw. Not surprisingly, many resettlers found therefore favourable economic conditions, not least among the German-Baltic gentry who often obtained large estates.¹¹ However, not every ethnic German who came to the Reich found a new home. Those who failed to fully demonstrate their German racial and ethnic background, remained in camps and were shifted around according to the whims of a complex bureaucracy set up by the SS. Although the criteria kept changing, some resettlers were considered to be inferior

⁸ Hans von Riekhoff, *Memoirs from my Life*, n.d., 2, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

⁹ Lars Bosse, "Vom Baltikum in den Reichsgau Wartheland," in Michael Garleff, ed. *Deutschbalten, Weimarer Republik und Drittes Reich*, vol. 1 (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001), 297-387; Ziegler, *Die Vertriebenen*, vol. 2, 993-998 ;

¹⁰ Götz Aly, *'Endlösung: 'Völkerverschiebung und der Mord an den europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1995) 20-21; Christopher R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (London: William Heinemann, 2004), 36-110.

¹¹ Bosse, "Vom Baltikum," 297-387.

Germans, whilst others were deemed capable of assimilating. Ethnic Germans from Lithuania, for example, were first settled in occupied Poland and later moved back to Lithuania. In effect, by late 1942 131,000 resettlers still lived in camps, waiting for their final settlement.¹² Meanwhile, in view of the deteriorating military situation the SS increasingly moved the resettlers to the western parts of the Reich. For example, in mid-1943 the SS moved a group of ethnic Germans from Bosnia to the former concentration camp in Wewelsburg, Westphalia, where they remained until after the end of the hostilities and became expellees.¹³ Thus, for resettlers like these ethnic Germans from Bosnia, the experience of the expulsion consisted of a broken promise of resettlement, demeaning categorizations and shifts from camp to camp until they were unable to return home.

Around the same time in mid-1943 the first ethnic German expellees from Russia and the Ukraine arrived in the western parts of the Reich following the retreat of the German armies on the eastern front. Evacuated by the German army, virtually all of the remaining 350,000 ethnic German settlers, who were left in Russia and the Ukraine after the Soviet retreat in mid-1941, headed to safety in occupied Poland.¹⁴ While most were accommodated in local camps, especially near Lodz, a small number of these evacuees moved further west to the homes of relatives and acquaintances where, eventually, they were left stranded, unable and unwilling to return home after the end of the war.¹⁵

¹² Vladis O. Lumans, *Himmler's Auxiliaries: The Volksdeutsche and the German National Minority of Europe, 1935-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1993), 151-204.

¹³ Andreas Lüttig, *Fremde im Dorf: Flüchtlingsintegration im westfälischen Wewelsburg, 1945-1958* (Essen: Klartext, 1993).

¹⁴ Note that nearly two thirds of the ethnic German population in Ukraine and Russia were deported to Siberia and (Soviet) Kazakhstan months before Nazi Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union. Otto J. Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing in the USSR, 1937-1949* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999), 47.

¹⁵ Interview Peter Epp, 4 August 1981, Multicultural History Society of Ontario (MHSO), Mennonite Collection.

Similarly, in the wake of the Soviet advance, the German army in the fall of 1944 evacuated German settlers from Transylvania (Romania), Carpathia (Slovakia) and parts of the Danube-Swabian settlements which after World War I were divided between Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia. Although most of the local ethnic German population stayed behind, some 200,000 individuals fled with the German army in regular treks, including local Nazi ‘bigwigs’ and others who feared reprisals by the Slovak, Hungarian or Romanian population. A good many of these ethnic Germans came to Bavaria and Franconia and thus lived an expulsion experience that was primarily shaped by their evacuation.¹⁶ By mid-1944 the German army also evacuated Danube-Swabian settlers from the historic regions of the Banat, Batschka, Slavonia, and Sylvania in Yugoslavia. As a measure of protection from Yugoslav partisans, these Danube-Swabian evacuees were moved to Austria, the ‘Sudetenland’ and Silesia, where they were accommodated in camps. By the time the German army left, less than half of Yugoslavia’s 500,000 ethnic Germans remained in the country.¹⁷ However, these Danube-Swabians either remained stranded in Austria, where they numbered 140,000 by 1952,¹⁸ or, like other small groups of ethnic Germans in eastern Poland and elsewhere who were evacuated in 1944, continued their journey in the subsequent months.

Indeed, as of mid-January 1945, following the breakthrough of the Soviet armies on the eastern front, Germans residing in the eastern parts of the Reich and occupied Poland fled en masse westward to safety. Among them were local residents, resettlers and evacuees. Without cars or carriages they boarded trains and arrived within days in the

¹⁶ Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 2, 32E-37E; vol. 3, 75E; and vol. 4/1, 173.

¹⁷ Beer, “Umsiedlung,” 179.

¹⁸ Tony Radspieler, *The Ethnic German Refugee in Austria, 1945 to 1954* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 9.

western parts of the Reich, although often only with the little they could carry.¹⁹ Those that left from Memel (Klaipėda), Königsberg/Pillau (Kaliningrad/Baltiysk) or Danzig (Gdansk) across the sea to Kiel, Flensburg or Lübeck likewise only had a relatively short trip and similarly were unable to carry substantial baggage.²⁰ By contrast, for the mass of locals, resettlers and evacuees, who had no access to motorized mass transportation, treks were the only means to escape the Soviet armies. They correspondingly took longer to get to the western parts of the Reich, if they ever did. The residents of Warthbrücken (Kolo, central Poland), for example, took five weeks to move roughly 800 km west and reach the area of Lüchow/Dannenberg, Lower Saxony, while the residents of Schroda (Środa, central Poland) took six weeks to move some 600 km west and get to the area of Schaumburg-Lippe, Lower Saxony.²¹ Yet, despite the lengthy journey, the latter retained a decisive advantage in that they were capable of transporting a substantial amount of goods on handcarts, horse-drawn wagons, cars or trucks. To locals in the western parts of the Reich, especially in heavily destroyed towns and cities, treks could seem like mobile shelters replete with valuable goods and foodstuff. One expellee, for example, distinctly remembered his arrival in Oldenburg, Lower Saxony, in March 1945. As he noted in his memoirs: “The wagon with four horses in tandem [...] created quite a stir. Everybody wanted to help [but] we needed none. We did not want to advertise our load of saved

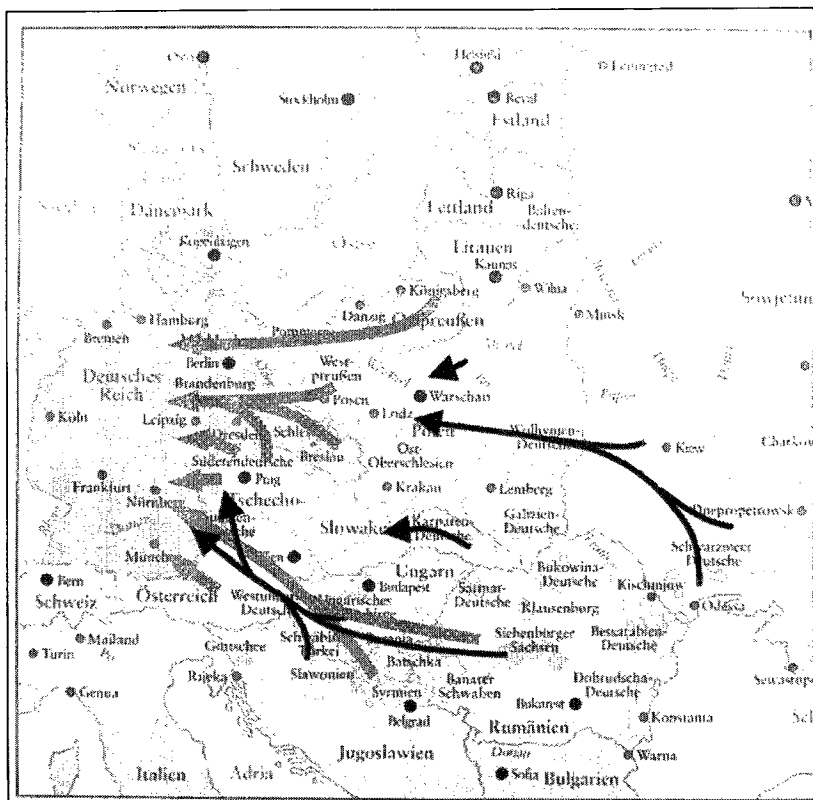
¹⁹ L. Z., *Aus meinem Leben*, 43, Institut für Geschichte und Biographie (IGB), Kempowski.

²⁰ Interview E. and A. F., 18 March 1987, IGB, Wustrow; Gräfin Eva Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann, was will, soll wollen, was er kann: Niederschrift von fast 90 Jahren eines ungewöhnlichen Lebens, 1903-1990* (New York: Legas, 1992), 48.

²¹ Interview A. W., n.d.; Interview K. W., September 1989, IGB, Wustrow; Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 63, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

foodstuff such as a barrel of salted pork, boxes with rolled oats, sacks of flour and peas and jars of canned goods.’²²

Map 2: Evacuation and Flight Movements



← Evacuations 1943/44 ← Flight 1944 and thereafter

In any event, for an untold number of Germans the move to safety was far from straightforward and depended on the movement of the front, the whims and fancies of officials and/or personal decisions. Some arrived at the homes of friends and relatives independently or got to locations where family members were stationed or convalescing.²³

²² Roland von Stackelberg, *Memoirs*, n.d., 35, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.
²³ L.Z., *Aus meinem Leben*, 54-56, IGB, Kempowski; Roland von Stackelberg, *Memoirs*, n.d., 32, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton; Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 41-43, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London; Hildegard von Blanckenburg, *Flucht aus Pommern und Neubeginn* (Göttingen: Selbst, 1983), 4-5; Interview F. R., 8 August 1989, IGB, Wustrow.

One German Balt, for his part, thought it best to head to the small estate in Bavaria that he had bought in 1943 in anticipation of a possible flight.²⁴ The move westward could also involve complicated itineraries as in the case of a young woman who first trekked from central Poland to Dresden before she independently moved to her sister in Vienna and, once the front came close to the Austrian capital, escaped by train half-way to Munich only to be attacked by American airplanes and end her journey on foot in a Bavarian village near Kaufbeuren, where some friends of her parents lived.²⁵ Similarly, a young boy and his mother found themselves first on a trek from East Prussia to Saxony, each pulling a handcart that they had prepared in advance. Soon they continued their journey to the ‘Sudetenland,’ Bavaria and, finally, Thuringia. En route, while running into army units and death marches of Jewish concentration camp inmates, they generally did not know where they would spend the night, let alone where they would eventually end up.²⁶

Nazi Germany’s collapse greatly multiplied this type of haphazard journey to the western parts of the Reich. One expellee noted in his memoirs that “forests and country roads [were] literally swarmed with people who moved in every direction north, east, south, west, following unofficial signposts that indicated nearby destinations and checkpoints.”²⁷ Expellees, if they could, travelled by train, horse carriage or on foot to the homes of relatives and acquaintances where they hoped to be able to stay or, simply, find out about the whereabouts of family members. Unaware of Allied plans for post-war Europe, expellees also attempted to move back east to their homeland. Until the end of June 1945,

²⁴ Baron Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegé, *Lebenslauf*, Bundesarchiv Koblenz (BaKo), Nachlass Baron Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegé, N 1157, vol. 9.

²⁵ Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 24-26, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

²⁶ H. G., *Aufzeichnungen*, n.d., 5-27, IGB, Kempowski.

²⁷ Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 98, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

for example, when Polish authorities closed off the border, 300,000 to 400,000 Germans are estimated to have gone back to their homes in the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers.²⁸ This included not only civilians who had fled from the Soviet armies, but also former concentration camp inmates and released prisoners-of-war. They had little clue about the planned population transfers and thus endeavoured to see for themselves what was happening in the homeland. Such was the case of a young man from Bohemia who later became a renowned historian in the FRG. In August 1945, he was released from detention in northern Germany and subsequently made his way independently to Czechoslovakia where he learnt about the planned transfers of the ethnic German population to occupied Germany.²⁹ For many, the flight to the western part of the crumbling Reich seemed to be a temporary measure of evacuation. One youngster captured this conviction quite well, recalling over forty years after the flight what the “general mood on the trek” had been: “Everybody thought that we were only leaving the villages for a few weeks in order to evacuate the war zone. Over the Oder River, so everybody said, the Russians will never make it.”³⁰

After Germany’s surrender Germans from Eastern and Central Europe fled to the western occupation zones along two main axes. Firstly, they came straight westward from Poland and the Soviet occupation zone to Lower Saxony, Hesse and Bavaria, fearing

²⁸ Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 1/1, 61E.

²⁹ Friedrich Prinz, *Szenenwechsel: Eine Jugend in Boehmen und Bayern* (Munich: Beck, 1995), 53-65.

³⁰ Interview K. W., September 1988, IGB, Wustrow. Similarly Interview A. W., n.d., *ibid.*; Eric von Harpe, *The Story of my Life*, n.d., 88-89, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London; Olga Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg: Eine Biographie* (Blieskaster: private publication, n.d.), 76.

Polish or Soviet reprisals.³¹ Overtaken in early 1945 by the rapidly advancing Soviet armies, they essentially continued their move westward. A case in point were Germans from Central and Eastern Europe, who continued their flight, when in July 1945 the British and U.S. occupation authorities handed over control of Thuringia and parts of Saxony and Mecklenburg to the Soviet Army. When the changeover was announced, countless expellees and locals fled further west to Lower Saxony, Hesse and Bavaria.³² All told, between 1945 and 1961, when the Berlin Wall brought the migration flow to an end, three million Germans moved west across the ‘German-German’ border. Among them were a disproportionate number of expellees, namely one million expellee men, women and children.³³ However, expellees increasingly arrived in the western occupation zones less out of fear of the Soviet authorities and more often because of the political and economic limitations imposed by the Soviet regime and the later GDR. By 1948, the American, British and French occupation zones gradually offered better economic opportunities and thus attracted expellees.³⁴ In addition, the newly founded FRG immediately drew expellees as a result of benefits put into place to reimburse specifically those who had lost property in

³¹ Interview Frau S., 21 September 1981; Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir.

³² Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Esther Dietrich, *Schicksal einer deutsch-baltischen Familie*, n.d., 7-9; and Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 101, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London; Eleonore Andres, *My Life: Life on Two Continents* (Agassiz: private publication, 1994), 79-81.

³³ Heidemeyer, “Vertriebene,” 237-249; also idem, *Flucht und Zuwanderung aus der SBZ/DDR 1945-1961: Die Flüchtlingspolitik bis zum Bau der Mauer* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994); and Volker Ackermann, *Der ‚echte‘ Flüchtling: Deutsche Vertriebene und Flüchtlinge aus der DRR, 1945-1961* (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 1995).

³⁴ Interview Adolf Fischer, 16 November 1977; and Interview Frederike Kuprath, 21 February 1981, MHSO, German Collection.

the wake of the expulsion.³⁵

Secondly, from Austria, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and particularly Czechoslovakia expellees arrived mostly in Bavaria and Württemberg. Most of Czechoslovakia had remained under German control until the end of the war and thus had offered a refuge to countless Germans from Silesia and occupied Poland who fled the rapidly advancing Soviet armies. Within days of the German surrender, Czech militias and regular troops chased away these refugees and some of the local German residents. They headed pell-mell to the adjacent American occupation zone, often lost somewhere in Bavarian towns and villages just across the border to Czechoslovakia. As one expellee, who arrived days after the German surrender in the Bavarian town of Straubing, some 60 km away from the Czech border, put it, “we stood there helpless with our buggy, children and baggage and did not know where to go or in which direction we should head. The GIs looked at us with quite some surprise and eagerly took pictures of our miserable lot.”³⁶ However, the difficult living conditions for Germans in Central and Eastern European countries also led Germans to leave their homes on their own accord. A combination of violence, internment, forced labour, the expropriation of German residents and their public stigmatization – the wearing of white armbands, for example – prompted the departure of Germans from Czechoslovakia.³⁷ Similarly, a Danube-Swabian woman left her village in Romania in late 1946 for quite similar reasons and arrived three months later after an

³⁵ The extent to which expellees moved from the GDR to the FRG to obtain compensation remains unclear. However, during the 1950s the average age of expellees moving west was higher than for local residents of the GDR, suggesting, for example, that they were more likely to have owned property before 1945. See Heidemeyer, “Vertriebene als Sowjetflüchtlinge,” 237-249.

³⁶ E. C., *Erinnerungen aus dem Tagebuch*, 10, IGB, Kempowski.

³⁷ Gudrun Pausewang, *Wie es den Leuten von der Ronsinkawiese nach dem Krieg erging* (Frankfurt a.M.: Eichborn, 1996), 76-91.

adventurous flight across Hungary and Austria in Bavaria, where her brother had been released from American captivity.³⁸ Another Danube-Swabian woman managed to escape Yugoslavia's particularly brutal handling of Germans in internment camps, arriving on her own in Bavaria via Romania, Hungary and Austria without valid personal papers.³⁹

Besides the mass of German civilians, who, in one way or another, fled to the western occupation zones, an equally large number of conscripted German men and women from Central and Eastern Europe found themselves stranded in the western occupation zones following their release from service or internment. In mid-January 1945, for instance, one expellee woman moved with her unit from occupied Poland to the vicinity of Berlin, in mid-April to Czechoslovakia and in early May, finally, to Bavaria. Only then, on the day of the unconditional surrender, was she discharged by German officers and left to her own devices.⁴⁰ Other women from the eastern parts of the Reich, who were called up as secretaries, nurses or switchboard operators, found themselves captured by Soviet forces and after several years of forced labour released from detention to occupied Germany.⁴¹ Conscripted men, unless they went into hiding for fear of persecution, and some surely did,⁴² generally were prisoners-of-war by the time they realized that Germans were being expelled from Central and Eastern Europe. Loosely confined in ad-hoc P.O.W. camps, countless German soldiers captured in the last days of the war in Schleswig-Holstein or

³⁸ Interview Lucy Amberg, 22 March 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

³⁹ Interview Elisabeth Knipl, 26 April 1979, *ibid.* Similarly Interview Mary Telipassa, 28 May 1979, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Margarete von Budberg, *Reisetagebuch*, 13 April to 9 June 1945, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton; see also the experiences of an expellee from Serbia who, unlike the vast majority, was even flown to safety during the course of her retreat to Lower Saxony, see Interview Mary Telipassa, 28 May 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

⁴¹ G. P., *Erlebnisse in den Jahren zwischen Herbst 1944 und Frühjahr 1948*, 37-44, IGB, Kempowski.

⁴² Harry Siegismund, *Rückblick: Erinnerungen eines Staatsdieners in bewegter Zeit* (Raisdorf: Ostseeverlag, 1999), 365-382.

Bavaria heard about the expulsion by word-of-mouth around camp fires or on the farms where they were lodged.⁴³ In regular P.O.W. camps across Europe and North America or in the forced labour camps of the USSR, expellees learned about the expulsion and the population transfers by listening to Allied airwaves or reading the Allied press, informal camp newssheets and letters from relatives and friends sent through the channels of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). One German officer, for example, who secretly kept a diary, painstakingly collecting pencil stubs and scraps of paper, poignantly captured the way he and thousands of others tried to make sense about the future of their homelands, while interned in a British P.O.W. camp on the beaches of the Adriatic Sea. As he noted in his diary, internees regularly met at “mutual homeland meetings” and progressively formed opinions about the fate of their hometowns or villages by exchanging information they had gathered from the camp loudspeakers, personal Red Cross cards and, in one case, from a thirteen-year-old boy, who arrived to join his father in the P.O.W. camp, coming all the way from Silesia, some 1,500 km away from the camp, with detailed news about the exodus taking place in the homeland.⁴⁴

Released from internment, especially in the months after the final surrender, when British and American occupation authorities discharged German prisoners-of-war in droves, Germans from Central and Eastern Europe often had no idea where to go. Some walked through the exit gates of the camps only to move to nearby villages and towns in

⁴³ Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir; Siegfried Bartel, *Remembrances: Living with Conviction* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1994), 59-60.

⁴⁴ Jürgen and Martha von Rosen, *A Baltic Odyssey: War and Survival* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1995), 191-193. On information about the expulsions during internment, see also Erik von Harpe, *The Story of my Life*, n.d., 74-75, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

the hopes of finding shelter.⁴⁵ Others did not even move and stayed on the farms where they had been placed during their internment, release papers in hand.⁴⁶ To join family members left stranded in occupied Germany, released expellee P.O.W.s widely used finding services provided by the Red Cross, church organizations and homeland groups. However, for fear of reprisals or, simply, personal anticommunist convictions, expellees, who had been captured by British or American troops, also purposefully arranged for their release in the three western occupation zones and later brought their families over from the Soviet occupation zone and elsewhere.⁴⁷ Former citizens of the USSR, who were in British or American internment, made up fake identities in order to be released in the three western occupation zones and avoid repatriation as requested by the Soviet Union. They feared Stalin's uncompromising attitude toward returning Soviet citizens of German descent, who were commonly suspected of treason and condemned to forced labour.⁴⁸ However, while most of the German prisoners-of-war in British, French and U.S. captivity were released by the end of 1947, those that ended up in Soviet internment either died or remained in captivity for an extended period. Roughly a third of the 2.1 million German P.O.W.s in Soviet captivity died. Among the survivors, most served five to ten years internment after

⁴⁵ Horst Duberg, *Der Junge aus der Altstadt [Danzigs]* (Frankfurt a.M.: private publication, 1993), 293.

⁴⁶ Interview F. K. and wife, November 1985; and Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir; Bartel, *Remembrances*, 59-60.

⁴⁷ Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978; Interview Matthias Brandt, 7 December 1977, MHSO, German Collection; Georg Basch, *Erinnerungen eines Donauschwabens* (Seisheim: Hartmann, 1989), 84.

⁴⁸ Interview Henry Driedger, 9 July 1979, MHSO, Mennonite Collection; Jacob P. Regehr, *My Life Story: Memoir of a Happy New Canadian* (Ottawa: private publication, 1999), 58; and Mueller, *A Life Between Stalin and Hitler: New Beginning in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Nanaimo: Loonbook, 2000), 107-109. Following Allied agreements, between May and December 1945, British and U.S. military authorities 'repatriated' 2.2 million Soviet citizens, among them 203,706 Germans, who were sent to 'special settlements' in Siberia and Kazakhstan and mostly died. See Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing*, 47.

being tried for war crimes. In effect, the last German P.O.W.s to return from Soviet captivity arrived in the FRG in 1955/56. They numbered 35,000 and included combatants captured after the battle of Stalingrad in February 1943.⁴⁹

As of late fall 1945, finally, the remaining civilian German population in Central and Eastern Europe arrived in the western occupation zones, shipped by the trainload in accordance with the Potsdam Agreements. In November 1945, the Allied Control Council, the highest governing authority in occupied Germany, set a distribution key according to occupation zones and their proximity of the countries of origin. According to this key, 2.75 million expellees from Czechoslovakia and mostly Poland were to go to the Soviet Occupation zones, 1.5 million expellees from Poland to the British occupation zone, 2.25 million expellees from Hungary, Austria and mostly Czechoslovakia to the American occupation zone and, lastly, 150,000 expellees from Czechoslovakia and Hungary to the French occupation zone.⁵⁰ The transfers, mostly by train, immediately started and rapidly brought expellees to occupied Germany. Data from Bavaria, which came under American occupation, illustrate well the magnitude and speed of the transfers. From January 1, 1946, to November 1, 1946, a total of 725 railway transports transferred 752,646 Germans from Czechoslovakia to Bavaria, which amounted to an average of two

⁴⁹ Günter Bischof, Stefan Karner and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, eds., *Kriegsgefangene des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Gefangennahme, Lagerleben, Rückkehr* (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2005); Andreas Hilger, *Deutsche Kriegsgefangenschaft in der Sowjetunion 1941-1956: Kriegsgefangenenpolitik, Lageralltag und Erinnerung* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 2000); Rüdiger Overmans, *Soldaten hinter Stacheldraht: Deutsche Kriegsgefangene des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Augsburg: Bechtermünz, 2002); Arthur L. Smith, *Heimkehr aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg: Die Entlassung Der Deutschen Kriegsgefangenen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1985).

⁵⁰ As non-signatory to the Potsdam Agreements the French occupation authority refused at first to accept any transport. For the numbers, see Wolfgang Benz, "Fünfzig Jahre nach der Vertreibung," in Benz, *Vertreibung*, 10.

train transports per day with each carrying approximately 1,250 people.⁵¹ Expellees themselves had no idea where they would eventually land. They were moved under the auspices of Allied forces and dropped somewhere in occupied Germany. Prior to the departure, one expellee, who asked about the destination, was mockingly told that: “*früher Deutschland über alles – jetzt alles über Deutschland* [in the past Germany over everything – now everything over Germany].”⁵² Notices for the transports were short and precise information scarce. However, expellees gradually realized that they were being moved out of the country, especially when they witnessed Germans from nearby villages being moved away.⁵³ Once on board of the trains, they were often relieved to leave the difficult living conditions under the Soviet, Polish or Czechoslovak authorities.⁵⁴ En route in cattle cars they travelled for five or six days, left literally in the dark and often unable to lie down for lack of space. For the journey they were allowed to bring along a week’s worth of food supplies, some small cash and, depending on the point and time of departure, between 30 to 70 kg, although regular ‘checks’ also ensured that expellees frequently lost their last valuable items – wedding rings, sweaters or linens – to the staff on patrol.⁵⁵ How much baggage one actually brought along also depended on one’s circumstances prior to the transfer. An expellee, who had been chased from his or her home and forced to work in labour camps, generally carried less baggage than expellees who were transferred to occupied Germany straight from their homes. That is, at least, what one expellee from Breslau (Wroclaw) observed. Apparently, after her aborted flight in early 1945, she had only two suitcases left, whereas the local German population of nearby Waldenburg

⁵¹ As quoted in Beer, “Die Vertreibung der Deutschen,” 49.

⁵² E. C., *Erinnerungen aus dem Tagebuch*, 9, IGB, Kempowski.

⁵³ Interview H. J.-S., September 1987, IGB, Nachkriegseliten.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*; Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 1/1, 139E.

⁵⁵ Interview H. R., November 1987, IGB, Wustrow.

(Walbrzych), where she had been forced to work for a year after the collapse of the Nazi regime, brought along household goods, pillows and bedcovers that she, by contrast, had been unable to pack and carry.⁵⁶

Of quite a different order were the 'special transports' of German antifascists from Czechoslovakia to the American and the Soviet occupation zones. Indeed, during the course of 1945/6 around 130,000 German antifascists departed from their native Czechoslovakia complete with their families, furniture and liquid assets. 50,000 of the German antifascists, mostly communists, went to the Soviet occupation zone and 80,000, mostly social democrats and former member of the German Socialist Workers' Party of Czechoslovakia (DSAP), relocated to the American occupation zone, chiefly to Bavaria (76 percent) but also Hesse (20 percent) and Baden-Württemberg (4 percent).⁵⁷ They had done so in view of the difficult living conditions they were exposed to in post-war Czechoslovakia. Although officially exempted from reprisals, many German antifascists were disenfranchised and chased from their homes like the rest of the German population.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Interview H. R., November 1987, IGB, Wustrow; similarly also Interview H. J.-H., September 1987, IGB, Nachkriegseliten; Interview H. R., November 1987, IGB, Wustrow; Mathilde Marzinko, *Erinnerungen* (Mannheim: private publication, 2000), 27.

⁵⁷ Roman Wirkner, *Das letzte Aufgebot in der Heimat 'Aktion Ullmann': Eine Dokumentation zur Geschichte des Sudetensozialismus*, n.d., 3, Archiv der Seliger-Gemeinde im Archiv der sozialen Demokratie (ASG), Nachlass Roman Wirkner, 4/SER file 57. Parts of Wirkner's account are also published in Schieder, *Dokumentation*, vol. 4/1, document 117 and 118, 518-522 and 522-529. For the transports to the American zone, see also Hans-Werner Martin, *...nicht spurlos aus der Geschichte verschwinden: Wenzel Jaksch und die Integration der sudetendeutschen Sozialdemokraten in die SPD nach dem II. Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1996), 39-54; and for the resettlement to the Soviet occupation zone, see especially Heike van Horn, *Neue Heimat im Sozialismus: Die Umsiedlung sudetendeutscher 'Antifa'-Umsiedler in der SBZ/DDR* (Essen: Klartext, 2003).

⁵⁸ Andreas Wiedemann, *'Komm mit uns, das Grenzland aufbauen: Ansiedlung und neue Strukturen in den ehemaligen Sudetengebieten 1945-1952*, Ph.D. Thesis Heinrich-Heine University of Düsseldorf 2004, 34-71; *Unbekannte Schicksale: Internationales Seminar in Liberec (Reichenberg)* (Prague: Prago Media News, 1999); and Martin, *...nicht spurlos*, 35-116.

As a result, a group of local German socialists, liberated months before from Dachau concentration camp, successfully led negotiations with Czech and Allied authorities and obtained the relocation of German antifascists to occupied Germany under quite favourable conditions, especially when compared to the mass transfers of ordinary Sudeten Germans. Unlike the latter, German antifascists were allowed to move to places ferreted out by one of their representatives so that they knew the destinations they would go to beforehand. American occupation officials also authorized the establishment of a central co-ordination bureau in Munich overseeing the transportation and reception of antifascists to the zone.⁵⁹ Moreover, compared to the general transfers of expellees to occupied Germany, the transports for antifascists benefited from substantially higher levels of comfort and freightage. “Special rail transport 13565” is a case in point, for it moved 34 antifascists from the Bohemian town of Schluckenau (Šluknov) to Böblingen, Baden-Württemberg, with one coach and five freight cars.⁶⁰ Antifascists thus no doubt had it better than the mass of expellees who, packed in freight trains like sardines, suffered terrible journeys on their way to occupied Germany.

On arrival in the three western occupation zones German authorities accommodated the expellee masses primarily in rural areas that had remained unscathed from the war. Heavy Allied bombardments had destroyed supply lines and most German cities. During the war, around six million urban residents had been evacuated to rural

⁵⁹ Emil Werner, “In München liefen die Fäden zusammen,” *Sudeten-Jahrbuch* (1976), 52-54.

⁶⁰ Lagebericht, Ullmann Transport 13565, 10 December 1946, ASG, Nachlass Hasenoehrl, 4/SEAH 191.

areas, including one million from Berlin alone.⁶¹ After the war, city councils strictly controlled the influx of residents so that even evacuated residents found it difficult to move back.⁶² Left with no other choice and pressured by Allied occupation authorities, local German authorities therefore directed expellees to camps and private homes in rural areas.⁶³ When the first treks arrived in early 1945 expellees were generally first put up in makeshift camps until they were placed in private homes. Afterwards, during the mass transfer of 1946 and 1947, expellees were typically dropped off at the train station, registered and, if basic medical facilities were available, checked for contagious diseases, deloused and finally assigned to camps or private homes either within the surrounding area or in nearby villages. The rail network permitting, trains were often moved around so that cars could be detached from village to village. No welcome ceremony and brass bands awaited expellees on arrival in marked contrast to the much celebrated reception of the resettlers who came 'home into Reich' in 1940 or 1941. The mood was far more sombre. In early 1945 the mass arrival of expellees in more remote areas of the western parts of the Reich baffled

⁶¹ Michael Krause, *Flucht vor dem Bombenkrieg: "Umquartierungen" im Zweiten Weltkrieg und die Wiedereingliederung der Evakuierten in Deutschland, 1943 - 1963* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997), 33.

⁶² Interview G. S., June and November 1988, IGB, Nachkriegseliten. On the difficulties for obtaining residence permits, see also Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Luser.

⁶³ American occupation officials expected, for example, local German authorities to "do it" as quickly as possible. In terms of accommodating expellees American, British and French policies differed little and basically left local German authorities in charge of it. See Sylvia Schraut, "'Make the Germans do it': Die Flüchtlingsaufnahme in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone," in Sylvia Schraut and Thomas Grosser, eds. *Die Flüchtlingsfrage in der deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaft* (Mannheim: Palatium, 1996), 119-140; for the French occupation zone, in the same volume Andrea Kühne, "Abschottung oder Assimilation: Die Flüchtlingspolitik in der Französischen Zone am Beispiel Württemberg-Hohenzollerns," in *ibid.*, 193-215; for the British occupation zone Hans Ake Persson, *Rhetorik und Realpolitik: Grossbritannien, die Oder-Neisse Grenze und die Vertreibung der Deutschen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 2nd ed. (Potsdam: Berlin-Verlag Spitz, 2001).

local villagers who were unaware of Nazi Germany's imminent downfall. Locals were then still taken aback by the desolation and misery expellees visibly exhibited. Later on, locals became weary of the constant and increasing influx of expellees and resented their presence.⁶⁴ Arriving in mid-1946 from Poland to a small village in Lower Saxony, one middle-aged woman, for example, waited several hours on the market square until a local official came and gave her and her fellow travellers scraps of paper, indicating the addresses of their hosts. Then she struggled to find the farm and, once there, saw the faces of her hosts falling.⁶⁵ Yet, expellees were not always left waiting on the village squares. Farmers in need of labourers regularly recruited their workforce among expellees in order to fill the gap left by the departure of forced labourers or P.O.W.s.

The numerous camps left behind by Nazi Germany's demise were an obvious first choice to quickly provide lodgings for the thousands of homeless expellees who arrived every day desperate to find some form of shelter. Former concentration camps and the barracks of ammunition plants, mining companies and other large-scale industries where foreign labourers and prisoners-of-war had been forced to stay, were swiftly revamped and turned into mass shelters for expellees.⁶⁶ Former army barracks equipped with bunk beds, furnaces, common tables and outdoor washrooms likewise provided readily available mass shelters,⁶⁷ unless they were confiscated by Allied forces and used to accommodate Allied army staff and personnel. Still, the camps did not suffice and led German authorities to set up ad-hoc facilities in community halls, hangars, schools, barns and church halls in towns and villages that still possessed the necessary infrastructure to

⁶⁴ On these resentments, see in particular chapter V.

⁶⁵ Interview H. R., November 1987, IGB, Wustrow.

⁶⁶ Interview A. H., 28 August 1988, IGB, Nachkriegseliten.

⁶⁷ Interview H. E., 10 October 1991, IGB, Dasa; G. M., *Ein gottgeführter Weg*, 27-31, IGB, Kempowski.

receive large numbers of expellees. As one might expect, living conditions and amenities in such ad-hoc facilities were quite basic. A few hanging sheets often separated families from one another and provided a minimum amount of privacy. Furniture, not to mention kitchen facilities, scarcely existed and in lieu of washrooms other basic sanitary installations had to do. The stay at such a mass shelter remained for most expellees a lifelong memory, as it did for one young man from Gdansk, who had been released from captivity in Schleswig-Holstein and had nowhere to go. He ended up staying at a dance hall, occupied mostly by members of a trek from central Poland. Along the walls, all the spaces were apparently taken, subdivided into small quarters with the help of hanging blankets. All there was left for him was a small space in the middle of the hall in full view of all the residents. As he noted in his memoirs, he hardly slept.⁶⁸

Beyond the camps, German authorities located every square meter of inhabitable living space in private homes and requisitioned rooms even against the proprietor's will in order to accommodate expellees. The rooms in which expellees were put up were usually far too small to host expellee families. In an extreme case a family of five had to get by with a floor space of five by three meters.⁶⁹ Amenities in the rooms were basic and typically consisted of little more than the most necessary household items such as tables, chairs and pliable camp beds that expellees obtained from charitable organizations, friendly homeowners or the remains of ruined buildings. In the antechambers or storage rooms that they typically inhabited, expellees lacked stoves and cooking facilities and thus were dependent on community canteens or the goodwill of their landlords. Similarly, in

⁶⁸ Duberg, *Der Junge*, 295. See also Interview John Werner, 12 May and 19 June 1977; and Interview Anton Pleschinger, 30 November and 14 December 1977, MHSO, German Collection; Erik von Harpe, *The Story of my Life*, n.d., 121, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

⁶⁹ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

this type of accommodation expellees usually lacked adequate heating facilities and struggled to keep warm during cold winter days. Bathrooms, if available at all, were basic and, especially on farms, often outdoors.⁷⁰

German officials largely ignored the professional and cultural backgrounds of expellees in the haste of the population transfers. As a result, expellees felt displaced and far removed from the geographic and social environments they once lived in. Protestant city-dwellers were placed in Bavaria's deeply Catholic communities or, conversely, Catholic peasants in the small Protestant towns of Hesse. White-collar workers found themselves stranded in remote villages with no employment opportunities except for farming. In addition, local German dialects that expellees found hard to understand further exacerbated their feeling of displacement. Local traditions and cultures appeared strange to expellees and did nothing to make them feel at home. This sense of cultural dislocation could include traditions as trivial as greeting forms. After the war, with the Nazi salute gone, regional forms of greetings again prevailed. As one expellee boy, who was used to greeting people in Silesia with *Guten Tag*, noticed, in Bavaria one had to say *Grüss Gott* in order to conform to local customs and avoid mockery. While he rapidly did so, his parents had a hard time adjusting and both felt strongly displaced in Bavaria.⁷¹

For middle and upper-class expellees this displacement came hand in hand with an abrupt feeling of social decline. Former school teachers or civil servants, who had been living in spacious apartments and homes, suddenly had to live with four or five people in the same room. After her flight to Schleswig-Holstein, one expellee, for example, who had

⁷⁰ Interview H. R., November 1987; and Interview E. M., 6 February 1987, IGB, Wustrow; Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 41-48, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London; Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 52.

⁷¹ Bernard Tietze, *Mainwärts: Der Weg eines Schlesiens von der Oder zur Main* (Poppenhausen: Selbstverlag, 1998), 114.

lived at a castle in East Prussia, felt quite upset living in a small and damp room with her husband, four children and two servants.⁷² Like many members of the Prussian nobility, German-Baltic expellees similarly felt the abrupt social decline, especially estate owners who had acquired large grounds in the wake of the resettlement to occupied Poland in 1939/1940. On expropriated Polish farms many of them had, though only briefly, relived the genteel lifestyles they had been accustomed to prior to the independence of the Baltic States and the subsequent expropriations. The “medium-sized room, the bed with a straw mattress, the hard sofa and the [...] stove” certainly did not compare to the large estate in occupied Poland that, for example, one German-Baltic family lived in between 1940 and 1945.⁷³

Given the lack of privacy and resources in camps and private quarters, conflicts were bound to occur. Yet, the intimate atmosphere of shelters and mass accommodations also instilled in expellees a sense of comfort over the loss of the *Heimat*. At night, in dimly lit barracks, camp residents confided their stories to one another and vented their anguish and distress. They all had “lost everything,” as expellees typically described their misfortunes. One had lost her baby girl during the flight, another one had been mistreated before she was shipped off to occupied Germany and yet another man had just returned from captivity and knew nothing about the whereabouts of his family. “Each had a different story to tell,” one expellee observed in her memoirs adding, quite rightly, that “by and large these stories were all very much the same, [the loss of *Heimat* was] a common

⁷² Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 57.

⁷³ Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 69, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

experience.”⁷⁴ Hosts and co-lodgers in private homes similarly lent their ears to the stories expellees had to tell and thus offered expellees another way to come to terms with the consequences of the expulsion. Moreover, locals were often also in grief dealing with the loss of family members or, if they had been evacuated from urban centres, the loss of homes and apartments. As one expellee recalled, on arrival in the western occupation zone she was accommodated with an elderly couple who had lost both their sons in action. The elderly couple, apparently, welcomed the expellee with open arms.⁷⁵

What is more, the mass arrival in the west soon led expellees to voice their opinions and vent their grief in public, mostly through protests and demonstrations. Due to paper rationing and strict Allied press licensing laws, expellees were hardly able to use the press, let alone publish extensive accounts of their experience. Until 1948 British, American and French occupation authorities censored the press and suppressed most coverage on the expulsion.⁷⁶ During the early post-war period, expellees authored few publications and, in general, only reached a small localized public. The hectographed newsletters, which expellee pastors and priests distributed among expelled church members, were a case in point. These informal newsletters typically contained search lists, day-to-day information, homeland hymns and short accounts of the flight or the transfer to occupied Germany.⁷⁷ However, expellees extensively manifested their feelings in the local

⁷⁴ Isalie von Maydell, *The Spirit of Those Times*, 1990, 263, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton; G. P., *Notizen ihrer Mutter*, 4 and 29 November 1945, IGB, Kempowski.

⁷⁵ Hilde Degenhardt, *Weil Du mein Vater bist: Eine packende Geschichte aus der Zeit von Krieg und Vertreibung* (Witten: Bundesverlag, 1998), 94.

⁷⁶ Hans W. Schoenberg, *Germans from the East: A Study of their Migration, Resettlement and Subsequent Group History since 1945* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 78.

⁷⁷ Between 1945 and 1946 only 25 irregular newsletters appeared in occupied Germany, mostly parish bulletins and localized information sheets. The Catholic *Christ Unterwegs* started its publication as early as January 1946 and subsequently became an important

public sphere. In and around reception camps expellees were able to form groups and commemorate homeland traditions. They organized folk dances, recounted tales, sang songs and created, despite limited resources, small artefacts of the *Heimat* carved in wood or painted onto discarded pieces of cardboard. Some of the paintings, as one expellee noted, were apparently “real showpieces, displaying the characteristics of the relevant home city or landscape.”⁷⁸ Moreover, expellees joined mass gatherings to collectively mourn the loss of the homeland. In early June 1945, for instance, a large crowd gathered in the port-city of Lübeck where countless expellees from north-eastern Europe had arrived by boat. Apparently, Danzig’s highest-ranking pastor was reading the mass in memory of the homeland.⁷⁹ Similarly, across western Germany at reception point of treks Catholic expellees from south-eastern Europe organized large processions in order to erect crosses in honour of those who died during the course of the flight.⁸⁰ Thus, whether at large gatherings or processions, expellees were able to publicly mourn the loss of the homeland. In effect, as the next section of this chapter will show, unlike in Canada expellees in occupied Germany were omnipresent: they occupied large camps, lived in requisitioned private lodgings and, due to the lack of resources and viable living space, penetrated remote areas which, by and large, had remained unscathed by the war.

expellee mouthpiece. See Karl O. Kurth, “Presse, Film und Rundfunk,” in Lemberg/Edding, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 3, 412-413.

⁷⁸ Rosen, *A Baltic Odyssey*, 1921. Similarly see also G. P., Notizen meiner Mutter, Tagebucheintrag vom 4. November 1945, IGB, Kempowski.

⁷⁹ Max H. Boehm, “Gruppenbildung und Organisationswesen,” in Lemberg/Edding, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 1, 547.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Beyond the Sea

The expulsions taking place in Central and Eastern Europe directly affected a number of Germans in Canada. For one thing, there were an unknown number of expellees among German prisoners-of-war interned in Canada. A first contingent of 3,000 German P.O.W.s arrived from the UK in early 1941 for safekeeping. Of these most were keen supporters of Hitler's Third Reich and, as middle and high-ranking navy and air force officers, largely dominated camp life and arranged for the lynchings of two anti-Nazis.⁸¹ By the end of 1945, a total of 33,798 German prisoners-of-war were kept in 40 camps scattered across New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Alberta.⁸² Only few internees attempted to escape and did so primarily before the USA entered World War II in December 1941. As of summer 1944, many of the German P.O.W.s were offered paid work, cutting timber, milling pulpwood or ploughing fields for 50 cents per hour. Due to the remoteness of most camps, P.O.W.s had limited access to mail, which almost completely stopped after Germany's surrender in May 1945. Even so, by that time prisoners knew pretty well what was happening in the *Heimat*. In late 1945, as Canadian officials prepared to repatriate the German P.O.W.s and ship them back to the UK, a group of detainees originating from Czechoslovakia refused to do so in light of the Allied sanctioned population transfers and petitioned the Canadian government for permanent settlement, although to no avail. Ottawa only granted permanent stay to some 200 prisoners-of-war – among them prisoners who suffered severe injuries as a result of their work in the camps – and instead duly

⁸¹ David J. Carter, *Behind Canadian Barbed Wire: Alien, Refugee and Prisoner-of-War Camps in Canada* (Calgary: Tumbleweed Press, 1980).

⁸² Bassler, *German-Canadian*, 30-31.

repatriated the overwhelming majority according to the Geneva Conventions on the Treatment of Prisoners-of-War.⁸³

Secondly, and more importantly, German immigrants residing in Canada were also directly affected by the population transfers. Around 80,000 German immigrants arrived from Europe to Canada between the two world wars, many of them originating from regions in Central and Eastern Europe.⁸⁴ According to census figures almost two thirds of the interwar German immigrants were born in countries east of Germany, specifically: 42.1 percent in the USSR (including the Baltic States and other areas annexed in 1939/1945), 9.8 percent in Poland and 12.2 percent in other Eastern European countries.⁸⁵ The majority of these interwar immigrants, including those from Germany, were of rural background and, except for those from Eastern Europe (i.e. not from Poland and the USSR) who moved mostly to Ontario (37.7 percent) and Quebec (13.1 percent), primarily settled in the Prairie provinces, in particular in Saskatchewan (22.4 percent) but also in Alberta (18.4 percent) and Manitoba (12.4 percent).⁸⁶ The protracted demise of Hitler's Third Reich naturally filled these German immigrants with worries about the fate of relatives in Central and Eastern Europe. As one German immigrant, originally from East Prussia, wrote in his diary on VE day: "And how will things look on the other side [of the

⁸³ Carter, *Behind*; Bassler, *German-Canadian*, 30-31; Martin F. Auger, *Prisoners of the Homefront: German POWs and 'Enemy Aliens' in Southern Quebec* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005). The precise outcome of the petition by Sudeten-German prisoners-of-war remains unclear. The relevant files at the National Archives in Ottawa are, as yet, not declassified. See German prisoners-of-war in Canada who were formerly residents of Czechoslovakia (1945-1946), National Archives of Canada (NAC), External Affairs, RG 25, vol. 3770, file 7761-40.

⁸⁴ Bassler, *German-Canadian*, 51.

⁸⁵ Appendix, table III.C).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

ocean]!”⁸⁷ Without news since 1939, he was in no doubt and firmly believed that his family had fled ahead of the advancing Soviet armies. Moreover, whilst worrying about the fate of his loved ones in Europe, he fully understood the consequences of Hitler’s downfall and expected to never see his native East Prussia again. “My homeland,” he noted, “has been taken away from me and, with it, the hope of returning.”⁸⁸

For one group of German immigrants the expulsion of Germans in Central and Eastern Europe had very real implications, for it left them stranded in exile. Until the end of World War II some 6,000 refugees from Europe came to Canada. Of these 2,600 were mostly Jewish refugees who came from the UK to Canada in 1940 as a result of their internment since the outbreak of World War II, when British authorities at home and in the empire interned German citizens for security reasons without regard for their political and ethnic backgrounds. Once shipped to Canada for safekeeping, these ‘friendly enemy aliens’ were at first accommodated together with German prisoners-of-war until massive rows prompted Canadian authorities to separate the two groups. By late 1942, the refugees were released from internment and offered to stay in Canada or return to Britain; 972 chose to stay, predominantly young adult males.⁸⁹ Another substantial group of refugees arrived in Canada just before the outbreak of the war. They consisted of German social democrats and were part of the roughly 60,000 people driven out of Czechoslovakia following the

⁸⁷ Clive von Cardinal, Diary entry, 8 May 1945, 204, NAC, Clive Helmut von Cardinal Papers, MG 30 E 368, vol. 1, file Diary and notes 1939-1945.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Paula J. Draper, “The ‘Camp Boys;’ Interned Refugees from Nazism,” in Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin and Angelo Principe, eds. *Enemy Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 171-193; Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 266-288; Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada’s Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), 131-135.

Nazi takeover of the 'Sudetenland' in 1938. As such, they were members of the German Socialist Workers' Party of Czechoslovakia (DSAP) [*Deutsche Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei der Tschechoslowakei*] which had been the last and only German party to resist the meteoric rise of the local Nazi Party, the Sudeten-German Party, headed by Konrad Henlein. However, by the late 1930s, the DSAP represented only a minority among a minority, having won 3.6 percent of the national vote and 16 percent of the German vote in the last free election (as opposed to, respectively, 19 percent and 85 percent by the Sudeten-German Party). This was, obviously, a far shot from the early 1920s when the DSAP constituted the strongest German political force in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁰ Once in exile in the UK and Sweden in early 1939, the DSAP set up its new headquarters in London under the name of the Loyal Society of Sudeten-German Social Democrats (TG) [*Treugemeinschaft sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten*]. From there, the party successfully campaigned for the immigration of its members to Canada after negotiations with New Zealand proved fruitless. In 1939 one thousand or a third of the party members in exile were admitted to Canada, although, as their leader Wenzel Jaksch admitted, as "brave" and "prospective farmers" rather than with the "red flag high and aloft."⁹¹

The TG officially had its members move to Canada as farmers in order to comply with stringent Canadian admission criteria and convince the more than reluctant Canadian immigration officials of their suitability for immigration. Since the onset of the Great Depression Canadian officials had practically closed the gates to immigrants,

⁹⁰ Nancy Merrimether Wingfield, *Minority Politics in a Multinational State: The German-Social Democrats in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1938* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 132, 170-184; Martin K. Bachstein, *Wenzel Jaksch und die sudetendeutsche Sozialdemokratie* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1974), 36-174.

⁹¹ Wenzel Jaksch, *Zu den Differenzen in der Siedlergruppe Tomslake - Tupper Creek*, 5 October 1949, ASG, Emigration Kanada, file 818.

especially to Jews scrambling to escape Hitler's Third Reich. As for the German social democrats from Czechoslovakia, several factors played a role in their admission which, not surprisingly, was shrouded in secrecy. First of all, the British government granted substantial funding for their settlement in the dominion so that, effectively, these arrived in Canada at no cost to the country's taxpayers.⁹² Secondly, the admission of the DSAP members provided Canadian officials with an excuse to avoid the admission of Jewish refugees. The Sudeten-German refugees, who purposefully sent a Catholic priest to Ottawa for preliminary negotiations,⁹³ were at least on paper Catholics and, except for a few, not Jewish. With anti-Semitism running high in Canadian society, for Ottawa, when it came to Jews, "none [was] too many."⁹⁴ Finally, while scoring a few public relations points in the face of a worsening refugee crisis in Europe and attempts to organize international assistance (Evian Conference), Canadian officials knew that they were not opening a Pandora's Box by admitting a limited number of Sudeten-German refugees at the expense of a potentially growing number of Jews.⁹⁵

The Sudeten-German refugees arrived in Canada between April and July 1939 under the auspices of the Canadian railway companies. The Canadian National Railways (CNR) settled 524 Sudeten-German refugees, mostly families, on isolated homesteads in northern Saskatchewan in the area between Meadow Lake, St. Walburg and Loon River.

⁹² Annette Puckhaber, *Ein Privileg für wenige: Die deutschsprachige Migration nach Kanada im Schatten des Nationalsozialismus* (Münster: Lit, 2002), 130-136.

⁹³ Wenzel Jaksch, Zu den Differenzen in der Siedlergruppe Tomslake - Tupper Creek, 5 October 1949, ASG, Emigration Kanada, file 818.

⁹⁴ Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Limited, 1983); Kelley/Trebilcock, *Making*, 250-310; Avery, *Reluctant Host*, 126-133; Gerald Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 1977), 41-96.

⁹⁵ Puckhaber, *Privileg*, 130-136; Abella/Troper, *None*, 48-49; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 74-86.

Each of the farms that the CNR bought on behalf of the Sudeten-German refugees comprised a quarter section of land and, as one refugee put it, “of everything two: two cows, two chickens, one rooster, two pigs, two plates and two pots.”⁹⁶ The homesteads, which were located within a circumference of 150 km, consisted mostly of dilapidated farms abandoned by their owners during the course of the Great Depression. The primitive living conditions shocked the new settlers who were first forced to clear the overgrown fields before they could even think of farming. As an unpublished report for the 25th anniversary of the Sudeten-German settlement in Saskatchewan stated:

Until spring 1940 we did not get into touch with farming as such. During the summer and the winter, as long the weather permitted, we were busy building and clearing the bushes and the soil. A water fountain had to be built as well as living quarters for us and the livestock. [...] A few families were forced to reside in tents for several months until they could move into their own four walls with a roof over their heads.⁹⁷

Without furniture and appropriate machinery the Sudeten-German refugees in Saskatchewan came to depend on the help of neighbouring settlers and charities. Many also received the “dole” which was, apparently, “not unusual among the farmers of the region.”⁹⁸

The Canadian Colonization Association, a subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Railways (CPR), settled a further 518 Sudeten-German refugees in Tupper Creek, a remote area in north-eastern British Columbia, only recently opened up for settlement after the establishment in 1932 of the Peace River outlet of the Northern Alberta Railways. The

⁹⁶ As quoted in Doris Liebermann, “Das Schicksal der deutschen Tschechen,” *Kafka – Zeitschrift für Mitteleuropa* 13: 4 (2004), 30.

⁹⁷ Seliger-Archiv, ed., *Menschen im Exil: Eine Dokumentation der sudetendetschen sozialdemokratischen Emigration von 1938 bis 1945* (Stuttgart: Seliger-Archiv, 1974), 232.

⁹⁸ Hanns F. Skoutajan, *Uprooted and Transplanted: A Sudeten Odyssey From Tragedy to Freedom, 1938-1958* (Owen Sound: The Ginger Press, 2000), 153.

Sudeten-German refugees in B.C. fared scarcely better than their counterparts in Saskatchewan. When the first group of 25 families arrived in May 1939, they found only nine log cabins on the site of a former ranch so that for the first few weeks three families had to live in each of the cabins.⁹⁹ However, in contrast to Saskatchewan, the Sudeten-German refugees in B.C. settled on uncleared land following the tried and tested methods of block settlements of previous decades. In doing so, they were assisted by a CPR superintendent and a dozen supervisors with farming experience. Within one year of their arrival, the refugees built 50 cabins and 102 sheds as living quarters and cleared 1400 acres of farming land.¹⁰⁰ In addition, they built furniture, stables, barns and community buildings, acquired livestock and learnt, not least, how to plough, sow and milk. Living conditions were correspondingly basic. Cooking facilities for the first few weeks were limited to camp fires and supplies were rationed with meat in very short supply and milk given only to children. There was no electricity and no enclosed water closet. As one refugee recalled:

There was, of course, no plumbing. Every family had only one pail at this time which had to serve as water container, milking pail, and slop bucket. Water was hauled in from nearby Tupper Creek in a wooden tank and everyone helped themselves to whatever they needed. Well, you can only do one thing at a time, so dump the slops straight outside, don't haul them away. With upwards of fifty or more people living in close proximity, that soon created an open sewer situation with all the usual health hazards: flies, smells and other associated unpleasantness.¹⁰¹

In the wilderness of north-eastern B.C., the Sudeten-German refugees were practically cut off from the rest of the world, except for the railway line that connected the settlement to

⁹⁹ Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰⁰ Wanka, *Opfer*, 14.

¹⁰¹ Walter Schoen, *The Tupper Boys: A History of the Sudeten Settlement at Tomslake B.C.* (Victoria: Trafford, 2004), 43.

Dawson Creek, some 25 km away, or in the other direction over the Rocky Mountains to distant Edmonton. Only the purchase of a radio, for which the refugees pooled together money, kept them abreast of current affairs.¹⁰²

Not surprisingly, whether in B.C. or Saskatchewan, the Sudeten-German refugees struggled to adapt to the harsh conditions of North American settler communities. They “would [have] return[ed] any time, even at the threat of hunger in our homeland,” one refugee claimed.¹⁰³ Not only did they have a hard time with the long and cold winters, but as former party organizers, newspaper editors or union representatives they also had little clue about farming. Most of the refugees previously worked and lived in urban settings and felt quite displaced on their remote farms. In Czechoslovakia they were used to wearing suits, white shirts, ties and hats or, for women, knee-length skirts, whereas in Canada they found themselves amid a rural society wearing, as one refugee put it, nothing but “heavy overalls, plaid shirts, windbreakers, felt leggings and rubber shoes.”¹⁰⁴ Socially, the Sudeten-German refugees therefore felt thrown into a backward society far removed from the industrial towns characteristic of their homeland. As a select group of socialists, many of the refugees had held positions of some distinction that warranted their flight from the Nazis. On their settlements in Canada, however, they were reduced to the status of humble farmers and had few prospects of regaining a position of respect beyond the narrow scope of their community. Culturally, they had little in common with the frontier farmers of British or Ukrainian heritage, although in Saskatchewan there was at least a language bond

¹⁰² Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection; Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*, 40-44; Puckhaber, *Privileg*, 141-148.

¹⁰³ Emil and Steffi Kutscha to Ernst Paul, 31 March 1940, as quoted in Rita Schilling, *Sudetens in Saskatchewan: A Way to be Free* (St. Walburg: St. Walburg Sudeten German Club, 1989), 83.

¹⁰⁴ As quoted in Schilling, *Sudetens*, 66-67.

with the sizeable ethnic German population of the province. Politically, the Sudeten-German refugees were thrust from a fierce fight against fascism and its variant in the German-speaking areas of Czechoslovakia, the Sudeten-German Party, to the comparatively unruffled atmosphere of the Canadian West. This was particularly true for the refugees that landed in B.C., whereas the group that came to Saskatchewan settled amid a hotbed of political activism. By the time the refugees arrived in the province, both pro-communist and pro-Nazi organizations had made inroads among German settlers, particularly the Nazi *Deutsche Bund* with its great appeal of the *Volksgemeinschaft* to the impoverished farmer, the artisan and the unemployed.¹⁰⁵ While many of the refugees joined the ranks of Canada's rising left-wing movement, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), they very quickly got a taste of the local German population's penchant for Hitler's Third Reich, for already on the day of their arrival they had disputes with local Nazi grandees who accused them of betraying the 'New Germany.'¹⁰⁶ So, at least in Saskatchewan, the Sudeten-German refugees found familiar ground and fought against Nazis as if they were still in Czechoslovakia.

Major conflicts within and beyond the community further aggravated the already difficult circumstances of their adaptation. On the one hand, soon after their arrival the terms of their settlement with the railway companies became a source of considerable contention for the settlers. For the first few years the farms remained under the trusteeship of the railway companies, which excluded the Sudeten-German refugees from the decision-

¹⁰⁵ Art Grenke, "From Dreams of the Worker State to Fighting Hitler: The German Canadian Left from the Depression to the End of World War II," *Labour/Le Travail* 35 (Spring 1995), 65-105; Jonathan Wagner, *Brothers Beyond the Sea: National Socialism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1981), 68-72.

¹⁰⁶ Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 110; Grete Rabas, *Leben und Schaffen der Sudetendeutschen in Kanada* (Winnipeg: Wolf Verlag, 1993), 91.

making process of the settlements. Only after two (Saskatchewan) or three (B.C.) years was the ownership of the farms turned over to the refugees; in the meantime the relationship with railway officials went from bad to worse. In Saskatchewan the refugees fell at first completely out with the local CNR superintendent since he was a widely known local Nazi authority.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, the very fact that such a highly politicized people as the Sudeten-German refugees lived together within two relatively enclosed areas quickly led to leadership rivalries and political disputes. “Too many chiefs and no Indians [sic],” commented one refugee thirty years after his arrival to Canada.¹⁰⁸

But beneath the quarrels were also fundamental ideological differences that went back to the political battles fought in Czechoslovakia between the nationalist and the ‘Czechoslovakist’ wing of the DSAP. In the face of the party’s dwindling support and the growing popularity of the Sudeten-German Party in early 1938, the nationalist wing under Wenzel Jaksch prevailed and took over the leadership of the DSAP. However, regrouped in exile, a group of dissidents in England openly broke with the Loyal Society of the Sudeten-German Social Democrats (TG) and in 1940 formed the International Group of DSAP [*DSAP-Auslandsgruppe*] opposing Jaksch’s pursuit of German autonomy within a future and reinstated Czechoslovak state.¹⁰⁹ In distant North America the Sudeten-German refugees quickly became embroiled in the schism, although the The International Group of

¹⁰⁷ Schilling, *Sudetens*, 100-102, see also Puckhaber, *Privileg*, 148-149.

¹⁰⁸ Willi Schoen, “Zum Beginn der Sudetensiedlung Tupper, Teil 2,” *Forward* 21:11 (November 1969), 12.

¹⁰⁹ Deeming the term fascist, the International Group refused to accept the designation of ‘Sudeten-German’ as part of the party’s name in exile. On the schism, see Martin, , ...*nicht spurlos*’, 55-80; Seliger-Archiv, *Menschen im Exil*, 289-297; Martin K. Bachstein, “Die Politik der Treuegemeinschaft sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten als Hauptrepräsentanten des deutschen Exils aus der Tschechoslowakischen Republik,” in Karl Bosl, ed. *Das Jahr 1945 in der Tschechoslowakei: Internationale und wirtschaftlich-soziale Probleme* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1971), 65-100; Bachstein, *Wenzel*, 175-284.

the DSAP succeeded in gaining the support of several, mostly young party members whose socialization had mostly taken place during the existence of the Czechoslovak state.

However, the party leadership in Canada severely repressed these dissidents. Writing to his friend in England, Henry Weisbach somewhat dramatically described the Sudeten-German settlement in B.C. as a “concentration camp without barbed wire.”¹¹⁰ In effect, this schism cemented a life-long hostility between two distinct Sudeten-German groups in Canada.¹¹¹

Given the compounded social, cultural and political difficulties most of the Sudeten-German refugees tried to leave their farms as soon as they could. In B.C. the CPR encouraged at first the departure of some settlers and graded their suitability for farming on a scale from A to D. The CPR thereby hoped to alleviate some of the land distribution problems and remove “the misfits” from the settlement. However, the classification triggered a veritable exodus and forced the railway company to stop handing out free train tickets to departing settlers. Between 1940 and 1942, when the trusteeship of the CPR ended, well over a third of the refugees in Tupper Creek left the settlement and forfeited their property entitlements.¹¹² In Saskatchewan the settlers replicated the exodus and likewise left in high numbers. As of 1941, they took full possession of their properties and hence were able to sell or rent out farms to fellow refugees who had decided to stay. According to one account, as many as one in four refugees left their farms in northern Saskatchewan.¹¹³ In addition, both settlements suffered further losses when the Sudeten Germans were able to join the Canadian armed forces. In Saskatchewan, for example, one

¹¹⁰ Weisbach to Kögler, 29 August 1941, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 952.

¹¹¹ For further details on this hostility, see chapter IV, p. 226

¹¹² Gow, B. A.: “A Home for Free Germans in the Wilderness of Canada: The Sudeten German Settlers of Tupper Creek, B.C.,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 10:1 (1978), 69; and Puckhaber, *Privileg*, 158-159.

¹¹³ Schilling, *Sudetens*, 153.

in four adult men was estimated to have signed up for the fight against Nazi Germany and its allies.¹¹⁴ Hence, in Saskatchewan more than half of the refugees had left the province within the first three years of arrival; the pattern in B.C. was similar.

Most of the departing refugees moved to cities such as Edmonton or Winnipeg and, in particular, Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal, where the booming war industries increasingly ran short of labourers. In Hamilton, Sudeten-German refugees went from plant to plant and promptly landed manual jobs in foundries and other heavy industries, whereas the search for accommodation proved delicate. According to one account, landowners, unless they were of Hungarian or Italian origins, apparently refused to let apartments once they heard the German accent of the Sudeten-German refugees.¹¹⁵ In Toronto, Sudeten-German refugees found jobs in the textile and metal industry, sewing, washing or operating machines.¹¹⁶ Another family moved to eastern Ontario near Trenton where the renowned Czech manufacturer Bata had opened a new plant in 1940. There this family lived among ethnic Czech immigrants and Anglo-Canadians.¹¹⁷ On the whole, although they earned comparatively good money, these jobs scarcely restored the social status and living conditions they had enjoyed in Czechoslovakia. A letter to the party executive in London made this plain, when it claimed that since the beginning of the Canadian experience every man and woman among the Sudeten-German refugees did have to work well below the level of their previous status and qualifications. Apparently, the

¹¹⁴ Schilling, *Sudetens*, 153. Altogether 70 Sudeten-German refugees signed up for the Canadian forces, see Adolf Hasenoehrl, ed., *Kampf, Widerstand, Verfolgung der sudetendeutschen Sozialdemokraten: Dokumentation der deutschen Sozialdemokraten aus der Tschechoslowakei im Kampf gegen Henlein und Hitler* (Stuttgart: Seliger-Archiv, 1983), 572.

¹¹⁵ Zwanzig Jahre Hamiltoner Sudetenklub, *Forward* 14: 6 (November 1961), 2.

¹¹⁶ Weisbach to Kern, 6 February 1949, Sudetendeutsches Archiv (SudAr), Nachlass Karl Kern, 22.

¹¹⁷ Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 177.

former director of a co-operative grocery store in Czechoslovakia had to clean the stables and the former director of a co-operative health insurance had to work as a launderer.¹¹⁸ Not surprisingly, these jobs thus hardly improved their sense of social decline since their departure from Czechoslovakia.

Whether in the army, in Tupper Creek or Toronto the Sudeten-German refugees were well informed about the fate of Germans in Central and Eastern Europe. In 1941, they were made aware of plans by the Czechoslovak government-in-exile for the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans.¹¹⁹ One year later, they came to feel what the end of the war might entail for the German population of Czechoslovakia. Following the massacre of Lidice, a Czech village destroyed in retaliation for the murder of the Nazi governor of the occupied Czech rump state, Czech expatriates in North America vented their anger at the Sudeten Germans and mounted a hostile information campaign for the removal of the German minority from liberated Czechoslovakia.¹²⁰ By 1945, the Sudeten-German refugees knew exactly from Canadian newspapers what the Allied planned to do with the German population in post-war Central and Eastern Europe. However, they were missing news from relatives and friends who had stayed behind. Were they in the know? And, if so, how did they fare? Although contact had not completely broken down thanks to open communication lines via neutral countries, especially Sweden, where some 400 DSAP

¹¹⁸ Kutscha to the Executive Committee of the DSAP, July 1945, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 3, file Sudetenklub Hamilton Korrespondenz Treugemeinschaft Sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten, 1942-1948.

¹¹⁹ Letter to Sweden by Edmund Maiwald, 2 May 1942, as quoted in *Forward* 16: 10 (April 1964), 13.

¹²⁰ Canadian officials noted the mounting tensions between Sudeten Germans and Czechs following the massacre. For a pamphlet of the information campaign by the Czechoslovak National Council of America, see *The Story of Two Peoples or Czechoslovak and German Morality*, released by the Czechoslovak National Council of America, National Archives of Canada (NAC), Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 10, reel C-10436.

members had found sanctuary in 1939, most Sudeten-German refugees had not heard from relatives and friends since the beginning of the war. In late 1944, the headquarters of the Loyal Society of the Sudeten-German Social Democrats in London attempted to inform comrades at home about the planned expulsion of Germans in post-war Czechoslovakia, but the three parachuters dropped off from British planes over the *Heimat* failed to get the message through. While two of the parachuters were killed, the third could not convince local leaders who, in part, dismissed the information about the Czechoslovak expulsion plans as Nazi propaganda designed to shore up German resistance.¹²¹

After almost six years of silence, the Sudeten-German refugees in Canada finally received the first letters from home in late July/early August 1945. The Skoutajan family, for example, received the first letter from their relatives in Aussig (Ústí nad Labem) in early August 1945 and learnt about the way relatives and friends were disenfranchised, rounded up and deported even though as social democrats they had actively opposed the joining of the Sudeten areas into Nazi Germany.¹²² Also in early August 1945, a Sudeten-German family in Calgary received a telegram from their relatives in Czechoslovakia that read, “we shall emigrate penniless stop we miss your advice.” In response the family telegraphed back asking the relatives to remain in place as they would send as much money as they could.¹²³ Around the same time Henry Weisbach learnt from his parents that due to the unbearable conditions in Czechoslovakia they would join a convoy for Bavaria that the German antifascists had succeeded in organizing in conjunction with Czech, German and

¹²¹ Albert Exler, *Das grosse Wagnis: Ein Rettungsversuch für die unfreie Heimat* (Stuttgart: Seliger-Archiv, 1965); Almar Reitzner, *Das Paradies lässt auf sich warten: Erinnerungen eines Sozialdemokraten* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1984), 59-63.

¹²² Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 191-212.

¹²³ Augsten to Reilich, 5 August 1945 and Reilich to Augsten, 29 August 1945, ASG, Nachlass Frank J. Reilich, file 471.

Allied authorities. He similarly advised his parents to remain in place until they had at least secured a place in the region of their destination and sent them a power of attorney to regain the belongings he had left behind in 1938 and which the Czechoslovak authorities had requisitioned in 1945. Shortly thereafter, his family moved to Bavaria apparently with Weisbach's belongings which had duly been returned.¹²⁴ From the comfort of their homes, the Sudeten-German refugees were thus able to follow the events at home in detail. As Henry Weisbach's experience suggests, they were also capable of intervening and getting directly involved in developments. The Skoutajan family even became a vital, if only temporary, intermediary for letters and information between relatives and friends left stranded somewhere in the defeated Reich. By using the Skoutajans' address for the first few months after the end of the war, friends and relatives were able to circumvent the communication breakdown between Czechoslovakia and occupied Germany and exchange information about their whereabouts.¹²⁵ By a variety of means, the Sudeten-German refugees, though absent from their homes in Czechoslovakia, knew therefore pretty well what was going on in the *Heimat*.

The series of terrifying news about the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia to occupied Germany put a definite end to the hopes that the Sudeten-German refugees initially held for a possible return to the homeland. Most of them had arrived in Canada, assuming that they would one day be able to return. When in 1941, the first refugees left the isolated farms in the western provinces, they apparently still regarded

¹²⁴ Weisbach to Kögler, 13 January 1946 and 3 March 1946, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 492.

¹²⁵ Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 209.

Hamilton, Montreal or Toronto as “halfway station[s]” to home.¹²⁶ However, given the explicit call by Czechoslovakia’s government-in-exile for the removal of the German minority, over the course of the war the Sudeten-German refugees became increasingly critical. Jaksch already sensed the changing attitudes of some of his comrades when in 1943 he met a few refugees at a Canadian army training camp in England. To his dismay, for the post-war period they seriously toyed with the idea of returning to Canada for good.¹²⁷ Back in Canada, the mood among the Sudeten-German refugees was no different and gradually tended toward permanent settlement despite the difficult beginnings. Pondering the Sudeten-German refugees’ future, in early 1944 Edmund Maiwald wrote to friends in Sweden:

If we were to base our decision on our emotions, there would only be one answer. We would never leave this beautiful country [Canada] which offered us, uprooted by fate after a seemingly intolerable trauma, a new home and peace in our hearts. We lead a quiet and simple life, free of sorrows and filled with plenty of little joys and this during a time of horror and death.¹²⁸

By the end of 1944, over a third of the settlers in Tupper Creek filed a declaration of intention as a preliminary step to obtain Canadian citizenship.¹²⁹ In part they thereby sought to broaden their options for the post-war period given the uncertain legal status of their citizenship. In some cases the consulates of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile systematically refused to renew passports and hence left their holders effectively

¹²⁶ Julius Scharing, “Montreal, die Halfway Station,” *Forward* 16: 4 (September 1964), 7; Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, Toronto, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection.

¹²⁷ Jaksch to Reilich, 3 February 1943, ASG, Nachlass Frank J. Reilich, file 480.

¹²⁸ Letter to Sweden by Edmund Maiwald, 26 January 1944, as quoted in *Forward* 16: 11 (April 1964), 13.

¹²⁹ Willi Wanka, *The Sudeten Settlement of Tupper Creek, B.C., in 1944: Complete Report*, n.d., 21, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 3, file 1; also cited in Puckhaber, *Privileg*, 164.

stateless.¹³⁰ Moreover, in the precipitation of their departure most of the refugees received in lieu of passports temporary papers that did not guarantee the right of re-entry into Czechoslovakia.¹³¹ In any event, by the end of 1945 in light of the events at home the Sudeten-German refugees were disillusioned about the future of a multiethnic state in Central Europe and gave up the hope of return. Like the Skoutajan family, most applied for Canadian citizenship.¹³² Officially, the door to Czechoslovakia was not completely closed to the Sudeten-German refugees. After May 1945, as recognized antifascists, they could reassert their Czechoslovak citizenship and return to the country of their birth. However, none of the Sudeten-German refugees who came to Canada were known to have done so.¹³³

Within weeks of the end of the war in Europe, the Sudeten-German refugees attempted to mount a campaign against the expulsion of Germans in Central and Eastern Europe. They wrote letters to the Canadian government, the Czech representation in Montreal and to English-language newspapers such as Hamilton's *Spectator* or Toronto's *Daily Star*.¹³⁴ The few refugees, who had moved south across the border, attempted to do the same in the USA, notably Emmanuel Reichenberger, the Catholic prelate who had been sent to Ottawa in early 1939 to support the admission of the Sudeten-German refugees to Canada. Based in Chicago as the head of the local Kolping Society, Reichenberger voiced his protest against the expulsion and later in West Germany became a legendary figure in

¹³⁰ Martin, ,...*nicht spurlos*', 103.

¹³¹ Seliger-Archiv, *Menschen im Exil*, 45-46.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 191-212. For further evidence on seeking Canadian citizenship, see also Antwort auf Fragebogen vom Czech Refugee Trust Fund, 24 May 1945; and Löwit to Reitzner, 13 May 1946, ASG, Nachlass Karl Löwit, file 896.

¹³³ Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³⁴ Kutscha to Andersch, 12 March 1961, ASG, Nachlass Emil Kutscha, file 329.

right-wing expellee circles for his advocacy on behalf of expellees.¹³⁵ Even so, immediately after the end of the hostilities, at a time when the full scope of Nazi atrocities was increasingly coming to light, the campaign met with very little sympathy among the North American public. As one refugee wrote, “we handed out the leaflets for free [...] yet the end result was ‘I am sorry’ but you are Germans too. They [Canadians] care for Sacco, Vancetti and Hottentots, but not for the German social democrats from the CSR.”¹³⁶

Outside private gatherings of the few and largely dispersed Sudeten-German refugees, the German-Canadian press effectively offered the only meaningful way publicly to express their opinion about the expulsion. Both weeklies, the *Nordwesten*, issued in Winnipeg, and the *Courier*, published in Saskatoon, extensively covered the expulsion and regularly shed light on the difficult living conditions of Germans in post-war Poland or Czechoslovakia. Both weeklies published a plethora of reports, documentaries or eye-witness accounts such as “In the Land of Death” or “Under the Terror of Russians” and minced no words regarding the harsh resettlement policies of the Allies, especially those of the USSR.¹³⁷ Moreover, with Franz Rehwald serving as the editor-in-chief of the *Nordwesten*, the Sudeten-German refugees were in a position for influencing the press coverage. Rehwald, as a leading member of Jaksch’s Loyal Society of Sudeten-German Social Democrats, pressed for a coverage as general and critical as possible in an attempt to rally all German immigrants whose relatives had been expelled from Poland, Hungary or Czechoslovakia. This, he claimed, would best benefit the campaign against the population transfers staged by the widely scattered and comparatively small number of Sudeten-

¹³⁵ Unser Anwalt in den USA, *Ostdeutsche Zeitung – Die Stimme der Vertriebenen*, 17 July 1949.

¹³⁶ Kutscha to Jaksch, 23 August 1945, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 3, file Correspondence Treuegemeinschaft Sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten, 1942-1948.

¹³⁷ *Nordwesten*, 13 August 1947 and 27 August 1947.

German refugees.¹³⁸ To do so, Rehwald did not shy away from allying with former enemies and regularly published articles penned by Otto Strasser, a former high-ranking Nazi who had been expelled from the NSDAP in the early 1930s and had found refuge in Paradise, Nova Scotia. In spite of the complaints he received from his fellow Sudeten-German comrades, Rehwald did not object to articles which like Strasser's columns severely criticized the Allied Potsdam Agreements and the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. As he replied to a fellow refugee in Tupper Creek, 99.5 percent of the *Nordenwesten's* readership overwhelmingly agreed with Strasser's views.¹³⁹

For the group of dissidents among the Sudeten-German refugees who had sympathized with the International Group of the DSAP, there were far fewer venues for publicly expressing opinions on the population transfer. The small German-Canadian socialist press effectively offered the only medium. Henry Weisbach, for instance, raised his voice in the communist *Volksstimme* [People's Voice] and expressed his indignation about the expulsions in a paper that approved these as a logical consequence of Hitler's failed attempt at world domination. In one article Weisbach claimed that the population transfer failed to solve the "Sudeten question" and reminded his readers that the social democrats in pre-war Czechoslovakia had fought a two-front battle against Sudeten-German Nazis and Czech conservatives.¹⁴⁰ However, characteristic of the dissident group, Weisbach condemned Rehwald's broad German-Canadian strategy to rally support against the expulsions in concert with what he called "the refined version of National Socialists in

¹³⁸ Rehwald to Wanka, 28 August 1945, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 18.

¹³⁹ Rehwald to Leinsmer, 12 November 1948, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 23.

¹⁴⁰ *Volksstimme*, February 1948, 6.

Canada.”¹⁴¹ While he denounced any form of violence, for him the history of the expulsions had certainly not begun in 1945. The Sudeten Germans, as he put it, “better take a fair amount of responsibility for the loss of our *Heimat*. It was they, who had cried out ‘home into the Reich’ and believed that paradise had arrived [on earth] when Hitler and his thugs took over power in the Sudeten regions.”¹⁴² Thus, by the standards of his Sudeten-German counterparts in Canada, Weisbach voiced a moderate critique of the expulsion.

What can be said at the end of this chapter? Clearly, compared to occupied Germany only few expellees were left stranded in Canada in the aftermath of the war. Beyond the P.O.W.s, who originated from Central and Eastern Europe and petitioned the Canadian government for permanent stay in light of the expulsion, there were effectively only the Sudeten-German refugees. These arrived in the aftermath of Czechoslovakia’s destruction in 1938/39, fleeing as social democrats persecution from the Nazis. This group of just over one thousand refugees experienced the end of World War II either as members of the Canadian Armed Forces or as civilians residing in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Quebec or Ontario. For them, the expulsion of Germans in Central and Eastern Europe was a very personal experience, which the Canadian public completely ignored. The German-Canadian press effectively constituted the only meaningful way to share their thoughts. By contrast, in occupied Germany expellees were omnipresent, accommodated privately and in large camps and living through a very common experience of mass migration and displacement. Unlike in Canada, expellees did not live an isolated experience and shared it with countless others who similarly deplored the loss of the homeland. Above all, while

¹⁴¹ Weisbach to Kern, 6 February 1946, SudAr, Nachlass Karl Kern, file 22.

¹⁴² Dreizehn Jahre Emigration, *Forward* 4: 4 (September 1951), 1.

paper rationing and the stringent Allied control of the media kept them from writing to newspapers like the Sudeten-German refugees in Canada, they gathered en masse to express their grief and commemorate the homeland. This chapter has clearly exposed this difference between an isolated experience in Canada and a mass phenomenon in occupied Germany.

What is more, by outlining these various experiences this chapter has also gone beyond the stereotypical expellee narratives of flight, vigilante expulsions and Allied-sanctioned mass transfers. There was more to the expulsion than these three archetypal forms. Recent scholarship has certainly addressed this inadequate portrayal by relating the expulsion of Germans in the aftermath of the war with Nazi Germany's brutal attempt at redrawing Europe's ethnic and racial map. However, as we have seen in this chapter, the experience of the Sudeten-German refugees is likewise part and parcel of the expellee experience and therefore must be included in the narrative of the expulsion. Like other expellees in occupied Germany, these Sudeten-German refugees experienced a period of great social, cultural and economic displacement after their arrival in Canada. Moreover, in marked contrast to the mass of expellees in occupied Germany, who had no clue about the planned expulsions and even attempted, for example, to return home, the Sudeten-German refugees were also acutely aware of Allied plans for post-war Europe. Thus, until expellees found themselves stranded in Canada and what later became the FRG, there were effectively six different aspects: 1) escape from the Nazis, 2) resettlement 3) evacuation, 4) flight from Soviet troops/occupation, 5) discharge from service/internment and 6) the transfers as sanctioned by the Allied Potsdam Agreements. These aspects were doubtless triggered by multiple factors and constellations. For example, the Sudeten-German social democrats' escape from the Nazis (i.e. aspect 1) and the flight from Soviet troops (aspect 4)

were both prompted by sudden changes to people's lives or what Richmond refers to as 'precipitating events.' This is particularly true for the mass flight of early 1945, when Germans in the eastern parts of the Reich and occupied Poland panicked and fled en masse ahead of the rapidly advancing Soviet armies. However, the Sudeten-German social democrats' escape from the Nazis (aspect 1) was also shaped by 'enabling circumstances' as was the resettlement of ethnic Germans 'home into the Reich' (aspect 2). While the former found refuge in Allied or neutral countries, the latter were invited by the Nazis at the expense of Poles and Jews. Furthermore, ethnic nationalism and anti-communism permeated all of these aspects. Nazi Germany pushed ethnic nationalism and thereby set standards which, after its demise, Central and Eastern European states went a long way to reiterate. Indeed, before 1938/1939 most Central and Eastern European states were multiethnic, whereas after 1945 they were far more ethnically homogenous. Finally, the fear of Soviet occupation or the experience of it likewise shaped the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. After all, in 1939 they triggered the departure of the German Balts and other resettlers from Volhynia, Galicia (both Ukraine) or Bessarabia (Moldavia) who came under the control or the sphere of influence of the USSR. Similarly, in early 1945 the fear and experience of Soviet occupation unleashed a mass movement which continued well beyond the end of the hostilities and thus left millions of Germans stranded in the three western occupation zones or what later became the FRG. However, while these expellees often suffered terrible journeys, the conditions in the three western occupation zones were scarcely inviting. The lack of suitable accommodation and food ensured that expellees frequently wished to continue their journey and get away from war-torn Europe. As we shall see in the next chapter, expellees in occupied Germany 'feverishly' wished to move abroad.

II. 'Distressed Outsiders'

In May 1948 an expellee representative avowed to a meeting of Protestant church leaders in Treysa, Hesse, that emigration was “on everyone’s lips.” Expellees, he claimed, had lost faith in the future of Germany, foregoing entirely their *joie de vivre*. The worst was apparently that the “emigration fever” infected so many people that it seemingly spread like the “plague:”

This disease is robbing people’s sleep. They take delirious dreams at face value and firmly believe in the existence of a paradise overseas. They forget that mountains need first to be moved to even have the slightest hope to get there. Exit permits and entry visas bar the way, ships and air planes need to be secured and schemes for the resettlement must be planned. Above all, one needs money, money and money, but of these three things we have none [...].¹

Three years after the end of the war in Europe the expellee representative had good reason to express concern over the widespread desire of emigration. In fact, few were those in occupied Germany that did not wish to escape from the rubble and the severe shortages of housing, food and other vitally important resources. Hitler’s war had left German cities in shambles with a quarter of the country’s housing completely destroyed. Crime and prostitution soared and highly contagious and potentially life-threatening diseases characteristic of poor and overcrowded living conditions such as typhus, diphtheria and tuberculosis spread. As a result, Germans longed for better living conditions which, not surprisingly, they often perceived to be elsewhere far away from a continent that twice within one generation had plunged into total disarray. Whenever

¹ Ansprache Franz Hamm in Treysa, 30 May 1948, Nachlass Franz Hamm, Institut für donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde (IDGL), HA 18, Hilfsausschuss/komitee der Evang. Kirche aus Jugoslawien.

newspapers and radio programmes aired items about possible emigration, lines in front of consulates and embassies apparently dramatically soared.² Similarly, as a survey taken in 1947 showed, no less than 46 percent of Germans wished to emigrate.³ Thus, as the aforementioned expellee representative rightly suggested, in the early post-war years Germans and in particular expellees were truly taken by an ‘emigration fever.’

However, for the overwhelming majority of the German population in occupied Germany emigration remained a wishful dream since Allied occupation authorities virtually closed off the borders of the country in an effort to prevent the escape of war criminals and high-ranking Nazis. As of September 20, 1945, only Germans with a proven record of persecution by the Nazi regime or close relatives of Allied nationals such as parents, children and ‘war brides’ were eligible for exit permits granted by the Allied Combined Travel Security Board.⁴ Moreover, after Nazi Germany’s unconditional surrender, the Allied Powers imposed stringent conditions on what was left of the defeated country and divided it between Britain, France, the United Kingdom and the USSR into four occupation zones. Besides the complete demilitarization of the occupied country, the Allied Powers dissolved all central government bodies, the SS and the Nazi Party,

² Canadian officials in occupied Germany, for instance, complained about the flood of inquiries from German individuals and organizations in the aftermath of Ottawa’s announcement that it would facilitate the immigration of Polish war veterans in July 1946. Similarly, when the U.S. announced a relaxation of its immigration regulations for German nationals in the fall 1948, the U.S. general consulate in Frankfurt alone received 12 to 14,000 applications a day, see Alexander Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 162-169.

³ As quoted in Johannes-Dieter Steinert *Migration und Politik: Westdeutschland – Europa – Übersee, 1945-1961* (Osnabrück: Secolo, 1995), 35.

⁴ Steinert, *Migration*, 23-24; Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 169-183.

prosecuted war criminals and, whilst relying on existing local government authorities to maintain law and order, set out to denazify German society. In addition, the Allied Powers exacted reparations and confiscated industrial plants and railway tracks, imposed export quotas for coal, iron-ore, steel or lumber and took possession of German patents.⁵ In this context the mass of Germans and expellees effectively found very few opportunities to emigrate in marked contrast to Displaced Persons (DPs). Among the 11.5 million DPs in post-war Europe, around 1.2 million individuals refused to be repatriated to their home countries in Eastern Europe. Consisting of refugees, forced labourers, Holocaust survivors, prisoners-of-war and foreign legionnaires for the German army and the Waffen-SS, in mid-1947 the Allies set up an organization, the International Refugee Organization (IRO), which provided for the international relocation of DPs but excluded Germans from its mandate. So, while in the late 1940s over 900,000 DPs found new homes in Western Europe and especially the USA (370,000), Canada (152,000) and Australia (182,000), Germans were forced to remain in occupied Germany.⁶ In fact, all

⁵ On Allied occupation policy, see Wolfgang Benz, *Potsdam 1945: Besatzungsherrschaft und Neuaufbau im Vier-Zonen-Deutschland*, 4th and rev. ed. (Munich: DTV, 2005); Klaus D. Henke, *Die amerikanische Besetzung Deutschlands* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1995); Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, Axel Frohn, Hermann-Josef Rupieper, eds., *American Policy and the Reconstruction of West Germany, 1945-1955* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁶ Mark Wyman, *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951* (Philadelphia: Balch Institute Press, 1989); Henriette Holleuffer, *Zwischen Fremde und Fremde: Displaced Persons in Australien, den USA und Kanada, 1946-1952* (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 2001).

told, between 1945 and 1950 fewer than 60,000 Germans were able to leave occupied Germany.⁷

This chapter, then, unveils how expellees yearned for the relocation to countries far from the war-ravaged European continent. In many ways, except for the Nazis that escaped Allied prosecution and with the help of the Vatican emigrated to South America, including Adolf Eichmann, the “chief executioner of the Third Reich,” and Franz Stangl, the commandant of the Treblinka death camp,⁸ this yearning for emigration reflected more a collective outburst of despair than a concrete plan of emigration. This chapter therefore first sheds light on some of the ways expellees lived through the deplorable material conditions in occupied Germany before it delves into the reactions that these generated on both sides of the Atlantic. Secondly, this chapter then looks at some of the concrete steps expellees took to organize their movement away from

⁷ That said, around 150,000 DPs, so-called ‘hard core’ cases, were also forced to remain in West Germany unable to qualify for one the IRO resettlement schemes, see Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, “Ortlos am Ende des Grauens: ‚Displaced Persons’ in der Nachkriegszeit,” in Klaus J. Bade, ed. *Deutsche im Ausland, Fremde in Deutschland: Migration in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Munich: Beck, 1992), 367-374. For the number of Germans able to leave occupied Germany, see Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 396.

⁸ On the escape of Nazis and the pivotal role of the Catholic Church, see in particular Matteo Sanfilippo, “Ratlines and Unholy Trinities: A Review-Essay on (Recent) Literature Concerning Nazi and Collaborators Smuggling Operations out of Italy,” in The Vatican Files.net, 2003, at the following internet address http://www.vaticanfiles.net/sanfilippo_ratlines.htm; idem, “Archival Evidence on Postwar Italy as a Transit Point for Central and Eastern European Migrants,” in Oliver Rathkolb, ed. *Revisiting the National Socialist Legacy: Coming to Terms with Forced Labor, Expropriation, Compensation, and Restitution* (Innsbruck: Kreisky Archiv Studien Verlag, 2002), 241-258; Uki Goñi, *The Real Odessa: How Péron brought the Nazi War Criminals to Argentina* (London: Grata, 2002); Holger M. Meding, *Flucht vor Nürnberg? Deutsche und österreichische Einwanderung in Argentinien, 1945-1955* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1992); and Ernst Klee, *Persilscheine und falsche Pässe: Wie die Kirchen den Nazis halfen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1991).

occupied Germany. Despite a widespread wish to return to the homeland, expellees also looked toward new horizons and lobbied Allied and local state officials to lift the restrictions imposed on emigration. To expellees in occupied Germany and elsewhere, the news coming from North or South America certainly seemed more enticing than what they heard about the homeland where discrimination and abuse against Germans continued unabated. Already by 1946 calls by expellee groups and relief associations resonated with German and international aid agencies which increasingly advocated their international resettlement. In early 1947 the French Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault, advocated the systematic relocation of expellees outside of occupied Germany.⁹ Two years later, the World Council of Churches in co-operation with the British Foreign Office made the “expellee question” the major theme of its conference in Hamburg calling for the international resettlement of expellees as a solution to the problem.¹⁰ In early 1950, then, the U.S. Representative Francis E. Walter proposed the emigration of one million expellees as part of an aid programme for the newly-founded West German state.¹¹ In the end, however, it was not before the early 1950s that a few non-governmental organizations carried out small resettlement projects to Brazil and

⁹ Motivated primarily by strategic considerations and the urgent need for labour, during the early post-war years the French government ultimately admitted 37,000 Germans and resettled over 10,000 Danube Swabians from Austria to central France. See Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 212-213; and Jean Lamesfeld, *Von Osterreich nach Frankreich: Die Banater Aktion und Robert Schuman* (Salzburg: Donauschwäbische Verl.-Ges., 1973).

¹⁰ “Vorschläge zur Lösung des deutschen Flüchtlingsproblems: Die Hamburger Konferenz des Oekumenischen Rates der Kirchen vom 22. bis 25. Februar 1949,” *Europa-Archiv*, 5 (Juni 1949), 2205-2208.

¹¹ For the proposal, see Francis E. Walter, *Expellees and Refugees of German Ethnic Origin: Report of a Special Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives pursuant to H. Res. 238* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1950).

Paraguay.¹² Similarly, the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), initiated by the USA to assist the international relocation of refugees from communist Eastern Europe, was only founded in 1951.¹³ In the interim, expellee groups in both Canada and occupied Germany evolved within a narrow field of action limited by Allied regulations and local German organizations. For example, due to Allied restrictions, in occupied Germany the Protestant or Catholic Church by and large controlled the expellees' emigration campaign. Meanwhile, in Canada the Sudeten-German refugees faced stiff resistance when trying to help expellees in occupied Germany where – it almost goes without saying – none of them wished to relocate to despite the offer of financial support from the Allied repatriation fund.

¹² Karl A. Gauss and Eugen Lemberg, "Das Erwachen der Hilfsbereitschaft in der westlichen Welt," in Edding/Lemberg, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 1, 246-253.

¹³ The ICEM has since been renamed to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with seat in Geneva, see Marianne Ducasse-Rogier, *The International Organization for Migration, 1951-2001* (London: International Organization for Migration, 2001).

Emigration Fever

Since the defeat of the German forces at Stalingrad in early 1943 Germans became increasingly demoralized and weary of the living conditions prevailing in the crumbling Third Reich. Particularly during the last year of the war German society showed signs of severe strain, not least because of the savagely-fought 'total war' and the unbridled terror and mass murder unleashed by the Nazi regime.¹⁴ Nevertheless, for most of the central and western parts of the Reich it was not until early 1945 that Nazi Germany's comprehensive supply system broke down and ended up in shambles. Until then the regime managed to keep supplies going, although on ration and at the expense of the non-German population of the 'Greater German Reich.' Thereafter reserves dwindled and massive shortages became the order of the day. After May 1945 under the harsh conditions imposed by the Allies, which first of all focused on providing relief to Nazi Germany's victims, food rations were officially set at around 1,500 calories per person depending on the occupation zone, but in reality rarely rose above 1,100 calories or the equivalent of a spoon of milk soup, two pieces of bread with margarine and two small potatoes per day.¹⁵ Shortages, which existed across Europe in the immediate post-war

¹⁴ For an account demonstrating the degree to which Nazi terror encompassed even the so-called healthy German population in the war's dying days, see Robert Gellately, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 224-255.

¹⁵ As quoted in Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Vom Beginn des Ersten Weltkriegs bis zur Gründung der beiden Deutschen Staaten, 1914-1949*, vol. 4 (Munich: Beck, 2003), 951. On living conditions in occupied Germany in general, see Klaus Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001); Alexander von Plato and Almut Leh, *Ein unglaublicher Frühling: Erfahrene Geschichte im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1997); Robert G. Moeller, ed., *West Germany Under Construction: Politics, Society, and Culture in the*

period, were so acute in occupied Germany that the population at large suffered a great deal, though in particular expellees, who, discharged from detention or transferred to occupied Germany, possessed precious little and struggled to survive.

In the face of this general penury expellees were short of clothing and consequently were forced to wear the same attire for months and years on end, repeatedly repairing tears and blotting out P.O.W. and other insignias with dye.¹⁶ Lacking footwear, they had to walk barefoot even when they went out to glean the remains of the harvest on fields full of stalks, stones and fissures. The fortunate few had wooden shoes.¹⁷ Accommodated in basic rooms with inadequate or no heating at all, they struggled to keep warm by spending a few hours a day in heated public spaces. At night, in bed, others wore several layers of clothing, woollen hats, gloves, coats or, for lack of blankets, rolled themselves into carpets.¹⁸ Above all, however, as most other Germans, expellees struggled to find sufficient food. Virtually all accounts perused for this study describe at length the suffering from hunger. One man, for example, who survived the 1930s famine in the Soviet Union, recalled that “from 1945 to 1947 every day we would go to the garbage dump and pick up anything that could help us survive; things were rough, very

Adenauer Era (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997); Martin Broszat, Klaus D. Henke and Hans Woller, eds., *Von Stalingrad zur Währungsreform: Zur Sozialgeschichte des Umbruchs in Deutschland* (Munich: Oldenburg, 1988).

¹⁶ Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir.

¹⁷ Tietze, *Mainwärts*, 105; Fink von Finkenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 54; Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 48, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

¹⁸ Mathias Kuester to his mother, 2 February 1947, CBIAS, Correspondence Mathias F. Kuester, Archive Edmonton; Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 53-54, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

rough. My sister cried from starvation.”¹⁹ Another account similarly exposed the difficult living conditions prevailing in occupied Germany. Arriving to Bavaria in early 1947, an expellee from Romania recalled that “people in Germany were very poor, so poor even, that we could eat a little meat only once a week and for the rest we ate some vegetables and potatoes. [...] These people,” as she noted, “had been living in poverty for longer than we had [in Romania].”²⁰ All four occupation zones were short of food, as one expellee from East Prussia noted. Arriving from the Soviet to the British occupation zone in late 1945, he saw hardly any difference; in both he found that Germans and in particular expellees were begging for food and waiting in line for long hours in order to obtain the weekly ration of potatoes or bread.²¹

Amid an ailing society that basically functioned on rationing, subsistence and barter, expellees and other impoverished Germans, especially ‘bombed-out’ urban residents, were forced to find further supplies beyond the meagre rations allocated to them according to age, gender and occupational activity. Like the rest of the German population expellees attempted to supplement rations by foraging through the debris of buildings, fields and woods in search of berries, roots, left-over potatoes, vegetables as well as planks, wood, bricks, wool, fabric, buckets or anything else that could still be of use for everyday living. Many an expellee recalled, for instance, how they drank syrup

¹⁹ Interview Peter Epp, 4 August 1981, MHSO, Mennonite Collection.

²⁰ Interview Lucy Amberg, 22 March 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

²¹ G. H., *Aufzeichnungen*, 33, IGB, Kempowski. On the whole, until 1947 agricultural and industrial production was actually higher in the Soviet than in the western occupation zones. The new communist authorities in the Soviet occupation zone swiftly implemented radical reforms and so were able to revive the economy at an earlier point than in the western occupation zones, see Werner Abelshauser, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte seit 1945* (Munich: Beck, 2004), 113-114.

made from corn collected on the fields after the harvest or how during the cold winter days of 1946 and 1947 they went a long way to find firewood and dried-up horse-dung.²² As one might expect, while scavenging, they frequently ran into troubles with the law. Crimes rates in occupied Germany dramatically soared. According to one statistic, in 1938 there had been 6,583 thefts in Berlin, whereas in 1948 this number rose to 74,597. Similarly, in 1938 there had been 5,544 burglaries and robberies in Berlin, whereas ten years later police officers recorded 32,771 such crimes.²³ Desperate for food and heating materials, expellees stole coal, cut off trees in public parks, picked up potatoes without permission from a farmer, poached game, milked cows unlawfully or stole grain from barns and storage facilities. Out of compassion for impoverished Germans, police officers often turned a blind eye to such acts of theft and let offenders go without pressing charges. The experiences of an expellee woman in Schleswig-Holstein are a case in point as she found herself in custody after being caught for stealing a bagful of potatoes. However, once she had explained her situation – she had to look after four hungry children and a depressed husband – the officer on duty let her go without further ado.²⁴

Occupied Germany's thriving underground economy became an indispensable source of supply to Germans and expellees in need of food and goods.

²² Johanna Cimander, *Es führte kein Weg zurück: Erinnerungen einer Oberschlesierin* (Schweinfurt: Wiesenburg Verlag, 2000), 73; Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 54-57; Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 105, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton; J. G.-P., *Unsere Flucht aus Schlesien und der Wiederaufbau*, 12, IGB, Kempowski; L. Z., *Aus meinen Leben*, n.d., 81, IGB, *Deutsches Gedächtnis*; Golbeck, *Bis eine Tür sich öffnet: Entwurzelt in Ostpreussen - heimisch in Ostfriesland* (Leer: Verlag Johann Sollermann, 1995), 144-146.

²³ As cited in Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 4, 953.

²⁴ Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 57.

Seemingly everything could be bartered from unused ration stamps, especially for cigarettes which became the black market's basic currency, to personal effects and services and items found foraging. Expellees, like everybody else, took advantage of this underground economy and exchanged whatever they had for whatever they needed, although a big chasm divided the 'haves' from the 'have-nots.' On the one hand, among upper-class expellees, whose wealth had been wiped out by the expulsion, some were able to secure comparatively comfortable lives relatively early on by capitalizing on the possessions they had been able to save through the turmoil of the war and its aftermath. One upper-class expellee, for example, whose husband had turned some of the family's wealth into easily transportable diamonds, sold the precious stones as a down payment on a property located in the largely destroyed city of Hamburg where residence permits were notoriously difficult to obtain.²⁵ Similarly, though on a far more moderate level, expellees who had arrived by trekking overland were able to supplement their rations by renting out their horses and oxen to local farmers whose livestock had been requisitioned by the *Wehrmacht*.²⁶ On the other hand, for the have-nots and the majority of expellees and Germans the black market only minimally improved living conditions. They lacked goods to barter and were mainly only able to obtain food by trading the few items they had such as watches, huts, wedding rings, pans, bicycles, soap, fish or mushrooms.²⁷ Furthermore, the sheer mass of foragers appearing at the doors of farmers and suppliers

²⁵ G. M., *Ein gottgeführter Weg*, 54-55, IGB, Kempowski.

²⁶ Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 45, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London. Interview F. R., 8 August 1989, IGB, Wustrow.

²⁷ Interview G. M., n.d., IGB, Wustrow; Interview H. S. and wife, 2 Feb 1981; and O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir; J. S., *Heimat und Lebenslauf*, 116-117, IGB, Deutsches Gedächtnis.

reduced the chances for successful dealings. Farmers were either weary of strangers hoping to trade in a few trifling and largely worthless products or, simply, did not themselves have sufficient supplies to trade. One expellee, for example, tried his luck with cigars that he had bought in Britain as a prisoner-of-war. For an entire day he apparently walked from farm to farm only to be turned down at each and every door. Only at one place, where the farmer's son knew the expellee from the P.O.W. camp in Britain, did he succeed in trading a few cigars for a handful of potatoes.²⁸

Nevertheless, like other impoverished Germans needy expellees could offer one major product for exchange, namely labour, skills and their bodies. Some skilled professionals and tradespeople, whose expertise was in high demand, definitely benefited from the barter economy as did other local producers and suppliers, in particular farmers. As trained barbers, shoemakers, mechanics or dentists some of them were able to turn their skills into needed clothing, food and 'hard cash' such as, for example, a trained butcher who built up a business by illicitly slaughtering farm animals. He was so successful that by 1946 he acquired – on the black market, naturally – his first fridge and two years later a second-hand car.²⁹ However, like other Germans the vast majority of expellees had to find different strategies to survive. One such strategy was prostitution, which dramatically increased in the immediate post-war years and became a matter of great concern to contemporary Germans. Driven by want, women and men widely sold

²⁸ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

²⁹ Interview A. and E. H., 7 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow. Similarly, see also Interview F. R., 8 August 1989; Interview W. S., 6 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow; Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German collection; J. G.-P., *Unsere Flucht und der Wiederaufbau*, 1992, IGB, Kempowski.

their bodies in return for food, accommodation or ‘hard cash,’ notably to members of the Allied occupation forces.³⁰ Another survival strategy was farm labour. Due to the losses at the front, Allied internment and the repatriation of DPs, there was a shortage of farm workers in the immediate post-war years. Needy Germans thus widely found placements on farms in return for food and/or shelter. At the expense of their professional development and careers, they often worked on farms with no previous experience in agriculture and learnt on the spot how to clean stables, look after cows and use field machinery. For most, farm labour merely represented a stopgap.³¹ Indeed, as one expellee put it, “survival came first.”³²

Aid agencies working in occupied Germany did their best to assist needy Germans and expellees. Organizations such as the German branch of the Catholic relief organization Caritas, its Protestant counterpart, the *Hilfswerk* [Aid agency], set up by Protestant Church of Germany in the fall 1945 as a central body to expedite relief, or the union-based Workers’ Welfare [*Arbeiterwohlfahrt*] set up soup kitchens, distributed clothing and blankets, organized clinics for mothers and pregnant women and took abandoned children into care. In the face of the food crisis authorities in occupied

³⁰ Fulbrook, *History*, 125; Elizabeth Heineman, “The Hour of the Woman: Memoires of Germany’s ‘Crisis Years’ and West German National Identity,” in *Schissler, Miracle Years*, 37-40; Dagmar Herzog, *Sex After Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 64-140.

³¹ Helmut Appelt, *Zeitzeuge eines bewegten Jahrhunderts: Autobiographie* (Frankfurt a.M.: private publication, 1995), 181; Golbeck, *Bis eine Tür*, 144-146; Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 47-48; and Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 103, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978; and Interview Eric Janotta, 25 May 1979, MHSO, German Collection. For a similar experience in domestic labour, see Interview G. S., June and November 1988, IGB, Nachkriegseliten.

³² Interview F. K., November 1985, IGB, Lusir.

Germany not only relied on massive imports from abroad, but in conjunction with charities also helped place famished children on farms so that the latter could benefit from a few weeks of regular meals. Placements were mostly made within the vicinity of the child's residence, although one aid scheme placed children as far away as Switzerland.³³ In addition, charities in North America, Britain, Sweden and Switzerland widely sent aid packages to occupied Germany. Between 1946 and 1949 five million packages alone were sent from the USA under the aegis of the newly-founded Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (CARE). Initially, CARE acted only as an intermediary to expedite packages from U.S. residents to designated persons in the American and later in the British occupation zones. But the scale of both the need and the size of donations rapidly changed this. Packages were soon sent to "a hungry homeless person in Germany" or "a needy school teacher in Germany" and were highly appreciated by the recipients.³⁴ *Colis Suisse* or CARE packages kept entire families alive. One expellee family received over one hundred CARE packages with everything

³³ Leistungsbericht der Landesstelle Lübeck für die Zeit vom 1.7.47 bis 30.6.48, Carl-Schirren-Gesellschaft (CSG), Hilfsstelle der evangelisch-lutherischen Deutschbalten im Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, Alte Akten II.

³⁴ Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 106, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; Duberg, *Der Junge*, 310-313; Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 56-57; Interview A. W., n.d., IGB, Wustrow; Interview E. H., May and June 1983; and Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB, Lusir; Interview John Werner, 12 May 1977, MHSO, German Collection. On CARE specifically, see Gehard Weyerer, "CARE Packages: Gifts from Overseas to a Defeated and Debilitated Nation," in Detlev Junker, ed. *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990, A Handbook* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 522-528; and on relief work for expellees in general, Gauss/Lemberg, "Das Erwachen," 246-253.

they needed, including “clothing, food, shoes - you name it.”³⁵ As another expellee recalled:

No, these were no times of distress for us. I wrote to Ohio, to my mother’s sister and she sent me fabric; and for my sisters too. She sent flour and we went to get the bags at the port of Hamburg. Lard, corn, she sent us everything so that we could get married. My wedding was great, I was in white and I wore a tiara.³⁶

While the latter expellee obviously fared well thanks to her aunt in the USA, the standard package from CARE and other donors and agencies typically contained foods such as beef in broth, corned beef, margarine, lard, honey, dried raisins, sugar, chocolate, egg powder, whole-milk powder and instant coffee. Needy expellees and others, who received relief packages, obviously appreciated every little bit of help to the point that they exchanged the less nutritious contents of the package for more vital items on the black market. Hence, aid was certainly welcome even if the chocolates and biscuits were exchanged for milk, bread or eggs.³⁷

The hardships caused by the indigence of the post-war years emotionally dragged down the German population. For expellees, it added to the trauma of expulsion and loss. They felt demoralized as a result of being unable to find sufficient food and clothing and from the long hours spent waiting in line, scavenging or begging for naught. In his memoir one expellee emphasized how miserable he felt when, as a boy, he had to go begging for milk every week. Years later he recalled:

³⁵ Von Rosen, *A Baltic Odyssey*, 273.

³⁶ Interview A. W., n.d., IGB, Wustrow. For a similar experience, see also Interview John Werner, 12 May 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

³⁷ Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 106, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

When I refused to go or asked to be replaced by my older brother I always got the same reply: you, as the youngest, you best get people's compassion. Some days it made me so angry that I hid away until my hunger broke every inch of my will.³⁸

What is more, according to their testimonies in memoirs and oral histories, expellees felt deeply humiliated by the way they were forced to get by, day by day ravenous and clad in old and frayed attire. Their clothing, they felt, set them apart from the rest of the population and frequently made them the object of ridicule. Expellees felt laughed at for the shirts and shoes that neither quite matched nor fit their bodies.³⁹ Forced to wear donated clothing, middle and upper-class expellees resented their appearance as 'déclassés.' The aforementioned expellee, who had been released for an offence without charge, recalled how strongly she resented her impoverishment. With little improvement in sight until 1948 she feared to remain "proletarianized" for the rest of her life. Quite typically for a generation of middle and upper-class Germans, who had lost most of their wealth as a result of the war and its aftermath, she loathed that a family of her standing had to wear donated second-hand clothing. As she claimed in her autobiography, she looked terrible and was reluctant to walk around town ashamed as she was to display her indigence.⁴⁰ Moreover, former estate owners and independent farmers felt humiliated when they were forced to work as labourers in order to survive. Contrary to the past, when they were independent and gave out orders, it was they who had to milk cows, collect hay and look after farm animals. This was particularly disheartening for well-

³⁸ H. G., *Aufzeichnungen*, n.d., IGB, Kempowski.

³⁹ Golbeck, *Bis eine Tür*, 146; Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 56-57; Interview Susanne and Ulrich von Harpe, 15 December 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

⁴⁰ Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 57.

educated agriculturalists with extensive experience on large-scale farms characteristic of the eastern parts of the old Reich.⁴¹ Similarly, middle and upper-class women, who had sewn or knitted for leisure in the past, were compelled to use their skills to make a living and felt socially demoted.⁴² No longer able to pay for servants, they were forced to carry out household duties and felt depressed. For example, without the services of her maids, to one upper-class expellee the world after the expulsion seemed “upside down.”⁴³

Confronted everyday with such conditions, Germans and others longed to get away from occupied Germany. Compared to locals, expellees were even more likely to want to emigrate. In 1950, even though expellees only made up 16 percent of West Germany’s population, 56 percent of all inquires at official emigration information offices were made by expellees.⁴⁴ However, the location of this place far away from the rubble of occupied Germany remained vague. As it was, it rested primarily in people’s mind somewhere between Shangri-La and El Dorado as an antipode to the dreadful living conditions of occupied Germany. While the future of Europe, let alone Germany, looked bleak and a bearable life seemed out of the question for the foreseeable future, visions of a land of ‘milk and honey’ appealed and so instilled in expellees some hope and courage.

⁴¹ Kroeger, *Start*, 36; Interview W. P., 11 January 1988, IGB, Wustrow.

⁴² Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 69-74, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

⁴³ Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 57. See also, Margarete von Maydell, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 34, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

⁴⁴ Rundschreiben Nr. 85/1954, Statistik über den Auswanderungsdrang 1953, 5, BAKo, Bundesministerium des Inneren (BMI), Bundesamt für Auswanderung, B 106, file 12436. Unfortunately there are no earlier official surveys enumerating the widespread ‘emigration fever’ among expellees. Steinert cites percentages of up to 75 percent that were, however, purposefully inflated by contemporary German officials, see his *Migration*, 35.

As one expellee put it, when he heard about the empty plains of South America, the quiet settlements near the rain forest and the crystal-clear air of the Andes, he “lapped up the words like prayers from the Holy Land.”⁴⁵ The GIs’ Lucky Strikes and Jeeps whetted, of course, the appetite for the land of plenty across the ocean, as did the contents of the relief packages sent from the USA and elsewhere. Indeed, expellee and aid representatives clearly identified relief packages as a major source for the high levels of ‘emigration fever’ in occupied Germany.⁴⁶ Unlike previous decades, when the lure of the ‘New World’ stood for unlimited opportunities, the hopes that distraught expellees and others had in the early post-war period mainly reflected the harsh realities of day-to-day living and a war-weariness that in the wake of the growing tensions between the Western Allies and the USSR threatened to be further exacerbated. When they thought about distant lands, they did not expect to become rich, earn high wages and acquire large plots of land; on the contrary, the images they entertained were more modest. For example, one young expellee from the Baltic, who sought to get away from a continent that had destroyed his youth, longed for a better future without expecting to fall on heaps of gold. So desperate was he that he hatched out a “march plan” that would bring him from Bremen overland to Southern Europe and the Middle East all the way to South Africa. While he did not elaborate on how he was going to manage this “march,” in preparation he nevertheless set out to learn Spanish, Portuguese and English. This, he thought, would

⁴⁵ Prinz, *Szenenwechsel*, 110.

⁴⁶ Minutes of the pastors’ meeting, Hilfskomitee der Evang. Landeskirche aus Jugoslawien im Hilfswerk der Evang. Kirche Deutschlands, Stuttgart, 11 January 1949, IDGL, Nachlass Franz Hamm, HA 18, Hilfsausschuss/komitee der Evang. Kirche aus Jugoslawien.

cover a good part of the world.⁴⁷ In that he was surely right, but it also exemplified the degree to which he and many others had only a vague idea as to where exactly they wanted to go. Only one thing was sure, namely that it would be a place far from war-torn Europe.

As the example of the aforementioned man from the Baltic shows, expellees were quite willing to go out of their way in order to be able to move abroad. To do so, aside from illegal means including the use of fake identities, expellees attempted to obtain as much information as they could and wrote to the consulates of potential host countries that had already opened missions in Europe. In fact, expellees frequently applied for immigration to more than just one country in order to maximize their chances to qualify for the very few slots available. As of 1947 in the wake of the DP movement some ethnic German expellees attempted to reinstate their pre-war nationalities in the hopes of being able to move abroad. For example, while the aforementioned man from the Baltic failed to do so after he had successfully obtained papers as a stateless person from Bremen's local registration office,⁴⁸ another expellee from the Baltic, who came to Austria in the aftermath of the war, Latvianized her name and later reached the shores of Australia as a DP.⁴⁹ Other expellees took concrete steps toward their aim of emigration

⁴⁷ Kuester to his mother, 8 February 1947, 5 March 1947, 11 May 1945 and 27 July 1947, CBIAS, Correspondence Mathias F. Kuester, Archive Edmonton.

⁴⁸ Kuester to his mother, 17 February 1947, CBIAS, Correspondence Mathias F. Kuester, Archive Edmonton.

⁴⁹ Lisel Gebels to her mother, n.d., CSG, Lisel Gebels, Briefe an die Mutter. There were also other reasons than that of emigration to obtain the status of a DP, notably the higher food rations that DPs received in comparison to the German population. In his study of a group of Danube-Swabian expellees Mathias Beer finds that the latter similarly tried to keep up their Serbian heritage in order to retain the DP status that they originally

and moved to places where they thought their chances of success would be increased. As a way out of occupied Germany one expellee, for instance, tried his luck after Bidault's call for the immigration of expellees to France and elsewhere and moved from the British to the French occupation zone.⁵⁰ To the same end another expellee moved to the Swiss border in the hopes of being able to cross it and ultimately leave Europe.⁵¹ Thanks to his connections in Switzerland as a member of the Baltic gentry his plan ultimately paid off. Yet, while his family sailed for Chile in early 1947, emigration remained an unrealized dream for the vast majority of Germans. Unlike the 'baron from the Baltic' they had to stay in occupied Germany.

However, during the second part of 1945, before the Allied-sanctioned population transfers even started, a series of small expellee relief organizations emerged which promptly took up the issue of international relocation. A group of Baltic-German expellees in northern Germany formed one such organization, the Baltic Relief Committee (BRC), and consolidated the local ad-hoc groupings that had been emerging since April 1945 in areas where the bulk of the German Balts had fled, notably in and around Göttingen, Flensburg, Hamburg, Lübeck, Oldenburg, Lüneburg and Hanover.⁵²

obtained amid the confusion of the early post-war days. Apparently, at that point they were well fed and mainly spoke Serbian and socialized with Serbian officers. However, once their DP status was revoked, they reverted to German and like the rest of the German population began to endure considerable hardship. See Mathias Beer, "Selbstbild und Fremdbild als Faktoren bei der Eingliederung der Flüchtlinge und Vertriebenen nach 1945," in Schraut/Grosser, *Flüchtlingsfrage*, 31-54.

⁵⁰ Kroeger, *Start*, 38-44.

⁵¹ Cecil von Hahn, "Das Salz der Erde: Von den Anfängen baltischer Emigration," *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 9 (1966), 139.

⁵² Bastian Filaretow, *Kontinuität und Wandel: Zur Integration der Deutsch-Balten in die Gesellschaft der BRD* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1990), 286-287.

In October 1945 at the first cross-regional reunion in Lüneburg the BRC issued a memorandum to the British occupation authorities that formally expressed an interest in overseas relocation. As the memorandum stated, “following the loss of all their possessions they [the German-Baltic expellees] live hopeless expellee existences [*Flüchtlingsdasein*] lacking any kind of revenue and housed in emergency accommodation. Without any certain prospects they are compelled to look for a new homeland.”⁵³ This was a clear indication that members of the German-Baltic community wished to leave occupied Germany. But, at that point, the issue of emigration appears to have been controversial. At least, according to a position paper penned by Werner Hasselblatt, a former member-of-parliament of Estonia and leading advocate of German minority rights in Eastern Europe, the “emigration question” came to a head once living conditions further deteriorated over the course of 1945/6. On the one hand, as he summed up the debate, there were those who favoured departure from occupied Germany due to the difficult living conditions and a general sense that they were not accountable for the rise and fall of the Third Reich. On the other hand, there were those that stressed the “pan-German experience” [*gesamtdeutsches Erlebnis*] of National Socialism, war, destruction and expulsion which presumably tied German Balts inextricably to the future of Germany. According to Hasselblatt, the former group predominated. Apparently, at a meeting of German-Balts that he co-chaired 96 percent of the attendants had voted in

⁵³ Baltic Relief Committee, Memorandum über die Baltischen Flüchtlinge, Übersetzung aus dem Englischen, 17 October 1945, CSG, Hilfsstelle der evangelisch-lutherischen Deutschbalten im Hilfswerk der EKD, Alte Akten III.

favour of British citizenship, if able to adopt it.⁵⁴ In any event, by way of concluding, Hasselblatt proposed that the BRC lobby for a limited group movement of German Balts to a single European country. Such a movement, as he claimed in a typical fashion for Nazi ethno-political experts, would be the only way to preserve the historic ties of German Balts to Eastern Europe and their distinct identity.⁵⁵ This was as far as discussions came on the “emigration question” before Allied officials struck a severe blow to the BRC and the nascent expellee relief movement.

In January 1946 British and American occupation officials banned supra-regional expellee organizations such as the BRC for fear that they could potentially seek or abet the reversal of the expulsion and thereby pose a threat to the future peace of Europe. In Munich the Sudeten-German Relief Place and its Silesian counterpart, founded respectively in July and December 1945, were forced to close their doors and cease operation.⁵⁶ In the newly-founded state of North-Rhine-Westphalia expellee organizations incurred the same fate and this largely with the consent of the local state

⁵⁴ Hasselblatt to friends and countrymen, 20 July 1946, BAKo, Nachlass Reinhard Wittram, N 1226, vol. 37. For a similar, though shorter letter, see also Hasselblatt to countrypeople, n.d., CSG, Hilfsstelle der evangelisch-lutherischen Deutschbalten im Hilfswerk der EKD, Alte Akten III.

⁵⁵ Hasselblatt to friends and countrymen, 20 July 1946, BAKo, Nachlass Reinhard Wittram, N 1226, vol. 37. On Nazi ethno-political experts, see in particular Michael Fahlbusch, “The Role and Impact of German Ethno-Political Experts in the SS Reich Security Main Office,” in Ingo Haar, ed. *German Scholars and Ethnic Cleansing 1919-1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 28-50. On Hasselblatt specifically, see Jörg Hackmann, “Werner Hasselblatt (1890 - 1958): Von der estländischen Kulturautonomie zur nationalsozialistischen Bevölkerungspolitik,” in Gert von Pistohlkors und Matthias Weber, eds. *Staatliche Einheit und nationale Vielfalt im Baltikum* (Munich: Oldenburg, 2005), 175-206.

⁵⁶ Boehm, “Gruppenbildung,” 524-526; Franz J. Bauer, *Flüchtlinge und Flüchtlingspolitik in Bayern, 1945-1950* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1982), 252-267.

authorities who, similar to British and American officials, feared the rise of revanchist organizations and therefore thought it best to nip the creation of a German irredenta in the bud.⁵⁷ As for the BRC in northern Germany, the ban was brought about by the revocation of the DP status for German-Baltic expellees. In March 1946 British occupation officials declared German Balts to be German citizens and consequently signalled the end of the BRC.⁵⁸ Pursuant to the Allies' revocation of Nazi Germany's international treaties, German-Baltic expellees were initially thought to be stateless people. However, according to the bilateral resettlement treaties of 1939 between the Baltic States and Nazi Germany, German-Baltic resettlers were first denaturalized before they individually received German citizenship on arrival in occupied Poland. By contrast, for the small minority of German Balts that stayed in their home country until the Soviet advance of 1944, German citizenship was generally conferred to them by decree following Hitler's offensive on the USSR. Hence, after the war the latter qualified for DP status, while the former did not.⁵⁹

Yet, the Allied ban neither put an end to the expellee relief movement nor abruptly terminated the discussions on the emigration question. On the contrary, under the umbrella of Protestant or Catholic aid organizations expellees found powerful sponsors able and authorized to accommodate organized expellee groups. In fact, while the doors of secular expellee relief organizations closed, new expellee relief organizations

⁵⁷ Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *Vertriebenenverbände in Nordrhein-Westfalen, 1945-1954* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1986), 18.

⁵⁸ Filaretow, *Kontinuität*, 310.

⁵⁹ This reclassification occurred later in the American occupation zone and thus added to the confusion of German Balts, see Filaretow, *Kontinuität*, 305-316.

emerged, often staffed by the same people, with the added benefit that they could get access to the funds and resources of the church charities. Besides joining the Catholic aid agency Caritas, within the Catholic Church expellee groups were able to establish separate organizations. For example, in early 1946 leading Sudeten-German Catholics, including prelates, politicians and trade unionists, founded the Ackermann Community in Munich. It rapidly spread across Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, the main settlement areas of Sudeten Germans. Similarly in Westphalia, where predominantly expellees from the eastern parts of the Reich arrived, Silesian expellees founded the *Eichendorfgilde* and the *St. Hedwigswerk*.⁶⁰ Within the Protestant Church, which after the split during the Nazi period set up a new central body in August 1945, the Lutheran Church in Germany [*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, EKD*], expellee groups were able to form independent aid committees. These were affiliated with the Church's aid agency, the *Hilfswerk*, which was set up as a separate co-ordinating body in the fall of 1945 and led by Eugen Gerstenmaier, a Nazi opponent and later president of the West German parliament.⁶¹ In March 1946 expellees from the former Yugoslavia were perhaps among the earliest groups to establish an organization as part of the *Hilfswerk*, the Aid

⁶⁰ Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 526-528; Dietmar Meder, *Integration oder Assimilation? Eine Feldstudie über den Beitrag der Kirche zur Integration der Heimatvertriebenen vor Ort in der Diözese Rottenburg* (Stuttgart: Thorbecke, 2000), 12-13; Ian Connor, "The Churches and the Refugee Problem in Bavaria, 1945—1949," *Journal of Contemporary History* 20 (1985), 399-421.

⁶¹ Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 529-530; Hartmut Rudolph, *Evangelische Kirche und Vertriebene, 1945-1972*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1984); Daniela Gniss, *Der Politiker Eugen Gerstenmaier 1906-1986: Eine Biographie* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2005).

Committee of the Lutheran Church of Yugoslavia.⁶² In May 1946 expellees from the Baltic also founded an aid committee under the aegis of the *Hilfswerk*.⁶³ During the subsequent months expellee groups from across Central and Eastern Europe followed, so that by early 1947 there were 24 aid committees affiliated to the *Hilfswerk*.⁶⁴

In line with the Allied ban on expellee organizations the *Hilfswerk* endowed aid committees with tasks which were aimed primarily at the support of social, cultural and religious activities such as the preservation of existing church bonds and assistance with the search for missing family and parish members. In addition, aid committees were also allowed to inform, support and register expellees interested in emigrating abroad.⁶⁵ Since the outset the *Hilfswerk* had indeed endorsed emigration as part of its relief work. However, it was not until the emergence of the aid committees in the first half of 1946 that the head of the *Hilfswerk*, Eugen Gerstenmaier, outlined his organization's basic tenets on emigration. As he wrote in May 1946, in light of the Potsdam Agreements the *Hilfswerk* could not go against the integration of expellees on German grounds, but it could support "ethnic group migrations" ["*stammesmäßige Auswanderung*"] to help preserve the characteristic and "organic unity" of viable German "living and work

⁶² Hamm to Hilfswerk der EKD, 23 March 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file 1; Mathias Beer, "Selbsthilfeinitiativen der Flüchtlinge und Vertriebenen: Die Entstehung des Hilfskomitees der Evangelischen Kirche aus Jugoslawien mit Sitz in Stuttgart," *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte* 55 (1996), 311-315.

⁶³ Hilfskomitee der Deutschbalten to Kanzlei der EKD, 10 May 1946; and von Gersdorff to Girgensohn, 11 June 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file 1.

⁶⁴ Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 529-530; Rudolph, *Evangelische Kirche*, vol. 1.

⁶⁵ Von Gersdorff to Girgensohn, 11 June 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file 1.

communities.”⁶⁶ The *Hilfswerk* subsequently contacted authorities in occupied Germany and abroad, inquiring about potential immigration opportunities. As one letter read, there were “pressing needs in Germany, in particular, for expellees.”⁶⁷ Later on, in early 1947 the *Hilfswerk* established a combined commission with the Catholic aid agency Caritas in order to promote the emigration of expellees. Moreover, also in 1947, the *Hilfswerk* started to publish a separate section in its new monthly periodical entitled “The Emigrant.” It published articles on overseas emigration in the past and present, kept readers informed about current legislation and issued profiles outlining the climate, population composition, government and the economy of selected countries in the Americas and elsewhere.

Not surprisingly, under the protection of the churches talk about emigration abounded among expellee relief organizations. While Silesia’s Protestant bishop reportedly had hopes to transplant members of his diocese to Canada,⁶⁸ aid committees busily worked toward the breakdown of emigration barriers and drafted relocation plans and/or released pamphlets praising their group as valuable settlers worthy of being granted admission overseas. Sent out to departments across occupied Germany and abroad, one such pamphlet landed on the desk of immigration officials in Ottawa. It praised the virtues of Protestant expellees from Bessarabia (Moldavia), Dobruja (Romania, Bulgaria) and the Black Sea Area (southern Ukraine) who boasted, according

⁶⁶ Gerstenmaier, Memorandum betreffend Flüchtlingshilfe / Auswanderung den Herren Bevollmächtigten und Hauptgeschäftsführer des Hilfswerk der EKD, 27 May 1946, ADW, Zentralstelle Büro Ost, Berlin, ZBB, vol. 211.

⁶⁷ Hennig to Immigration Branch, 29 April 1946, NAC, Immigration Branch Papers, RG 76, vol. 31, file 682, part 5.

⁶⁸ Rudolph, *Evangelische Kirche*, vol. 1, 151.

to the pamphlet, a proven record of colonization. Whilst outlining the historical background of the said German communities and their difficult living conditions in occupied Germany, the pamphlet suggested that Canada still offered room for a “most arduous people” who were overwhelmingly of rural background with experience in farming as well as in skilled trades.⁶⁹ The Aid Committee of the German Balts likewise drafted a pamphlet that proposed the relocation of twenty to twenty-five thousand German Balts to South Africa. As the pamphlet argued, German Balts had owned over 30 percent of Latvia’s industries and more than 50 percent in Estonia despite the fact they were only a minority of four percent in the former and 1.7 percent in the latter. Consequently, or so the pamphlet claimed, German Balts possessed the know-how necessary to any industrializing nation.⁷⁰ In addition, thanks to the support and funds of the *Hilfswerk*, the Aid Committee of the German Balts established a separate “emigration commission” with an office in Hamburg which collected names and addresses of aspiring German-Baltic emigrants, issued a newsletter and organized information meetings for members scattered across the British and American occupation zones.⁷¹

However, support from the churches came with strings attached that greatly impinged on the work of expellee relief groups. Besides the endorsement of selective

⁶⁹ Memorandum by the Aid Committee for Lutheran Germans from Bessarabia, Dobruja and the Black Sea Area, 18 October 1948, see in NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 31, file 682, part 5.

⁷⁰ Hasselblatt to von Gersdorff, 5 November 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file II.

⁷¹ Joachim von Hahn, “Rückblick auf die Entstehung und Durchführung der Baltischen Einwanderung nach Kanada nach dem Jahre 1945,” in Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society, *Zwanzig Jahre Baltischer Hilfsverein in Kanada* (London/Vancouver: private publication, 1968), 21-22. See also Mathias F. Kuester, *Bricks and Mortar to a History of the Baltic Germans for Canadians* (Edmonton: private publication, 1997), 75.

groups,⁷² the *Hilfswerk* was far from fully supporting the emigration of expellees. Indeed, while the *Hilfswerk* generously lent its support to aid committees and some of their emigration plans, Gerstenmaier's organization identified the expellee issue primarily as a problem of Allied occupation policy which severely limited Germany's economic development. In August 1946, Gerstenmaier plainly explained what was at stake: "unless a highly developed export industry is being developed [in occupied Germany], human beings must be moved to places where living and work opportunities exist."⁷³ In practice this meant that the *Hilfswerk* primarily promoted the reconstruction of a viable and ultimately independent German state, stressing the need for a young work force. In fact, in light of the heavy population losses as a consequence of the war and its aftermath, expellees were seen as a particularly important cohort for the reconstruction of German society. Unlike locals, whose female and older cohorts had suffered fewer losses, expellees as a whole had a more balanced age and gender distribution.⁷⁴ From the onset the *Hilfswerk* therefore deliberately kept a low public profile about possible overseas emigration of expellees and other Germans, if only to avoid, as Gerstenmaier suggested, a "tide" of letters from interested parties.⁷⁵ In early 1947 Gerstenmaier reminded his staff

⁷² Beer, "Selbsthilfeinitiativen," 283-312.

⁷³ Memorandum an Hilfskomitees für ehemalige deutsche Kirchen Osteuropas, 3 August 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file 1.

⁷⁴ This argument assumes that military losses were roughly equal between expellees and locals. For a similar line of reasoning, see also Göttinger Arbeitskreis, *Auswanderung*, 2-3. In view of the loss of 5 million soldiers German officials in general held strong reservations against emigration for fear of a further deterioration of the population balance in occupied Germany. See Steinert, *Migration*, 28.

⁷⁵ Gerstenmaier to Herren Bevollmächtigten und Hauptgeschäftsführer des Hilfswerks der EKD, 27 May 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro Ost, Berlin, ZBB, vol. 224.

that “every appearance of offering German emigrants to overseas countries be avoided.”⁷⁶ Moreover, quite tellingly, in the post-war period emigration bureaus sponsored by the *Hilfswerk* and other agencies were popularly known as *Reichswarnungsamt* (‘German Warning Office’). While providing information, emigration bureaus systematically cautioned individuals against high-flying expectations in distant and largely unknown lands.⁷⁷ This cautionary tone similarly pervaded publications issued by the *Hilfswerk* or Caritas. For example, in a commemorative publication of the Protestant Emigration Office in Hamburg the introduction warned readers about the throngs of utterly impoverished emigrants that had come back in the past for want of welfare benefits overseas.⁷⁸ One article in the Catholic press clearly intended to discourage readers from emigrating and detailed a long list of obstacles that potential emigrants would have to face if they were to move abroad. The list included, among others, debts incurred as a result of the application process, medical examinations and travel fares and language problems which, it rightly claimed, would usually lead to badly paid jobs despite one’s extensive experience and training. As the article concluded, in the ‘New’ as in the ‘Old World’ life in the upcoming years was to be a “bitter fight for life.”⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Schröder to Zentralbüro Ost, 20 March 1947, ADW, Zentralbüro Ost, Berlin, ZBB, vol. 224.

⁷⁷ Jan Philipp Sternberg, “Fernweh verwalten: Staatliche und kirchliche Auswanderer-Beratungsstellen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,” in Jochen Oltmer, ed. *Migration steuern und verwalten: Deutschland vom späten 19. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Göttingen: V and R unipress, 2003), 354.

⁷⁸ *Unser Weg: Ein Bericht der Evangelisch-lutherischen Auswanderermission Hamburg anlässlich ihres 75. Jahresfestes* (Hamburg: Ev.-luth. Auswanderermission, 1948), 8.

⁷⁹ *Christ Unterwegs* 2: 9 (September 1948), 23.

Guided by two assumptions, the *Hilfswerk* only supported the emigration of a small number of specific expellee groups. Firstly, the *Hilfswerk* thereby hoped to placate widespread calls for emigration. As the head of the *Hilfswerk* emigration branch explained, “psychologically a lot could be gained” if the organization were to succeed in placing one to two thousand expellee families in Brazil, Argentina or South Africa.⁸⁰ Secondly, the one or two thousand expellee families that the head of the emigration branch referred to, were to be drawn primarily from among the peasant ethnic German expellee families from outside the Reich. Among German officials these were believed to be particularly difficult to integrate due to their presumed pre-modern lifestyles. Both the *Hilfswerk* and Caritas favoured group migrations so as to maintain family and community ties and help counteract personal and social difficulties resulting from the relocation process.⁸¹ But beneath the support of this type of limited migration, there were two further motives believed to be in Germany’s national interests. On the one hand, these peasant ethnic German expellee groups were expected to be capable of preserving their German identity as they had in Eastern Europe when they formed vibrant and self-sustaining diasporas.⁸² Church officials and others seamlessly drew on Nazi ideology and idealized these groups as industrious and humble settlers somehow indelibly tied to

⁸⁰ Schröder to Zentralbüro Ost, 20 March 1947, ADW, Zentralbüro Ost, Berlin, ZBB, vol. 224.

⁸¹ Similarly, see also *Unser Weg*, 8-10 as well as the pamphlet by the Aid Committee of the Lutheran German Balts, Hasselblatt to von Gersdorff, 5 November 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro des Hilfswerks, ZB, vol. 922, file II.

⁸² Gerstenmaier to Herren Bevollmächtigten und Hauptgeschäftsführer des Hilfswerks der EKD, 27 May 1946, ADW, Zentralbüro Ost, Berlin, ZBB, vol. 224.

the land and innately apt to colonize.⁸³ Thus, while in 1939/40 the Nazis assigned ethnic German expellee groups to build-up the 'Greater German Reich' in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe, post-war officials saw in them a group of colonizing people worthy of assistance in settling in the Americas. On the other hand, these peasant ethnic expellee groups were deemed irrelevant to the reunification of the four occupation zones and the former Prussian provinces east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers. As German officials beyond the *Hilfswerk* quite generally argued, their departure from occupied Germany would not undermine claims for reunification in a future peace treaty that would substitute the provisional arrangements of the Potsdam Agreements. From that perspective peasant ethnic German expellee groups were a people that could be done without.⁸⁴

⁸³ See also chapter I, p. 37.

⁸⁴ The Potsdam Agreements of August 1945 left the final determination of Germany's borders to a future peace treaty leaving German officials a window of opportunity to seek the reunification of Germany and, by extension, the return of substantial numbers of expellees. For the wide use of this argument among German officials in the early post-war period, see in particular Steinert, *Migration*, 28.

Relief Frenzy

Seemingly every letter reaching expellees and other members of the German ethnic community in Canada from relatives and friends in occupied Germany contained an account of the difficult living conditions in the 'Old World' and, consequently, a plea for assistance. The letters received by the Cardinal family in Toronto were, for instance, no different and provided detailed insights into the daily struggle for survival of their relatives who had landed near Flensburg in northern Germany after a long trek from East Prussia in early 1945. As one letter pointed out, the family lacked the most basic utensils for cooking, let alone vegetables, meat or other groceries to eat. Moreover, the letter went on to describe the cumbersome arrangements that the lack of adequate housing entailed for a family of three generations whose communal life was in two quite small rooms.⁸⁵ Similar mail also reached the Sudeten Germans in North America. One letter, for instance, described at length the lack of resources in occupied Germany, especially food, clothing and firewood, but also more trivial items such as toothbrushes, pans, cutlery, pencils or paper.⁸⁶ Countless letters reached Canadian residents from anonymous senders who had obtained addresses through one means or another and pleaded for assistance. Such letters typically claimed that senders had "lost everything" as a result of the expulsion and consequently lived an impoverished life in occupied Germany on the brink of starvation. As one young expellee woman wrote, having found a Canadian address on the food package that a neighbour in her camp had received: "you [the

⁸⁵ Cardinal to his mother, brother, and sister-in-law, Mansonville, June 7, 1946, NAC, Clive Helmut von Cardinal Papers, MG 30 E 368, vol. 1, file Correspondance 1945-1958.

⁸⁶ Else Reilich to Augsten, 29 June 1947, ASG, Nachlass Frank J. Reilich, file 471.

addressee] have made so many Germans happy in this expellee camp that I was wondering whether you would mind surprising my mother and myself with some clothing and food too. [...] If I may be specific, I also urgently need a coat, a dress and shoes size 39.”⁸⁷ One Lutheran pastor, who in late 1947 received up to twenty such letters a day, noted that although names and signatures changed, the pleas still bore the same text and handwriting. Members of his congregation apparently similarly complained about serial letters from unknown expellees in occupied Germany.⁸⁸ Indeed, this phenomenon became so widespread that leading relief officials actively intervened, calling the Canadian public to disregard any such “begging letters.” On tour across the U.S. and Canada the head *Hilfswerk* took up the issue of the “begging letters” during a speech in Winnipeg in April 1948, condemning the serial letters and asking Canadian residents to ignore the pleas and donate instead goods and money to established charities. Conditions in occupied Germany, so the head of the *Hilfswerk* explained, had deteriorated to the point that exploitation and a “Darwinian” struggle for life had become part of ordinary living. Apparently, amid a thriving underground economy, “some people receive[d] twenty packages a day whilst neighbours [were] starving.”⁸⁹

In the face of such terrifying news, expellees in Canada had no desire to relocate to occupied Germany. For the Sudeten-German social democrats in exile, the party leadership actually obtained in 1946 the “right of repatriation,” which meant that exiled party members were able to apply for relocation to occupied Germany at the

⁸⁷ Letter by Hildegard Bednarski, 18 January 1948, AWD, ZB, file 365.

⁸⁸ Hahn to Hilfswerk des EKD, 21 April 1948, *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *News Bulletin of the Canadian Lutheran World Relief*, 5 May 1948, 3.

expense of the Allied repatriation fund, “just like German citizens returning from exile,” as the party leader, Wenzel Jaksch, put it.⁹⁰ However, three years after the end of the war as few as 40 of the 3,000 members-in-exile had moved to occupied Germany.⁹¹ Czechoslovak authorities certainly viewed the ‘repatriations’ with great suspicion and, fearing the build-up of revanchist forces, attempted to stall the relocation of Sudeten-German social democrats to occupied Germany. Wenzel Jaksch, the party leader, is a case in point. He only managed to move to the American occupation zone in February 1949 after a concerted effort involving German, British and American trade union leaders.⁹² However, in general, it was doubtless the adverse living conditions that kept the overwhelming majority of the Sudeten Germans away from occupied Germany. Among the Sudeten Germans in Canada not a single person ‘repatriated’ to occupied Germany.⁹³ Most thought that such a move would be “sheer madness,” as a Sudeten German living at the time in Toronto recalled.⁹⁴ Others, who were still wavering, like a young bilingual German-Czech refugee serving in the Czech wing of the British Royal Air Force, were finally convinced by their appalling experiences in occupied Germany. Stationed in Munich, the aforementioned German-Czech refugee had seen, as he wrote, the “*Herrenvolk*” in hunger, hoarding, stealing and at his knees, “picking up the fag-ends

⁹⁰ Rundbrief Treuegemeinschaft, London Representative of the Sudeten-German Social-Democratic Party, 24 November 1946, SudAr, Nachlass Wenzel Jaksch, F 12a.

⁹¹ Wenzel Jaksch, Some facts and arguments about the hold-up of my permit for the U.S. zone in Germany, n.d., SudAr, Nachlass Wenzel Jaksch, D 53.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

of the smokes that we were throwing away!” Consequently, at the end of his service the young man went to England and later emigrated to Canada.⁹⁵

The majority of the Sudeten Germans in exile were no different from the majority of the German émigrés. In total, only about 30,000 of the 500,000 émigrés returned to occupied Germany. Most of the émigrés were Jewish and had no desire to relocate to a country that had barbarously decimated European Jewry.⁹⁶ Similarly, as we have seen in chapter one, by 1945 the Sudeten Germans had lived for a prolonged time in exile and rebuilt their lives and careers under often difficult circumstances so that they were not willing to relocate to a country in shambles with little or no prospect for long-term peace, let alone economic stability.⁹⁷ As one Sudeten German remarked, by the end of World War II they all had come of age and felt too old to start anew under very difficult conditions.⁹⁸ Resentments against remigrants, who were widely perceived as cowards and traitors by the German population,⁹⁹ surely also played a role, especially if they had served in the Allied forces.¹⁰⁰

For the Sudeten Germans in exile there were two further reasons to stay away from occupied Germany. Firstly, most had had little connection with German society and

⁹⁵ Herbert Barber, *Search for Freedom: Some Memories* (Toronto: Sigma, 1999), 51.

⁹⁶ Marita Krauss, *Heimkehr in ein fremdes Land: Geschichte der Remigration nach 1945* (Munich: Beck, 2001), 24-71

⁹⁷ As a rule of thumb, it has been suggested that that the more political the reason for emigration, the less likely remigration to Germany was, see Krauss, *Heimkehr*, 24-71.

⁹⁸ Dill to Reilich, 30 July 1945, ASG, Nachlass Frank J. Reilich, file 474.

⁹⁹ Krauss, *Heimkehr*, 24-71.

¹⁰⁰ Almar Reitzner, for instance, who after the war became a leading Sudeten-German social democrats in Bavaria, time and again heard harsh criticism for his service in the British Royal Air Force and his involvement in the carpet bombing of German cities. See his *Das Paradies lässt auf sich warten: Erinnerungen eines Sozialdemokraten* (Munich: Langen Müller, 1984), 51.

politics until the onset of the Sudeten Nazi party in the mid-1930s. Many of them were born in the days of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and looked to Austria and Vienna as the main point of reference. Politically, they felt more at ease with the various strands of Austrian socialism drawing inspiration from such figures as Otto Bauer, Karl Renner, Max Adler and Rudolf Hilferding.¹⁰¹ Secondly, like other émigrés the Sudeten Germans felt that from abroad they were able to better help relatives and friends in occupied Germany than if they were to join them and most likely become a burden to them for the initial period of adaptation. After all, work abounded in the booming economies of North America and in Canada rationing was gradually being phased out following the end of hostilities. The few restrictions that remained in place thereafter served primarily for the reconstruction of Europe and the stabilization of the world market's supply of primary goods.¹⁰² Even Sudeten Germans, who remained in the backwoods of B.C., gained a comparatively comfortable position by the end of the war. The construction of the Trans-American Highway to Alaska in the early 1940s improved access to local markets and thus increased revenues, especially from milk.¹⁰³ In short, as one Sudeten German quite evocatively wrote to a friend in Bavaria, from abroad he could better provide the "fodder" for her than by relocating to occupied Germany.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection; Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 31.

¹⁰² Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owsram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991), 539-621.

¹⁰³ Andrew Amstaetter, *Tomslake: History of the Sudeten Germans in Canada* (Saanichton: Hancock House, 1978), 56.

¹⁰⁴ Paul to Guenzl, 18 March 1947, ASG, Nachlass Ernst Paul, file 1163.

The Sudeten Germans and other members of the German-Canadian community tried to help relatives and friends in occupied Germany as best as they could. Besides remittances in 'hard cash,' especially U.S. dollars, they sent packages filled with food, clothing or any other goods that were desperately needed through the normal postal route which allowed for a freightage of up to eleven pounds. One family, for instance, spent practically every weekend in 1946 and 1947 preparing and sending packages for the many requests they received from across the Atlantic. To save time, they soon started sending "standard packages" with items they considered most useful such as canned meat, milk powder, starch and, as ersatz currency, cigarettes.¹⁰⁵ It was no different for Henry Weisbach, who only wished he had more money to spare to better help his relatives and friends in occupied Germany. Every fortnight, he sent packages to his brother in the Soviet occupation zone, to his brother-in-law in the British occupation zone and to his parents and in-laws in the American occupation zone.¹⁰⁶ That the Weisbachs and others had considerable obstacles to overcome hardly reduced their endeavours to assist. Except for the British occupation zone, during most of 1946 there was no other direct postal service available to Canadian residents wishing to send packages to occupied Germany so that they had to try to get packages forwarded by friends and relatives in the British occupation zone or use private import/export companies or non-governmental aid agencies as intermediaries. Alternatively, some of the Sudeten Germans in Hamilton short-circuited postal constraints and sent packages to the American occupation zone from across the nearby U.S. border. On top of this, some of

¹⁰⁵ Else Reilich to Augsten, 29 June 1947, ASG, Nachlass Frank J. Reilich, file 471.

¹⁰⁶ Weisbach to Kögler, 15 October 1946, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 952.

the Sudeten Germans in Canada also stepped in for their comrades in the United Kingdom, who were unable to assist their friends and relatives in occupied Germany due to extensive rationing on the British Isles. While comrades in the United Kingdom thus remitted cash to Canada, Sudeten Germans in Canada closed the transnational circle of assistance and sent packages to occupied Germany.¹⁰⁷

Beyond the individual assistance of friends and relatives, donations to a series of organizations offered another way to come to the aid of expellees and others in occupied Germany. However, like their American counterparts, Canadian relief agencies were at first kept out of occupied Germany in line with Allied policy to cover the massive needs of formerly Nazi-occupied countries first. Only after the end of February 1946 were aid organizations allowed to enter the American occupation zone and only as of June/July 1946 did CARE receive permission to take up its work in the British and American occupation zones.¹⁰⁸ Although CARE soon thereafter opened an office in Ottawa and until 1951 raised donations in the amount of 3.2 million U.S. dollars,¹⁰⁹ from spring 1946 onward, Canadian residents had the possibility of donating to multiple other agencies. And so they did. Among the relatively small number of Sudeten Germans modest donations were made to the New York branch of the German Workers' Welfare [*Arbeiterwohlfahrt*] which provided relief to Nazi victims in occupied Germany and in

¹⁰⁷ Kögler to Weisbach, 12 October 1946; Weisbach to Kögler, 15 October 1946; and Weisbach to Kögler, n.d. [ca. November 1946], ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 952. Gabriele Stüber, "Kanadische Deutschlandhilfe in den ersten Jahren nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg," *Zeitschrift für Kanada-Studien* 6:2 (1986), 45.

¹⁰⁸ Weyerer, "CARE Packages," 522-527.

¹⁰⁹ From the Canadian donations five out of eight parcels apparently went to German recipients. In the USA CARE raised well over 100 million U.S. dollars during that time. See Stüber, "Kanadische Deutschlandhilfe," 45.

particular to persecuted trade-unionists and social democrats.¹¹⁰ In addition, the Sudeten Germans were also active in building Canada's only secular aid agency for needy Germans, the Canadian Society for German Relief (CSGR). Together with a group of Mennonites in Kitchener several Sudeten Germans from Hamilton kick-started the CSGR and drafted a charter that expressed the organization's aim to "alleviate human suffering among the German people, especially among the sick, the aged, the children and expelled persons."¹¹¹ The Society's bulletin regularly published what it viewed as the "world's greatest refugee problem" which, it claimed in one issue, the North American press often ignored.¹¹² After its founding, the Society rapidly spread and incorporated branches based in Montreal, Toronto, Osoyoos and Vancouver. All in all, however, the Society's relief work remained limited as the organization never exceeded more than 1,500 members and until 1954, when the organization ceased its relief work, raised only 150,000 Canadian dollars.¹¹³

By comparison, religious relief organizations were of far greater importance, in particular the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). In 1946 it sent the equivalent of

¹¹⁰ Weisbach to CFF, n.d. [ca 1947], NAC, Sudetenklub Vorwärts Papers, MG 28 V 6, vol. 2, file CCF; Sudetenklub Hamilton - 30 Jahre Pflichterfuellung, *Forward* 23: 9/10 (September/October 1971), 7.

¹¹¹ *Forward*, 22: 9/10 (September/October 1970), 23; Constitution of the Canadian Society for German Relief, n.d., Archives of Ontario (AO), Multicultural History Society of Ontario Papers (F 1405), Klaus Bongart Papers, MFN 295, A1, reel 1.

¹¹² *Bulletin of the Canadian Society of for Germany*, September 1949, 1.

¹¹³ Stüber, "Kanadische Deutschlandhilfe," 50-52; Gottlieb Leibbrandt, *Canadian German Society: 25 Jahre caritative und kulturelle Arbeit des Hilfswerks der Deutsch-Kanadiers* (Waterloo: private publication, 1972); idem, *Little Paradise: Aus Geschichte und Leben der Deutschkanadier in der County Waterloo, Ontario, 1800-1975* (Kitchener: Allprint Company Ltd., 1977), 357-360; Interview Clive Cardinal, 9 November 1986, NAC, Clive Helmut von Cardinal Interview, Audio Accession 1987-0157 C 5865.

800,000 Canadian dollars worth of foodstuffs to occupied Germany and in both 1946 and 1947 it constituted the *Hilfswerk*'s single most important donor. Founded in the USA in 1920 to provide food for Mennonites in the Soviet Union, the MCC set up its headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania, and in 1944 opened a branch in Kitchener. The first MCC representatives began their work in occupied Germany immediately after American occupation officials allowed their entry in March 1946. They organized soup kitchens, placed children in need on farms and set up community centres for expellees and other homeless Germans.¹¹⁴ Besides the MCC, the relief organization of Canada's Lutheran Churches raised well over half a million Canadian dollars in addition to the sponsorships that individual congregations arranged with counterparts in occupied Germany. Already in June 1945 the two main Lutheran Churches in Canada (Missouri Synod and United Lutheran Church) sought permission to send relief goods to occupied Germany, but the Canadian government declined on the grounds that without a peace treaty, Canada officially still remained at war with Germany. Officials from the Lutheran Churches therefore repeatedly pressed the government in Ottawa to allow for humanitarian aid in occupied Germany pointing out specifically the "terrible and pitiful needs" of many expellees.¹¹⁵ In March 1946 Canada's Lutheran churches founded the Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) with headquarters in Winnipeg and branches

¹¹⁴ Stüber, "Kanadische Deutschlandhilfe," 48-50; John C. Unruh, *In the Name of Christ: A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and its Service, 1920-1951* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1952), 102-174.

¹¹⁵ See, for example, the letter to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, Meinzen to King, 18 January 1946, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief Papers, MG 28 V 120, vol. 22, file general correspondence.

in Kitchener and Montreal. Aiming primarily to aid expellees, the CLWR subsequently raised funds to buy foodstuffs for the *Hilfswerk* in occupied Germany.¹¹⁶

For all of these groups, secular or religious, relief work to occupied Germany seamlessly led to the campaigning against the ban on German immigration that had been in place since the beginning of World War II. Both humanitarian assistance and immigration rapidly became two parts of the same relief effort, not least because German-Canadian relief workers stationed in occupied Germany in 1946 considered immigration a viable solution to come to the help of expellees in distress. Pressure from Canadian residents, who frequently wished for the admission of close relatives left stranded in occupied Germany, further fuelled this campaign. The Sudeten Germans had already hatched out relocation plans months before the end of the hostilities in Europe. It was, as one of their leaders in Canada claimed, the only way that they would be able “to save a larger number of good citizens from misery.”¹¹⁷ In June 1945, while in Europe the first concrete steps were taken to bring several hundred Sudeten-German antifascists directly from Czechoslovakia to Sweden using the Red Cross, plans were floated among the leaders of the Sudeten-German refugees in exile in England and Canada that suggested the resettlement of expelled Sudeten Germans to Canada, “linked up with little industrial projects [...] under the clear aspect of assimilation.”¹¹⁸ In July 1945 the

¹¹⁶ Art Grenke, “Canadian Lutheran World Relief,” *The Archivist* 15:6 (1988), 12-14; and Stüber, “Kanadische Deutschlandhilfe,” 46-48.

¹¹⁷ Wanka to Jaksch, 15 April 1945, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 18.

¹¹⁸ Jaksch to Wanka, 18 June 1945, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 18. On the Swedish ‘rescue mission’ organized by Sudeten Germans in exile in

Sudeten Germans in Tupper Creek met with the community's supervising railway officials and gained their support for the "possible necessity to further the immigration of a large number of compatriots." Nine months later a select group of parliamentarians, government officials, German-Canadian dignitaries and pastors of various ethnic German congregations received a brochure funded by the CPR and penned by Willi Wanka, one of the Sudeten-German leaders, calling for the admission to Canada of the "democratically-minded Sudeten Germans, who have proved to be very valuable settlers and loyal to Canada." While sternly criticizing Czechoslovakia's deportation policy ('*odsun*') and the Potsdam Agreements, the author extensively elaborated on the achievements of Sudeten Germans in the "wilderness" of north-eastern B.C. and northern Saskatchewan and thus vouched for the admission of relatives and friends. This, as the author claimed, was the main aim of the newly-founded Committee for the Relief of Democratic Sudeten Refugees.¹¹⁹ On the ground in Czechoslovakia, these first attempts were taken seriously to the point that German antifascists set out to prepare their departure to Canada. In late 1945, as antifascists in Czechoslovakia were still negotiating their transfer to occupied Germany, a local German antifascist group in Bodenbach (Podmokly) was apparently drawing up plans to move abroad, whilst neighbouring antifascist groups prepared for the relocation to the American

conjunction with the Swedish government and trade unions, see Martin, *...nicht spurlos*', 81-116.

¹¹⁹ Willi Wanka, *Twice Victim of Munich: The Tragedy of the Democratic Sudeten Germans* (Tupper Creek: private publication, 1946), 5; see also Memorandum by Willi Wanka introduced by Margarete Ray, n.d., NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 18.; on CPR funding, see Wanka to Jaksch, 6 July 1945, *ibid.*

and Soviet occupation zones.¹²⁰

Among the religious relief groups the Mennonites similarly pressed for the relocation of Mennonite expellees from occupied Germany as a form of humanitarian assistance. As early as February 1946, the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization (CMBC) requested admission for a group of just over 400 Mennonites, who in late 1945 had come from occupied Germany to the Netherlands claiming Dutch citizenship. However, even though a quarter of these Mennonites had close relatives in Canada, Ottawa's immigration officials denied the request since no definitive policy had yet been drawn up by the Canadian government on the immigration of refugees and displaced persons from Europe.¹²¹ As a result, while the CMBC continued to lobby for the admission of Mennonites to Canada, the group of 400 expellees moved to Paraguay under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees (IGCR).¹²² As a senior MCC official present in the Netherlands wrote:

I myself was quite surprised at some who just couldn't face waiting for the door to Canada to open. [...] I can understand their desire to take the first opportunity that presents itself to escape the terrible situation in Europe. Many of them, who had already endured so much, wouldn't take the risk of an indefinite wait, and headed for the first open door. Who could blame them?¹²³

¹²⁰ Koegler an Weisbach, 30 December 1945, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 952.

¹²¹ Joliffe, Memorandum for file, 22 February 1946, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 176, file 58764, part 15, microfilm C-7331.

¹²² See notably MCC to Immigration Branch, 19 March 1946; Resolution by the Canadian Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church, 4 July 1946; and MCC to Mackenzie King, 9 August 1946, *ibid.* For the group of 400 Mennonites moved from the Netherlands to Paraguay, see Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, ch. 4.

¹²³ As quoted in Herbert and Maureen Klassen, *Ambassador to His People: C.F. Klassen and the Russian Mennonite Refugees* (Winnipeg: Kindred Press, 1990), 151.

By the end of 1946, the CLWR similarly resolved that immigration be part of its relief strategy for occupied Germany, urged by a group of pastors from the Western Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri. In a resolution, dated October 22, 1946, the latter had asked that the CLWR “concern itself most earnestly in the matter of securing admission into Canada of close relatives of our church members” all the more since Mennonite, Jewish and other interested groups in the country were doing all in their power to help their people in this respect. This, besides reassuring church members that something was being done, would “numerically” and “materially” benefit the Lutheran Church in years to come.¹²⁴ A few months later, the Western Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri upped the ante and directly petitioned the Prime Minister for the admission to Canada of close relatives from occupied Germany.¹²⁵ In so doing, Canadian Lutherans hoped to provide at least some help to a limited group of people in distress in occupied Germany, although the desire to expand the church’s membership clearly played a role in this endeavour.¹²⁶

Even so, every attempt made by German-Canadian community groups whether through the Sudeten committee, the CMBC or the CWLR failed to get past the offices of immigration officials in Ottawa. Since 1931, when the Great Depression set its mark on Canadian immigration legislation, officials brought the influx of immigrants to a

¹²⁴ Tavistock to Schneider, 3 November 1946, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief Papers, MG 28 V 120, file General Correspondance 1946-1952, microfilm H-1391.

¹²⁵ Ontario Conference Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Submission to the Prime Minister, 7 February 1947; and Erdmann to Herzer, 8 February 1947, *ibid.*

¹²⁶ For a similar point of view, see also Angelika E. Sauer, “Christian Charity, Government Policy and German Immigration to Canada and Australia, 1947-1952” *Canadian Issues Themes Canadiens* (1996), 159-180.

virtual standstill. With a few notable exceptions, the 1931 legislation only allowed for the admission of a) (white) British and American subjects with sufficient capital or assured employment, b) agriculturalists with sufficient means to farm in Canada and c) wives and unmarried children of Canadian residents capable of caring for a family. In addition, with the exception of the United Kingdom, in 1945 Canadian immigration offices in Europe had not yet been re-opened and shipping was chiefly reserved for the repatriation of war veterans whose re-integration into civilian life Canadian officials anxiously anticipated. Thus, despite a flood of requests from ethnic community groups, immigration officials only in May 1946 responded to the growing refugee crisis in Europe and cautiously relaxed the country's strict admission policy. Henceforth further categories of close relatives were to qualify for entry, including parents, unmarried children, siblings or orphaned nephews and nieces of Canadian residents prepared to care for them. Moreover, and specifically targeting Europe's displaced persons, prospective immigrants no longer in possession of valid passports were eligible for Canadian visas as long as they could provide documents that established the bearer's identity. In terms of immigration this was as far as Canadian officials were prepared to go until May 1947, when the government enacted new legislation that amounted to a sea change in policy and led to the mass arrival of Displaced Persons.¹²⁷

For the Sudeten relief committee or the CMBC the amendment of 1946 appeared at first sufficient. At long last a "workable precondition" for the transatlantic

¹²⁷ Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Opinion* (Kingston/Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 1988), 89-90; Howard Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry: The Truth About Nazi War Criminals in Canada, 1946-1956* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 28-31.

movement of relatives had been put in place, the representative of the Sudeten relief committee recalled.¹²⁸ However, both the Inter-Governmental Committee for Refugees (IGCR) and its successor organization, the IRO, established in mid-1947, excluded German nationals and ethnics from their mandate, leaving Canadian officials still with no agency to facilitate the movement of close German relatives from occupied Germany to Canada.¹²⁹ As it was, Canadian law stood at odds with the regulations of the international refugee organizations. According to Canadian law ethnic German expellees were perfectly eligible for immigration under their pre-war nationalities, whereas German nationals as ‘enemy aliens’ remained barred from entry. Thus, while the IRO was shipping non-German relatives to Canada, for German Canadians whose ethnic German relatives remained stranded in occupied Germany, Canadian law seemed to be a “dead letter,” all the more since the majority of close relatives applied for by Canadian residents were of ethnic German background.¹³⁰ The crucial element in this regard hinged on the interpretation of their German citizenship which had either been obtained individually by way of naturalization or collectively by way of decree in the wake of Hitler’s conquests.

¹²⁸ Rehwald to Wanka and Schmidt, 27 March 1946, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 20; Willi Wanka, “Begegnungen und Episoden aus meiner Flüchtlingsarbeit,” *Sudetenjahrbuch* 18 (1969), 109.

¹²⁹ As the IRO constitution read, the exclusion applied to “persons of German ethnic origin, whether German nationals or members of German minorities in other countries,” IRO constitution as reproduced in Louise Holborn, *The International Refugee Organization: A Specialized Agency of the United Nations, its History and Work* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 586.

¹³⁰ By February 1948, ethnic German expellees made up 40 to 50 percent of the approved applications for the immigration of close relatives. This amounted to around 19,000 ethnic German expellees. Joliffe to Keenleyside, 6 February 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 1. See also Sauer, “A Matter of Domestic Policy? Canadian Immigration Policy and the admission of Germans, 1945-1950,” *Canadian Historical Review* 84 (June 1993), 240.

By the standards of Canadian (and international) law, after the war only the former were still to be regarded as German citizens so that, for example, most German-Baltic expellees were effectively ineligible for immigration, whereas the majority of ethnic German expellees (e.g. Sudeten Germans or ethnic German residents of Gdansk and pre-war Poland) were admissible. Nazi Germany's highly differentiated naturalization methods led to considerable confusion among officials in Ottawa, who only in late 1949 came up with a more definitive judgment on the citizenship status of the various expellee groups.¹³¹

In any event, the Sudeten relief committee, the CWLR and the CMBC denounced this discrepancy between Canadian law and IGCR/IRO regulations and joined forces to campaign for the transatlantic transportation of German-Canadian relatives in occupied Germany. They took full advantage of a tight network of parliamentarians, journalists, railway officials and government representatives and secured substantial funding from associated organizations in the USA, as was the case of the CLWR which

¹³¹ In May 1947, for example, there were still two schools of thought among Ottawa officials with regard to the post-war citizenship status of Sudeten-German expellees in occupied Germany. Immigration officials deemed the latter citizens of Czechoslovakia while officials from External Affairs saw them as German citizens. See Minutes of the meeting held in the office of the Deputy Minister, 22 May 1947, NAC, RG 26, Citizenship and Immigration Records, vol. 151, file 3-32-11. For further evidence of this confusion, see for the Sudeten Germans, O'Brien to Keenleyside, 16 November 1948; and the reply of 26 November 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 31, file 682, part 5; Memorandum by the Acting Commissioner, 18 July 1949, *ibid.*, vol. 685, file B 41075, part 3; for former ethnic German citizens of the Free City of Gdansk, Keenleyside to Gibson, 8 August 1949, NAC, External Affairs, RG 25, vol. 447, file 675985, part 5; and Ronald E. Schmalz, "Former Enemies Come to Canada: Ottawa and the Postwar German Immigration Boom, 1951-57," Ph.D. Thesis University of Ottawa 2000, 53. For a more definitive verdict on the citizenship status of all expellee groups, see Status of Volksdeutsche, E.J. Bye, Security Officer, n.d. [circa November 1949], NAC, RG 76, Immigration Branch, vol. 876, file 560-2-551.

drew considerable funds from American Lutheran organizations.¹³² In addition, by late 1946/early 1947 the various German-Canadian relief organizations operated despite widespread German-bashing amid a climate not entirely averse to ethnic German immigration. As a Gallup poll in November 1946 showed, only 34 percent of Canadians who favoured immigration wanted Germans barred from entry to Canada compared to 49 and 60 percent who, respectively, wanted Jews and Japanese denied entry.¹³³ On June 23, 1947, less than two months after the sea change in Canadian immigration policy, representatives of the Sudeten relief committee, the CMBC, the CLWR and two further organizations interested in moving ethnic German expellees, namely the North American Baptist Immigration and Colonization Society (NABICS) and the Catholic Immigrant Aid Society (CIAS), promptly succeeded in gaining support from the federal government for the establishment of an organization that effectively amounted to a Canadian surrogate of the IRO, the 'Canadian Christian Council for the Resettlement of Refugees (outside the mandate of the IRO)' (CCCRR). Under the chairmanship of Traugott Herzer, treasurer of CLWR and a former general manager of the Canadian Colonization Association, a CPR subsidiary, the CCCRR was authorized to pre-select, assemble and transport prospective immigrants to Canada.¹³⁴ To make up for the limitations of the IRO, the Canadian government afforded the CCCRR extensive support and by 1948, after

¹³² Minutes of the Meeting of Various Relief Agencies held April 8, 1947, in Chicago; and Herzer, Memorandum, 9 June 1947, NAC, MG 28 V 120, file CCCRR Ottawa meeting, Correspondence and meeting, microfilm H-1399.

¹³³ As quoted in Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?," 251.

¹³⁴ Notes of the meeting at Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, taken by J.R. Cleveland, Consular Division (secret), 23 June 1947, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 1; and Erdmann to Joliffe, 24 June 1947, *ibid.*

it had helped open vital doors to officials in Europe, became the organization's primary source of funding.¹³⁵ For the transportation of the close relatives the CCCRR secured at first berths on private liners or IRO-chartered ships. As of early 1948 the CCCRR regularly obtained 400 berths on the SS Beaverbrae, a former German submarine tender seized by the Allied War Reparations Commission and purchased by the CPR in 1947. By the end of 1948, the CCCRR utilized all 773 berths of the SS Beaverbrae which usually travelled each month back and forth between Bremen and Québec or Halifax.¹³⁶ All told, until the Canadian government lifted the immigration ban on German nationals, the CCCRR moved over 15,000 immigrants to Canada.¹³⁷

Nevertheless, in order to reduce costs Canadian officials and representatives of German-Canadian organizations continued to woo the IGCR/IRO for the movement of ethnic German relatives. Until the end of March 1949, when almost half of the total number of people moved by the IGCR/IRO between 1947 and 1952 had arrived in Canada, 9,838 of its passengers were of German "racial origins." For a people, who officially were banned from the services of the IRO, this was an astonishingly high number, namely one in seven of the total of 70,476 IRO passengers.¹³⁸ Among them were ethnic German Mennonites from Russia and the Ukraine, who benefited from the services of the IGCR/IRO thanks to the effective intervention of U.S. State Department officials. The latter were clearly impressed and grateful for the scale of the MCC's relief

¹³⁵ On the CRRR's funding, see particularly Margolian, *Unauthorized*, 72-73.

¹³⁶ Herzer to External Affairs, 7 September 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 655, file B 41075, part 2, also quoted in Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 73.

¹³⁷ Sauer, "A Matter of Domestic Policy?," 244.

¹³⁸ Government of Canada, *Report of the Department of Mines and Resources* (1949), 228.

work in Europe and so returned a favour.¹³⁹ Still, from the perspective of ordinary Mennonite expellees, this turn of events looked as if “some work [had] been done behind the scenes,” especially after a group of Mennonites assembled for examination and embarkation at a camp in the British occupation zone were asked to testify under oath to their ethnic Dutch ancestry. Apparently, this request caused quite a stir among the Mennonites who, in general, were strongly conscientious of their faith and German ethnicity. But, as one woman present at the scene recalled, when it came to the oath-taking in a large room full of people, “nobody had to say the full sentence.”¹⁴⁰

Once set up and running, the CCCRR attempted to expand the number of immigrants that it could take into its care and move across the Atlantic. One obvious strategy to achieve this was to try to expand the categories of close relatives eligible for immigration.¹⁴¹ More importantly, however, for the countless ethnic German expellees keen on immigrating but without relatives, the CCCRR attempted to push for their admission under the same terms that DPs obtained in May 1947, namely as indentured labourers bound at low wages to contracts of between one and two years in Canada’s farm, mining or lumber industries.¹⁴² From the point of view of the CCCRR, there was

¹³⁹ Ted D. Regehr, “Of Dutch or German Ancestry? Mennonite Refugees, MCC, and the International Refugee Organization,” *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 13 (1995), 7-25; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, ch. 4; Holborn, *International Refugee Organization*, 210.

¹⁴⁰ Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 32, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

¹⁴¹ For such a request, see Herzer to Joliffe, 8 November 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 655, file B 41075.

¹⁴² Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Avery, *Reluctant Host*, 146-168; Mylda Danys, *DP Lithuanian Immigration to Canada after the Second*

no reason why ethnic German expellees would not be able to do the same as DPs. “You will doubtless know,” the CCCRR’s temporary chairman wrote to the minister in charge of immigration, “that the dividing lines between DPs and refugees [i.e. expellees] is very fine and often movable – depending on the whim and judgement of the examining sub-officials.”¹⁴³ Nothing came of this campaign until spring 1948 when the issue suddenly took on a new dimension and ultimately resulted in the approval of a limited CCCRR indentured labour scheme.

Separate from the CCCRR a group of German Balts and their sympathizers founded the Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society (CBIAS) which lobbied for the admission of German-Baltic expellees to Canada. Using personal links to high-ranking Canadian government officials, including the Governor General, Lord Alexander, in early 1948 the CBIAS gained admission for fifty German-Baltic expellees under the same terms as DPs under the immigrant labour scheme.¹⁴⁴ Yet, for lack of funding, in April 1948 the CBIAS seconded the movement of the 50 German-Baltic expellees to the

World War (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1986); Holleuffer, *Zwischen Fremde*, 75-88.

¹⁴³ CCCRR to Glen, 24 October 1947, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief Papers, MG 28 V 120, file CCCRR Minutes and Reports, microfilm H-1391; Minutes of the meeting, 20 October 1947, NAC, North American Baptist Immigration and Colonization Society Papers, MG 28 V 18, vol. 2, file 7; see also Memorandum to the Executive Committee of the CCCRR, 3 October 1947, *ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Minutes of the Immigration/Labour Committee Meeting, 17 February 1948, NAC, Immigration and Citizenship Records, RG 26, vol 72, file 3-18-3, part 2. On the founding of the CBIAS and personal links to the government, see Robert W. Keyserlingk, *Across Many Oceans: A Family Saga* (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1984), 234-235; Robert W. Keyserlingk, “Historischer Rückblick,” in Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society, *Zwanzig Jahre*, 7; von Hahn, “Rückblick,” in *ibid.*, 23-24.

CCCRR. With the secondment approved by Ottawa,¹⁴⁵ the first 17 young German-Baltic expellees arrived in Canada in mid-1948.¹⁴⁶ Small as the German-Baltic movement was, it nevertheless provided the CCCRR with a precedent to press for the expansion of its operations and subsequently had its member organizations submit petitions, urging the government to permit the admission of 2,000 Mennonite, 1,000 Lutheran and 1,000 Catholic ethnic German expellees from occupied Germany.¹⁴⁷ In Ottawa the CCCRR's attempt to move beyond the processing of ethnic German relatives made government officials visibly uneasy since it posed, in the words of one high-ranking immigration official, "an extremely difficult problem" that could unleash a flood of similar requests from community associations across the country.¹⁴⁸ Even so, in January 1949 the CCCRR successfully convinced the government of its case and obtained an immigrant labour scheme for ethnic German expellees without close relatives in Canada, although only at half the quotas that they had petitioned for.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Minutes of the meeting, 2 April 1948, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society Papers, MG 28 V 99, vol. 1, file Minutes; Herzer to Joliffe, 15 May 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 1.

¹⁴⁶ Minutes of the Immigration/Labour Committee Meeting, 23 November 1948, NAC, Immigration and Citizenship Records, RG 26, vol 72, file 3-18-3, part 2.

¹⁴⁷ Herzer to Joliffe, 8 November 1948; CLWR to Immigration Branch, 17 November 1948; and CIAS to Immigration Branch, 17 November 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 2.

¹⁴⁸ Memorandum for Mr. Pearson regarding Immigration Labour Committee, 21 January 1949, NAC, External Affairs Records, RG 25, vol. 3913, file 9408-40, part 1; Keenleyside to McKinnon, 20 December 1948, NAC, Citizenship and Immigration Records, RG 26, vol. 116, file 3-24-34, part 1.

¹⁴⁹ Mennonites received a quota of 1000 individuals, Lutherans and Catholics each 500 and Baptists 150. Note that dependants were not included in the numbers, so that the actual size of the movement was considerably larger. For letters of approval, see Joliffe to Monk, 19 January 1949; Joliffe to Warnke, 19 January 1949; Joliffe to Thiessen, 19

In spite of the small quota the CCCRR was nonetheless satisfied with what officially came to be classified under the rubric “DPs special group.” For the leading members of the CCCRR, in effect the German-Canadian ‘captains of immigration’ who knew full well how to foster immigration, this quota was nothing more than the creation of a springboard from which they hoped to increase the number of immigrants entering Canada.¹⁵⁰ Toward the government, they had been quite open about their aim and explicitly stated that once immigrants had arrived in Canada, they were expecting them to bring across their own relatives and thus continue the chain.¹⁵¹ In the words of the CLWR this became the “seed movement” with the “outstanding advantage,” as a report stated, that once these “seedlings” were established in Canada, they would “immediately make applications to have their relatives come forward under the Close Relative Scheme.”¹⁵² Similarly, among the German Balts in occupied Germany the scheme was promoted as a chain of migration that “model boys” would launch and facilitate. Those “boys” and subsequent immigrants would have to commit, as one German-Baltic newsletter in occupied Germany propagated, to a) repay the cost of transportation

January 1949, NAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 2; and Joliffe to Streuber, 8 March 1949, *ibid.*, part 3.

¹⁵⁰ All of the leading members of the CCCRR, including for the CLWR, CMBC and NABICS, had been active in immigration since before the war either for voluntary immigration organizations or as employees of Canada’s primary agent of colonization, namely the CPR or other major railway companies. On the background and tight links between the leading CCCRR figures, see Wanka, “Begegnungen und Episoden,” 108; Sturhahn, *They Came*, 21-27; and Klassen, *Ambassador*, 48-51.

¹⁵¹ Herzer to Joliffe, 8 November 1948, NAC, Immigration Branch, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 2

¹⁵² Report [by the CLWR] to the Members of the Emergency Planning Council, Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, 25 January 1949, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief Papers, MG 28 V 120, file Lutheran Labour Scheme, microfilm H-1393.

through wage deductions; b) support relatives left behind with CARE parcels and c) save money to apply for the immigration of relatives.¹⁵³ In other words, as one of them recalled, the “boys” were to be the “ice-breaker commando” of the German-Baltic immigration to Canada.¹⁵⁴ Aged between eighteen and twenty-four, the first 17 “boys” that arrived in Canada in August 1948 manifestly fulfilled their duty. One year later, despite notoriously low wages in Canada’s primary industry, where immigrants such as the “boys” typically worked at first, thirty relatives had arrived in Canada.¹⁵⁵ Quite visibly, the chain of migration that the German-Canadian ‘captains of immigration’ wanted to build began to unfold.

During the course of 1949, however, the CCCRR struggled to fill the berths of the SS Beaverbrae claiming that Canadian and Allied officers rejected a substantial number of candidates, wishing to leave occupied Germany. The Lutheran labour scheme is a case in point, for out of a quota of 500 persons only 224 Lutheran ethnic German

¹⁵³ Rundschreiben, Landesstelle Schleswig-Holstein, 6 August 1947, CSG, Hilfsstelle der evangelisch-lutherischen Deutschbalten im Hilfswerk der EKD, Hilfsstelle Alte Akten III; see also Rundschreiben Landesstelle Lübeck, 1 November 1947, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief Papers, MG 28 V 120, file Lutheran Labour Scheme, microfilm H-1393.

¹⁵⁴ Jürgen A. von Hahn, “As ‘Musterknabe’ to Canada,” in Mathias F. Kuester, *The Baltic Germans: Reminiscences* (Edmonton: Central and East European Studies Society of Alberta, 1985). 89-90.

¹⁵⁵ *Baltische Briefe* 1: 10 (August 1949), 11-12. According to another “boy’s” account there were also two couples and one baby among the first “model boys”, see Otto von Wetter Rosenthal “Die Musterknaben,” in Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society, *Zwanzig Jahre*, 14-16. Incidentally, both he and von Hahn refer to 16 “model boys,” whereas Canadian government documents record the number of 17. See von Hahn, “As ‘Musterknabe’ to Canada,” 89-90; and Minutes of the Immigration/Labour Committee Meeting, 23 November 1948, NAC, Immigration and Citizenship Records, RG 26, vol 72, file 3-18-3, part 2.

immigrant labourers made it to Canada between January and December 1949.¹⁵⁶ For this low rate, senior CCCRR officials chiefly blamed rejections on the grounds of German citizenship. According to CCCRR data, these apparently made up 37 percent of the rejections.¹⁵⁷ However, according to same set of data, there were further reasons for the rejections as 14 percent of the candidates failed to qualify because of medical reasons, 24 percent due to security concerns such as membership in the Nazi party, which remained an automatic bar to admission until 1951,¹⁵⁸ and 25 percent because the person contacted by the CCCRR failed to come forth, had deceased or no longer wished to move abroad.¹⁵⁹ Thus, a considerable amount of ethnic German expellees also opted to stay in occupied Germany and forsook the offer of relocation proposed by the CCCRR when it came to the ultimate decision. This development did not go unnoticed with the Sudeten relief committee, for its own movement of close relatives petered out by mid-1949 and thereafter resulted in the organization's withdrawal from the CCCRR.¹⁶⁰ Four years after the end of hostilities in Europe, the Sudeten relief committee no longer advocated immigration as a means to come to the aid of expellees in occupied Germany and so

¹⁵⁶ CLWR Report 1949, 15 December 1949, NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, MG 28 V 120, microfilm H-1393, file Lutheran Labour Scheme.

¹⁵⁷ Herzer to Joliffe, 4 October 1949, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 3.

¹⁵⁸ Margolian, *Unauthorized*, 98.

¹⁵⁹ Herzer to Joliffe, 4 October 1949, NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 665, file B 41075, part 3.

¹⁶⁰ Willi Wanka "Auftakt zur deutschen Nachkriegseinwanderung nach Kanada," *German-Canadian Yearbook* 9 (1986), 139. The withdrawal of the Sudeten Germans from the CCCRR appears to have also been motivated as part of a strategy to fend off non-German ethnic groups from joining the organization and confine it to Protestant German-Canadian church organizations only. See CCCRR Minutes, 4 February, NAC, North American Baptist Immigration and Colonization Society Papers, MG 28 V 18, vol. 2, file 7.

refrained from seeking an immigrant labour scheme akin to the ones that the other member associations of the CCCRR obtained. Responding to the growing West German opposition against large-scale international relocation plans, in April 1949 one of the leading figures of the Sudeten relief committee concurred and deemed the plans contrary to the economic and social rehabilitation of German society. By advocating the settlement of expellees in the Americas, such endeavours would, he claimed in concert with the rising West German expellee organizations, ultimately relinquish “the moral claim to the lost *Heimat*.”¹⁶¹

For the CCCRR, meanwhile, there was only one way out of the difficulties posed by the limits to facilitate the transatlantic relocation of expellees: the removal of the ban against Germans. By fall 1949 the CCCRR together with the German-Canadian media and other German-Canadian community groups launched a new campaign, focusing particularly on ethnic German expellees. After all, wrote the temporary chairman of the CCCRR to Ottawa, the latter “had lived for centuries outside Germany and should not be branded like herds of cattle.”¹⁶² In pamphlets distributed in German-Canadian Lutheran communities across North America, the same chairman no longer minced words and claimed that ethnic Germans in occupied Germany were “not only displaced [people] but they are victims of racial discrimination and of a collective-guilt-

¹⁶¹ *Nordwesten*, 6 April 1949.

¹⁶² Herzer to Gibson, 20 September 1949, NAC, Immigration and Citizenship Records, RG 26, vol. 122, file 3-32-13. See also Herzer to St. Laurent, 21 December 1949; and Herzer to Fortier, 16 February 1950, *ibid*.

theory.”¹⁶³ The German-Canadian press similarly joined the campaign and advocated German immigration to Canada.¹⁶⁴ Ultimately, this strategy proved successful, for in March 1950 the Canadian government allowed the immigration of ethnic Germans, who had not received German citizenship on or after September 1, 1939, and six months later the immigration of German nationals in general. Yet, in the red-baiting atmosphere at the onset of the Cold War, which the CCCRR and the German-Canadian press fully exploited, the government’s removal of the ban owed as much to the mobilization of the German-Canadian community as to the slackening of immigration in 1949/1950 and the regularization of trade and diplomatic relations with the newly-founded West German state. After all, in the struggle against world communism five years after the end of the war the Canadian government could no longer view Germans as ‘enemy aliens’ and was thus forced to open the gates to them.¹⁶⁵

At the end of this chapter it is clear that living conditions in the immediate post-war period in occupied Germany triggered calls of despair and emigration. The lack of food and resources exacerbated the sense of social displacement expellees felt as a result of the expulsion. Some expellees felt humiliated and demoralized because they had to scavenge and beg food. Others felt socially demoted and loathed the fact that for a people of their standing they had to wear donated second-hand clothing. As Anthony

¹⁶³ Traugott Herzer, *Persons of German Ethnic Origin*, n.d. [circa March 1949], NAC, Canadian Lutheran World Relief, MG 28 V 120, file General Correspondence, microfilm H-1391. Herzer penned two further pamphlets in his campaign for German immigration in Canada, see his *The Problem of Displaced Persons of Europe*, n.d.; and *I Was A Stranger And Ye Took Me (Not) In*, n.d., *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Nordwesten*, 9 February 1949; 19 March 1950; *Courier* 25 May 1949; 22 March 1950; and 1 March 1950.

¹⁶⁵ Steinert, *Migration*, 104-109; Sauer, “A Matter of Domestic Policy?,” 261-262.

Richmond points out, after a period of incubation, such feelings can lead psychologically to paranoid symptoms, hypochondria, anxiety and depression.¹⁶⁶ In light of this it is equally not surprising that in Canada expellees and other German Canadians frenetically attempted to get relief to occupied Germany. As soon as postal lines re-opened, they sent aid packages to friends and relatives in occupied Germany and donated money to aid organizations which were able to deliver relief as of spring 1946. Despite the fact that it remained a small organization, one such organization, the Canadian Society for German Relief, was co-founded by a group of Sudeten Germans. It specifically targeted the sick, the young and the expelled.

In both countries this relief effort went hand in hand with the attempt to relocate expellees overseas. In occupied Germany, under the umbrella of the Protestant and Catholic Churches expellee groups vigorously pushed for the international resettlement of expellees. In Canada, the Sudeten-German refugees and other German-Canadian groups worked hard toward the admission of expellees. However, barriers on both sides of the Atlantic were immense. On the one hand, there were stiff Allied controls which severely restricted the ability of Germans and others to leave occupied Germany. On the other hand, restrictive Canadian immigration rules prohibited entry of German nationals. In light of these constraints, the foundation of the CCCRR by the Sudeten Germans and other (church-based) German-Canadian groups was a great success. Based on the political clout of the German-Canadian communities in the Prairie provinces, the CCCRR took advantage of a gap between Canadian and international law

¹⁶⁶ Richmond, *Global*, 53.

and succeeded in moving ethnic German relatives from Europe to Canada. Yet, for the Sudeten Germans and the other groups involved in the CCCRR every means was used to get expellees out of occupied Germany. As we have seen, the Mennonites bent rules and succeeded in moving a substantial number of relatives through the IRO, even though the organization excluded Germans from its mandate. Similarly, once set up and running, the CCCRR succeeded in gaining admission for ethnic German expellees, who were not relatives of Canadian residents. Under the rubric “DPs special groups,” Canadian officials allowed the admission of a limited number of expellees under the same terms as DPs, who had no relatives in Canada. They sailed across the Atlantic as indentured labourers bound at low wages to contracts of between one and two years in Canada’s farm, mining or lumber industries. However, in the end the remarkable success of the CCCRR and its member organizations mattered little. On the whole, only comparatively few expellees in occupied Germany were capable of moving overseas so that the vast majority were compelled to come to terms with the prevalent social and economic conditions. That said, once the penury receded, immigration overseas became an option among other choices. As we will see in the following chapter, in the face of West Germany’s rapid economic recovery, the ‘emigration fever’ quickly faded.

III. 'Willing Migrants'

In a speech delivered at Fulton, Missouri, in March 1946 Winston Churchill bluntly spelled out the foreseeable clash between the victorious Allied Powers: “a shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory [...] from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the [European] continent.”¹ Less than eight months after the end of World War II, the recently ousted British prime minister minced no words to describe the rapidly deteriorating relationship between the western Allied Powers and the Soviet Union. Within just three years of Hitler’s downfall, Britain and the undisputed strongest world power, the USA, were at odds with the USSR. By 1948, after a series of disagreements over conflicts in Greece, Italy, occupied Germany and elsewhere, the Cold War between the former Allies divided the world into two solid camps with two mutually exclusive and hostile ideologies. On the one hand, under the direction of Stalin’s autocratic regime, there was the communist camp stretching from the Elbe River to the Chinese Seas and, on the other, the self-proclaimed ‘free world’ led by the USA and encompassing the capitalist countries of the Americas, Asia, Australia and the states and empires of Western Europe. For occupied Germany the antagonism between the two camps resulted in the foundation of two separate German states in 1949: in the east, emerging from the Soviet occupation zone, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and in the west, arising from the British, American and French occupation zones, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). While the GDR became a member of the communist world, the FRG or West Germany rapidly

¹ Churchill, *Speeches*, vol. 7, 7248.

became an integral component of the capitalist camp, joining the military alliance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), founded in 1949 in opposition to the perceived Soviet threat and in 1955 it became a full partner.

During the two subsequent decades, the capitalist camp lived through a 'golden age' marked by unprecedented economic growth and the full development of consumer societies. For North America this massive economic surge was directly related to the outbreak of World War II following the slump of the 1930s, while for much of Western Europe, largely in tatters in 1945, the economy took off in the early post-war period partly as a result of the U.S.-sponsored European Recovery Programme of 1947 (ERP). As an illustration for the scale of the economic growth, world output of manufacturing, for example, quadrupled between 1950 and 1970.² Countless Europeans and North Americans seized their opportunities and went on the move in search of gainful employment. Most moved locally and continued a trend toward urbanization set off by rapid industrialization of Western Europe and North America since the mid-nineteenth century.³ A substantial number of Europeans also headed overseas, even though immigration quotas and other country-specific admission regulations considerably hampered the international flow of migrants, especially when compared to the period of mass migration before World War I, when some 50 million Europeans moved abroad.

² As quoted in Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), 261.

³ *Ibid.*, 289-294; Leslie Page Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 102-158; Alan Artibise, "Canada as an Urban Nation," *Daedalus* 117 (Fall, 1988), 237-64.

Nevertheless, between 1945 and 1960 eight to nine million Europeans moved overseas.⁴ Expellees were an integral part of this process and similarly took part in this massive economic boom. To seize their opportunities, they moved within and to the FRG and the surging economies of the capitalist West, including France, the United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, the USA and Canada. Until 1960, for example, over 700,000 Germans, many of whom were expellees, departed from West Germany overseas and thus made up the last wave of mass emigration in German history.⁵

Chapter three investigates the mobility of expellees in the wake of these ‘golden years’ and their economic integration into transnational labour markets. The founding of the FRG and its incorporation into the capitalist camp set the stage for expellees to gain a viable source of revenue after the difficult years of the occupation. Internationally, against the background of the escalating Cold War, barriers against German immigrants from the FRG increasingly disappeared. Within the capitalist camp they were no longer shunned and instead were widely seen as staunch pillars in the fight against global communism. This was particularly the case for expellees whose loss of homeland bestowed upon them the patina of victims of communism and hence a seemingly natural inclination to oppose the USSR and its satellites in Eastern Europe.⁶ While countries such as the USA, South Africa or Australia increasingly recruited German immigrants from the FRG, in Canada German immigrants became admissible in 1950 and during the subsequent years arrived in large numbers. As this chapter

⁴ Bade, *Migration*, 204-220.

⁵ Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 394. Johannes-Dieter Steinert, “Drehscheibe Westdeutschland: Wanderungspolitik im Nachkriegsjahrzehnt,” in Bade, *Deutsche*, 386.

⁶ Steinert, *Migration*, 332; Moeller, *War Stories*, 51-87.

illustrates, expellees were a highly mobile group and disproportionately moved both within West Germany and to Canada. Numerous factors account for this, notably government policies, family ties and, above all, the very need to establish a sound economic basis for living.

However, as the analysis of their immigration to Canada shows, there were also substantial differences between various regional expellee groups despite contemporary claims that expellees as a group were prone to increased mobility. When in September 1950 Canada's government allowed for the immigration of German nationals, one of Canada's main German-language weekly newspapers assumed that expellees in general would seek immigration. As the paper wrote, Canada "finally opened the doors to 18 million expellees desperately keen to immigrate overseas."⁷ However, while such gross simplification pervaded the public perception of the expellees' mobility, differences between regional expellee groups remained obscured. For example, compared to expellees from the former German provinces east of the Oder/Neisse River, who immigrated to Canada in only slightly greater numbers than Germans born within the territory of the FRG, in the early 1950s expellees from the Soviet Union were far more likely to move to Canada. Hence, in this chapter I endeavour to disclose, firstly, some of the variations and to unveil group-specific work and migration patterns; secondly, the motives and methods employed to move within and from West Germany to Canada and, thirdly, personal experiences of everyday working life in each of the countries. In doing so, I have relied on different data sources that are at

⁷ *Nordwesten*, 4 October 1950, 1.

times conflicting and thus not without problems for this study. For Canada I have used a computerized sample of the 1971 census and, for more detailed information, the 1981 census microdata files. For West Germany I was unable to retrieve similar data as the corresponding microdata files are still being computerized. As a result, for most of the West German data I have used the standard statistical publication on expellees which generally draws on census data or, for the professional occupation of expellees, also on separate surveys. These sources are not as detailed as the Canadian microdata files. West German data also always refer to the country of origin of expellees according to the borders of 1937, whereas Canadian sources refer to Europe's post-1945 map.⁸ The use of other statistical materials has also not been without flaws. Indeed, to investigate the mobility of expellees, I have made use of contemporary migration statistics which, if compared between the FRG and Canada, deviate considerably for several reasons.⁹ Nevertheless, despite these differences, this dissertation unveils the general trends of the expellees' movements.

⁸ For more information on the data sets, see also herein in the appendix, p. 324 and 333.

⁹ The most important reason for the deviations lies in the fact that (im-)migration statistics cannot necessarily differentiate between what essentially accounts for tourism or temporary stays and permanent relocation. Also, the determination of ethnic origins for Canadian statistics is based on the self-identification of immigrants who do not necessarily want to disclose their actual ethnic heritage. See Peter Marschalk, "Dem Land den Rücken gekehrt: Deutsche Auswanderungen in die Welt nach 1945," in Hans-Martin Hinz, ed. *Zuwanderungen - Auswanderungen: Integration und Desintegration nach 1945* (Wolftrathshausen: Edition Minerva, 1999), 214; Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 390-391; and Renate Vollmer, "The Informative Value of Migration Statistics on Overseas Migration (1945-1961). Exemplified for Emigrations from Germany," *Historical Social Research/ Historische Sozialforschung* 17: 2 (1992), 65-73.

Into the 'Economic Miracle'

The merger of the U.S. and British occupation zones in January 1947 set the foundation for dramatically altered living conditions in the future West German state. In June 1948 the merged zones, popularly known as the 'bizones,' in conjunction with the French occupation zone introduced the new German Mark and thus paved the way for the economic rehabilitation of the country and, effectively, the introduction of a regular consumer market. In May 1949 the newly-established West German government authorities set out to reinforce the economic recovery and, coupled with funds from the European Recovery Programme (Marshall Plan), sustained the modernization of West German society and industry. In addition, West Germany's federal and state governments sponsored a series of measures that directly benefited the social and economic integration of expellees, notably by means of financial grants, the support of resettlement programmes, the enactment of preferential trade and employment laws, and the subsidization of housing construction and new businesses. Between 1950 and 1965 the West German economy grew an average of 5.6 percent, signalling the country's rapid recovery and its unprecedented wealth and prosperity.¹⁰ Traditional industrial centres such as in the Ruhr area and newly industrializing areas around the cities of Hanover, Munich, Frankfurt, Mannheim and Stuttgart generated employment on a mass scale, attracting millions of Germans from across the country and beyond. The latter notably included nearly 3 million refugees from the GDR and 2.6 million 'guest workers' from

¹⁰ Abelshausen, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 293.

Italy, Spain, Yugoslavia and, especially, Turkey.¹¹ What is more, under the active intervention of West German government agencies, the thrust of modernization also transformed rural districts and provincial towns into bustling regional centres and produced a series of new towns, which, planned from scratch under the impact of the huge expellee influx, turned into regional hubs. Neugablonz, for example, built on the site of a former ammunitions plant, became one of six such new towns. By the mid-1950s, it boasted more than 800 businesses and over 10,000 inhabitants.¹²

Expellees, in particular, capitalized on West Germany's recovery and moved en masse out of the rural districts of Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and Bavaria where most initially had been accommodated. One high-ranking West German government official likened the expellees' mass movement to the "rural exodus"

¹¹ The overwhelming majority of the refugees from the GDR arrived in the FRG before the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Meanwhile, regulated by bilateral agreements, 'guest workers' arrived in the FRG predominantly between 1955 and 1973. Rainer Münz and Ralf Ulrich, "Changing Patterns of Immigration to Germany, 1945-1995: Ethnic Origins, Demographic Structure, Future Prospects," in Klaus J. Bade and Myron Weiner, eds. *Migration Past, Migration Future: Germany and the United States* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1997), 65-110; Herbert, Ulrich, *A History of Foreign Labour in Germany, 1880-1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Labourers, Guest Workers* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 214-241.

¹² Other such new towns include: Geretsried, Traunreut, Waldkraiburg, Neutraubling (all in Bavaria) and Espelkamp (North-Rhine-Westphalia). See Elisabeth Pfeil, "Städtische Neugründungen," in Lemberg/Edding, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 1, 500-520. On rural modernization and structural change under the impact of the expellee influx, see Rainer Schulze, "Zuwanderung und Modernisierung: Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene im ländlichen Raum," in Klaus J. Bade, ed. *Neue Heimat im Westen: Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge, Aussiedler* (Münster: Westfälischer Heimatbund, 1990), 81-105; Franz J. Bauer, "Zwischen 'Wunder' und Strukturzwang: Zur Integration der Flüchtlinge und Vertriebenen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B32 (1987), 21-33.

[*Landflucht*] taking place in Germany since the late 19th century.¹³ Statistical evidence underscores his point: in 1950, 54.2 percent of expellees compared to 39.1 percent of locals lived in rural communities of less than 5,000 inhabitants. By 1970, however, 27.9 percent of expellees compared to 30.5 percent of West Germans lived in communities of less than 5,000 inhabitants. In effect, while during this period expellees nearly halved their share of residency in smaller rural communities, by 1970 about half of the expellees (50.5 percent) lived in towns and cities of more than 20,000 residents.¹⁴ During the 1950s expellees proved indeed comparatively mobile whether locally or further away across state boundaries. In 1952, while they made up 16 percent of the population, expellees accounted for 29.1 percent of all moves within the FRG, 25.6 percent of all intra-state moves, and 37.8 percent of all cross-state relocations. In 1957, expellees still accounted disproportionately for West Germany's internal migration with respectively 24.6 percent (intra-state), 26.3 percent (cross-state) and 25.1 percent (combined).¹⁵

Geographically, while Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony and Bavaria still retained above average shares of expellees, the bulk of them went chiefly to urban centres in Baden-Württemberg and North-Rhine-Westphalia. Baden-Württemberg, for one, with its industrial centres in Mannheim and the state's capital, Stuttgart, more than doubled its expellee population from 557,000 to 1.4 million between 1946 and 1970, increasing thereby the state's share of the national expellee population from 9 percent in 1950 to 17

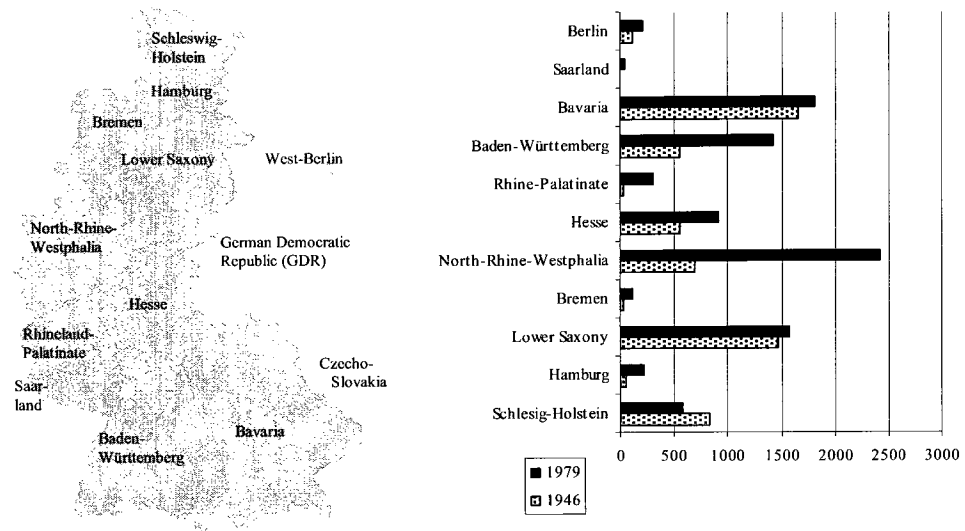
¹³ Middelmann to Weisz, January 4, 1950, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 526, file 2.

¹⁴ Appendix, table II.L).

¹⁵ Ibid. table II.K).

percent in 1970.¹⁶ However, by far the greatest number of expellees went to North-Rhine-Westphalia. During the 1950s one million expellees moved from other states to North-Rhine-Westphalia, accounting for a third of the expellees' registered cross-state

Map 3 and Chart 1: Expellees in the FRG, per 1000s and federal states (1946 and 1970)



moves.¹⁷ In fact, during the course of the 1950s North-Rhine-Westphalia became host to the largest expellee community in West Germany. Between 1946 and 1970 its expellee population grew by two and a half times from 698,000 to 2.4 million. In 1946 one in nine expellees resided in North-Rhine-Westphalia; by 1970 one in four lived in West Germany's industrial powerhouse.¹⁸

¹⁶ Appendix, table II.A), B) and F).

¹⁷ Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 39.

¹⁸ Appendix, table II.A), D), E), F) and G).

In terms of mobility there were significant differences among expellee groups. Expellees from the former German provinces east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers arrived from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony (and the GDR) in North-Rhine-Westphalia and increased their number in that state by an impressive 1.3 million between 1946 and 1970. Thus, while in 1946 one in six expellees from the former German provinces east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers resided in North-Rhine-Westphalia, twenty-four years later one in three did so. The same group of expellees also migrated disproportionately across the country to Baden-Württemberg where by 1970 they outnumbered the Sudeten-German population. Ethnic German expellees from the USSR, the Baltic States, Poland and Gdansk appear to have been even more mobile than the latter group. Those from Poland and Gdansk moved, for instance, disproportionately from Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony to North-Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Württemberg. While the previous two states in 1950 together hosted 52.2 percent of these ethnic German expellees, in 1970 this share dropped to 29.6 percent in favour of the latter two states, which by then accommodated 42.3 percent of the total. Furthermore, those from the USSR and the Baltic States moved in particular from the north to the south of the country, for in 1950, 50 percent of them still resided in Schleswig-Holstein (16.7 percent) and Lower Saxony (33.3 percent) whereas twenty years later their numbers dwindled to 19.1 percent (7 percent and 12.1 percent respectively) and soared from 9.3 to 28.6 percent in Baden-Württemberg. In fact, though only a comparatively small group,

between 1950 and 1970 expellees from the USSR and the Baltic States proved the most mobile expellee group.¹⁹

The quest for upward social mobility clearly stood behind this rural exodus, particularly after the currency reforms of June 1948 when wage earnings became prevalent and, as a consequence, employment opportunities in the countryside dwindled or failed to match the higher levels of income in towns and cities. Indeed, in the aftermath of the currency reforms unemployment rates steeply rose and hit expellees particularly hard. In early 1948 still only 3.2 percent of West Germany's working population claimed unemployment benefits, but in early 1949, six months after the currency reforms, already 8 percent registered as unemployed and in early 1950 the rate rose to a peak of 12.2 percent.²⁰ Furthermore, nearly one third of the claimants were of expellee background so that, effectively, expellees were twice as likely to be unemployed as local West Germans.²¹ In certain rural regions, such as in Schleswig-Holstein, unemployment sky-rocketed to 25 percent and this disproportionately affected expellees.²² Thus, in mid-1948 the stopgap that farm labour represented came abruptly to an end and forced expellees to look for opportunities elsewhere. A survey conducted by Bavarian state officials found that in 1950 two thirds of the expellees residing in rural Franconia (northern Bavaria) wished to move to urban centres. This drive for the city included

¹⁹ Appendix, table II.D), E), F) and G).

²⁰ Numbers as quoted in Abelshäuser, *Deutsche Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 155, 301.

²¹ Arbeitslosen- und Bevölkerungsanteil der Vertriebenen in der Bundesrepublik, 14 July 1958, BaKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 106, vol. 22320.

²² Dierk Hoffmann, "Binnenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt: Beschäftigungspolitik unter dem Eindruck der Bevölkerungsverschiebung in Deutschland nach 1945," in Hoffmann/Krauss/Schwartz, *Vertriebene in Deutschland*, 232.

expellees who prior to the expulsion had lived in rural areas. According to the same survey, apparently one in two of them wished to remain in rural Franconia.²³

By moving away from rural districts, expellees had little to lose and everything to gain. There were no farewell parties among villagers and/or friends for those who decided to take the great leap and relocate. Only one expellee from the sample analyzed herein recalled celebrating her departure. As she married and moved away to Essen, the residents of the village she had come to in the wake of the expulsion apparently gave her an extended party, albeit less as a way to say farewell and more out of gratitude for the services she had provided during her stay between 1946 and 1950. She had been, as the expellee wrote, the first dentist in the village for over a decade.²⁴ In any event, the thrill of theatres, cinemas, sports events and concerts sufficed to draw young adult expellees to urban centres. As one young adult expellee recalled, he had come to Essen at the end of 1947 from rural Lower Saxony and had finally been able to see the soccer games and American films he had heard about. He was, as he noted, mesmerized by the city despite the piles of rubble surrounding him everywhere. And more than this: unlike in rural Lower Saxony he found work that allowed him to pay for this entertainment.²⁵

That said, for expellees of urban and/or professional background the economic recovery permitted more the return to 'normal' circumstances than the

²³ As quoted in Paul Erker, *Vom Heimatvertriebenen zum Neubürger: Sozialgeschichte der Flüchtlinge in einer agrarischen Region Mittelfrankens 1945-1955* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag 1988), 29.

²⁴ J. G.-P., *Unsere Flucht aus Schlesien und Wiederaufbau*, 37, IGB, Kempowski.

²⁵ Interview K.B., 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir.

enthraling discovery of urban life. Expellee teachers, lawyers, bank clerks, accountants and others sought to re-establish the status they held '*ante migratio*.' The son of a tenured railway worker from East Prussia certainly noted his father's relief when the latter received his new railway uniform after three years of casual jobs and uncertainty. As the son wrote in his memoirs, "he [the father] was quite visibly content and his emotions calmed down as soon as he was able to carry out his most beloved duty." Moving into two empty rooms of a railway building, a degree of pre-war normality, the son noted, was finally restored.²⁶ Expellees received powerful backing from the West German government, when in 1951 it passed a law to support the reinstatement of former civil servants by way of an affirmative action clause. Henceforth 20 percent of the new recruits in public service at all levels (federal, state and municipal) were to be individuals, who had been civil servants prior to May 8, 1945, and who had not been re-employed as such. An estimated 300,000 former civil servants 'normalized' in this way their vocational status, among them countless expellees. They and other reinstated officials became popularly known as '131ers,' following the article of the new West German constitution that governed the new law and its affirmative action clause. It should be added that the law also aided the rehabilitation of former civil servants with dubious war records, including high-ranking Nazis, top Gestapo officials and SS officers. Governments departments and associated administrative units rehabilitated most of their pre-1945 staff, including local police units whose members had been part of such

²⁶ G. H., *Aufzeichnungen*, 44, IGB, Kempowski. For a similar account of a family that moved from their rural refuge in Franconia, Bavaria, to North-Rhine-Westphalia for the father's re-appointment as a teacher, see Tietze, *Mainwärts*, 113-115.

notorious Nazi death squads as the *Einsatzgruppen*, responsible for the mass killings of countless Jews, Roma, Poles and others.²⁷

Between 1949 and 1955 nearly one million expellees took advantage of public assistance to relocate and accept employment in urban centres.²⁸ West Germany's first government followed the trail blazed by the Allied occupation authorities and in late 1949 launched a resettlement programme designed specifically for expellees. While in 1948 the Allied scheme proposed the resettlement of 300,000 expellees from the American and British to the French occupation zone, which, until then, refused to admit expellees, one year later the West German resettlement programme aimed to relocate expellee families from predominantly rural 'donor states' (Lower Saxony, Bavaria and especially Schleswig-Holstein) to the more industrialized 'host states' of Baden-Württemberg and, in particular, North-Rhine-Westphalia.²⁹ The programme was quite straightforward. Once applications were accepted, local authorities in the 'donor states' assembled expellee families in special trains and moved them to predetermined destinations, where officials of the 'host states' helped provide accommodation and work.

²⁷ Norbert Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich: Beck, 1996), 60-100; Mathias Beer, "Die Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa und die politisch-administrative Elite der Bundesrepublik: Ein Problemaufriss," in Günther Schulz, ed. *Vertriebene Eliten und Verfolgung von Führungsschichten im 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Boldt im Oldenburg Verlag, 2001), 199-227; Curt Garner, "Public Service Personnel in West Germany in the 1950s: Controversial Policy Decisions, and their Effects on Social Composition, Gender Structure and the Role of Former Nazis," *Journal of Social History* 29 (1995), 25-80.

²⁸ Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 37-8.

²⁹ Hoffmann, "Binnenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt," 224-227. On interzonal and interstate resettlement schemes in the early post-war years, see also Wolfgang Schegg, *Vertriebene und Bevölkerungsausgleich in Westdeutschland 1945-1953: Zur Vertriebenenpolitik der ersten Nachkriegsjahre* (Munich: Osteuropa-Institut, 1996).

West German authorities stressed the voluntary character of the programme and took great care to move participants' personal belongings, although, as one expellee who moved from Schleswig-Holstein to Hesse pointedly remarked, the few things that he and expellees in general had acquired since the expulsion fitted easily into one suitcase.³⁰ In all, between 1949 and 1962 just over one million expellees moved in this way away from 'donor' to 'host states,' particularly during the period from 1950 to 1955. North-Rhine-Westphalia received 499,720 people or nearly half of the people, who moved under this scheme. Baden-Württemberg came next (274,486), followed by the Rhineland-Palatinate (123,359), the city states of Hamburg and Bremen (73,006) and Hesse (36,418).³¹

However, the slow progress at the onset of the resettlement programme at first ignited massive expellee protests. Selection teams from the 'host states' dragged their feet and in their selection systematically shunned the aged, disabled and otherwise disadvantaged individuals for fear that they would become a burden on the state. Moreover, as delays increased, the programme tested the patience of some of the candidates who actually terminated work contracts following their acceptance to the programme. Without work and left waiting for the resettlement, they struggled to pay for accommodation and heating, let alone food.³² Similarly, in 1950 about 6,000 expellees returned to Schleswig-Holstein after they failed to obtain appropriate work and

³⁰ Duberg, *Der Junge*, 325.

³¹ Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 36-37.

³² Exposé by Hans Krüger, Bundesminister a.D., *Welche Faktoren haben sich für die Eingliederung der Heimatvertriebenen als hemmend und welche als fördernd erwiesen*, June 1967, 79-81, BAKo, B 106, Bundesministerium des Inneren, vol. 22480.

accommodation in the 'host states.'³³ As a result, discontent rose among expellees and in late 1950 eventually turned into organized protest. In Schleswig-Holstein as in Lower Saxony and Bavaria 'trek associations' formed and threatened to march independently to West Germany's industrial centres if the government failed to expedite the resettlement programme. The first and largest such organization, the *Treck-Vereinigung Schleswig-Holstein*, gathered no fewer than 34,000 signatures and within weeks opened 130 branches. By early 1951, officials and the press deemed the protest movement "pretty revolutionary."³⁴ Fearing the departure of treks loaded with impoverished and angered expellees, West German authorities immediately stepped up the resettlement scheme and forced 'host states,' which were the main obstacle to the smooth development of the programme, to accept expellees from all social backgrounds, young, old, skilled, unskilled, able and/or disabled. Within a year, the protests yielded effective results so that in 1952 twice as many expellees relocated under the aegis of the resettlement programme from 'donor' to 'host states.'³⁵ In addition, besides the increased efficiency of government officials, expellees poised to move to urban centres benefited from the sympathy of numerous employers who, made attentive by the wide media coverage of the protest movement, sent offers of employment to the 'trek associations.' Only one month

³³ Ian Connor, "German Refugees and the Bonn Government's Resettlement Programme: The Role of the Trek Association in Schleswig-Holstein, 1951-3," *German History* 18: 3 (2000), 341-342.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 343.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 345-346.

into its existence, the *Treck-Vereinigung Schleswig-Holstein*, for instance, received over 600 job offers which, poised to move, expellees promptly accepted.³⁶

All in all, to find gainful employment most expellees moved independently to urban centres. Alone in 1952 and 1953 over one million expellees moved within states and thus outnumbered expellees who took advantage of the federal resettlement programme between 1949 and 1955.³⁷ Moving independently, expellees moved to urban areas because they had been accepted for a posting or had knowledge about job opportunities based on information they obtained through unemployment officials, newspapers, radio programmes, kin or friendship networks and by word of mouth. Relatively early on, even before the currency reforms, expellees knew about opportunities in the mining industry of the Ruhr area that paid relatively well and, more importantly, guaranteed lodging, clothing, shoes and such highly tradable goods as spirits and personal coal allowances. Upon hearing about such opportunities, expellees, not surprisingly, were enticed in droves.³⁸ Within various types of networks word passed about specific job prospects or, more generally, about living conditions and labour markets of urban centres. As we have seen, expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers concentrated in North-Rhine-Westphalia. This was likely tied to migration cultures and chains going back to the late 19th century, when Germans (and Poles) from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers arrived in

³⁶ Connor, "German Refugees," 347.

³⁷ Appendix, table II.K).

³⁸ Interview O. S., 10 September 1981 and 29 January 1982; Interview A.K., 6 March 1981; Interview K.B., 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir; J.H., *Heimat und Lebenslauf*, 142, IGB, *Deutsches Gedächtnis*.

droves to the Ruhr area. Expellees from these territories had heard about the Ruhr area since their childhood or had relatives who lived there.³⁹ Others drew on networks built during or after the war. For example, before he decided to move to the Ruhr area, one expellee drew his information from among his former comrades in arms with whom he had kept in touch after being released from detention. He regularly corresponded with friends who told him about their and others' experiences hunting for work across occupied Germany.⁴⁰ Gatherings of homeland societies and groups similarly provided a great venue to get hold of the whereabouts of former employers, colleagues or business acquaintances so that, for instance, a secretary, who went to a meeting of Silesians, heard about the re-founding of the establishment she had worked for in Breslau (Wrocław) and thus promptly got her old job back when she got in touch with her former employer.⁴¹

Most expellees eventually found work in industry. In 1956, when West German authorities evaluated almost 6 million applications to issue expellee identity cards, 24.4 percent more expellees were employed in industry than in 1939 and so made up 51.3 percent of the total expellee labour force. In 1956 a mere 5.2 percent worked as

³⁹ Interview H.S. and wife, 2 February 1981; Interview H.-G. S., n.d.; Interview K.B., 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir. On the connection between the Ruhr area and expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse River, see Friedrich Edding and Eugen Lemberg, "Eingliederung und Gesellschaftswandel," in Edding/Lemberg, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 1, 156-173. On the migration of Germans from the eastern parts of the Reich after 1890, see James H. Jackson, *Migration and Urbanization in the Ruhr Valley 1821-1914* (Boston: Humanities Press, 1997), 304-309; Klaus J. Bade, "Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt im deutschen Nordosten von 1880 bis zum ersten Weltkrieg: Überseeische Auswanderung, interne Abwanderung und kontinentale Zuwanderung," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 20 (1980), 265-323.

⁴⁰ Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB, Lusir.

⁴¹ Interview H. R., November 1987, IGB, Lüchow. For a similar experience using homeland reunions as a network to land a job, see also Cimander, *Es führte kein Weg zurück*, 88.

farm labourers and 1.5 percent as independent farmers. Moreover, while 6 percent worked independently in unspecified areas, 13.8 percent of expellees were employed in trade and 22.1 percent in unspecified fields.⁴² Except for a decrease in farm labour, which dropped to 1.1 percent and signalled the continued modernization of the West German economy, in the general census of 1970 this occupational pattern remained largely unchanged: 48.3 percent of expellees were employed in industry, 16.6 percent in trade and transport and 26.0 percent in other unspecified fields.⁴³ Despite public aid, which included almost 10 billion German Marks in subsidy for the establishment of independent expellee farmers, between 1956 and 1970 the number of independent expellee farm owners only rose by 0.2 percent to 1.7 percent.⁴⁴ Similarly, despite 2,535 million German Marks in public aid between 1948 and 1972, the number of self-employed expellees in trades and professions remained largely stable and in fact even dropped by 0.5 percent to 5.5 percent between 1956 and 1970.⁴⁵ Overall, compared to the general population, expellees in 1970 remained significantly underrepresented in agriculture (1.7 percent of expellees versus 6.3 percent of the general working population) and self-employed business (5.5 percent versus 9.6 percent). Moreover, expellees were overrepresented in comparatively lower paid labour sectors such as industry (48.3 percent of expellees versus 45.6 percent of the general working

⁴² Appendix, table II.M) and N).

⁴³ Ibid., and table II.O).

⁴⁴ To be precise, between 1949 and 1970 191,299 farms were taken over by expellees with the help of 9,471.5 million marks from public funds. See Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 94.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 98.

population) and other unspecified employment (26.0 percent versus 20.2 percent).⁴⁶ Thus, in line with other research findings,⁴⁷ by the early 1970s significant differences between expellees and the general West German population still existed.

According to the same data, not one expellee group escaped this wind of change, although, it should be noted, that expellees from south-eastern Europe were particularly affected by this change. In 1939 56 percent of these ethnic German expellees worked in agriculture (of whom 49 percent were independent farmers). However, as we have seen, West Germany's agriculture offered expellees few opportunities to acquire farms so that by 1956 three out of four expellees from Hungary, two out of three from Yugoslavia and three out of five from Romania worked as industrial wage earners. By comparison, while in 1956 one out of two expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers and Czechoslovakia worked as industrial wage earners, in 1939 only one in four of these expellees worked in agriculture.⁴⁸ Thus, in terms of occupational patterns, expellees from south-eastern Europe had to go through a quicker and more intense phase of change.

Regardless of their regional origins, on a subjective level expellees in general viewed their occupational adjustment in West Germany quite favourably. It appears that expellees believed that the jobs they obtained in the course of the late 1940s and 1950s enabled them to gain a viable economic basis from which they could advance professionally. In particular, those who worked in the large mining and steel industries of

⁴⁶ Appendix, table II.O).

⁴⁷ Lüttinger, "Der Mythos," 20-36; Frantziöch, *Die Vertriebenen*.

⁴⁸ Appendix, table II.M) and II.N).

the Ruhr area expressed contentment about a vast array of training programmes available to them to advance their careers. Take the example of an expellee originally from Upper Silesia. In 1949 he came to Essen from a rural district in Lower Saxony without specific training and with schooling interrupted by the war and its aftermath. He first worked as a miner and later moved into the steel industry working on an assembly line. He gradually took on supervisory roles and increasingly became involved with health insurance work in the union. Following a string of training courses, he eventually became the union's full-time head of health insurance.⁴⁹ Outside the Ruhr area, as they became lawyers, salespersons, trades people or supervisors on construction sites, expellees by and large judged their careers with considerable satisfaction. They were no longer dependent on public assistance and, as one expellee typically remarked, "contributed their bit toward the economic recovery of [West] Germany."⁵⁰ Also, as full employment took hold of the country, by the mid-1950s expellees were increasingly able to acquire training through government-sponsored programmes. For example, one expellee, who had come to the Ruhr area and taken up several casual jobs in industry, eventually re-trained as a nurse with financial support from the government. In his autobiography, written some forty years later, the expellee looked back at a satisfying career in the health sector.⁵¹

Similarly, another expellee, who had lost his farm as a result of the expulsion, retrained

⁴⁹ Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir. For similar career developments, Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981; Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB Lusir.

⁵⁰ Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 102. See also L. Z., *Aus meinem Leben*, IGB, Deutsches Gedächtnis; Interview W. P., 11 January 1988; Interview W. S., 6 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow; Fritz Trossowski, *Alles in allem: Lebenserinnerungen eines westpreussischen Bauernjungen* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2002).

⁵¹ J. S., *Heimat und Lebenslauf Chronik*, IGB, Deutsches Gedächtnis.

as a machine operator after a series of low-paid unskilled jobs. Later, he eventually succeeded in realizing his wish and regained his independence. Taking out a grant from the government to set up an independent expellee business, he bought a dairy business and made it prosper. Looking back at his life, he noted in all modesty that he had made it “like many other expellees.”⁵²

Secondly, besides gainful employment, the move to urban centres increasingly allowed expellees to find more adequate accommodation, although only at the (fast) rate that housing was being built or renovated. Between 1949 and 1960 when West German authorities progressively phased out housing and rent control, 3.1 million expellees found a home in newly-built and publicly-(co-)funded homes. Of the 8.3 million West German residents that found a home in such a way, expellees made up well over a third of the beneficiaries of government housing subsidies.⁵³ Besides social housing and other arrangements in which government agencies invested, public support for housing also came in the shape of grants paid directly to expellees under the terms of the Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law of 1952 (EBL). These sums were aimed at the compensation of expellees and others for assets – fixed, intangible or liquid – lost as a result of the war and its aftermath. The issue of compensation had been debated ever since the end of the hostilities and in 1948 became even more topical, when the U.S. and British occupation authorities called for a compensation scheme in the wake of the currency reforms of mid-1948. After much deliberation, the West German parliament finally passed the EBL in 1952 and set up a scheme whereby grants were paid out to

⁵² Interview W. H., March 1988, IGB, Wustrow.

⁵³ Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 92.

claimants in compensation for lost assets through the taxation of property, credit and mortgage revenues. Lost assets were compensated at variable incremental rates starting at 95 percent of sums below 5,000 *Reichsmark* down to 6.5 percent of those at and above 1 million *Reichsmark*. In all, by 1979 expellees received 113.9 billion German Marks in compensation.⁵⁴ Although the bulk of the payments consisted of pension contributions [*Kriegsschadenrenten*], the monies granted under the terms of the EBL also often went into mortgages or were paid out as lump sums for down payments. This was the case for the von Harpe, Eichberg and many other families.⁵⁵ The von Harpe family moved into their newly-built detached home in 1957 after spending over ten years in rented housing on farms and elsewhere. Suddenly, as the expellee recalled his first impressions of moving in, the family had four bedrooms at their disposal and a garden that produced large quantities of fruits and vegetables. Their lives, as he noted, “took another turn for the better.”⁵⁶ Similarly, the Eichberg family built a home with the money they saved and the compensation they received for their lost farm in pre-war Poland. In doing so, they were motivated to recreate at least to some degree their former lifestyle so that they kept a kitchen garden and some livestock around the newly-built detached home.⁵⁷ By 1968 a

⁵⁴ Reinhold Schillinger, “Der Lastenausgleich,” in Benz, *Vertreibung*, 238-241. On the EBL, see also Paul Erker, ed., *Rechnung für Hitler’s Krieg: Aspekte und Probleme des Lastenausgleichs* (Heidelberg: Verlag Regionalkultur, 2004); and Martin L. Hughes, *Shouldering the Burdens of Defeat: West Germans and the Reconstruction of Social Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

⁵⁵ Eric von Harpe, *The Story of my Life*, n.d., 130-131, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 112; Basch, *Erinnerungen*, 92; von Blanckenburg, *Flucht*, 54-55; Interview W. P., 11 January 1988; and Interview A. and E. H., 7 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow.

⁵⁶ Eric von Harpe, *The Story of my Life*, n.d., 131, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

⁵⁷ Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 112.

remarkable 27.8 percent of expellees (compared to 33.9 percent of the general population) were home or apartment owners like the von Harpe and the Eichberg family.⁵⁸ Thus, by 1968, even if the differences between expellees and non-expellees remained tangible, expellees on the whole had closed the wide gap in terms of homeownership that existed at the beginning of the 'economic miracle.'

Thirdly, like most West Germans, the move to urban centres allowed expellees gradually to participate in West Germany's rising consumer society. As Germans went from "starvation to excess,"⁵⁹ expellees were increasingly able to purchase products and services. Interestingly, while the expellees analyzed herein mentioned their relocation only in passing, they regularly stressed their growing material comfort. The experience of an expellee from Breslau (Wroclaw) is a case in point. She spent several years in a Westphalian village before she moved to Dortmund in the Ruhr Valley. In the village she had been deprived of the most basic consumer goods and only after her relocation to the Ruhr area was she able to acquire modern household amenities which, she remembered, generated in her an immense feeling of happiness. Indeed, as she recalled, she would regularly pass by the fridge of her new household in Dortmund and stroke its surface.⁶⁰ Expellees such as the woman from Breslau (Wroclaw) perceived the acquisition of household and consumer goods as a milestone in their lives. As they started anew in the city, they bought beds, tables and chairs followed soon after by radio

⁵⁸ Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 46.

⁵⁹ Arnold Sywottek, "From Starvation to Excess? Trends in the Consumer Society from the 1940s to the 1970s," in Schissler, *The Miracle Years*, 341-358.

⁶⁰ Interview F.K. and wife, November 1985, IGB, Lusir; see also Interview H.S. and wife, 2 February 1981, *ibid.*

sets, couches, fridges, vacuum cleaners and washing machines. For the substantial outlays needed for such purchases, expellees used, if they could, their savings, took out loans or paid in instalments.⁶¹ Expellee women routinely took up employment despite the strong bias in West German public opinion against women's work. During the 1950s women made up at least one third of West Germany's labour force and the number of married mothers in paid employment increased by 324 percent.⁶² Hence, while women often took on the double burden of looking after families and working in typically lower-paid jobs, they also substantially contributed to the expansion of West Germany's consumer society and, by inference, to expellee households.⁶³ This represented the day-to-day reality of one expellee woman in Essen, who complemented her husband's wage by working casual jobs. As she recalled, there was no other way to support the family, pay the rent and purchase household and consumer goods.⁶⁴

For all the advantages that urban centres boasted, to expellees the rural exodus nonetheless entailed a number of downsides. Expellees, for one, bewailed the loss of a sense of community which, they felt, the common experience of impoverishment had generated. One expellee, for instance, who moved to North-Rhine-

⁶¹ Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir; Degenhardt, *Weil Du mein Vater bist*, 104.

⁶² Klaus-Jörg Ruhl, *Verordnete Unterordnung: Berufstätige Frauen zwischen Wirtschaftswachstum und konservativer Ideologie in der Nachkriegszeit, 1945-1963* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1994), 197.

⁶³ On the status of women in the 1950s FRG, see Elizabeth Heinemann, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 209-238; Ruhl, *Verordnete Unterordnung*; and Robert G. Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar West Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁶⁴ Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir.

Westphalia in the late 1940s, recalled how the relocation brought about the end of the nightly gatherings he and his family had enjoyed in the small shack of rural Franconia (northern Bavaria) where he and his family initially landed. After the move, the expellee recalled, the family no longer gathered around the only stove of the abode singing folk songs and playing cards.⁶⁵ Similarly, an expellee who in 1949 accepted a job in a glass manufactory in a nearby town, very much regretted her departure from the circle of friends she had made in the past four years, especially among the “expellee mother group” [*Flüchtlingsmutterkreis*] which, she claimed, had been a constant source of help and comfort whilst she was struggling to feed and support her family.⁶⁶ Besides such feelings, the move away from rural districts sometimes also failed to live up to the expellees’ expectations. As we have seen, 6,000 expellees, who took advantage of the federal government’s resettlement programme, returned to Schleswig-Holstein, unable to find adequate employment in the ‘host states.’⁶⁷ The experience of the Duberg family tellingly exemplifies the initial shortcomings of the resettlement programme. Having moved from Schleswig-Holstein to Hesse in late 1949, the Duberg family found themselves in an area just as remote and underdeveloped as before. There was neither work nor adequate housing and shortly thereafter they were forced – independently – to move to Frankfurt to find employment.⁶⁸

Moreover, with the transition to urban centres and/or remunerated work, expellees frequently associated a period of separation from close family members. The

⁶⁵ Tietze, *Mainwärts*, 105.

⁶⁶ Blanckenburg, *Flucht*, 48.

⁶⁷ See in this chapter, p. 157

⁶⁸ Duberg, *Der Junge*, 235-237.

lack of suitable urban housing typically forced young adult expellees to move ahead of close family members and have wives, children, siblings and elderly parents join at a later date, once a foothold was established in the city. In the meantime weekends and holidays provided the only occasion for reunions. For one expellee couple, such a situation went on for almost four years. In 1949, just after their engagement in a village of Lower Saxony, the groom-to-be left his fiancée for the Ruhr area to take up work in the coal industry. In Essen, where he described the housing conditions as “catastrophic,” he obtained a bunk bed in a “home for singles” [*Ledigenheim*] sharing a room with 18 other men. In 1951 they married and soon after had a child. Yet, they still remained separate and only in 1953 did the husband find accommodation for his young family in Essen, namely in two converted rooms of a former machine house. Meanwhile, for all this time the husband saw his wife for only twelve days of the year.⁶⁹ Incidentally – and quite symptomatic of the experiences of upwardly-mobile expellees and locals in the late 1940s and early 1950s – there was little comfort for the husband in knowing that he was joined by a host of men who were in the same boat, for every time he went to visit his wife in Lower Saxony, he travelled in overcrowded trains and struggled to find a seat. He was, as he recalled almost three decades later, obviously not the only person to visit loved-ones in the countryside.⁷⁰

Lastly, hard work decidedly overshadowed the integration into the labour market. As newcomers and especially as former farmers and soldiers expellees lacked adequate training to start new careers and consequently worked hard to make up for the

⁶⁹ Interview O. S. and wife, 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982, IGB, Lusir.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

shortfall in relevant skills. Sometimes new careers appeared at first daunting or so a former expellee farmer felt, when he first went out to sell chocolates and candies in his new employment. Given that he had no previous experience or training in sales, it had been, he noted in his memoirs, “a real effort to walk into the stores and offer my product. I had never attended business school and did things my way [...]”⁷¹ More importantly, the lack of relevant skills led to the initial sub-stratification of expellees and others in West Germany’s growing labour market.⁷² Educated and trained expellees crucially lacked relevant business contacts and thus first had to accept jobs below their rank or, worse, outside their field of expertise. Former army officers, whether of local or expellee background, thus became kitchen aides and accountants, dentists and office clerks started to work in the coalmines of the Ruhr area.⁷³ For an expellee originally from Stettin (Szczecin), business schooling and a two-year apprenticeship as an office administrator did not suffice to land him an office job. Apparently, upon arrival in the Ruhr area, all he could find was a job in the pits. As he noted, during the first few weeks he worked with tears moistening his eyes and a body that, under the physical strain of mining, hurt with

⁷¹ Erik von Harpe, *The Story of My Life*, n.d., 127-129, CBIAS London, Memoir Collection.

⁷² On this sub-stratification, see also Klaus J. Bade, “Sozialhistorische Migrationsforschung und ‚Flüchtlingsintegration‘,” in Rainer Schulze, Doris von der Brölie-Lewien and Helga Grebing, eds. *Flüchtlinge in der westdeutschen Nachkriegsgeschichte: Bilanzierung der Forschung und Perspektiven für die künftige Forschungsarbeit* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1987), 107-116; idem, *Neue Heimat im Westen*.

⁷³ Interview Frau S., 21 September 1981; Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir. On the initial sub-stratification of former German army officers, see also James M. Diehl, *Thanks to the Fatherland: German Veterans after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

every step he took. Never in his life, he recalled, had he worked as hard as in the mine and had it not been for his family, he would have quit the job straightaway. Thus, while he eventually became a tenured official, his years in the pits left him, like many expellees and others, with a deeply-engraved memory that the beginnings of his working life in the FRG were filled with arduous work.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Interview H.-G. S., n.d., IGB, Lusir; similarly Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, *ibid.*

The 'North American Way'

Spurred on by World War II after the massive slump of the 1930s, Canada's economy continued to grow throughout the first three post-war decades. Despite fears to the contrary, the demobilization of roughly half a million Canadian soldiers, or roughly 5 percent of the general population, went smoothly. In fact, the cutback in the Canadian army, reduced to a mere 31,000 soldiers by the end of 1946, stimulated consumer demand and further fuelled the Canadian economy. Between 1939 and the late 1950s Canada's gross national product effectively grew six-fold and unemployment ranged between 2.8 percent to 5.9 percent.⁷⁵ Much of this economic growth, with the exception of the resource and energy industry, took place in urban centres, especially in and around Montreal and in Ontario's 'Golden Horseshoe' along Lake Ontario stretching from the eastern fringes of Toronto all the way to Hamilton. As elsewhere in the capitalist world, Canadian government agencies actively encouraged economic growth by adopting Keynesian economic policies, funding major projects that included the construction of highways, pipelines and seaways.⁷⁶ Similarly, with full control over the admission of immigrants, the federal government also adjusted immigration policy to the needs of the Canadian economy. Following the sea-change in immigration policy in 1947, which allowed for the mass arrival of European refugees and removed the ban on enemy aliens including Italians in 1947 and Germans in 1950, the federal government set out to modernize immigration policy. It established an immigration ministry in its own right

⁷⁵ Numbers as quoted in Kelley/Trebilcock, *Making*, 311.

⁷⁶ On Canada's 'golden post-war era,' see Norrie/Owram, *History*, 539-621; Bothwell, *Canada since 1945*, 9-36, 61-73, and 132-145.

and proposed a new immigration act which was passed by parliament in 1952. As a result, between 1945 and 1960 nearly two million immigrants came to Canada. In light of continued discrimination against non-white immigrants and Ottawa's strong preferences for certain ethnic groups, most immigrants came from the British Isles, the USA and to a lesser degree from Italy, the Netherlands, West Germany and Eastern Europe. This government-controlled surge in immigration added to the rapidly growing Canadian population and spurred economic growth.⁷⁷

Expellees in both Canada and the FRG took advantage of the new opportunities in Canada. On the one hand, economic growth and modernization further cut into the already reduced Sudeten-German communities in B.C. and Saskatchewan, as settlers moved away, unable to keep pace with the increased productivity and mechanization of farming. In 1954 in Tupper Creek, B.C., a mere 72 households remained on the site of the initial settlement as post-1945 members of the community moved to nearby Dawson Creek, where new employment opportunities in teaching, social care and other public services opened.⁷⁸ On the other hand, and most importantly, the removal of the immigration ban on Germans dramatically increased the numbers of expellees residing in Canada, as it set free, what one scholar has dubbed, the "post-war German immigration boom."⁷⁹ Expellees figured prominently in this boom: at least one third of the nearly 200,000 Germans, who moved to Canada between 1950 and 1958, were of expellee background. Thereafter, expellees still continued to arrive, but in the

⁷⁷ Kelley/Trebilcock, *Making*, 311-345; Avery, *Reluctant Host*, 170-178.

⁷⁸ Hermann Seidel, "Tomslake," *Forward* 7: 11 (April 1954), 5; Schoen, *Tupper Boys*, 83-134.

⁷⁹ Schmalz, "Former Enemies Come to Canada,".

face of rising wages and full employment in West Germany the overall number of Germans coming to Canada markedly dropped. For the years 1953 to 1958, when West German officials separately registered the expellee flow abroad, statistics suggest that on average 31 percent of German immigrants to Canada were of expellee background, peaking in 1953 with 39 percent of the overall migration from West Germany to Canada.⁸⁰ According to the same data, moreover, Canada appears to have attracted a disproportionate number of expellees, for, with the exception of the USA, which ran a special expellee immigration programme in the early 1950s, no other country received as many expellees. From 1953 to 1958 an average of 37 percent of expellees, who moved overseas from the FRG, chose Canada as the destination and in 1953 Canada drew a startling 58 percent.⁸¹ Canadian census data corroborates West German emigration statistics. According to a microdata sample from the 1981 census, expellees made up 31.7 percent of Germans, who arrived in Canada between 1946 and 1955.⁸² Consequently, all told, between 1945 and 1960 expellees were definitely strongly overrepresented in Canada's post-war German immigrant community with roughly a little less than a third of its population or, by an equally rough though conservative estimate of around 85,000 people.⁸³

⁸⁰ Appendix, table III.A).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., table III.D) and III.E).

⁸³ Until September 1950 at least 25,000 expellees arrived to Canada under the auspices of the IGCR/IRO and the CCCRR. Added to an average of 31.7 percent of expellees that arrived during the 1950s, the overall total is roughly 85,000. For pre-1950 data, see herein ch. II, p. 131. Note, however, that the latter figures include expellees arriving from Austria, whereas the West German data of the 1950s used above obviously do not.

There appears to be an inverse relationship for the migration of expellees to Canada: the greater the distance of their regional origins to West Germany, the likelier they were to cross the ocean. Sudeten Germans, whose former homes were comparatively close to West Germany, were underrepresented in the 1981 census sample with approximately 5.6 percent of Canada's post-war expellee immigrant population. By comparison, in West Germany Sudeten Germans made up 25.9 percent of the expellee population in 1970.⁸⁴ For their part, expellees from Silesia or other regions east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers that were part of the German Reich before the war, were similarly underrepresented in Canada with 39.7 percent of the postwar expellee immigrant population compared to 56.9 percent of the expellee population in West Germany.⁸⁵ In effect, this expellee group did not show a much greater inclination to move to Canada than Germans born in West Germany. Indeed, whereas in 1970 expellees from these areas made up 9.7 percent of the German population in the FRG, the same group in Canada in 1971 made up 11.2 of the post-war German immigrant population.⁸⁶ Consequently, the overrepresentation of expellees in the post-war German immigration flow to Canada was, by and large, fuelled by ethnic German expellees from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe. Expellees from the USSR, for example, who represented only

⁸⁴ Appendix, table II.E) and III.D).

⁸⁵ Ibid. It should be noted that the Canadian data refers to expellees born in Poland in the post-1945 boundaries and thus do not include expellees from former German territories annexed by the USSR in 1944/5, namely from the north-eastern part of East Prussia and Königsberg (Kaliningrad Oblast). Conversely, Canadian data includes expellees born in areas that were Polish before and after World War II.

⁸⁶ Appendix, table III.D) and for West German data, Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 2, 31. The reservations outlined in the above footnote apply for these numbers too.

2.1 percent of the Federal Republic's expellee population in 1970, made up 29.1 percent of Canada's post-war expellee immigrant population in 1971.⁸⁷ Similarly, while in 1970 expellee from south-eastern Europe represented 6.8 percent of the expellee population in the FRG, in Canada, by 1981, expellees from Yugoslavia comprised 15.8 percent of the post-war expellee immigrant population.⁸⁸

What explains this predominance of certain groups in Canada's post-war expellee immigrant population? As one historian has recently shown, migration chains and networks, familial and regional migration traditions as well as specific societal constellations go a long way in explaining how certain expellee groups found "migration windows" while others did not.⁸⁹ As such, expellees from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe built on the chains and networks built since the turn of the century, when most German immigrants to Canada predominantly came from the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires.⁹⁰ This is evident in the settlement pattern of post-war expellee immigrants. Whereas most immigrants from West Germany settled in the rapidly industrializing province of Ontario (48.2 percent), expellee immigrant groups from Poland and the USSR settled disproportionately in the provinces where German immigrants primarily settled between the 1890s and late 1920s, namely in the Canadian West. Specifically, among expellee immigrants born in what became post-war Poland, in 1971 27.7 percent settled in Alberta, 21.4 percent settled in British Columbia, 15.2

⁸⁷ Appendix, table II.G) and III.D).

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 510-514.

⁹⁰ On the pre-1945 German immigrant population, see ch. I, and for its composition particularly p. 84.

percent settled in Manitoba and 8 percent settled in Saskatchewan. Similarly, among expellee immigrants born in what became the post-1945 USSR, in 1971 25.5 percent settled in British Columbia, 13.4 percent settled in Alberta, 19.5 percent settled in Manitoba and 6.1 percent settled in Saskatchewan.⁹¹ Expellee immigrants from south-eastern Europe also show evidence of chain migration, moving to Ontario, where, in the 1920s, Danube-Swabian immigrants had previously settled. For example, in 1981 58.8 percent of expellee immigrants born in Hungary and 72.5 percent of expellee immigrants born in Yugoslavia resided in Ontario.⁹²

In the post-war period such chains were reinforced by a variety of factors both at work in the FRG and Canada. In West Germany public officials up to the highest echelons continued their attempts to limit emigration to a few expellee groups that were thought to be dispensable and unnecessary for the country's economic recovery. Officially, as a member of the 'free world,' the West German government endorsed emigration, however, in reality it only encouraged the departure of ethnic German expellee families of peasant background. Such families were typically seen as backward settlers innately apt to colonize.⁹³ As one senior West German government officials concluded: "Emigration: yes or no? [...] Only for expellee farmers (ethnic Germans) can [emigration] be of some importance."⁹⁴ Consequently, during the 1950s the tools that

⁹¹ Appendix, table III.D).

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ See also chapter I, p. 37.

⁹⁴ Werner Middelman, *Auswanderung – ja oder nein?*, 13, 29 October 1952, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 526, file 1. For a programmatic enunciation of this policy by government ministers, see in particular the manuscript for speeches that Hans Lukaschek, Federal Minister of Expellees from 1949 to 1953, gave

West German officials held to control the flow of immigration to Canada and elsewhere were built on this supposition. Firstly, West German officials negotiated a preferential status for ethnic German expellee farmers in bilateral migration agreements such as with Australia in 1952.⁹⁵ Secondly, to further the emigration of ethnic German expellee peasants, notably from the south-eastern Europe, West German officials allocated money to individuals eligible for small international relocation grants under the terms of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM).⁹⁶ Thirdly, in some cases West German officials were allowed to pre-screen prospective immigrants on behalf of overseas governments and thus could directly influence the composition of migration abroad. Indeed, for the sake of expediency Canada authorized West German officials to pre-select and assemble groups of prospective immigrants.⁹⁷ As a result, ethnic German expellees of rural background were primed to relocate overseas, all the more since Canadian authorities were, for their part, similarly keen on their immigration. For example, Canadian immigration officials held expellees from the Danube Plains in high

across West Germany and Western Europe in 1950: *Bedeutung der Heimatvertriebenen in der Deutschen Bundesrepublik für Europa*, n.d. [1950], BaKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 1440, part 1. An extended version of this text appeared in print: Hans Lukaschek, *Die Deutschen Heimatvertriebenen als zentrales deutsches Problem* (Bonn: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, 1952).

⁹⁵ Werner Middelman, *Auswanderung – ja oder nein?*, 7, 29 October 1952, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 526, file 1.

⁹⁶ Dr. von Trützschler, *Aufzeichnung über den Verlauf und Ergebnisse der Internationalen Auswanderungskonferenz in Brüssel vom 26. November 1951*, 30 December 1951, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (PAAA), Abt. 3, B 11, vol. 1108, 412-19; Steinert, *Migration*, 133-145; Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 206-208; and Schmalz, "Former Enemies Come to Canada," 259-274.

⁹⁷ Aide-Memoire on selection criteria for German Labour officials, n.d. [ca. April 1952], NAC, Immigration Branch Records, RG 76, vol. 31, file 682, part 7; Despatch no. 499, 7 June 1951, *ibid.*; and Bird to Deputy Minister, 23 October 1952, NAC, Citizenship and Immigration Records, RG 26, vol. 107, file 3-24-6, part 2.

esteem, viewing their presumed sturdiness and rural affinity a fitting match for the requirements of Canada's labour-poor farming, mining and resource-based industries. By contrast, suspicious of their role in the break-up of Czechoslovakia in 1938, Canadian officials deemed Sudeten-German expellees as unsuitable immigrants, potentially disloyal to the state. Thus, when hard-pressed to fill immigration quotas as in 1952, they resorted to the recruitment of expellees from Yugoslavia and Hungary residing in the vicinity of the Canadian immigration office in West Germany. Apparently, they had "dealt with them before and consider[ed] them very good material as farm labourers in Canada."⁹⁸ Given these clear preferences by Canadian immigration officials, it is thus not surprising that certain expellee groups figure prominently in Canada's post-war immigrant population. It should be added that for the period between 1953 and mid-1954 alone, for which specific data is available, 47.8 percent of the immigrants recruited for farming in Canada were of expellee background.⁹⁹

The decision to move abroad and leave West Germany rested, ultimately, with the expellees themselves. It was they who had to show interest in emigration, apply for visas, and undergo medical and security tests in addition to personal interviews with immigration officials. Nor did the decision to move abroad come out of the blue. It was a decision borne out of reflection and was generally commemorated with family and community members on the day of departure. Friends flocked to say farewell and give

⁹⁸ Memorandum for file, 2 February 1952, PAAA, Abt. 2 (Politische Abteilung), B 10, vol. 1892, 412-08-40. On the negative perception of Sudeten Germans as potential immigrants, see Despatch no. 322, Davis to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 August 1950, NAC, External Affairs Records, RG 25, vol. 6248, file 9408-A-40.

⁹⁹ *Wanderung der Vertriebenen und Zugewanderten im Jahre 1953 und im 1. Halbjahr 1954*, *Wirtschaft und Statistik* (1955), 15.

presents and mark the event. One expellee, for instance, on his last day at work in West Germany received a hatchet from his colleagues. Apparently, his co-workers deemed the tool essential for the wilderness of Canada.¹⁰⁰ The last moments were commonly filled with tears and cheers as expellees and others embarked on ocean liners, knowing full well that they would not see the FRG for some time. At the port of embarkation, usually Bremen, uniformed brass bands paraded and played the tunes of marching songs as a farewell to the departing crowds. Clearly, the decision and the act of departing from the FRG were not of minor significance. The fact that many expellee immigrants remember the precise dates of their immigration to Canada is indicative of the momentousness of the event.¹⁰¹

During the 1950s expellees, in general, moved to Canada because they saw in that country an opportunity to realize their hitherto unfulfilled aspirations. Given the varied composition of the expellee immigration population, expellees were surely not predestined to move abroad because they had, as some scholars and contemporary observers claim, lost their homeland in the aftermath of the war.¹⁰² For most expellees analyzed in this study the decision to move to Canada represented, with hindsight, a

¹⁰⁰ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection. Similarly, *Auswanderung nach Canada: Aufzeichnungen, Briefe und Unterlagen der Familie Hentzelt Mai-Juni 1954*, 1-2, CSG, Familie Hentzelt Papers; and Kroeger, *Start*, 45.

¹⁰¹ Andres, *My Life*, 116; Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978; Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Interview David Mathes, 3 and 10 February 1978; Interview Mathias Brandt, 7 December 1977; Interview Reverend John Goetze, Goetze, 17 May 1977; Interview Paul Kromer, 15 October 1979; Interview Margarete Wiese, 3 July 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰² Wolfgang Friedmann, *German Immigration into Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1952), 15-18; Schmalz, "Former Enemies come to Canada," 66; Wieden, *The Trans-Canada Alliance*, 19.

chance to better themselves economically and socially. As they claimed in their autobiographical interviews and writings, they had heard from friends, relatives, newspapers, films, radio programmes and other sources about employment opportunities in Canada's expanding and prospering economy or about the abundance of fresh groceries and consumer goods available in Canada. As one expellee put it, they had seen posters of Canada Dry advertised "all over" and thus had been left with the impression that Canada was a good country to live in.¹⁰³ Similarly, by taking the decision to emigrate, they claimed to have looked for better living and working conditions beyond the small flats, rooms and communal shelters of West Germany or some of the dissatisfying jobs they took on in the FRG.¹⁰⁴ Expellees of farming backgrounds, who, prior to 1945, had been or wanted to become independent farmers also expressed the opinion that compared to the FRG they saw better opportunities to acquire a farm in Canada. They had heard, as one expellee suggested, that immigrants in Canada could acquire a farm at comparatively low cost and possibly after a few years of saving.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Interview Frank Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; see also Interview Paul Kromer, 15 October 1979; Interview Siegfried and Waltraud Schoepke, 28 April and 14 May 1977; Interview John Penteker, 22 June 1977; Interview Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰⁴ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978; Interview Reverend Kurt Mittelstaedt, 8 September 1977; Interview Eric Janotta, 25 May 1979; Interview Norbert Lackner, 15 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Interview Anton Wekerle, 10 March 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Stella, Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 74-75, CBIAS London, Memoir Collection.

¹⁰⁵ Andres, *My Life*, 112-113. Similarly Jost von der Linden, *The Uprooted Linden Tree* (Vancouver: private publication, 1995), 122-123; Kroeger, *Start*, 55-70; Roland von Stackelberg, *Memoirs*, n.d., 44, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

Yet, adding to this motive for upward social mobility, which most scholars stress for German immigrants,¹⁰⁶ a web of further factors supported the decision to emigrate to Canada, which was in any event neither etched in stone nor inalterable. Expellees, like other immigrants, came to Canada with a set of expectations and hopes that, if unattained, also prompted their return to the FRG. Among them were individuals of all ages who, after a period of one or ten years, moved back to the FRG perhaps to help family members in need or take advantage of the special benefits granted by the West German state to expellees.¹⁰⁷ That expellees, as they suggested in interviews, had no 'home' to return to like German immigrants born within the territory of the FRG,¹⁰⁸ fails to reflect the multidirectional migration of expellees between West Germany and Canada. In fact, according to West German data, expellees were almost as likely to return to West Germany as Germans born within the territory of the FRG.¹⁰⁹ The web of other factors that motivated expellees to move to Canada included specific circumstances

¹⁰⁶ Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 265-388; Koch-Kraft, *Deutsche*, 44-48; Anthony H. Richmond, *Post-War Immigration to Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 32-33.

¹⁰⁷ Interview Lucy Amberg, 22 March 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Ein baltischer Junge wandert aus, CSG, Balten in Kanada, Australien, USA, Südamerika, Kasten II; Kroeger, *Start*, 202.

¹⁰⁸ Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978; Interview Nibert Lackner, 15 March 1978; Paul Roeseler, 6 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰⁹ West German statistics suggest a sizable amount of expellees among German migrants returning to the FRG from Canada during the 1950s. In 1953, for example, at the height of the 'German immigration boom,' 21 percent of the comparatively few Germans that moved from Canada to West Germany were expellees. One year later the same number rose to 27 percent and remained, with increasing numbers of expellees, at a similar level for the subsequent years. The return rate of expellees to the FRG thus almost reached the level of their representation in Canada's German immigrant population. See appendix, table III.B).

in people's lifecycles, notably marriage,¹¹⁰ retirement¹¹¹ and the beginning of working lives of young adult expellees filled with a sense of adventure.¹¹² Furthermore, as a primary motive for immigration a good many expellees also referred to the potential of renewed hostilities in Europe in the wake of the Cold War. In doing so, they believed Canada to be safer than the FRG, claiming often that they had experienced violence firsthand and thus, 'once bitten twice shy,' preferred to stay away from potentially disastrous conflicts.¹¹³ For those, who had suffered forced labour and/or rape in the aftermath of the war, such fears were pivotal in the decision to move away from Europe.¹¹⁴ A number of expellees blatantly expressed their personal fear and hatred of communism. For one expellee, the threat posed by the Soviet Union determined, by and large, the decision to move to Canada. He did so, as he remarked, despite the fact that he was an established senior medical paediatrician in West Germany and, once in Canada,

¹¹⁰ Interview Anton Fischer, 16 November 1977; Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978; Interview Edda Morsher, 15 June 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹¹¹ Esther Dietrich, *Schicksal einer deutsch-baltischen Familie*, n.d., 29-30, CBIAS London, Memoir Collection.

¹¹² Interview Ernst Bollenbach, 2 August 1977, MHSO, German Collection; Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978; Interview Mathias Brandt, 7 December 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; von der Linden, *Uprooted*, 122-123; and Betty Sellnies Goos, *From Memelland to Canada* (Winnipeg: Hignell Printing, 2000), 73-80.

¹¹³ Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Interview Norbert Lackner, 15 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Interview with Waldemar Hildebrandt in Tova T. Yedlin, *Germans From Russia in Alberta: Reminiscences* (Edmonton: Central and East European Studies Society of Alberta, 1985), 154.

¹¹⁴ Interview Reverend Kurt Mittelstaedt, 8 September 1977, MHSO, German Collection; Interview Anton Wekerle, 10 March 1979; Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978; and Interview Elisabeth Knipl, 26 April 1979, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

had to pass Canadian medical examinations and recommence his career ‘from scratch.’¹¹⁵ Consequently, aside from social and economic considerations, a wide range of factors came into play in generating the decision to immigrate.¹¹⁶

After the removal of the immigration ban in 1950 Germans could immigrate to Canada as a ‘preferred class’ of immigrant, second only to white U.S., British and French citizens and at the same level as other immigrants from north-western Europe such as Dutch or Scandinavians. More specifically, besides relatives of Canadian residents,¹¹⁷ Canadian authorities allowed for the admission of agriculturalists with sufficient means and persons deemed capable of making a significant contribution to the economic, social or cultural life of the country. Provided they met security restrictions, individuals who – generally between 20 and 34 –¹¹⁸ qualified for one of Canada’s labour-immigration schemes aimed at filling the labour shortages of the economy, were also eligible for immigration. Roughly one third of the Germans arriving during the 1950s came as relatives of Canadian residents and roughly two-thirds did so under one of the

¹¹⁵ Gerhard Conradi, “Wir lieben Kanada,” *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 43 (2001), 79-80. For anti-communism as a motive, see also Interview Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection; Kroeger, *Start*, 120; Kuester to his mother, 2 September 1951, CBIAS, Correspondence Mathias F. Kuester, Archive Edmonton.

¹¹⁶ Several empirical surveys reach similar conclusions, see notably Bundesamt für Auswanderung, Rundschreiben 85/1954, Statistischer Jahresbericht für das Jahr 1953 über den Auswanderungsdrang in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und in West-Berlin, 15, BAKo, Bundesministerium des Inneren, B 106, vol. 12436; as well as Koch-Kraft, *Deutsche*, 225; and Thomas Poetschke, “Reasons for Immigration and Ethnic Identity: An Exploratory Study of German Immigrants in Edmonton, Alberta,” M.A. Thesis University of Alberta 1978.

¹¹⁷ Namely: fiancées, spouses, children, parents, grandparents, siblings and unmarried nephews or nieces under the age of twenty-one.

¹¹⁸ Appendix, table III.L).

labour-immigrant schemes.¹¹⁹ However, due in part to strict currency exchange restrictions and generally low income levels in West Germany, most expellees and other immigrants from West Germany were only able to make the move to Canada through subsidized arrangements offered by Canadian voluntary organizations and the Canadian government.

Canadian relatives interested in sponsoring the immigration of relatives residing in West Germany were able to get assistance through organizations such as the CCCRR which advanced the costs of transportation and processing fees. Once the immigrant arrived in Canada, he or she was obliged to pay back the advance within a limited time period of one to two years and this, usually, at no interest charged to the immigrant. As in the late 1940s, during the 1950s expellees used this arrangement to unfold a chain of migration.¹²⁰ The Canadian government also offered expellees and, generally, German immigrants from West Germany the opportunity to move abroad at an affordable price through the so-called Assisted Passage Scheme (APS) and other specific labour-immigration programmes administered jointly by the Federal Department of Labour and the newly founded Department of Citizenship and Immigration. The APS, which was originally designed by immigration officials to entice British immigrants to Canada, aimed at easing the financial burden of immigration by providing transportation

¹¹⁹ Schmalz, "Former Enemies come to Canada," 121-124. By contrast during the 1950s over 90 percent of the immigrants from Italy were sponsored by relatives residing in Canada, see Alan Green, *Immigration and the Postwar Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), 82.

¹²⁰ Interview Reverend Kurt Mittelstaedt, 8 September 1977; Interview Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Evelyn Irschik, "Unsere Kinder sollen sich nicht fremd fühlen," *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums* 43 (2001), 97-98.

loans to selected immigrants in desirable occupations. The scheme was applied to West Germany and elsewhere in Western Europe in 1951. During the 1950s German immigrants from the FRG became the main beneficiaries of the scheme.¹²¹ Loans were interest-free and granted to adults only, until 1955 when it was extended to immediate family members in an attempt to respond to the slackening immigration flow from West Germany. There were strings attached to the scheme as prospective immigrants were required to contribute a minimum of \$30 toward their own transportation costs and pay off their debts directly from their wages within two years of their arrival in Canada. Moreover, by signing up for the APS, prospective immigrants bound themselves for a predetermined time of up to 18 months to a specific occupation at a location determined by the government and its employment agency, the National Employment Service.¹²² In addition to the APS, further schemes helped expellees and German immigrants reduce the cost of immigration. As of 1950 they could notably commit to specific jobs in labour-starved sectors such as in mining, farming or domestic service for a period of up to two years. These schemes – known among officials as ‘bulk labour’ or ‘domestic labour’ – were originally developed in the immediate post-war period for the mass movement of DPs from Europe to Canada. However, unlike DPs, whose transatlantic passage was paid for by the IRO, expellees and German immigrants arriving under the auspices of one of

¹²¹ Between 1951 and 1960 almost 50 percent of all APS loans were granted to immigrants from West Germany, specifically 41,454 out of 85,880 loans, see Steinert, *Migration*, 161.

¹²² Schmalz, “Former Enemies come to Canada,” 108-120.

such immigrant-labour schemes were asked to reimburse the fare through regular wage deductions.¹²³

Expellees, like other immigrants from Western Europe, used such immigrant-labour schemes as conduits to enter Canada and typically moved into different labour sectors once they had fulfilled the terms of their engagement. The comparison between Canadian and West German data makes this quite apparent: while Canadian tables show that 16.9 percent and 17.8 percent of West German immigrants qualified for the admission to Canada under the schemes for domestic and farm labourers, West German data, by contrast, suggests that between 1953 and 1956 no more than 10.3 percent and 7.5 percent of expellees worked in these two labour sectors prior to their immigration overseas. In fact, according to West German data, between 1953 and 1956 most expellees worked in industry and trades (47.6 percent) before they moved abroad. It should be added that the occupations of expellees prior to moving overseas only slightly deviated from those of German immigrants born in the FRG. For example, between 1953 and 1956 4.3 percent of Germans born and residing in the FRG worked in agriculture before they left for overseas destinations, 10.3 percent in health and domestic labour and 45.7 percent in industry and trades.¹²⁴ The experience of a newly-wed expellee couple

¹²³ Freund, *Aufbrüche*, 403-452; Schmalz, "Former Enemies come to Canada," 120-174. On the immigrant labour schemes in general, see Avery, *Reluctant Host*, 171-176; and Franca Iacovetta, "Ordering in Bulk: Canada's Postwar Immigration Policy and the Recruitment of Contract Workers from Italy," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 11:1 (Fall 1991), 50-80.

¹²⁴ West German figures subsume health and domestic labour into one category. Canadian numbers as quoted in Schmalz, "Former Enemies come to Canada," 137, 154; for West German figures, *Statistische Berichte* (June 1955), 10-13; and (October 1956), 15-18.

was thus typical: they arrived in the Okanagan Valley in May 1951 and were bound for labour in agriculture. However, they hoped to move to Alberta as soon as they could in order to make use of the husband's drilling skills acquired in West Germany. On arrival, at the port, they were presented the full bill for the cost of their immigration, \$605 in all. Earning a combined \$120 per month, they paid off their debts before the end of their farm labour contract and consequently moved to Edmonton, where they were hoping that the husband would find employment in the far more lucrative oil industry. And so he did, in fact earning twice as much as on the farm.¹²⁵

Most expellee men eventually worked in industry. Specifically, according to 1971 census data, between 45 and 50 percent of expellee men, who arrived in Canada between 1946 and 1955, worked in industry.¹²⁶ Thus, while in 1971 29 percent of Canada's working population was employed in industry,¹²⁷ expellees were significantly overrepresented. Like other immigrant groups, expellees lacked a number of critical features to obtain professional jobs, including English language skills, local education experience and, particularly for legal or medical jobs, Canadian accreditation.¹²⁸ Taking into account the various regional origins of expellees, further significant differences come

¹²⁵ Kuester to mother, 12 May 1951; 3 June 1951, 8 February 1952 and 1 June 1952, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondance.

¹²⁶ Appendix, table III.F).

¹²⁷ Table D8-85, Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 1971 census, 2nd electronic ed., 1999, <http://www.statscan.ca>.

¹²⁸ In his path-breaking study John Porter made out a correlation between occupational status and ethnicity. Starting from professional to unskilled workers, according to him, between 1931 and 1961 there was a clear ethnic hierarchy, namely at the top Canadians of British heritage followed by Jews, French, German, Dutch, Scandinavians, Eastern Europeans, Italians, Chinese, Blacks and, at the very bottom, Natives. See his *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 81-83.

to light. According to 1971 census data, 9.3 percent of expellee men from the USSR and 11.5 percent of expellee men from other Eastern European countries, who arrived in Canada between 1946 and 1955, worked in agriculture/forestry. Expellee men from the USSR and elsewhere in Eastern Europe were thus twice as likely to work in farming as were male immigrants born in West Germany (5.2 percent) and the Canadian population (5.6 percent) in general.¹²⁹ A number of factors account for this significant difference. Firstly, as we have seen, Canadian and West German regulations and policies favoured their immigration to Canada since they were seen as good settlers. Secondly, unlike the FRG, continued growth in agricultural production and export offered expellees and Canadians in general the opportunity to acquire and run profitable farms.¹³⁰ Thirdly, expellees, who had lost assets in Eastern Europe, could also count on West German financial support under the terms of the Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law of 1952 (EBL) and invest the payouts in the purchase of farms.¹³¹ Another difference in the working patterns of regional expellee groups stands out. Expellee women from the USSR clearly sought less waged employment than did women from other expellee groups and Canadian women in general. According to 1971 census data, 27.9 percent of expellee women from the USSR worked or were in paid employment. By contrast, while nationally 39 percent of Canadian women worked,¹³² 39 percent of women born in West Germany, 36.8 percent of expellee women from Poland and 40.5 percent of women other Eastern

¹²⁹ Table D8-85 and table D1-7, Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 1971 census.

¹³⁰ Bothwell, *Canada since 1945*, 290 and 301-302.

¹³¹ Bartel, *Remembrances*; Andres, *My Life*, 144-146.

¹³² Table D1-7 and A1-247, Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 1971 census.

European countries worked.¹³³ This may well be related to stronger patriarchal hierarchies among expellees from the USSR. In her study of Mennonite expellee women Marlene Epp clearly unveils the strong bias against waged female work within the Canadian Mennonite communities.¹³⁴

How, then, did expellees judge the merits of their immigration to Canada? For the group of expellees traced in this study the answer generally was positive. Not one expellee regretted having moved to Canada, although some did wonder what would have happened to their lives had they gone or remained in West Germany.¹³⁵ Like other German immigrants, who came to Canada after the war, expellees fared relatively well. As one scholar has pointed out, as Germans they benefited from a high 'entrance status' and so were able to become upwardly mobile.¹³⁶ From a subjective point of view, expellees 'made it' and found employment that provided a livelihood. They typically arrived in Canada with little money and, most often, in debt due to the sponsorship arrangements of their immigration. The experiences of an expellee couple are a case in point. She arrived in Toronto in early 1953 having paid the transatlantic passage on her own. She first worked as a live-in housekeeper and later found employment as an office administrator. He came to Canada in 1951 sponsored through Ottawa's immigrant-labour scheme. He first worked as a lumberjack, paid off his debt, and moved to Toronto, where

¹³³ Appendix, table III.F).

¹³⁴ Epp, *Women with Men*; On gender and labour in post-war Canada, see, most recently, Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Post-war Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

¹³⁵ Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978; Interview Anton Fischer, 16 November 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³⁶ Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic*, 64-65.

he worked at multiple casual jobs whilst progressively setting up a landscaping business. Ten years after his arrival, he worked full-time and owned his own company.¹³⁷ What is more, a number of expellees felt that they had been able to advance their careers thanks to vocational training courses available to Canadians and immigrants at an affordable price through community colleges. They took courses in accounting, welding, electrical wiring, power plant electricity as well as typing and invoicing.¹³⁸ A few even managed to go to university and move into professions.¹³⁹

Much to their satisfaction, expellees in Canada became homeowners. As a survey among the members of the German-Baltic association showed, already in 1956 every third member of the organization owned a home.¹⁴⁰ By 1981 practically all expellees, who had come to Canada between 1946 and 1955, owned their own abode, specifically 93.2 percent of expellees from Poland, 92.5 percent of expellees from the USSR, 85.7 percent of expellees from Hungary, 98.1 percent of expellees from Yugoslavia and 100 percent of expellees from Czechoslovakia.¹⁴¹ These homes, incidentally, were mostly located in urban centres, for by 1981 almost two-thirds of

¹³⁷ Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³⁸ Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Interview Norbert Lackner, 15 March 1978; Interview John Penteker, 22 June 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³⁹ Interview Fritz Wieden, 1 October 1980, MHSO German Collection; Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 36, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; see also Regehr, *My Life Story*, 100-105; and Bernd W. Baumgartel, *Mit den Wölfen heulen: Deutsche Einwanderer aus Kanada erzählen* (Herdecke: Scheffler-Verlag, 1999), 261-290.

¹⁴⁰ CBIAS, circular letter, no. 1, March 1956, 2, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society Papers, MG 28 V 99, vol. 3, file circulars.

¹⁴¹ Appendix, table III.K).

Canada's expellees lived in metropolitan areas, except in Alberta, where expellees from the USSR primarily lived in rural districts, and in British Columbia.¹⁴² A young child's comment captures the effect that homeownership and residence in detached homes had on expellees. In the FRG he and his family had lived in crowded circumstances, so that once they moved to a house in Canada the boy remarked with some astonishment: "father, there are eight rooms in this house [...] four bedrooms with each of them containing two beds!"¹⁴³ Similarly, the aforementioned expellee couple that moved to Edmonton took great satisfaction from the fact that two years after their arrival they were able to buy a home. As the husband wrote to his mother, they had bought on the outskirts of Edmonton, where homes apparently "shot up like mushrooms from the ground." One still had to walk through mud to get to the bungalow and there was as yet no running water and sewage connection. Even so, despite these shortcomings they were, the husband noted, happy first-time homeowners.¹⁴⁴

During the post-war decades expellees like other Canadians bore the fruits of the country's growing affluence. Besides steady employment and homeownership they relished eating tropical fruits, using modern household amenities and, above, all, driving automobiles. During the 1950s 'the God car' came to epitomize Canadian prosperity and ownership rapidly grew. While in 1941 36.7 percent of Canadian households reported

¹⁴² Appendix, table III.J).

¹⁴³ Susanne von Harpe, *Calendula*, 1988, 66, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

¹⁴⁴ Kuester to his mother, 22 June 1953, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton. Similarly, Letter 14 May 1954, CBIAS, Annemaria Hornung, *Briefe aus Kanada*, Baltic Library Edmonton; Interview Siegfried and Waltraud Schoepke, 28 April and 14 May 1977; Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

owning a car, two decades later 68.4 percent owned at least one. Cars occupied, as one historian noted, “a central place in Canadian life: the convenience absolutely essential to recreation, travel – and commuting.”¹⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, expellees strived for car ownership which made them feel part of their prosperous environment or, as one expellee put it, “almost like Canadians.”¹⁴⁶ In 1956 apparently 49 percent of German-Baltic households in Canada possessed automobiles.¹⁴⁷ Airplane travel similarly reflected Canada’s growing affluence, for expellees were increasingly able to afford flights to visit relatives in West Germany and enjoy holidays in Florida and elsewhere. As of the 1960s, expellee organizations in conjunction with German-Canadian associations specialized in the sponsorship of charter flights and offered plane tickets to members at an affordable price.¹⁴⁸ “Tourism to West Germany is flourishing,” one expellee noted in her diary in 1968. Apparently, her daughter had already gone back across the Atlantic for six weeks. And in the spring, she claimed, “grandmothers fly like the birds in the air to see their loved ones, here or there.”¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, for a good many expellees the distance between Europe and North America remained a source of chagrin. They missed relatives and friends but also German customs, food and, generally speaking, German language and culture. Once the thrill of Canada’s cars and vast expanses had faded, the memory of relatives left behind in West Germany surfaced and saddened expellees, especially on special occasions such

¹⁴⁵ Quote and ownership numbers as in Bothwell, *Canada since 1945*, 142.

¹⁴⁶ Kroeger, *Start*, 135.

¹⁴⁷ CBIAS, circular letter, no. 1, March 1956, 2, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society Papers, MG 28 V 99, vol. 3, file circulars.

¹⁴⁸ Interview Adolf Fischer, 16 November 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁴⁹ Margarete von Maydell, Tagebuchnotizen, 34-35, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

as Christmas.¹⁵⁰ What is more, immigration typically left expellees with a period of loneliness at the beginning of their stay in Canada due to the language barriers they faced or, simply, the unpleasant nature of their work. Unable to communicate with neighbours and colleagues, expellees like other foreign-language immigrants found it difficult to foster contacts in the wider Canadian community and therefore felt isolated. This was particularly the case for expellees who came to work as live-in domestics or as labourers in agriculture, mining or lumbering. “*Kanada ist ein Männerland* [Canada is a land of men],” noted a still youthful expellee in his diary shortly after his arrival in North America. Working on an isolated farm near Ottawa, he had found few people to talk to apart from his elderly employers and a few male labourers scattered on neighbouring farms and thus sorely missed female company.¹⁵¹ As domestic expellee women found themselves typically isolated from the outside world and struggled to live up to the expectations of employers as they had little knowledge of Canadian ways of cooking and homecare, let alone English or French.¹⁵² The very nature of Canada’s emphasis on immigrant labour meant that expellees were frequently forced to separate from close

¹⁵⁰ Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978; Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Letter 3 January 1958, CBIAS, Annemaria Hornung, Briefe aus Kanada, Baltic Library Edmonton; Kuester to his mother, 25 November 1951, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton.

¹⁵¹ Peter Hessel Diary, 20 July 1952, 107, NAC, Peter Hessel Papers, MG 31 H 178, vol. 1, file diary February 1952 - October 1952. For an incisive description of a similarly male-dominated and isolated working environment in logging, see Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), ch. 2.

¹⁵² Sellnie Goos, *Fleeing Home*, 93-103; Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection. On domestic immigrant labour, see Danys, *DP*, 121-134; Marilyn Barber, *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991).

family members until the head of the family, usually the father or husband, established a base in Canada. Immigration officials, convinced that family split-ups would ultimately help families to better adjust to the Canadian environment, saw no disadvantage to these arrangements.¹⁵³ However, it was quite a different matter for the immigrants themselves; months and years went by until they scraped together the necessary funds to sponsor the immigration of family members. As one expellee poignantly remarked with hindsight: “I suffered stress, something [then] changed my mind, the pressure of Canada, of being alone, of trying to make good and pay for the immigration of my wife and child.”¹⁵⁴

Expellees braced themselves for setbacks during a period of transition and knew that they would have to be flexible and work hard, yet it was only on arrival that they realized how low down the ladder they would have to begin. As farm labourers, lumberjacks, miners, construction workers, nurses and domestics, expellees together with other immigrants from Europe were contracted for jobs that Canadians did not want. Consequently, working conditions were often difficult and marked by strenuous physical labour, minimal job security and low pay. Once the harvest was in at the end of fall, farmers routinely let their labourers go for lack of work during the winter months. Similarly, logging companies made labourers redundant with the first warmer days in spring.¹⁵⁵ Lacking English proficiency or, merely, ‘Canadian experience’ expellees were forced first to take employment that typically remained reserved for immigrant labourers.

¹⁵³ Schmalz, “Former Enemies Come to Canada,” 126.

¹⁵⁴ Interview Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection. Similarly Interview Siegfried and Waltraud Schoepke, 28 April and 14 May 1977, *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Interview Hans-Juergen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Roland von Stackelberg, *Memoirs*, n.d., 43, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

Twenty-five years after his arrival in Canada, one middle-class expellee from Upper Silesia still vividly recalled the difficult period until he found employment in his apprenticed work as a draftsman. On arrival, he first worked as bricklayer, mover, and gardening aide not knowing whether he would still be employed the following day.¹⁵⁶ The same was true for highly educated and professionally experienced expellees, who did not come to Canada with a specific employment opportunity. They too were frequently forced to accept jobs well below their education and social standing as in the case of an expellee born into the landed gentry of Estonia. Thirty-eight years after her arrival she gave an account of the first few years in Canada working in a cardboard factory:

The work in the factory was very hard. During the first three years I did not tolerate the heat well. When the thermometer climbed to 80 and 90 degrees [Fahrenheit] it was very hard to work in a closed room. Of course there were factories in Estonia and Germany, but this was a world with which I had never had contact before. The workers were mostly Polish women and others who had no interest in anything and always assumed the worst in everyone else. I found it very difficult to adjust to that kind of mentality. I had to maintain the same work speed without doing more or less than the group. The only ray of sunshine was the pay check [...] I must admit, the first years in Canada were hard years.¹⁵⁷

The expellee from Estonia clearly disliked her job, putting up with a working-class environment she could not identify with and, possibly, even loathed. Yet, she shared this fate with other expellees of higher social and professional standing.¹⁵⁸ As a result of job

¹⁵⁶ Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁵⁷ Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 83; CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; for similar accounts see also Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 35, *ibid.*; Interview Margarete Wiese, 3 July 1977, MHSO German Collection.

¹⁵⁸ Interview Margarete Wiese, 3 July 1977; and Interview Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection; Dina von Hahn, "Dina Hahn Remembers," in Kuester, *The Baltic Germans*, 130. Kroeger, *Start*, 50.

loss or illness, expellees as other immigrants were forced to obtain outside assistance which they found, among other charitable institutions, at the Lutheran Immigration and Service Centre in Montreal, Toronto, Kitchener and Winnipeg. During the early 1950s the Toronto office received numerous visits from expellees desperate to find help. One particularly notable case in August 1954 immediately drew the attention of officials. Apparently, the expellee in question had been completely destitute on arrival at the Service Centre, having slept for weeks in the open and having hitch-hiked from a remote farm in northern Ontario to Toronto. As he told the officer-in-charge, he had been refused wages beyond board and thus left his employer in search of remunerated work. Without money, however, he had been forced to beg for food. In Toronto he was most anxious to get employment so that he could support his wife and three children who were still in West Germany.¹⁵⁹ In Kitchener the Lutheran Immigration and Service Centre permanently rented two rooms at a local hostel to place immigrants struggling to find a foothold in Canada. In addition, the centre provided further assistance to immigrants, who were unable to find employment within weeks or even months of their arrival. According to the centre's secretary, such "subsistence loans" were apparently not infrequent.¹⁶⁰ Clearly, expellees as other immigrants typically started out on the margins of society, struggling to make ends meet and degraded by some of the jobs they were forced to accept. Many of them found that the lid on the pot of 'milk and honey' was difficult to open.

¹⁵⁹ Pauley to Baskerville, 30 August 1954, Archives of Ontario (AON), Multicultural History Society of Ontario Fonds (F 1405), Reverend J. Calitis Papers, MU 9348.

¹⁶⁰ Meta von Behr, speech, n.d. [ca. 1951/2], NAC, Meta von Behr Papers, MG 31 H 97, file 1; Interview Meta von Behr, 28 December 1978, *ibid.* file 2.

What can be said about the mobility of expellees in West Germany and Canada at the end of this chapter? Clearly, in West Germany their mobility was essentially a product of free internal migration and publicly-funded resettlement programmes. By contrast, in Canada their movement was part of an immigration flow that an army of officials carefully screened and selected. Even so, when comparing these two migration movements, there are many similarities. Firstly, in both the FRG and Canada expellees made up just under one third of the German migrant population. In the early 1950s expellees accounted for 29 percent of West Germany's internal migration while in Canada expellees made up around 31 percent of the German immigration influx (from the FRG). Compared to local West Germans, expellees were twice as likely to move either within the FRG or to Canada. Secondly, upward social mobility played a key role in generating the movement of expellees in and to both countries. In the FRG, this was frequently seen as part of a 'normalization' process. In Canada, this was tied to the hope for a better and more secure future. Thirdly, on a subjective level, in both the FRG and Canada expellees expressed satisfaction with the level of upward social mobility they were able to achieve after an initial sub-stratification they experienced in both countries. Whether in the FRG or in Canada, expellees thought that their hard work had been rewarded and that they had been able to greatly improve their living conditions. In Canada virtually all the expellees sampled for this study became homeowners and in the FRG they practically closed the gap between them and local West Germans in terms of homeownership.

However, there were also some substantial differences between the FRG and Canada. Above all, while at first glance expellees appeared to have worked in both countries to a similar degree in industry (i.e. between 45 and 50 percent), in Canada they were significantly overrepresented in that labour sector. On the one hand, in the FRG positive discrimination aided a more equal distribution in working patterns between locals and expellees. On the other hand, in Canada expellees lacked Canadian experience and English-language skills to get to the same level in professional jobs as Canadians of British heritage. Secondly, in terms of farming Canada clearly offered better opportunities than the FRG. In Canada expellees were at least as likely as Canadian counterparts to be working in farming. Compared to the Canadian population in general, in 1971 expellees from the USSR were, in fact, even twice as likely to be farmers. In marked contrast, in the FRG expellees were substantially underrepresented in agriculture. While 6.3 percent of the West German population worked independently in agriculture, a mere 1.7 percent of expellees did so. Thirdly, this research has also shown a remarkable difference in the way expellees appreciated their migration within West Germany or to Canada. From their testimonies it is clear that the decision to immigrate to Canada represented a far greater step than a possible move within West Germany. No expellee celebrated his or her departure from a village in Bavaria to a metropolis in the Ruhr area. It was part of West Germany's 'normalization.' In marked contrast, the departure of expellees to Canada prompted farewell parties and marching songs at the quays. Expellees thus viewed immigration to Canada as an extraordinary event and clearly were conscious of it.

Finally, this chapter has also shown that in both the FRG and Canada regional origins are a significant variable that explains the mobility of expellees. Within West Germany expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers gathered disproportionately in North-Rhine-Westphalia. Similarly, as we have seen, expellees from the USSR and the Baltic widely moved from the northern parts of the country to the south, notably to Baden-Württemberg. In Canada, meanwhile, ethnic German expellees from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe were significantly overrepresented within the post-war German immigrant population. In fact, they were largely responsible for the fact that one in three German immigrants in the post-war period was of expellee background. Such regional variations are doubtless based on various migration chains and cultures forged since the end of the 19th century. Nevertheless, with regard to the overrepresentation of ethnic Germans from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe in Canada, West German and Canadian officials clearly also had a hand in shaping their movement. In both countries government officials deemed these ethnic German expellees as particularly suitable immigrants and so encouraged their resettlement. As the next chapter shows, this overrepresentation of ethnic German expellees also had an important bearing on the organizational structure of Canada's expellee community. Indeed, whereas ethnic German expellees from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe built homeland societies, their counterparts from the eastern parts of the German Reich did not. Chapter four probes how this came about.

IV. 'Professional Expellees'

When in May 1950 Francis E. Walter's report to the U.S. House of Representatives was published in German and proposed to alleviate West Germany's glut of expellees through mass emigration, expellee organizations unleashed a barrage of criticism against what they saw as the German nation's *coup de grâce* at the hands of the victorious Allies. It was, as leading expellee representatives claimed in a language highly reminiscent of the Nazis, a "final assault" or the ultimate "blood depletion" of an already "biologically" weakened German people.¹ The expellee organizations' public outburst against Walter's proposition immediately forced the West German government to justify its general approval of the report, which Hans Lukaschek, the federal minister in charge of expellee affairs, deemed of "the greatest importance."² Indeed, between the end of 1948 and early 1950, expellee organizations grew from outlaws prohibited by Allied occupation authorities to powerful organizations wooed and coveted by West Germany's newly formed parties and governments, including the federal government led by the conservative Christian Democrat Union (CDU) which ruled the FRG from 1949 to 1966. Within two years, expellees formed a vast network of organizations including political parties, political pressure groups and cultural, social, educational and professional associations. All told, in 1959, when expellee leaders formed a single national umbrella

¹ *Ostdeutsche Zeitung/Stimme der Vertriebenen*, 14 May 1950; for further criticism on Walter's proposal, see also *Baltische Briefe* 5 (May 1950), 1; *Die Brücke*, 13 May 1950; *Schlesische Rundschau*, 2 May 1950; Göttinger Arbeitskreis, *Die Auswanderung: Ein Mittel zur Lösung der deutschen Frage* (Göttingen: private publication, 1950). On Walter's report, see also chapter II, p. 87.

² *Ostdeutsche Zeitung/Stimme der Vertriebenen*, 14 May 1950.

organization, the Federation of Expellees [*Bund der Vertriebenen (BdV)*], the organization claimed a combined membership of 2.5 million expellees. In Canada, by contrast, although authorities issued no ban, expellee organizations could be counted with one hand. By the time the Walter Report was published, the only expellee organizations existing in Canada were those that the Sudeten-German refugees had founded. Criticism against the Report's proposition remained pretty muted. The 'German immigration boom' of the 1950s subsequently increased the number of expellee organizations in Canada despite the notable lack of support from West Germany. Still, scattered across the vast country, these few organizations comprised at the most a combined membership of roughly 10,000 members. What is more, until the 1960s only organizations founded by ethnic German expellees from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe came into existence.

This chapter queries the reason why only ethnic German expellee organizations came to the fore in Canada. It juxtaposes West Germany's organized expellee movement with that of Canada and sheds light on the respective number and size of organizations. In addition, while investigating the various relationships these organizations maintained with each other and with government authorities, this chapter will also clarify their aims and the methods they employed to reach these goals. Finally, it will also discuss the type of ideologies that underpinned the organized expellee movement in both West Germany and Canada. Historians have extensively researched and documented the growth and significance of expellee organizations in the FRG. Most have concluded that by the late 1960s these organizations were out of step with West

German public opinion. By then, as scholars rightly claim, expellee organizations had lost their status as powerful anti-communist lobby groups and had become the exclusive domain of the conservative right and radical nationalist factions.³ Whereas in the 1950s it was perfectly acceptable for expellee organizations to call for the ‘right to a native land’ [*Heimatrecht*] and blame communists for the expulsion, a decade later such calls no longer struck a chord with the wider West German public. In fact, since the 1960s expellee leaders increasingly became known as ‘professional expellees,’ whose relentless appeals for the return to the homeland set them apart from the rest of West German society, including many expellees.⁴ In marked contrast, with the notable exception of Wieden’s trilogy on immigrant groups from the former Austro-Hungarian Empire,⁵ historians have hardly explored expellee organizations in Canada. How did Canada’s expellee organizations compare despite the obvious disparity in size and numbers? Did they also become welcome anti-communist partners of the government? Or were they simply isolated groups within a society that widely condemned Nazi Germany’s legacy? This chapter attempts to find the answers to these questions.

³ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 266-279; Matthias Stickler, *Ostdeutsch heisst Gesamtdeutsch: Organization, Selbstverständnis und heimatpolitische Zielsetzungen der deutschen Vertriebenenverbände, 1949 - 1972* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2004), 239-436; Steinert, *Vertriebenenverbände*; Manfred M. Wambach, *Verbändestaats und Parteien-oligopol: Macht und Ohnmacht der Vertriebenenverbände* (Stuttgart: Enke, 1971).

⁴ Similarly, during the 1970s and 1980s expellee representatives were also frequently referred to as ‘*Ewiggestrige*’ [‘forever stuck in the past’]. Today, however, this term tends to be used to unrepentant supporters of the GDR. Martin Wengeler, “Multikulturelle Gesellschaft oder Ausländer raus? Der sprachliche Umgang mit der Einwanderung seit 1945,” in Georg Stötzel, ed. *Kontroverse Begriffe: Geschichte des öffentlichen Sprachgebrauchs in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995), 715.

⁵ Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*; Wieden, *Kanadas Siebenbürger Sachsen*; and Wieden/Benzinger, *Canada’s Danube Swabians*.

Clamorous Organizations

For the first two years, Allied occupation policy in Germany kept expellees from founding organizations of wider geographic and political significance. Although an initial surge of activity in the summer and fall of 1945 led to the formation of a series of local expellee aid organizations, the Allied ‘coalition ban’ soon thereafter clipped the wings of the organized expellee movement. In early 1946 British and American officials prohibited the formation of supra-regional expellee organizations in an attempt to prevent the rise of German irredenta. However, in the wake of the Cold War the tide receded and British and American occupation officials increasingly refrained from prohibiting newly-founded expellee organizations and instead used these as pawns in the fight against ‘global communism.’ Although they were just as unwilling as Soviet officials to change the terms of the Potsdam Agreements, they openly questioned the decision to expel twelve million Germans from their homelands. As one historian put it, by allowing the existence of expellee organizations, British and American officials sought to win over “German loyalties and embarrass the new enemy, the USSR.”⁶ As a result, already in mid-1947 British and American occupation officials turned a blind eye to a number of new expellee organizations, including the Main Committee of Expellees from the East [*Hauptausschuss der Ostvertriebenen*] based in Lippstadt, Westphalia, the Development Group of the War-Damaged [*Aufbaugemeinschaft der Kriegsgeschädigten*] in Hamburg founded by Linus Kather, a lawyer from East Prussia and former member of the (Catholic) Centre Party, and the Bavarian-based Working Group for the Protection of

⁶ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 27; see also Persson, *Rhetorik*, 179-210.

Sudeten-German Interests [*Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Wahrung der sudetendeutschen Interessen*]. All of these groups openly called for an organized expellee diaspora and publicly advocated the expellees' return to the homelands, pointing out the preliminary terms of the Potsdam Agreements.⁷

The currency reforms of June 1948 formally marked the British and American authorization of expellee organizations, as British and American officials openly encouraged expellee groups to lobby for the compensation of the losses they incurred as a result of the expulsion. Specifically, when in June 1948 the new German currency was introduced in the three western zones, British and American officials demanded from the executing German government body, the Combined Economic Council, that within six months of the reforms a compensation scheme be put into place that would divide the burden of the war among all German citizens. This was highly controversial and it took West German parliamentarians over a year to live up to British and American expectations and pass a temporary law, the Emergency Aid Law of August 1949, while the differences over a final compensation scheme were still being ironed out. Three years on, after much deliberation and many vitriolic debates, the West German parliament finally endorsed the Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law (EBL) [*Lastenausgleich*], which set the legal foundation for the compensation of all those,

⁷ Steinert, *Vertriebenenverbände*, 31; Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 563; Johannes-Dietrich Steinert, "Flüchtlingsvereinigungen - Eingliederungsstationen? Zur Rolle organisierter Interessen bei der Flüchtlingsintegration in der frühen Nachkriegszeit," *Jahrbuch fuer ostdeutsche Volkskunde* 33 (1990), 55-69; Bernd Sonnwald, "Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der ostdeutschen Landsmannschaften von 1947 bis 1952," Ph.D. Thesis FU Berlin 1975, 44-68.

including expellees, who had lost assets because of the war and its aftermath.⁸ By that time, the organized expellee movement had drastically expanded into a series of powerful expellee organizations that successfully lobbied for the British and American-mandated compensation scheme.

Three types of expellee organizations emerged. Firstly, when the Allied High Commission lifted licensing requirements in January 1950, a number of expellee parties came forth, notably the Bloc of Expellees and Deprived of Rights [*Block der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten, BHE*]. Founded in Schleswig Holstein by Waldemar Kraft, the BHE became the most important and long-lived expellee party. In July 1950 it won a stunning 23.4 percent of the vote in the local state election in Schleswig-Holstein and entered a coalition government with the CDU. Subsequently, the BHE rapidly spread and gained substantial support in several states. In Lower Saxony the BHE gained 11.1 percent of the vote in the local state election of 1951 and formed a government as a junior coalition partner. In 1950 the party similarly entered a coalition government in both Hesse and Bavaria with respectively 16 percent and 12.3 percent of the vote.⁹ Moreover, in the federal election of 1953 the BHE won 5.9 percent of the vote and became a junior partner in Konrad Adenauer's CDU-led federal government. Waldemar Kraft was called to Bonn as Federal Minister for Special Affairs and Theodor

⁸ Schillinger, "Der Lastenausgleich," 238-241; Hughes, *Shouldering*, 43-63 and 129-150; Wambach, *Verbändestaat*, 42-45. On the functioning of the EBL, see also chapter III, p. 164.

⁹ Franz Neumann, *Der Block der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten, 1950-1960* (Meisenheim: Verlag Anton Hain, 1968), 500-506.

Oberländer, who had blazed the trail for the BHE in Bavaria, became Minister for Expellees, Refugees and the War-Damaged.¹⁰

Secondly, in the wake of the currency reforms expellees formed a series of lobby organizations that ranged from such narrow interest groups as the Society for the Former Eastern [German] Mills, the Aid Group of Sudeten-German Cinema Owners or, of greater significance, the Association of Expelled Farmers and the Representation of Expelled Industry and Commerce, to more broadly-orientated organizations such as the Central Association of Expelled Germans [*Zentralverband der vertriebenen Deutschen, ZvD*]. The latter organization, founded by Linus Kather in August 1949, became the most vocal and influential expellee group in the early 1950s. In 1952 it was renamed League of Expelled Germans [*Bund deutscher Vertriebener, BvD*].¹¹ It absorbed various regional expellee lobby groups and by the mid-1950s was reported to consist of over 1.7 million members organized in a pyramid-like manner in 13,039 local, 421 district, 10 state groups and, at the top, a federal governing body. In addition, the ZvD/BvD incorporated separate women's groups, housing development societies, expellee business associations and care organizations for the elderly and the widowed.¹²

Lastly, after June 1948 expellees built up a vast network of homeland societies [*Landsmannschaften*] and associated social and cultural organizations. Homeland societies, as such, were nothing new in German society. Since the 19th century, university students gathered in societies organized according to regional origins.

¹⁰ Neumann, *Block*, 304; Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 588.

¹¹ Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 76; Wambach, *Verbändestaat*, 46-53; Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 33-37.

¹² Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 579-581; Wambach, *Verbändestaat*, 46-53.

Moreover, in the early 1920s residents in the Ruhr area, whose origins went back to the eastern parts of the former Reich, established the Reich Association of Loyal East and West Prussians. Also during the 1920s German Balts founded Baltic Clubs in Munich or Berlin.¹³ However, in marked contrast to interest-based expellee groups such as Kather's organization, homeland societies came into existence comparatively late. As one historian remarked, in 1948 they were a "*quantité négligeable*."¹⁴ Except for the peculiar case of the League of Danzigers, which the British occupation authority recognized as the legitimate heir of Danzig's senate, no other homeland society was founded before the latter part of 1948.¹⁵ In August 1948 the Pomeranian Homeland Society was founded, followed in October 1948 by the Homeland Society East Prussia and the Carpatho-German Homeland Society. Most were founded during the course of 1949 and thereafter incorporated a wide variety of sub-organizations such as heritage societies, education boards, academies, youth organizations or women's groups. A series of homeland societies had their roots in pre-war organizations, notably ethnic German expellee groups such as from Danzig (Gdansk), Romania or Czechoslovakia. The Sudeten-German Homeland Society re-assembled, for example, Czechoslovakia's three main German parties of the interwar period: the social democrats (organized in the Seliger Community), Catholics (Ackermann Community) and nationalists/members of the

¹³ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 80-85.

¹⁴ Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 67.

¹⁵ Because of the senate's Nazi orientation in the 1930s British officials nevertheless viewed the League with suspicion. Claiming to represent the government-in-exile of the Free City of Gdansk, until 1955 the League attempted to remain independent from other homeland societies, see Schoenberg, *Germans*, 88-89; Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 547-48.

Sudeten-German [Nazi] Party (Witiko League).¹⁶ In terms of size, homeland societies varied hugely and ranged between such giants as the Sudeten-German Homeland Society, which had 350,000 members, to such tiny groups as those from the Dobruja and Lithuania with 4,130 and 1,725 members respectively. All told, by the mid-1950s expellees founded over 20 homeland societies that were loosely federated in the United East German Homeland Societies [*Vereinigte Ostdeutsche Landsmannschaften, VOL*].¹⁷ Leading figures of the VOL were its chairman, Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, and its speaker, Axel de Vries, who were both members of the German-Baltic nobility.

Virtually since the onset of the organized expellee movement, attempts were made to build a united expellee organization. In August 1948, for example, 60 expellee representatives from the British and American occupation zones founded the Joint Representation of Expellees [*Gesamtvertretung der Vertriebenen*].¹⁸ However, very little

¹⁶ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 80-91; Boehm, "Gruppenbildung," 563-565; Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 37-41.

¹⁷ In the mid-1950s, the VdL regrouped following homeland societies: Sudeten-German Homeland Society (350,000 members), Homeland Society Silesia (319,000), Homeland Society East Prussia (138,254), Homeland Society Upper Silesia (110,000), Homeland Society Pomerania (84,5000), League of the Danzigers (62,822), Homeland Society West Prussia (60,000), Homeland Society of the Germans from Yugoslavia (35,360), Homeland Society Weichsel-Warthe (28,000), Homeland Society Berlin-Mark Brandenburg (27,971), Homeland Society of the Germans from Bessarabia (25,000), German-Baltic Homeland Society (21,000), Homeland Society of the Transylvanian Saxons (20,000), Homeland Society of the Germans from Hungary (19,000), Homeland Society of the Carpatho-Germans (10,000), Homeland Society of the Banat Swabians (7,000), Homeland Society of the Germans from Russia (4,582), Homeland Society of Lithuanian Germans (4,130) and the Homeland Society of Dobruja Germans (1,725). List of homeland societies and respective memberships, as quoted in Michael Imhof, "Die Vertriebenenverbände in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Geschichte, Organization und gesellschaftliche Bedeutung," Ph.D. Thesis Philipps-University Marburg 1975, 132.

¹⁸ Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 61-62.

came out of it. Until the late 1950s, three factors effectively barred the way for a united expellee front. Firstly, personal ambitions led to intense rivalries within and among expellee organizations. Linus Kather, for example, was known to desperately want the position of federal minister for expellees.¹⁹ Secondly, during the early 1950s the VOL was struck by a major crisis which led its reorganization into the Association of Homeland Societies [*Verband der Landsmannschaften, VdL*]. As opposed to the VOL, which gave each member organization one vote, the VdL balanced voting rights according to the size of member organizations. Thus, at the expense of the smaller homeland societies from south-eastern and north-eastern Europe, the large Silesian, East Prussian or Sudeten-German homeland societies gained more power.²⁰ Thirdly, in order to minimize its influence on policy-making, Konrad Adenauer's government sought to divide the organized expellee movement. In 1949, for example, it sponsored the foundation of homeland societies to counterbalance Kather's powerful ZvD/BvD.²¹ Subsequently, the federal government was also able to divide the organized expellee movement by providing vitally important funds. As early as 1950/1 both the ZvD/BvD and VOL/VdL gained extensive federal funding.²² Even the Sudeten-German Homeland Society, the financial powerhouse of the organized expellee movement, could no longer

¹⁹ Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 203.

²⁰ De Vries to Boehm, 25 January 1957, BAKo, Nachlass Axel de Vries, N 1412, vol. 16, file Sammelkorrespondenz, 1949-1963; Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 194-199; Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 42-68.

²¹ The first federal minister in charge of expellee affairs, Hans Lukaschek, was, for instance, instrumental in setting up both the Silesian and Upper Silesian homeland societies. Similarly, his deputy State Secretary Ottomar Schreiber, proved pivotal for the formation of the East Prussian homeland society. See Sonnewald, "Entstehung," 256.

²² Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 53.

raise sufficient funds and in 1952 sought funding from the federal government.²³ Thus, even though the federal government publicly announced its support for a united expellee movement,²⁴ it preferred to fund a multitude of expellee organizations and thereby effectively divided the movement and ruled.²⁵

Nevertheless, in December 1958 the time was ripe for the formation of a united national lobby group. After extended negotiations Kather's organization and the VdL merged into the Federation of Expellees – Union of the Homeland Societies and State Associations [*Bund der Vertriebenen - Vereinigte Landsmannschaften und Landesverbände, BdV*]. The BdV thereby became the FRG's second strongest pressure group after the labour unions and claimed a membership of 2.5 million people.²⁶ Hans Krüger, a veteran expellee representative from the ranks of Kather's organization, became the first head of the Federation of Expellees, followed in 1964 by Wenzel Jaksch who, by then, had built up the Seliger Community and risen to prominence as a member of the federal parliament and the vice-president of the Sudeten-German Homeland Society.²⁷ The passing of several key pieces of legislation cut the wings off the organized expellee movement and paved the way to the merger. This included the passing of the EBL in 1952 and other laws, which defined the legal rights of expellees and the legal

²³ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 53; Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 148-154.

²⁴ Jahresbericht des Bundesministeriums für Vertriebene 1952, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 2329, file 1.

²⁵ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 81-118; Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 148-154.

²⁶ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 115-117.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 117-129; Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 33.

basis for the funding of organized expellee groups.²⁸ Moreover, by the end of the 1950s support for the organized expellee movement started to decline and similarly opened the way for the merger. This is most evident with the demise of the BHE, which lost its electorate almost as quickly as it had gained it. In the federal election of 1957 it failed to gain entry into parliament with 4.6 percent of the vote. Infighting within the BHE had previously already led to the departure of two of its most prominent figures, Waldemar Kraft and Theodor Oberländer. In 1961 it merged with the German Party and thereafter sunk into oblivion, except in some states where it continued to exist until the mid-1960s.²⁹ Most of its voters moved, like Waldemar Kraft and Theodor Oberländer, to West Germany's pre-dominant and governing conservative party, Adenauer's CDU.³⁰

Despite the many divisions, the organized expellee movement managed relatively early on to draft a common charter which clearly outlined goals and ambitions. At a rally in Stuttgart in August 1950, representatives from the main expellee organizations endorsed the "Charter of the German Expellees" in the presence of federal and state parliamentarians and members of government and other public agencies. The charter outlined two objectives, firstly:

²⁸ These were, in particular, the Law for the Determination of Expulsion and War Damages of 1952 [*Gesetz über die Feststellung von Vertreibungsschäden und Kriegssachschäden*] and the Expellees and Refugees Law of 1953 [*Gesetz über die Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen und Flüchtlinge*].

²⁹ In Hesse, for example, the local BHE party remained in government until 1966 when the coalition with the social-democratic party broke down, York R. Winkler, *Flüchtlingsorganisation in Hessen, 1945-1954: BHE – Fluchtlingsverbände – Landsmannschaften* (Wiesbaden: Historische Kommission für Nassau, 1998), 369-375.

³⁰ Neumann, *Block*, 137-234; Hermann Weiss, "Die Organisation der Vertriebenen und ihre Presse," in Benz, *Vertreibung*, 252-253.

to demand that the right to our native land be recognized and be realized as one of the basic rights of man, granted to him by the grace of God

and secondly:

for as long as this right is not realized, [to gain] equal rights as citizens [of West Germany] [with a] just and reasonable division of the burdens of the last war among the entire German people.³¹

During the early 1950s expellee organizations focused on this second objective and forcefully called for compensation of expellees as an “all-German” [“*gesamtdeutsch*”] duty, insisting on “rights, not alms.”³² Thanks to an extensive press of between 280 to 350 newspapers which reached up to 2.5 million people,³³ expellees mobilized en masse and lobbied government officials by launching letter campaigns and gathering at mass demonstrations across West Germany. In February 1951 and May 1952, the ZvD/BvD organized, for example, two demonstrations that brought well over 100,000 expellees to the capital Bonn.³⁴ At rallies of the homeland societies, especially on Pentecost weekend, when homeland societies commonly held (and still hold) their annual national meetings, expellee representatives similarly drummed up support. At the ‘Sudeten-German Day’ in May 1951, which attracted nearly 300,000 people, the speaker of the Sudeten-German Homeland Society, Rudolf Lodgman von Auen, in typical fashion called, for example, on

³¹ *Charter of the Expellees* (Bonn: Bundesministerium für die Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen, 1950), 2-3.

³² *Vertriebenen-Korrespondenz*, 11 November 1950, 2; 27 January 1951, 15; 3 May 1952, 4; and 25 May 1952, 2.

³³ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 124.

³⁴ Hughes, *Shouldering*, 145-148.

the “all-German” duty of the FRG to assist those who had, in his opinion, suffered most from the war.³⁵

West Germany’s full sovereignty in 1955 shifted the attention toward the first objective of the charter and the federal government’s foreign policy. Expellee organizations – and at the forefront homeland societies – were keen to influence the FRG’s attitude toward Central and Eastern European states and stepped up calls for the so-called ‘right to a native land’ [*Heimatrecht*].³⁶ Despite the apparent contradiction between the two objectives – one calling for the return to the homeland, the other for social justice and integration into West German society – expellee organizations relentlessly pushed for the *Heimatrecht* which, they claimed, was a God-given right.³⁷ One had to learn to distinguish, as Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, leader of the VOL/VdL and the German-Baltic Homeland Society, explained to an audience of expellees in 1949, that there were “short-term” and “long-term” objectives for expellees; the first being equal rights to West German residents and the second the repossession of the homeland.³⁸ By the early 1950s expellee leaders worked out a commonly-agreed rationale in order to justify both objectives, calling for what they called an ‘integration ad interim’ [*Integration auf Zeit*]. As Theoder Oberländer explained shortly after his appointment as Federal Minister for Expellees, Refugees and the War Damaged in late 1953, the

³⁵ *Der Sudetendeutsche*, 17 May 1951, 2; Rede von Dr. Lodgman beim Sudetendeutschen Tag in Ansbach, 13 May 1951, SudAr, Nachlass Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, CV/1 I 6.31.A.

³⁶ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 98.

³⁷ *Charter*, 2.

³⁸ Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, Vortrag Manteuffels gehalten an der Evang. Akademie in Schloss Tutzing am 10.5.49, BAKo, Nachlass Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, N 1157, vol. 9, file Aufsätze.

‘integration ad interim’ was the precondition for the expellees’ return to the homeland. Only by providing extensive support, Oberländer argued, would expellees be able to strengthen their ability to return. Besides compensation and housing subsidies, this included, for example, also kitchen gardens, which Oberländer sought to promote among the large number of expellee farmers who were unable to work in agriculture. As he argued, kitchen gardens would allow these expellees to maintain farming skills while away from the homeland.³⁹

West German society widely supported ‘the right to a native land,’ not least Adenauer’s governing CDU, which not only backed Oberländer’s plans but also instituted the ‘Hallstein Doctrine.’ This foreign policy guideline asserted the FRG’s right to represent Germany in its 1937 borders and dictated that the FRG desist from establishing diplomatic relations with countries that recognized the GDR, including Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia. To the delight of expellee organizations, the ‘Hallstein Doctrine’ thus called into question the validity of post-war territorial changes and, implicitly, the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe.⁴⁰ Moreover, support for the expellees’ ‘right to a native land’ also came from the main opposition party, the Social-Democratic Party (SPD). As the party’s first post-war leader, Kurt Schumacher, vowed, the SPD was willing to “fight with all peaceful

³⁹ Niederschrift über die 55. Sitzung des Ausschusses für Flüchtlingsfragen, 12 November 1953, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 2329, file 2; Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, Memorandum zur Eingliederung der Vertriebenen, 30 April 1956, *ibid.*, vol. 2330. See also Oberländer, “Zum Geleit,” in Lemberg/Edding, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 1, V-VI.

⁴⁰ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 70-71; Stickler, ‘*Ostdeutsch*’, 212-235; and generally Geoffrey Pridham, *Christian Democracy in Western Germany: The CDU/CSU in Government and Opposition, 1945 – 1976* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1977).

means [...] over every square kilometre east of the Oder-Neisse.”⁴¹ Expellee luminaries such as Reinhold Rehs and Herbert Hupka rose to prominence as members of the SPD. Wenzel Jaksch, as head of the all-powerful Federation of Expellees (BdV), was a member of the SPD party executive in the early 1960s. Until the late 1960s the SPD steered a course compatible with key expellee demands. However, once it came to power in 1966 and launched the ‘New Eastern Policy’ three years later, the SPD alienated expellee organizations. In marked contrast to the ‘Hallstein Doctrine,’ the ‘New Eastern Policy’ opened the way to diplomatic relations with Central and Eastern European states and recognized, if not *de jure*, *de facto* post-war borders.⁴²

Two types of ideologies rooted in German nationalism nurtured the claims for the ‘right to a native land.’⁴³ ‘Professional expellees’ such as Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, Herbert Hupka and others boasted a traditional type of nationalism which focused on Prussian culture and typically viewed Eastern Europe as Germany’s natural backyard. They longed for the recreation of a Prussian state, which the Allies had formally dissolved in early 1947. As the VdL’s news bulletin claimed, Prussian expellees like other Germans and Europeans had the “need for a fatherland” and “the right to patriotism.”⁴⁴ A series of homeland societies from former German territories east

⁴¹ As quoted in Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 55.

⁴² Stickler, *Ostdeutsch*, 236-279; Kurt Klotzbach, *Der Weg zur Staatspartei: Programmatik, praktische Politik und Organisation der deutschen Sozialdemokratie 1945 bis 1965*, 2nd ed. (Bonn: Dietz, 1996).

⁴³ For an overview and detailed descriptions on the various strands of (especially anti-democratic) German nationalism in the early FRG, see, in particular, Kurt P. Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika: German Nationalism Since 1945* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1967), vol. 1.

⁴⁴ *VdL-Informationen*, 23 August 1954.

of the Oder/Neisse Rivers were headed or set up, though not exclusively, as in the case of the Silesians, by notable figures of the Prussian nobility, including the Homeland Society of Pomerania, which was first presided over by Herbert von Bismarck, a grand-nephew of the Iron Chancellor, or the Homeland Society of West Prussia, led in the 1950s by Erick von Witzleben, a renowned member of that region's landed gentry. They, together with others of all political stripes, set their eyes on the Potsdam Agreements and campaigned for a future and final peace treaty that would reinstate Germany along the borders of 1937. However, calls also frequently went well beyond this territory. Homeland societies such as the Homeland Society Weichsel-Warthe sought the reinstatement of Germany along the borders of 1914, which included the former Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia. Others such as the German-Balt Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, whose homeland had never been part of peace-time Germany, remained vague over the exact borders of this new Prussian state in Eastern Europe. In his diary he never gave a clear indication and only excluded south-eastern Europe, whose expelled ethnic German population he wanted to use as the "rural populace" of the "recovered German territories in the East."⁴⁵

In an obvious analogy to the 'Diktat of Versailles' – a theme, among others, that the Nazis successfully used to shore up electoral support in the early 1930s – expellee leaders condemned the 'Diktat of Potsdam' and frequently used extreme

⁴⁵ Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, diary entry, 1 November 1957, BAKo, Nachlass Georg von Manteuffel-Szoegge, Diary 1950-1959, N 1157, vol. 1, 42.

language to express their claims.⁴⁶ In press articles and speeches they typically couched their claims in bigoted and anti-communist language that highlighted their plight and suffering as a result of the expulsion. They raged against the Soviet Union, which they regarded as the main culprit behind the expulsion, and denounced the USSR's 'pan-Slavic imperialism' and 'Asiatic bolshevism.' At a fair in Hamburg in 1950, which aimed at showcasing the industry and culture of expellee groups to a West German public, the Sudeten-German Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, for example, minced no words about his view that Bohemia and Moravia had sunk into total disarray since "Asianness" ["*Asiatentum*"] had arrived in the "heart of Europe and the Occident."⁴⁷ They viewed the expulsion as the "epitome of criminal inhumanity" and persistently sidestepped the Holocaust, mentioned often only in passing, whereas the "expulsion crimes" received extensive coverage. Expellee papers repeatedly published detailed accounts on "The Truth about the Polish Hell" and the gruesome story of the "Bestial Torture and Murder of Powerless Germans."⁴⁸ Moreover, oblivious to the fate of non-Germans during the Nazi period and thereafter, expellee representatives typically qualified the German presence in Central and Eastern Europe as a "religious, moral, jurisdictional and

⁴⁶ *Ostdeutsche Zeitung/Stimme der Vertriebenen*, 6 August 1950. Similarly *ibid.*, 20 May 1950; and 11 March 1951. On the Nazis' use of the 'Diktat of Versailles,' see Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 316.

⁴⁷ Rudolf Lodgman von Auen, Public address at the 'East German Week' in Hamburg, 21 May 1950, SudAr, Nachlass Lodgman von Auen, CV/1 I 6.31.

⁴⁸ *Der Donauschwabe*, 15 June 1958; *Unser Oberschlesien*, 3 April 1959; both as quoted in Schoenberg, *Germans*, 170.

civilizing mission of the highest order” which in 1945 found an abrupt end “in the cruellest way.”⁴⁹

A thin line often separated primarily ‘Prussian-minded’ expellee representatives from the likes who found their inspiration in ethno-racial theories prevalent in the interwar period and Nazi Germany. From socialists to outright Nazis they emphasized, in one way or another, the primacy of ethnicity and/or race in structuring societies and nations.⁵⁰ They generally framed their aims within a vision of a federated and free Europe wherein each ethnic group would freely decide on its statehood. This was particularly true of Sudeten-German and other ethnic German expellee leaders, who commonly strove to realize a European federation, not least because of the particular predicament arising from the fact that they and their supporters had lived outside the borders of pre-1938 Germany and therefore held no internationally recognized legal framework to substantiate claims, except for the Munich Agreements of 1938, which the Sudeten-German Homeland Society continued to assert even though the Allies had unilaterally cancelled the agreement during the war. Officially, this European federation was to be achieved by peaceful means as outlined in the ‘Charter of the German Expellees,’ but in the wake of the global Cold War polarization and the Korean

⁴⁹ Die Ostdeutschen als Schutzwall des Abendlandes, Kurzgefasste Inhaltsangabe der Ansprache von Herrn Zillich am 1. Bundeskongress der VOL in Frankfurt, 1 July 1951, BAKo, Bund der Vertriebenen, B 234, file 283.

⁵⁰ For the most part, these ethno-racial theories were grounded in social-darwinian science, particularly in Nazi Germany where they found their utmost application in the Nuremberg Laws on citizenship and race and, ultimately, in the ‘final solution’ and the Holocaust. For a brief overview on European and Nazi racial ideology, see Burleigh/Wippermann, *The Racial State*, 23-74; Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power: How the Nazis won over the Hearts and Minds of a Nation* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 506-611.

War a few key expellee figures went well beyond West Germany's rearmament and called for the armed conquest of the lost homeland.⁵¹ Still, during the 1950s and early 1960s the idea of a European federation was more than just a political catchphrase of expellee public relations, as some have argued.⁵²

On the political left, Wenzel Jaksch promoted a European federation, drawing on his 'people's socialism' [*Volkssozialismus*]. In the mid-1930s, amid the meteoric rise of the Sudeten-German Nazi party, the SdP, Jaksch essentially argued that socialism had to move beyond the traditional Marxist definition of class struggle and integrate 'all the people' [*Volksganze*] and the 'people's psychology' [*volkpsychologische Elemente*].⁵³ After the expulsion and his relocation to the FRG, Jaksch institutionalized his 'people's socialism' in the Seliger Community which regrouped the former German social democrats from Czechoslovakia.⁵⁴ As the statutes of the Seliger Community read,

⁵¹ Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 46-47.

⁵² Samuel Salzborn, *Grenzenlose Heimat: Geschichte, Gegenwart und Zukunft der Vertriebenenverbände* (Berlin: Elefant-Press, 2000).

⁵³ In 1937/8 Jaksch attempted to translate his ideas and allied with a number of centre-right and right-wing figures to form, briefly, the 'Young Activism' [*Jungaktivismus*] and oppose the SdP. I might add that in Prague Jaksch also befriended the exiled Otto Strasser, who propagated an ethno-nationalist version of socialism. On Jaksch's 'people's socialism,' see Wingfield, *Minority*, 147-151; Bachstein, *Wenzel Jaksch*, 67-114; Christof Schaffranek, "Die politische Arbeiterbewegung in den böhmischen Ländern, 1933-1938: Politisch-programmatische Wechselbeziehungen zwischen sozialdemokratischen und kommunistischen Strategien zur Abwehr der inneren und äusseren Bedrohung durch Hitler und die Heinleinbewegung," Ph.D. Thesis F.U. Berlin 2003, 305-354.

⁵⁴ Jaksch named this organization in honour of Josef Seliger, who had founded the German social-democratic party (DSAP) in 1919 and advocated the cultural and political autonomy of the Sudeten areas within the newly-founded Czechoslovak state. During the 1950s, the Seliger Community comprised around 10,000 members regrouped in local clubs across Austria, Sweden, the UK, Canada and West Germany, where the vast

members of the organization were to put the ideas of “Sudeten-German socialism” at the service of Europe’s federal reorganization by promoting the moral and “politico-mental” [“*geistespolitische*”] preconditions for the application of the right-to-self-determination.⁵⁵ Similarly, at the annual meetings of the Seliger Community in Brannenburg, Bavaria, Jaksch repeatedly underlined the importance of ethnicity for his organization. In 1958 he reminded his audience, for example, that ethno-national values constituted the most conclusive force in 20th century society. As he claimed, they had triumphed over class structures and identities.⁵⁶

On the political right, a more moderate voice such as, for example, Eugen Lemberg, who became a leading member of the Sudeten-German community in the FRG, advocated the building of a European federation, calling for the complete moral renewal of the Sudeten-German people within the West German mould.⁵⁷ However, for a good

majority of the members lived. Boehm, “Gruppenbildung,” 563-564; Ahonen, *After the Expulsion*, 35.

⁵⁵ Thesen der Seliger-Gemeinde (Dokument 210), in Ernst Nittner, ed. *Dokumente zur sudetendeutschen Frage 1916-1967* (Munich: Ackermann-Gemeinde, 1967), 322-323.

⁵⁶ As Jaksch specifically said: “It is the task of the whole [Sudeten-German] ethnic group to expand its homeland experience into a German experience and, from there, into a European sense of belonging [*Europabekennntnis*] [...] This is why currently the breakthrough of a peaceful German will for self-assertion is at stake. No lip-service for Europe can substitute the will for unity of the German people. However, the ‘ethno-national principle’ [*Volkstumprinzip*], which has begun its triumphal march around the globe, guarantees also Germany’s reunification for as long as the German people do not give up their will for unity. It is in this great struggle that our [Sudeten-German] heritage and experience has its meaning.” Wenzel Jaksch, *Von der Bewahrung zur Besinnung: Der Weg der Sudetendeutschen*, *Die Brücke*, 24 May 1958. For similar statements, see idem, *Sinn und Aufgabe der Seligergemeinde*, 11 December 1952, *SudAr*, Nachlass Wenzel Jaksch, G 7; and, idem, *Klasse und Nation: Besinnliche Rückschau auf unserem Weg*, 4 July 1964, *ibid.*, G 16.

⁵⁷ Eugen Lemberg, “Umdenken in der Verbannung: Ein neues Verhältnis zu Ostmitteleuropa?” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 24 March 1954, 109-122; idem, *Die Ausweisung*

many expellee leaders advocacy for Europe resembled more an image of the past than that of the future, stemming largely from Nazi Germany's 'New European Order.' Indeed, luminaries such as Lodgmann von Auen, Axel de Vries (speaker of the German-Baltic Homeland Society and VOL/VdL), Waldemar Kraft, Theodor Oberländer, Hans Krüger and others, had been supportive of or deeply involved in the 'ethno-national struggle' [*'Volkstumskampf'*] and/or the development and execution of Nazi racial policy. Oberländer, for example, participated in Hitler's failed putsch of 1923, for which he was awarded the 'Blood Order,' one of the most prestigious decorations in the Nazi Party, and later on, as an academic economist, became a 'leading light' of Nazi racial policy, teaching in Danzig (Gdansk), Königsberg (Kaliningrad) and Prague. During the war, as an SA-captain, he was involved in the killing of at least 3,000 Polish civilians.⁵⁸ Hans Krüger similarly obtained the 'Blood Order' for his participation in the Hitler putsch and later, as a 'special judge' and army officer, got deeply involved in Nazi racial policies, handing out death sentences to presumed 'life-unworthy humans' such as Jews,

als Schicksal und Aufgabe: Zur Soziologie und Ideologie der Ostvertriebenen (Gräfelfing: Edmund Gans Verlag, 1949). On Lemberg's biography, see Imhof, "Vertriebenenverbände," 293; and Ulrich Prehn, "Ethnopolitische Vorstellungen bei Max Hildebert Boehm, Eugen Lemberg und Guy Héraud," in Heiko Kauffmann, Helmut Kellershohn and Jobst Paul, eds. *Völkische Bande: Dekadenz und Wiedergeburt – Analysen rechter Ideologie* (Münster: Unrast-Verlag, 2005), 88-111; Karin Pohl, "Die Soziologen Eugen Lemberg und Emerich K. Francis: Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Überlegungen zu den Biographien zweier ‚Staffelsteiner‘ im ‚Volkstumskampf‘ und im Nachkriegsdeutschland," *Bohemia* 45 (2004), 24-76.

⁵⁸ On Oberländer, see Philipp-Christian Wachs, *Der Fall Oberländer (1905 - 1998): Ein Lehrstück deutscher Geschichte* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus-Verlag, 2000); and his involvement in Nazi racial policy-making, Aly/Heim, *Vordenker*, 92-97.

the mentally-ill and homosexuals.⁵⁹ Although eventually they were forced out of office for their involvement in war crimes, until the early 1960s Oberländer and Krüger both established successful political careers and became federal expellee ministers in Adenauer's Christian-Democrat led governments; Oberländer from 1953 to 1960 and Krüger from 1963 to 1964.⁶⁰ In or out of office both couched their calls for a European federation in language derived from Nazi racial ideology and, characteristic of numerous leading expellee representatives, deemed Europe as a space best inhabited by ethno-national communities [*'Stammes- und Landsmannschaftsgarten'*]. As Oberländer put it, "today's large formation of living space [*Grossraumbildung*] cannot be realized at the expense of the *Volk*, the *Volkstum* and *völkisch* independence."⁶¹ Indeed, although addressed to a West German audience in 1954, Oberländer could well have uttered these words in the heyday of Nazi Germany, when he actively helped create the German *Lebensraum* at the expense of Eastern European ethnics.

In any event, beyond its leaders and the language they used, the Nazi influence on the expellee organizations was also evident in the type of methods with which they chose to convey their message. The annual national reunions of some of the homeland societies such as the Silesian or the Sudeten-German homeland societies were,

⁵⁹ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 140; Dieter Pohl, "Hans Krüger and the Murder of the Jews in the Stanislawow Region (Galicia)," *Yad Vashem Studies* 26 (1997), 239-264.

⁶⁰ In 1960 the GDR sentenced Oberländer, *in absentia*, to life imprisonment for his involvement in war crimes. However, in 1993 a Berlin court revoked this sentence due, apparently, to the fact that falsified intelligence documents had originally been used. In the FRG Oberländer was never charged for his war-time record despite several attempts in the mid-1990s, Wachs, *Der Fall*, 266-308.

⁶¹ Theoder Oberländer, *Die Überwindung der deutschen Not* (Darmstadt: Leske, 1954), 232.

for one, mass events which regularly drew several hundred thousand people. While such mass gatherings offered participants the opportunity to meet old friends and neighbours, youth groups usually lit bonfires and paraded, as in the days of Nazi Germany, through the streets of the various host towns, carrying torches, flags and banners with emblems strongly reminiscent of Nazi organizations. For example, in 1956, at the Sudeten-German national rally, expellee leaders spelled out their claims and while government officials, in attendance to woo the expellee vote looked on, youth groups staged marches to “awaken,” apparently, the “battle of justice for the thousand-year German settlement in Bohemia, Moravia and all the German Eastern Provinces.”⁶² Like other institutions within the vast network of expellee organizations, such youth groups sold *Heimat* pamphlets, pictures and mementos, canvassed support and encouraged membership in the name of the “ethno-national struggle.”⁶³ In doing so, these groups doubtless conferred the expellee movement a patina of bygone days which 1950s West German society still widely accepted. However, a decade later this was no longer the case. Luminaries such as Oberländer and Krüger had to leave office and give way to the public outrage about their Nazi past.

⁶² As quoted in Karen L. Gatz, “East Prussian and Sudeten German Expellees in West Germany, 1945-1960: A Comparison of Their Social and Cultural Integration,” Ph.D. Thesis Indiana University 1989, 424.

⁶³ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 118-120; Weiss, “Organisationen,” 253-254.

Distant Echos

Until the ‘German immigration boom’ of the early 1950s, the only expellee organizations present in Canada were those that the Sudeten-German refugees had established. In 1941 the first Sudeten-German club opened in Hamilton as part of Canada’s left-wing party, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), which allowed distinct ethnic or social sub-groups to become collective members.⁶⁴ After World War II, once the Sudeten-German exile organization began its formal dissolution process, the Sudeten-German refugees founded a series of further organizations affiliated to the CCF.⁶⁵ In 1947 they founded the CCF Club Forward [*Vorwärts*] in Toronto and in Tupper Creek, which was renamed Tomslake in 1946, the Tate Creek CCF Club. Three further clubs followed in the 1950s: the CCF Sudeten Club Friendship of Montreal, the CCF Sudeten Club Edmonton and the CCF Sudeten Club Look Lake (Saskatchewan).⁶⁶ Only one club, the Canadian German Association, founded in 1947 in Tupper Creek/Tomslake, held no affiliation to the CCF. Moreover, except for the Toronto-based CCF Club Forward, Canada’s Sudeten-German clubs were small and held memberships of no more than two dozen people. As a means of communication they used the ‘Forward,’ a mimeographed

⁶⁴ On the CCF, founded in 1932, see in particular Walter D. Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF, 1932-61* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969).

⁶⁵ The dissolution of the Loyal Society of Sudeten German Social Democrats (TG) actually stretched over several years due to Jaksch’s inability to relocate to West Germany. While he first attempted to move to occupied Germany in 1947 and therefore prepared to dissolve the Loyal Society – a precondition that the SPD set to elect Jaksch into the party’s executive board – he eventually managed to move to Wiesbaden, Hesse, in early 1949. The formal dissolution process of the Loyal Society ended in 1951, when Jaksch founded the Seliger Community. See Martin, ‘...nicht spurlos’, 139-145, 231-232.

⁶⁶ *Die Brücke*, 16 December 1948; *Forward* 1 (June 1948), 1; 4: 11 (November 1952), 20; 5:10 (March 1953), 13; Schoen, *Tupper Boys*, 168-171.

newsletter edited monthly by the CCF Club Forward. No other formal ties between the clubs existed until 1956, when West Germany's Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law led to the foundation of a Sudeten-German umbrella organization, the Central Association of Sudeten-German Organizations in Canada [*Zentralverband Sudetendeutscher Organisationen, ZVSDO*]. The latter group was presided over by one of its initiators, Henry Weisbach, head of the CCF Club Forward, and comprised all the Canadian-based Sudeten-German clubs, except for the Canadian German Association. According to the official press communiqué, it sought to represent Sudeten-German interests with the West German authorities and maintain contact with the head organization of the former members of the DSAP, the Seliger Community.⁶⁷

As such, the ZVSDO and its member organizations dominated Sudeten-German affairs in Canada, although attempts were made to override it from both within and without the country. In the mid-1950s the Sudeten-German Homeland Society, which deemed the ZVSDO as “not without blemish” [*“nicht einwandfrei”*] due to its lack of commitment for the *Heimatrecht* and its concentration on compensation and pension rights, tried to organize a Canadian branch from West Germany, but quickly gave up, as it proved unable to find qualified volunteers capable of countering the ZVSDO.⁶⁸ However, far greater opposition came from within Canada, straight from one of the two

⁶⁷ *Forward*, 8:10 (March 1957), 2; Henry Weisbach, Why the Sudeten German Central Organization, n.d. [circa 1957], NAC, External Affairs Records, vol. 8382, File 10935-H-1-40; and Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*, 187-191.

⁶⁸ Rückel to Lodgman von Auen, 6 March 1956; Rückel to Eichler, 18 April 1956; Eichler to Rückel, 6 June 1956; and Bundesverband der Sudetendeutschen Landsmannschaft to Peckert, 23 October 1957, SudAr, Nachlass Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, CV/1a IX 20.

initial settlements, where the Canadian German Association attempted to rival the ZVSDO and in 1960 founded the Western Canadian Working Community of the Sudeten Germans [*Westkanadische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sudetendeutschen, WKAGSD*]. This organization explicitly committed itself to fight for the right of all the German people to self-determination within a free and unified Europe and, more specifically, the expellees' 'right to a native land.'⁶⁹ Moreover, in typical fashion for West German homeland societies, it claimed to be a non-partisan organization, unlike the ZVSDO whose member organizations, it rightly claimed, all had a party affiliation. In short, it claimed to be the Seliger Community's true representative on Canadian soil.⁷⁰ It was led by Willi Wanka, who, as Wenzel Jaksch's former personal secretary and a former executive member of the DSAP, had been in charge of co-ordinating the relocation of the Sudeten-German refugees to Canada in 1939 and, after 1945, had become a temporary CCCRR delegate in occupied Germany on behalf of the Sudeten-German relief committee. Although in 1965 it started to publish a bimonthly newsletter, the Sudeten Messenger [*Sudeten-Bote*], the Working Community had its base among the Sudeten-German settlers in Saskatchewan and, mostly, in Tomslake where Wanka resided until his relocation to nearby Dawson

⁶⁹ Grundsätze der Westkanadischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sudetendeutschen, n.d., SudAR, Nachlass Karl Kern, file 40; Westkanadische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sudetendeutschen to Zentralverband sudetendeutscher Organisationen in Kanada, November 1960, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 23.

⁷⁰ Westkanadische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Sudetendeutschen to Zentralverband sudetendeutscher Organisationen in Kanada, November 1960; Memorandum, Wohin steuert der Zentralverband Sudetendeutscher Organisationen?, n.a. [circa 1961]; and Willi Wanka, Offener Brief an Henry Weisbach, n.d. [circa 1961], NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 23.

Creek in the mid-1960s. In effect, no Sudeten-German club other than the Tomslake-based Canadian German Association joined the Working Community.

The challenge to the ZVSDO from Wanka's Working Community by and large reflected the fundamental political differences between the two main strands within the DSAP of the 1930s, namely those between pro-Sudeten-German-autonomy nationalists led by Jaksch and the 'Czechoslovakists' under the aegis of the latter's predecessor, Ludwig Czech.⁷¹ During the war, these differences led to a schism among the Sudeten-German refugees, including in Canada, where Henry Weisbach and others had briefly sympathized with a group of dissidents who adhered to a more class-based line than Jaksch's ethno-nationally inspired 'people's socialism.'⁷² In the post-war period, then, these differences further escalated and ultimately led to the complete separation of the organized Sudeten-German community. During the federal and provincial elections of June 1949, tensions came to a head in particular in Tomslake, where the Canadian German Association and the Tate Creek CCF Club passionately fought each other. At a meeting hosted by the Canadian German Association in Tomslake, Wanka had called for the community members to support the Liberal Party which infuriated the Sudeten Germans organized within the CCF. After an open letter

⁷¹ On these opposing factions within the DSAP in the late 1930s, see also herein chapter I, p. 71.

⁷² Weisbach's links to the group of dissidents have been the subject of a fierce controversy. Fritz Wieden, for instance, refutes Weisbach's allegiance to the International Group. However, letters written to a friend in England strongly suggest Weisbach's sympathy with, if not membership in the dissident group. In the early 1940s Weisbach appears to have paid contributions to the International Group for at least three years. See Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*; and especially Weisbach to Kögler, 3 March 1946, and 9 September 1948, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 952.

published by the *Forward*, Jaksch was eventually forced to intervene and from West Germany attempted to mend fences between the two groups. While he backed Wanka and his support for the governing Liberal Party as a strategic measure to help further the admission of German immigrants to Canada, he called on the Sudeten-German settlers in Tomslake to set aside differences and join the CCF as a new and united group.⁷³ However, his call remained unheeded as Wanka continued to support the Liberal Party and so remained at odds with the CCF-based Sudeten clubs. As he explained, in Canada the Sudeten-German cause could simply not be furthered through the CCF due to its lack of power at the federal level. Hence, he argued, the “ethno-political work” of his organization could only be mediated through the all-powerful Liberal Party.⁷⁴ Renewed attempts at reconciliation were launched by the Seliger Community when first Richard Reitzner, the organization’s deputy leader and member of the West German parliament, arrived in Canada in 1959 and, then, in 1962, when Wenzel Jaksch himself visited the

⁷³ For the admission of Sudeten-German relatives under the auspices of the CCCRR Wanka had already sought in 1946/47 support through and for the Liberal Party. While eventually his unorthodox strategy succeeded, many of his fellow Sudeten-German comrades were scandalized and wanted to stick to the CCF only. See Rehwald to Wanka, 16 January 1946, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 1, file 23; Jaksch to Kutscha, 20 July 1948, *ibid.*; Kutscha to Wanka, 9 July 1947, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 4, file German emigration to Canada, 1947-1961; Weisbach to Kern, 6 February 1949, SudAr, Nachlass Karl Kern, file 22. For the open letter to Jaksch and his response, see *Forward* 2: 1-2 (July 1949), 10-12; and Wenzel Jaksch, *Zu den Differenzen in der Siedlergruppe Tomslake-Tupper Creek*, 5 October 1949, ASG, Emigration Kanada, file 818, also contained in NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 3, file 12.

⁷⁴ Wanka to Kern, 19 January 1951, SudAr, Nachlass Karl Kern, file 41.

country.⁷⁵ Both attempts failed and eventually resulted in the isolation of Wanka's group within the Seliger Community.

Despite their personal friendship, Jaksch eventually turned away from Wanka and helped give the advantage to the ZVSDO and its leader Henry Weisbach. Jaksch himself had long been distant from Weisbach due to the latter's war-time sympathies for the Sudeten-German dissidents, but by the early 1960s he could no longer ignore Weisbach's uncontested leadership among the greater part of the Sudeten-German community and, in particular, his position within the wider German-Canadian community. By then, Weisbach not only led the ZVSDO but was also heavily involved within the national German-Canadian umbrella organization, the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians (TCA). Since its founding in 1951, Weisbach and other Sudeten Germans in Ontario had played an influential role in building up the TCA. Weisbach, in fact, had drafted the organization's statutes and since 1951 had been, intermittingly, a member of the executive. In 1967 he became the TCA's president for eight years.⁷⁶ In light of this Jaksch gave Weisbach his full support at the expense of Wanka and his organization. As Jaksch put it after his visit to Canada in 1962, the ZVSDO was based in Toronto "at the centre of German-Canadian affairs [*Deutschkanadiertums*]."⁷⁷

⁷⁵ *Die Brücke*, 29 August 1959; and *ibid.*, 14 April 1962.

⁷⁶ For Weisbach's biography, see "Zum 60. Geburtstag von Heinrich Weisbach," *Forward* 22: 7/8 (July/August 1970), 21.

⁷⁷ Jaksch to Wanka, 31 October 1962, NAC, Willi Wanka Papers, MG 30 C 232, vol. 2, file 9. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Seliger Community under new leadership after Jaksch's fatal car accident in 1965, made a renewed attempt to reconcile Wanka's group with the ZVSDO. However, the attempt failed and resulted in a complete break between the Seliger Community and Wanka's group. The latter co-founded the Wenzel-Jaksch-Circle and opposed West Germany's rapprochement with Central and Eastern

Weisbach and the ZVSDO's influence in the TCA was indeed substantial. Besides Weisbach, the TCA's Ontario director, Frank Lehnert, a Sudeten-German refugee from Hamilton, similarly proved instrumental in setting up the TCA and overcoming the reluctance of German-Canadian groups to join a nationwide umbrella organization. The experience of the 1930s, when the *Deutsche Bund* attempted to rally German Canadians across Canada for the Nazi cause, combined with the negative perception of all things German by the wider Canadian public after World War II, had made the formation of such a nationwide organization a daunting task.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, thanks to his contacts across the country Frank Lehnert rapidly expanded the TCA from its base in Ontario to a nationwide federation of local German-Canadian associations.⁷⁹ Moreover, during the course of the 1950s and 1960s, Sudeten-Germans continued to hold considerable sway over the TCA. In 1960, for example, the Sudeten Germans made up

European states since the late 1960s. Meanwhile, the ZVSDO backed the Seliger Community's support for this rapprochement. See *Sudeten-Bote*, March/April 1971, 12; Resolution Bonn – Prague and the Central Organization of Sudeten Clubs in Canada, September 23, 1972, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 1, file Minutes 1971-1975; and Wieden, *Sudeten Canadians*, 191-202.

⁷⁸ Founded by Nazis in Kitchener in 1934, the *Deutsche Bund Canada* attempted to mobilize German Canadians for its cause. However, at its peak in 1938 the organization boasted only 2000 members and consisted mostly of disgruntled farmers and artisans who were impoverished and/or unemployed. While it sponsored the *Deutsche Zeitung für Canada*, the “German Days” represented the organization's most popular event and drew regularly several thousand people. See Jonathan Wagner, *Brothers Beyond the Sea: National Socialism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 72; Bassler, *German-Canadian Mosaic*, 35-36.

⁷⁹ As such, the TCA grew out of the Canadian Society for German Relief and the Winnipeg-based German-Canadian Association. In both Sudeten Germans were influential and helped build TCA branches in Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and B.C. See Frank to Lehnert, 23 May 1951; Lehnert to Huelsemann, 14 September 1951; and Scharing to Lehnert, 6 June 1951, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians Papers, MG 28 V 4, vol. 5, file 13.

seven of the TCA's 40 member organizations.⁸⁰ Of the eight resolutions issued by the TCA between 1956 and 1968 at least five were initiated by the Sudeten Germans and related to issues dear to them. Three resolutions dealt with pension rights and two resolutions directly with the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. In 1959, for example, the TCA issued "with all due respect" a resolution that called on the Canadian government "to exercise its influence in favour of expellees and urge the United Nations to take effective steps in order to recompense these expellees for the losses they suffered [as a result of the expulsion]."⁸¹ Similarly, just over a year later, another resolution called on the Canadian government to act in favour of expellees and appoint a special commission that would represent these expellees' compensation claims before Central and Eastern European states.⁸² In doing so, the TCA advocated specific Sudeten-German interests and went well beyond its primary scope of activity which, according to its charter, was limited to Canadian matters and was primarily focused on the preservation of German culture in Canada and the assistance of German immigrants in integrating into Canadian society.⁸³ Thus, the Sudeten Germans doubtless left their mark on the TCA.

In the TCA the Sudeten Germans were joined by other expellee groups which in the wake of the 'German immigration boom' of the early 1950s grew increasingly in

⁸⁰ Fritz Wieden, *The Trans-Canada Alliance of German-Canadians: A Study in Culture* (Windsor: Tolle Lege Enterprises, 1985), 20.

⁸¹ TCA resolution, 6 December 1959; and TCA to Diefenbaker, 21 January 1960, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians Papers, MG 28 V 4, vol. 15, file 8.

⁸² TCA resolution, 19 February 1961, *ibid.*

⁸³ Charter of the Trans-Canada Alliance of German-Canadians, 25 September 1952, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 2, file TCA - by-laws.

importance. These were in particular Danube-Swabian expellees, who by the 1960s formed Canada's strongest organized expellee group.⁸⁴ During the course of the 1950s, they founded or revived a string of associations in their main areas of settlement in Ontario and Quebec so that in addition to the clubs that were originally founded during the 1920s in Kitchener, Montreal and Windsor, when a first wave of Danube-Swabian immigrants arrived, they had clubs in Aylmer, Bradford, Galt, Leamington and Toronto.⁸⁵ In 1959 these clubs formed an umbrella organization, the Alliance of the Danube Swabians in Canada (ADSC), which for several years also incorporated Danube-Swabian clubs from neighbouring Michigan and Ohio. The ADSC maintained ties with corresponding Danube-Swabian organizations in West Germany, Austria, France and Brazil and used the monthly Homeland Messenger [*Heimatbote*] as its press organ. The latter was founded in 1960 and first appeared as the Swabian Messenger [*Schwabenbote*] until it was renamed in 1961, and published 3,000 issues.⁸⁶ As of 1964, four years after it was first launched in West Germany, the Catholic group associated with the ADSC at St. Patrick's Church in Toronto launched a pilgrimage to Marylake, near Midland on Georgian Bay, in remembrance of the lost homeland and the expulsion of the Danube Swabians. For the first year 2,500 people joined the event, which was apparently led by children clad in white, followed by youth groups dressed in traditional costumes, grandmothers with black headscarves and survivors of Yugoslavia's post-war anti-

⁸⁴ According to the computerized sample of the 1981 Canadian census, one in four expellee in Canada was born in Hungary or the former Yugoslavia, see herein chapter III, p. 174 and appendix, table III.E).

⁸⁵ Wieden/Benzinger, *Canada's Danube Swabians*, 58.

⁸⁶ *Heimatbote* 2: 8 (June 1961), 1.

German persecution, who carried white crosses with the engraved names of individual detention camps.⁸⁷ Since its foundation the ADSC also organized an annual meeting, held in rotation by one of its member associations on Labour Day weekend. Besides a main rally, a parade of brass bands and dances with typical costumes from the homeland, such meetings offered an opportunity for Danube Swabians to meet old acquaintances and drew up to 3,000 people during 1960s.⁸⁸ Furthermore, unique among the various organized expellee groups in Canada, the ADSC built a vacation resort on Lake Scugog near Port Perry where members were invited to purchase lots and build cottages.⁸⁹

Expellees from Transylvania (Romania) similarly formed a homeland society in Canada in the wake of the 'German immigration boom,' although it remained considerably smaller than the ADSC and represented only around 1,500 to 2,000 Transylvanian Saxons [*Siebenbürger Sachsen*].⁹⁰ Most of these came to live in southern Ontario and established new clubs as in Aylmer or joined existing Transylvanian clubs in Kitchener-Waterloo and Windsor, which were both established in the late 1920s and modelled after their older counterparts in the United States. As had been done south of the border, these latter two Transylvanian clubs were originally established as mutual aid organizations, offering members help in the event of illness. Otherwise Canada's Transylvanian clubs comprised choirs, youth, women and/or folkdance groups. In 1960

⁸⁷ *Heimatbote* 5: 44 (June 1964), 8; Wieden/Benziger, *Canada's Danube Swabians*, 64-66.

⁸⁸ Waldheim to Auswärtiges Amt betreffend Tag der Donauschwaben in Toronto am 5. und 6. September 1959, PAAA, Referat 305/IIA6, B 32, vol. 50; *Heimatbote* 3: 23 (September 1962), 1.

⁸⁹ Wieden/Benziger, *Canada's Danube Swabians*, 79-85.

⁹⁰ Wieden, *Kanadas Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 14.

they established the Homeland Society of the Transylvanian Saxons in Canada [*Landsmannschaft der Siebenbürger Sachsen in Kanada, LSSK*], headquartered in Kitchener-Waterloo, and the Homeland Messenger [*Heimatbote*] as its common newsletter. Three years later in 1963 the Transylvanian homeland society joined forces with its American (and larger) counterpart and formed, although only for three years, a continent-wide organization with links to Austria and West Germany. However, a crisis struck the Transylvanian homeland society in the early 1970s as a new generation of members, mostly post-war immigrants, vied for its leadership. Since its foundation the homeland society also organized annual gatherings complete with official speeches, folk dances and parades which drew 800 to 1000 attendants during the 1960s.⁹¹

During the 1950s, a third organization of expellees came forth founded originally in Montreal in 1947, namely the Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society (CBIAS). After it had failed to further the immigration of German Balts from West Germany to Canada, the CBIAS ceased operations and in 1951 had to be revived by a group of newly-arrived German-Baltic immigrants, which took over the organization, not least because it inherited its remaining assets.⁹² A first branch of the CBIAS opened in London, Ontario, soon followed by branches in Kitchener/Guelph, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. In 1968 roughly one in two German-Baltic immigrants were member of the CBIAS which boasted 1,528 members in total and

⁹¹ Martin Intscher, "Die Siebenbürger Sachsen in Europa und Kanada: Gestern und Heute," *Canadiana Germanica* 9 (1990), 1-12; Wieden, *Kanadas Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 14; Bassler, "Germans," 602.

⁹² CBIAS Rundschreiben, 5, October 1951, 1, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society, MG 28 V 99, vol. 3, file Circulars.

thus was of a small size comparable to the Transylvanian homeland society.⁹³ Yet, compared to the latter, CBIAS members were dispersed across the country with the largest group in Kitchener/Guelph comprising 180 members in 1968.⁹⁴ As a homeland society, CBIAS issued a periodical and gathered for seasonal events in local clubs, including such typical Baltic celebrations as summer (solstice) fest and Thanksgiving. In the late 1950s, it was struck by a major crisis following the attempt of executive board members to seek West German compensation for the loss of goods and property in the Baltic. As a result, CBIAS transferred its board of directors from London, Ontario, to Vancouver, British Columbia.⁹⁵ CBIAS, as such, maintained close ties with the West German German-Baltic Homeland Society, which instituted a separate sub-commission to cultivate such contacts in 1953, including a transatlantic youth exchange programme.⁹⁶

Beyond these three organizations, the Danube Swabian, Transylvanian and German-Baltic homeland societies, no further homeland society were founded on Canadian ground, except for a handful of smaller clubs with informal ties to West German expellee organizations or a series of congregations that accommodated expellee groups. In Kitchener, for example, a small group of immigrants formed the *Alpenklub*, which had ties to West German and Austrian homeland groups from Gottschee

⁹³ An estimated 3000 German Balts immigrated to Canada in the postwar period according to Filaretow, *Kontinuität*, 327; on CBIAS membership, see Kuester, *Bricks*, 82.

⁹⁴ Kuester, *Bricks*, 82.

⁹⁵ Von Maydell to von Berg, 10 January 1958, document 196; Otto Stillmark to Graf Berg, 29 January 1958, document 218A; Protokoll der Generalversammlung des Hauptvorstandes, 8 March 1959; document 387; Protokoll der Generalversammlung des Hauptvorstandes, 9 July 1960, document 549, CBIAS, Archive Edmonton.

⁹⁶ Kuester, *Bricks*, 87.

(Slovenia).⁹⁷ Also in Kitchener, the Bethel Lutheran church brought together mostly expellees from Poznan (central Poland) and Volhynia (western Ukraine),⁹⁸ in Toronto St. George's Lutheran Church accommodated many German-Baltic expellees,⁹⁹ and in southern Manitoba and the Niagara Peninsula Mennonite churches hosted expellees from Russia who had retreated with the German armies in 1943/44.¹⁰⁰ Quite remarkably, despite their numerical strength, expellees east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers founded no homeland societies in Canada. With a share of roughly 40 percent of the expellee population,¹⁰¹ only one social club for Silesians in the Toronto area – named after a mythic mountain spirit, the *Rübezahl* – came into being in the early 1960s.¹⁰² Most of the expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers appear to have joined, if they did, German-Canadian clubs or associations where they often left a distinctive mark such as, above all, in the TCA. The latter organization's national secretaries in the 1950s and 1960s originated, for example, from East Prussia and Silesia and so helped ensure that the TCA was supportive of expellees and their concerns. Kurt and Clive von Cardinal were natives of East Prussia and jointly administered the TCA national secretary in the early 1950s. While Kurt himself had trekked from East Prussia

⁹⁷ Interview Anton Pleschinger, 30 November and 14 December 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

⁹⁸ Oskar Krampitz, "Begegnungen mit Landsleuten in Kanada und in den USA," Jahrbuch Weichsel-Warthe 23 (1977), 137-143; Interview Reverend Helmut Pruefer, 24 June 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

⁹⁹ Bericht über die kirchlichen Verhältnisse in Canada, n.d., CSG, Balten in Kanada, Australien, USA, Suedamerika, Kasten II; Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰⁰ Dankadresse der Mennonitischen Gemeinde an die Bundesregierung, Oktober 1963, PAAA, Referat 305/IIA6, B 32, vol. 198.

¹⁰¹ Appendix, table III.d).

¹⁰² Interview Chris Klein, 30 June 1998, MHSO, German Collection II.

to Schleswig-Holstein in early 1945, Clive had arrived in Canada in 1929 and had since become involved in German-Canadian organizations, especially after 1945 when he was instrumental in setting up both the Canadian Society for German Relief and the TCA. He took a keen interest in expellees, adopted two expellee orphans and actively campaigned for Canadian aid to expellees in Germany. As editor of the Canadian Society of German Relief's news bulletin, he entertained close ties to expellee circles in the FRG and in the early 1950s had his news bulletin published with the support of the Göttingen Research Committee [*Göttinger Arbeitskreis*], an influential West German organization that aimed to promote the dissemination of information on expellees.¹⁰³ Moreover, the TCA's long-standing secretary of the late 1950s and 1960s, Bernard Stopp, similarly helped ensure that the German-Canadian umbrella organization was supportive of expellees in Canada. Born in Breslau (Wrocław), he came to Canada in the early 1950s and in the TCA he backed the Sudeten-German initiatives for West German compensation payments. Stopp, in fact, co-authored the final version of one of the resolutions that called on the federal government to support compensation claims abroad on behalf of expellees in Canada.¹⁰⁴ Thus, while they founded no separate homeland society, expellees from east of the

¹⁰³ In the 1970s the Homeland Society of Silesia awarded Clive von Cardinal a special recognition for his work on behalf of expellees. In the early 1930s Clive first operated a farm in Nova Scotia before he took up studies in German literature and eventually became an academic, see Interview Clive von Cardinal, 9 November 1986, NAC, Accession, 1986-11-04/1986-11-09. On the *Göttinger Arbeitskreis*, see Kai Arne Linnemann, *Das Erbe der Ostforschung: Zur Rolle Göttingens in der Geschichtswissenschaft der Nachkriegszeit* (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2002), 124-133.

¹⁰⁴ Zentralvorstand TCA, Sitzungsprotokoll, 22 February 1959, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians, MG 28 V 4, vol.1, file 9; Boeschstein to Stopp, 13 October 1959; and Stopp to Boeschstein, 14 October 1959, *ibid.*, vol. 4, file 11, part 2.

Oder/Neisse Rivers were to be found in leading and influential positions within German-Canadian organizations.

Expellees in Canada did not benefit from any public support to form homeland societies. Both Canadian and West German officials limited their involvement to attendance at such events as the Danube-Swabian Day or the annual general meeting of the TCA. There was no official funding to commemorate the homeland nor could expellees in Canada rely on West German officials to help build a homeland society. In the early 1960s the latter, for example, declined to offer assistance when the West German Homeland Society Weichsel-Warthe sought to establish a branch in Canada. The TCA, West German officials argued, already covered all the needs of expellees so that “a further homeland society would only lead to the splintering of German Canadians.”¹⁰⁵ West German officials proved, in fact, quite reluctant to back expellees. When asked to comment on one of the TCA’s resolutions dealing with the compensation of expellees, the Consul General in Toronto deemed it “very problematic” [*“äusserst bedenklich”*] and called on the TCA to shelve the resolution as quickly as possible. According to him, there was no point in asking the Canadian government to help further expellee interests while Ottawa refused to come to an agreement over German assets confiscated during World War II. Moreover, the general consul also reminded the TCA of the expulsion’s “pre-history” which, he wrote, overshadowed the expulsion.¹⁰⁶ Thus, expellees in Canada could hardly count on the support of West German officials who, it

¹⁰⁵ Aktenvermerk gez. von Waldheim, 17 May 1963, *ibid.*, vol. 11, file 3.

¹⁰⁶ Von Waldheim to Stopp, February 13, 1959, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians Papers, MG 28 V 4, vol. 15, file 9.

seems, refused to back specific expellee demands for fear of alienating West German interests in Canada.

Although small and few in number, Canada's homeland societies diverged greatly in terms of their relationship with each other and with other German-Canadian societies. If, for example, Sudeten Germans worked keenly with and for the TCA, other organized expellee groups were more reluctant to do so. One reason for this might have related to the TCA's high membership fees, which, it was known, kept smaller clubs away from the TCA.¹⁰⁷ As we will see below, another reason might well have had to do with the past and Nazi Germany. The CBIAS, for one, stayed completely away from the TCA and had little contact with other organizations. One may hypothesize that the generally well-educated German Balts, who most often came from middle, if not upper-class backgrounds, avoided social interaction with groups that were mostly of peasant background such as the Danube Swabians or of working-class background such as the Sudeten Germans. In the mid-1950s there seems to have been discussions within the CBIAS about a possible collaboration with German-Canadian organizations. When asked for his opinion, the head of the national executive advised against collaboration for financial reasons.¹⁰⁸ However, a later controversy in the ethnic press brought forth the past as a motive for the CIBAS's lack of involvement in German-Canadian organizations. Specifically, when in the mid-1960s the ethnic press regretted its failure to join the TCA, several German-Baltic readers quickly fought back and pointed the finger to their

¹⁰⁷ Konsulat Toronto to Auswärtiges Amt, 28 February 1961, PAAA, Referat 305/IIA6, B 32, vol. 119.

¹⁰⁸ Stillmark to Berg, 19 February 1957, document 60, CBIAS, Archive Edmonton.

experience of National Socialism, which had spoiled, they claimed, their desire to work with Germans born in Germany.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, the Danube-Swabian homeland society (ADSC) similarly pointed to past events to justify its reluctance to join the TCA. At the annual general meeting of the TCA in 1960, the head of the ADSC reportedly argued that Danube Swabians had “burned their fingers in the past” by joining German organizations in Yugoslavia or Hungary and thus did not wish to repeat an experience that had led to carnage and deportation.¹¹⁰ He disliked in particular the fact that the TCA received funding from the FRG in support of Saturday German-language schools which, he claimed, in the 1930s had been a strategy employed by Nazis to mobilize Germans in Central and Eastern Europe. Consequently, although individual Danube-Swabian clubs such as the one in Toronto or in Kitchener joined the TCA, the ADSC did not.¹¹¹

Except for the Sudeten Germans, none of the organized expellee groups in Canada consistently and openly advocated the expellees’ ‘right to a native land’. Certainly, they shared a deep hatred of communism and denounced ‘the red dragon’ for the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. Similarly, organizations like the Transylvanian and German-Baltic homeland societies attempted to keep up the

¹⁰⁹ *Nordwesten*, October 22, 1963; March 31, 1966; and May 26, 1966. Contrary to this claim, until the 1970s the TCA’s leadership consisted in fact primarily of ethnic Germans who were born in Canada or in Central and Eastern Europe (as in the case of the Sudeten Germans). Only thereafter did TCA become dominated by Germans born in Germany following the acrimonious ousting of President Henry Weisbach in 1974. The organization subsequently shifted massively to the right and rapidly declined. Today, it exists in name only. See “Die TCA und wir - in eigener Sache,” *Forward* 28: 3/4 (March/April 1976), 7-8; Wieden, *Trans-Canada*, 68; Bassler, “Germans,” 602.

¹¹⁰ Stanley Zybala, Canadian Germans and their integration, working paper given at the National Staff Conference of the Canadian Citizenship Branch, 20, October 1963, NAC, External Affairs Records, vol. 10112, file 20-18-1-13, part 1.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

cultural heritage of the homeland. Danube Swabians also separately commemorated the loss of the *Heimat* and Yugoslavia's post-war persecution of ethnic Germans. However, no other homeland society matched the Sudeten-German organizations in the fervour and consistency of their efforts to gain justice for expellees. As we have seen, Wanka's Western Canadian Working Community of the Sudeten Germans explicitly backed the expellees' 'right to a native land,' whereas Weisbach's ZVSDO emphasized compensation. The ZVSDO, as such, seems to have accommodated different factions within its ranks. On the one hand, there were those who fully backed the Sudeten Germans' claim to the homeland and openly advocated their return within a free and federated Europe as proposed by leading Sudeten Germans in West Germany.¹¹² On the other hand, there were those who prioritised the building of a class-less society over the Sudeten Germans' 'right to a native land.' Members of this faction also refused to be identified as Sudeten Germans, preferring to be designated as German Bohemians [*Deutsch-Böhme*], Eggerländer or by other regional German-Czech sub-identities.¹¹³ Weisbach himself, as the uncontested leader of the ZVSDO, seems to have shifted over time toward a position more in tune with the Sudeten German Homeland Society and Jaksch's Seliger Community. In 1951 he still called for the primacy of socialist ideals,

¹¹² Among them were, for example, Emil Arnberg of Toronto and Emil Kutscha, the head of the CCF Sudeten-German Club Hamilton, see "Sudetendeutsche Probleme," *Forward* 3: 8 (January 1951), 9; "15 Jahre Emigration," *ibid.*, 6: 4 (September 1953), 3.

¹¹³ Among this latter group were Ludwig Loewit and Max and Ernst Koutnik. Max, who was closely associated with the dissident group during his exile in the UK, returned to Czechoslovakia before immigrating to Canada, where his brother, Ernst, resided since 1939. See Liebermann, "Das Schicksal," 26-33; [Max] Koutnik to Kögler, 10 August 1967, ASG, Korrespondenz Kögler, file 923.

whereas later on he wrote of his advocacy for the restitution of the homeland to the Sudeten Germans by peaceful means and within a pan-European context.¹¹⁴

However, all of the homeland societies aimed at assisting members with compensation claims for the loss of property or assets in the homeland. The ZVSDO wrote to Ottawa and Bonn and pressed the TCA to support compensation claims; the Transylvanian and Danube-Swabian homeland societies similarly sought assistance from the Canadian, West German and other government agencies for reparation claims.¹¹⁵ Yet, as mentioned above, advocacy and assistance for the EBL led to a major crisis within the CBIAS. Several German Balts attempted to obtain compensation for the loss of substantial properties and factories in Estonia and/or Latvia and sought advice from Canadian government officials in Ottawa. They claimed to act on behalf of the CBIAS, however, they had failed to obtain the full consent of the board of directors some of whom had serious reservations about the integrity of the claimants and their course of action.¹¹⁶ Similarly, among Danube Swabians the issue of compensation was equally divisive, although mainly due to the fact that Danube Swabians who arrived in Canada from Austria were unable to benefit from West Germany's EBL, whereas those who had

¹¹⁴ "Dreizehn Jahre Emigration," *Forward* 4: 4 (September 1951), 1; "Die Aufgaben der Organisation," *ibid.*, 9: 11 (April 1957), 2; and "Fünfzehn Jahre Vorwärts," 16: 1 (Juni 1963), 2.

¹¹⁵ The ZVSDO's correspondence relating to compensation claims fills several boxes, see NAC, Central Organization of Sudeten German Clubs in Canada Papers, MG 28 V 5, vol. 7-8; Claims of the Danube Swabians to property in Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary and West Germany, NAC, External Affairs Records, RG 25, vol. 5285, file 9155-BS-40, part 1.

¹¹⁶ Von Maydell to von Berg, 10 January 1958, document 196; Otto Stillmark to Graf Berg, 29 January 1958, document 218A; Protokoll der Generalversammlung des Hauptvorstandes, 8 March 1959; document 387; Protokoll der Generalversammlung des Hauptvorstandes, 9 July 1960, document 549, CBIAS, Archive Edmonton.

come from West Germany were entitled to the scheme. The ADSC called in both the FRG and in Austria for the compensation of all of its members regardless of where they had landed in the early post-war years, but to no avail. During the 1960s some Danube Swabians founded a separate sub-group, the Association of Ethnic Germans Expelled from the Homeland [*Verband der heimatvertriebenen Volksdeutschen*], which attempted to gain compensation from Austria.¹¹⁷

Besides expellee rights and compensations, homeland societies generally focused on the integration of members into Canadian society. Socially, they aimed at providing emotional support by regularly organizing festivities, dances and balls or, as in the case of the Danube Swabians, by building up a holiday resort for its members. In addition, some organizations built up credit unions to assist members with mortgage payments. For example, the credit union at Toronto's St. Patrick Church, associated with the ADSC and Toronto's Association of Danube Swabians, provided loans at preferential rates and so allowed members to pay down payments for mortgages. St. Patrick's also provided cheap day-care to members with young children.¹¹⁸ Similarly, members of the central Sudeten-German association ZVSDO pushed for the building of retirement homes for elderly members of the Sudeten-German and German-Canadian community. In 1972 the Sudeten Germans had their wish fulfilled when the *Heidehof* opened its doors in St. Catharines, Ontario.¹¹⁹ Culturally, homeland societies rapidly picked up on Canada's

¹¹⁷ *Neuland*, 22 February 1964, 3.

¹¹⁸ Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

¹¹⁹ Emil Kutscha, *Altenbetreuung*, January 1966, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians Papers, MG 28 V 4, vol. 5, file 4; *Heimblatt Heidehof*, August/September 1973, AO, MHSO Fonds, F 1405, Klaus Bongart Papers, MFN 295.

celebration of the ‘cultural mosaic’ and celebrated folk traditions and music from the homeland whilst honouring Canadian nationhood. On a festive occasion like the Danube-Swabian Day in 1962, dance or youth groups thus typically presented traditional Danube-Swabian folklore whilst singing a German-language version of the Canadian anthem.¹²⁰

According to von Waldheim, West Germany’s general consul in Toronto in the early 1960s, most leaders of the homeland societies and the organized German-Canadian community were men in their forties belonging, as he claimed, to the “upper strata of the working class” and the lower middle class.¹²¹ In terms of their political background leading expellee representatives covered a wide spectrum. Several German immigrants had doubtless been fanatic Nazis who had perpetuated war crimes and atrocities. Albert H. Rauca, for instance, was responsible for the killing of some 11,000 Lithuanian Jews and managed to escape prosecution until 1982 when his dark secret finally came to the fore after he had lived a quiet life in the Muskoka region for some thirty years.¹²² However, none of the leading expellee representatives were Nazi

¹²⁰ *Heimatbote* 3: 23 (September 1962), 1.

¹²¹ Generalkonsulat Toronto an Auswärtiges Amt, 28 February 1961, PAAA, Referat 305/IIA6, B 32, vol. 119.

¹²² As a German national, Rauca managed to dupe both Allied and Canadian authorities about his wartime activities. He came to Canada in December 1950 after having worked as a miner in the Ruhr area. He died in 1983 in the FRG while awaiting trial. In the wake of Rauca’s case, the federal government started to systematically prosecute war criminals, in particular after the Deschênes Commission Report of March 1987. However, since 1995 under Canada’s Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Program federal officials no longer prosecute alleged war criminals as such. To simplify the procedure, they are instead brought to court over the status of their Canadian citizenship. If defendants are found guilty of misrepresentation or the concealment of wartime activities, their citizenship is revoked and deportation ensues. All told, since

perpetrators. Some had been Nazi followers to variable degrees and others had been actively or passively opposed to the Nazi regime.¹²³ The Sudeten Germans, who came to Canada in 1939, were, for example, known for their outspoken opposition to the Nazi regime. By organizing protests and fighting for the expellees' right, they were guided by a sense of social justice derived from their belief in socialism. Some of the sub-groups among the Sudeten Germans were also strongly influenced by ethno-national ideas and the 'ethnic struggle' they had led in the interwar period against the Czechoslovak state. This was in particular the case for Wanka's Working Community but also for some factions within the ZVSDO. Most other expellee leaders in Canada similarly were marked by the 'ethnic struggle' of the interwar period, including the long-standing

Rauca just over 250 cases have been investigated of which three have resulted in the revocation of citizenship. They have involved Dutch, Ukrainian, Hungarian or German immigrants and among the latter a series of expellees, including Helmut Oberlander, Jacob Fast (both from the Ukraine) or Walter Obodzinsky (Byelorussia). While the last died during the course of the prosecution, Oberlander successfully appealed his deportation in 2004. Fast's case, while he was found guilty of collaborating with security police units, is still ongoing. Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 112; Sol Littman, *War criminal on Trial: Rauca of Kaunas* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1983); *Annual Report of Canada's Program on Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2005).

¹²³ Canadian security officials barred the admission of German war criminals to the best of their knowledge and until 1950/1 categorically barred even low or middle-ranking members of the Nazi Party, the general SS, SA or Waffen-SS. While these effectively represented 'ordinary offenders' according to an Allied classification system, high-ranking members of the Nazi Party or SS units as well as publicly known war criminals remained barred throughout the post-war period. However, it should be added that concurrently Canadian security officials barred potential immigrants due to membership or sympathy with Communist parties and effectively pursued a 'double standard' toward real or imagined Communists. Margolian, *Unauthorized*, 89-97, 161-186; on the 'double standard' of security officials, see Alvin Finkel, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the Cold War, 1945-1960," *Journal for Canadian Studies* 21 (Fall 1986), 53-70; and Reg Whitaker, *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys Limited, 1987).

president of Toronto's Danube-Swabian association, Stefan Kroeg, and the president of the CBIAS during the 1950s, Otto Stillmark. Kroeg, born in Semlin, an industrial town near Belgrade, witnessed Yugoslavia's assimilation policy against local German minority groups. He received a degree in commerce from the German College of Marburg (Maribor, Slovenia) which during the 1930s was a stronghold of ethnic German nationalism.¹²⁴ Although he served in the Yugoslav Army and in mid-1941 was captured by German units, he subsequently moved to his native village and lived under Croatia's fascist puppet state. According to him, in 1943 he forcibly relocated to Austria.¹²⁵ In his native Estonia Stillmark similarly witnessed his country's anti-German policy and the subsequent successful struggle of the German minority to gain cultural autonomy. According to him, he never joined the Nazi Party after his relocation to German-occupied Poland in 1939. Apparently, he fought on the Eastern front until he was seriously injured.¹²⁶

The background of at least two leading expellee figures likely went well beyond a passive acceptance of the Nazi regime. Martin Intscher, a leading member of the Transylvanian homeland society, had been part of Romania's heavily nazified Lutheran Church. The church's younger elements, who, like Intscher, had been ordained in the late 1930s and early 1940s, were particularly susceptible to Nazi sympathies.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Ziegler, *Die Vertriebenen*, vol. 2, 916-950.

¹²⁵ Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

¹²⁶ Stillmark to de Vries, 24 July 1957, BAKo, Nachlass Axel de Vries, N 1412, vol. 17.

¹²⁷ Intscher, "Siebenbürger Sachsen," 1-12; Wieden, *Die Siebenbürger Sachsen*, 39-41. On Romania's German minority's role during WWII and specifically that of the Lutheran Church, see Ziegler, *Die Vertriebenen*, vol. 2, 797-905; and Johann Böhm, *Die*

Similarly, Gottlieb Leibbrandt, an ethnic German from the Ukraine, likely had a deep insight into the implementation of Nazi Germany's racial policies in occupied Eastern Europe. While little is known about his activity having graduated in 1935 with a Ph.D. in political science [*Staatswissenschaften*] from the University of Vienna, his brother Georg achieved considerable fame as an ethno-political expert in Nazi Germany's Ministry for the Eastern Occupied Territories. In 1942 Georg took part in the Wannsee Conference and subsequently became deeply involved in the execution of the 'final solution' in Russia, Byelorussia and the Ukraine. After the war, Georg remained in custody until August 1950 when Bavaria's state court in Nuremberg dismissed his case.¹²⁸ For his part, Gottlieb left the FRG for Canada in 1952 after he had founded and presided over the Homeland Society of Germans from Russia in West Germany and launched its (still-existing) periodical *Volk auf dem Wege*. In Canada Gottlieb Leibbrandt succeeded Clive von Cardinal as the secretary of the Canadian Society of German Relief, publishing several monographs on Germans in Kitchener and Waterloo County.¹²⁹

Whatever their political background, at the end of this chapter it is evident that Canada's expellee leaders paled in comparison to West Germany's expellee representatives. Weisbach, Kroeg or Stillmark matched in no way the political careers

Gleichschaltung der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Rumänien und das ‚Dritte Reich,‘ 1941-1944 (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2003), 107-226.

¹²⁸ Eric J. Schmaltz and Samuel D. Sinner, "The Nazi Ethnographic Research of Georg Leibbrandt and Karl Stumpp in Ukraine, and its North American Legacy," in Haar, *German Scholars*, 51-85; Fahlbusch, "The Role," 28-50; Renate Bridenthal, "Germans from Russia: The Political Network of a Double Diaspora," in O'Donnell/Reagin/Bridenthal, *The Heimat Abroad*, 187-218.

¹²⁹ Leibbrandt, "Canadian German Society,"; idem, '*Little Paradise: Aus der Geschichte und Leben der Deutschkanadier in der County Waterloo, Ontario 1800-1975* (Kitchener: Allprint Co., 1977).

and clout of Jaksch, Oberländer or Manteuffel-Szoegge. Once American and British occupation officials endorsed the organized expellee movement as partners against communism, expellee leaders in the FRG built up a vast network of organizations wooed by parties and government authorities for the sizable segment of the West German electorate they represented. Although the organized expellee movement was split between a political party (BHE) and two main pressure groups (ZvD/BvD and VOL/VdL), expellee organizations in the FRG were able to obtain extensive backing for two key objectives: compensation, which they did get in the early 1950s, and the expellees' return to the homeland. In effect, West Germany's polity substantially accommodated expellee interests and also included the establishment of a separate ministry for expellee affairs. As one historian has recently suggested, this ministry may have been established for symbolic reasons to placate expellees and prevent their radicalization.¹³⁰ However, it also epitomized the power of the organized expellee movement. As such, expellee organizations were a stronghold of German nationalism. Homeland societies, in particular, viewed themselves as representative bodies in the diaspora, boasting clearly defined irredentist programmes and aims. On the one hand, organizations, which represented the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse River, aimed to restore Germany in the borders of 1937 and fixed their eyes on the preliminary character of the Potsdam Agreements in the hope of reversing the expulsion. On the other hand, organizations, which represented ethnic German expellees from

¹³⁰ Mathias Beer, "Symbolische Politik? Entstehung, Aufgaben und Funktion des Bundesministeriums für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte," in Jochen Oltmer, ed. *Migration steuern und verwalten: Deutschland vom späten 19. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Göttingen: V and R unipress, 2003), 295-323.

Czechoslovakia, Hungary or the USSR, aspired to return to the homeland by advocating the creation of a European federation on the basis of the right-to-self-determination. In addition, much of the language expellee organizations used was reminiscent of the Nazi period and some of the leaders were deeply involved in war crimes and atrocities.

By comparison, the handful of Canadian expellee leaders built only small organizations with very limited political ambitions. Besides mutual assistance and staunch anti-communist leanings, they primarily provided members with a locus to share a common heritage and speak the language/dialect of the homeland. Expellee organizations in Canada were, essentially, based on what historian Roberto Perin has referred to as “intense localism.”¹³¹ Like other immigrant institutions in North America before and after World War II, expellees founded organizations along regional lines in order to institutionalize mutual assistance and give a sense of themselves and of the world around them. That Canada’s organized expellee groups were exclusively of ethnic German heritage from the former Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires is not a mere coincidence. Similar to the Italian *contadino* who immigrated to North America before and after the war, these ethnic German expellee groups from Eastern Europe were still strongly marked by their peasant background and their loyalty to the local community.¹³²

¹³¹ Perin, “Writing about Ethnicity,” in John Schultz, ed. *Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 211.

¹³² Ibid.; see also Robert F. Harney, “Ambiente and Social Class in North American Little Italies,” *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 2: 2 (Spring 1975), 208-224; and idem, “The Commerce of Migration,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 9: 1 (1977), 42-53; John Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity* (Kingston: McGill/Queen’s University Press, 1988); Franc Sturino, *Forging the Chain: A Case Study of Italian Migration to Canada, 1880-1930* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society

What is more, except for the Sudeten-German groups, Canada's expellee organizations supported no political programmes akin to the diasporic nationalism of their West German counterparts. This is particularly striking in the case of the German Balts. As we have seen, in the FRG they were present in the highest echelons of the organized expellee movement, whereas in Canada they kept to themselves and concentrated on social and cultural activities. As the exception to this finding, the Sudeten-German groups must be considered separately. They were a group of highly politicized social-democrats, trained to advocate opinions and stage political protests. Thus, not surprisingly, in Canada they took an active role and supported the expellees' 'right to a native land.'

In marked contrast to the FRG, Canada's expellee groups founded no umbrella organization comparable to Kather's ZvD/BvD or the VOL/VdL. In fact, as the example of the German-Canadian umbrella organization, the TCA, showed, homeland societies greatly varied in their approach to other organizations. Whereas the main Sudeten-German association wholeheartedly embraced the TCA, the homeland society of the German Balts spurned it. An umbrella organization eventually emerged in the 1990s in the shape of the Toronto-based Society of German Heritage from Eastern Europe, which regroups expellees from across Central and Eastern Europe, including Silesia, East Prussia, Bohemia or the Banat. Why did no such organization emerge in the early post-war period? In Canada expellees were only a minority among a minority, which public officials could afford to ignore. As we have seen, they received no government support

of Ontario, 1990); Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991).

to form institutions and both Canadian and West German authorities limited their involvement to attendance at public gatherings. Whether German assets confiscated during World War II indeed inhibited the FRG from supporting expellee groups in Canada must be further investigated. One such claim by one West German diplomat stationed in Toronto does not warrant the conclusion that the FRG systematically withdrew its support to organized expellee groups in Canada (and possibly elsewhere abroad). But, it nevertheless indicates an ambivalent attitude toward organized expellee groups. Whereas in the FRG expellees were widely accommodated, abroad they were kept at arm's length and ignored. Expellee organizations in West Germany similarly failed to provide support to expellee groups in Canada. Except for the Sudeten Germans, and in particular the Seliger Community, no other expellee group in West Germany bothered building up counterpart organizations in Canada. This may well be because Canada's influence in European affairs was very limited. It would be interesting to see whether West German expellee organizations similarly did not create associated organizations in the USA. The fact that expellees in Canada were part of a carefully screened immigrant influx likely curtailed the organized expellee movement. Canadian immigrant officials selected immigrants not for their potential in politics, but primarily for their manual skills and manpower. Like other immigrants, in the early post-war period expellees were busy finding jobs and accommodation. Finally, as discussed in the next and last chapter of this thesis, expellees found fertile ground in Canada to develop a viable identity which accommodated their heritage and experience of resettlement. Except for specific groups who, by and large, transplanted their organizations to Canada,

most expellees went along with the newly celebrated 'cultural mosaic' and therefore showed little interest in building organizations to support separate identities. In fact, it was not until the 1990s that expellees sought wider publicity about the expulsion and established the Society of German Heritage from Eastern Europe. By then, however, further factors came into play, not least of which were Canada's prosecution of war criminals and the public's increased awareness of the Holocaust.¹³³

¹³³ Frank Bialystok, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* (Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 2000).

V. 'Fellow Citizens'

An official investigation in mid-1948 laid bare the difficult relationship between locals and expellees in occupied Germany and the early FRG. Apparently, refusing to accommodate an expellee family, a local farmer had removed all the planks from the floors of two requisitioned rooms. Although local authorities subsequently reprimanded the farmer, the investigation plainly stated that such hostility had not been an isolated case. As it concluded, locals were pitted against expellees and fiercely resented their presence.¹ Historians have widely documented this hostility toward expellees in occupied Germany and the early FRG. Indeed, from the perspective of the local population it was clearly expellees as Nazis, scavengers or homeless people who brought misery to Germany. Conversely, from the perspective of expellees it was they, who bore the burden of the lost war and had 'lost everything.'² Meanwhile, in comparatively well-to-do Canada the wider public similarly resented the presence of expellees in the early post-war period. On the one hand, Canadians had fought two world wars against Germany and so harboured resentments against people of German descent. On the other hand, Canadians also begrudged the mass arrival of immigrants, especially after 1947,

¹ Report Bartl to Bettinger, 31 July 1948, BAKo, Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, B 150, vol. 8021, file 1.

² Marita Krauss, "Das ,Wir' und das ,Ihr': Ausgrenzung, Abgrenzung, Identitätsstiftung bei Einheimischen und Flüchtlingen nach 1945," in Hoffmann/Krauss/Schwartz, *Vertriebene in Deutschland*, 27-39; Christiane Harzig, "Der Blick auf die Fremden im veröffentlichten Diskurs: Flüchtlinge in Bremen in der Nachkriegszeit," 1999. *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts*, 12:2 (1997), 30-49; Lehmann, *Im Fremden ungewollt zuhaus*, 170-176; and Rainer Schulze, "Growing Discontent: Relations between Native and Refugee Populations in a Rural District in Western Germany after the Second World War," *German History* 7 (1989), 332-349.

when new regulations opened the gates to tens of thousands of homeless Europeans. As a result, Canadians widely scorned foreigners – including expellees – for fear of increased job competition, wage decreases and, ultimately, the reduction in living standards.³

Even so, as this chapter illustrates, by the 1970s in both the FRG and Canada expellees were accepted as ‘fellow citizens.’ In the former, the Federal Expellee Law of 1953 formally granted German citizenship to ethnic German expellees from Czechoslovakia or Hungary. While expellees from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers were already German citizens, until 1953 ethnic German expellees had been dealt with ‘as equal in law to German nationals’ [*den Deutschen gleichgestellt*].⁴ In Canada expellees generally obtained citizenship by way of naturalization following a period of at least five-year’s residence. Yet, culturally, expellees in both the FRG and Canada also succeeded in forging identities that allowed them to be part of the nation and to honour the memory of their expulsion experience. Following Giddens’ structuration theory, which emphasizes the interplay between human agency and social structures in the reproduction of social systems, expellees did so by regenerating elements of their ethno-cultural heritage and producing discourses which fit the cultural matrix of their new environments. In the FRG this led expellees to adopt ethno-provincial identities and celebrate regional homeland customs in line with West Germany’s general revival of local traditions and identities. In Canada, by contrast, this

³ Kelley/Trebilcock, *Making*, 311-320; Avery, *Reluctant Host*, 170-178.

⁴ Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, “The Decline of Privilege: The Legal Background to the Migration of Ethnic Germans,” in David Rock and Stefan Wolff, eds. *Coming Home to Germany? The Integration of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic since 1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), 102-118.

led expellees to publicly foster ethno-cultural identities which tied in with the country's newly celebrated 'cultural mosaic' and highlighted the common experience of a war-torn immigrant generation from Europe. In effect, in both countries expellees found ways to avoid demeaning group labels and to reaffirm their place within the nation.

In this chapter I first give an account of the various forms of resentment that expellees encountered in occupied Germany/the FRG and Canada. In both countries these resentments in actual fact amounted to outright xenophobia. Subsequently, I take a closer look at the national identities expellees adopted in the FRG and Canada. As newcomers they were poised to move on and adopt new cultural values centred on the ethno-cultural heritage of the nation. However, this was not simply a top-down process whereby community leaders and the wider society instilled expellees with the notion of the regional *Heimat* or the 'cultural mosaic.' Certainly, in both the FRG and Canada, the mass of expellees followed the path set out by community leaders. But, this was also a reflected process based on their own experience. For example, the celebration of the various homeland traditions in the FRG made sense to expellees because they met Germans of various cultural backgrounds whose dialects and customs were different. Similarly, the celebration of the 'cultural mosaic' in Canada struck a chord with expellees because they did encounter people of different social and ethnic backgrounds. Consequently, for this analysis I want to illustrate how expellees understood this experience and projected it toward the wider public. As we shall see, expellees used their experiences at work and in the community to sustain the widely celebrated ethno-cultural values of their new home societies. In addition, they also based their identities on the

contributions they believed they had made to the development of Canada or the FRG. As such, these perceived contributions proved equally pivotal for their identity formation. Finally, in the last part of each section, I shed light on the place that the homeland ultimately inhabited in the minds of expellees. What did they think of the homeland thirty or forty years after the end of World War II? What sort of feelings did they harbour toward the new inhabitants of the homeland? Expellees in the FRG gave different answers to these questions than their counterparts in Canada. This divergence, although subtle in appearance, carried an important significance. As I shall demonstrate, it essentially denoted the difference between an ethnically homogenous society in the FRG and a pluri-ethnic society in Canada.

'German Provincials'

In the aftermath of the war a massive wave of resentment against expellees unfolded in what was left of Germany. Locals blamed expellees for the radically deteriorating living conditions, the soaring incidence of crime, the spread of contagious diseases, hunger, the ubiquitous destitution or, even, for the outbreak and the loss of the war. Standing in line to receive the weekly ration of bread and eggs, one expellee recalled, for example, how he was accused of robbing the local community's already diminished resources.⁵

Begging for food, another expellee remembered how he was castigated as a "parasite" and felt as if he were utterly resented by the local farmers and residents.⁶ The requisition of every inch of habitable space triggered, above all, resentment. Locals, who were forced to accommodate strangers in spare rooms and share cooking and cleaning amenities, reacted bitterly and made their resistance known through the constant pestering of their uninvited guests. They loaned decrepit furniture, prohibited the use of washrooms, restricted cooking times and lent as little as they could.⁷ In fact, locals even attempted to keep expellees out of their homes. As we have seen in the introduction to this chapter, one farmer, who refused to host an expellee family, removed the planks of two requisitioned rooms.⁸ Similarly, another local claimed to host orphaned nephews and

⁵ Interview E. and A. F., 18 March 1987, IGB, Wustrow.

⁶ G. H., Hinrichs, *Aufzeichnungen*, 34, n.d., IGB, Kempowski. Similarly, expellees were also often accused of being "potato beetles" [*"Kartoffelkäfer"*], see Duberg, *Der Junge*, 325-326.

⁷ E. C., *Erinnerungen aus dem Tagebuch*, 18, 1974, IGG, Kempowski; and Helene Langemark, *'Menschen wie Sie...: Neuanfang in Schleswig-Holstein, 1946-1950'* (Husum: Husum Druck und Verlag, 1991), 10-11.

⁸ See above, p. 253.

nieces in order to avoid the accommodation of expellees in his home. However, as it turned out, these children did not exist.⁹

Expellees, in effect, fell victim to a pervasive xenophobia that set them apart and made them the object of ridicule, if not hatred. Locals easily recognized their distinct dialects and collectively branded them as “riffraff.”¹⁰ Wearing frayed clothing or pulling a handcart packed with all their belongings in search of shelter, they were pigeonholed as “Rucksack Germans” and “Gypsies.”¹¹ Depending on the location of their residence, expellees were exposed to regional variations of the same pervasive fear and dislike of strangers. In Bavaria locals typically decried expellees as ‘Prussians,’ whereas in the Ruhr area, they were belittled as ‘*Pollacken*,’ a condescending German epithet for Polish immigrant workers. One expellee, for example, recalled the sensation he had stirred among the local population of a town in the Ruhr area when he spoke proper High German. As he claimed, most local people thought that everything that came from east of Berlin was Polish.¹² The expellees’ different ways of life likewise came under attack, particularly in rural regions where traditional lifestyles and clothing still prevailed. One expellee, for example, caught the ire of the local population because of her appearance. As a modern woman of upper-class background from the Baltic, she dressed in knee-

⁹ Interview E. M., Meier, 6 February 1987, IGB, Wustrow.

¹⁰ E. C., *Erinnerungen aus dem Tagebuch*, 24, 1974, IGG, Kempowski.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; and J. S., *Heimat und Lebenslauf Chronik*, 89, 1988, IGB, Deutsches Gedächtnis. Similarly, see also Theresa Jacobi, *Wir gehören jetzt schon hierher: Perbal/Ungarn in hessischen Gemeinden, 1946-1955* (Marburg: N.G. Elwert, 1996), 86.

¹² Siegfried Golbeck, *Bis eine Tür*, 146; Duberg, *Der Junge*, 324; Mr. Helbrecht from Volhynia in Yedlin, *Germans from Russia*, 186; G.H., *Aufzeichnungen*, 35; and E. C., *Erinnerungen aus dem Tagebuch*, 25, IGB Kempowski; Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview A. K., 6 March 1981, IGB, Lusir.

length skirts in marked contrast to local women who dressed in long red skirts typical of the region. She also did not tie her hair in a bun on top of the forehead and instead had her hair open and falling to her shoulders. To local women, she definitely looked different.¹³ Ethnic German expellees from eastern and south-eastern Europe such as Perbal (Perbál) in Hungary attracted, conversely, the local population's scorn for their traditional ways of life. Transferred from the Hungarian part of the Banat to rural Hesse in 1946, the *Perbaler* were of peasant background and still wore traditional clothing that distinguished them from the local population. Women, in particular, who still wore wide long skirts, were laughed at by the local population for failing to wear fashionable stockings, bras and shoes. Moreover, traditional *Perbaler* gender divisions and ways of worshipping clashed with the local customs. Most *Perbalers* were illiterate and spoke primarily a Danube-Swabian dialect. Apparently, as soon as they uttered a word, the *Perbaler* were identified as strangers.¹⁴

In the early 1950s, a few government initiatives to assist expellees exposed them to new forms of collective criticism. Expellees, for example, felt that locals resented them for the tax breaks metered out to them or for the fact that public authorities hired expellees according to pre-set quotas.¹⁵ Similarly, they felt they were blamed for tax hikes aimed at subsidizing housing construction and other initiatives. The Equalization-of-the-Burdens Law (EBL) of 1952 became the focal point of particularly vitriolic debates between expellees and locals. While expellees felt that justice had been

¹³ Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 69-70, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London.

¹⁴ Jacobi, *Wir*, 88-118.

¹⁵ Interview W. P., 11 January 1988, IGB, Wustrow.

done and, in fact, complained about the amount of red tape that compensation claims involved, locals, who predominantly bore the financial cost of the law, felt unjustly disadvantaged and accused expellees of profiting from the government. It was the locals, as expellees were told, who worked hard and paid taxes and therefore had to pay for the welfare of uninvited people.¹⁶ Expellees were also accused of inflating claims in order to maximize compensation. As a widespread rumour suggested, if one were to add up the properties for which expellees claimed compensation, the FRG's territory would stretch from the Rhine to the Volga. Expellees, the rumour concluded, could therefore only have owned "eight hundred acres of wind behind the stables."¹⁷ One expellee vividly recalled this type of resentment. As a young boy, he had repeatedly been ridiculed by a local farmer about the size of his parents' former estate until one day his mother, filled with rage, showed the farmer the exact maps of the property. In the end, apparently, the farmer was embarrassed and gave the expellee boy a loaf of bread.¹⁸

During the 1950s, however, West Germany's political and economic consolidation progressively eased tensions between expellees and locals. Upwardly mobile expellees, for one, increasingly turned away from an identity that focused on their plight. The rapid decline of the expellee party, the BHE, in the latter part of the 1950s clearly showed how this party's rhetoric of social justice no longer struck a chord with

¹⁶ Appelt, *Zeitzeuge*, 176; and Interview Frederike Kuprath, 21 February 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁷ Interview K. W., September 1989, IGB, Wustrow; and Interview H-G. S., n.d., IGB, Lusir.

¹⁸ Interview W. P., 11 January 1988, IGB, Wustrow.

the expellee electorate.¹⁹ Upwardly mobile expellees wanted to move on: “the constant lamenting of our fate, the continuous public display of self-pity, the reproachful expression of the self-declared ‘right to our homeland’ prompted in me,” as even Eva Finck von Finckenstein, a BHE luminary, admitted, “the lively wish to find a more impartial self-representation.”²⁰ Expellees like Finck von Finckenstein consequently ceased to self-identify with a collective shaped by loss, social marginalization and grief and instead preferred to look to new horizons.²¹ Secondly, in West Germany’s growing industrial centres expellees also met like-minded Germans with whom they shared a keenness for upward social mobility. In the Ruhr area, for instance, expellees who arrived there in the late 1940s and early 1950s felt that divisions between them and other Germans were less pronounced than elsewhere. In general, they thought the area to have been quite open toward newcomers and attributed this greater sense of welcome to the area’s tradition of accommodating migrants and the fact that many of the locals had lost homes in the Allied air raids and thus had similarly suffered considerable hardship. As one expellee recalled, after the war all the residents of the Ruhr area were “tugging on the same rope,” trying to rebuild their lives and make good.²² Elsewhere in West Germany’s industrial centres distinctions between expellees and West Germans similarly faded. In Frankfurt’s growing agglomeration one expellee recalled that in the city he was no longer singled out as an expellee in marked contrast to the rural area he had previously lived

¹⁹ See also chapter IV, p. 205.

²⁰ Finck von Finckenstein, *Wer nicht kann*, 61.

²¹ Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview K. B., 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir.

²² Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB, Lusir.

in.²³ In (West) Berlin another expellee found that she was treated as an equal by her peers as soon as she found work as a nurse.²⁴ Yet another expellee, who came to Mannheim, thought that the expellee/local divide had disappeared in the city.²⁵

The start of regular working lives and steady incomes effectively put expellees on par with the local West German population. At work expellees toiled next to locals and other German newcomers and so transcended previous divisions. In the Ruhr coal mines expellees worked next to miners, whose ancestors had come from East Prussia or whose names sounded Polish even though they introduced themselves as locals. Down the pit, one expellee thought, workers mixed regardless of regional origins. Apparently, the “whole of Germany was present; one could hear a medley of German dialects.”²⁶ Besides work, community life similarly broke down boundaries between expellees and locals, especially in places such as shelters or new housing developments where residents shared amenities and services in close proximity. Shelters, for one, served both incoming West Germans and expellees as stepping stones to the housing-strapped urban centres and constituted buoyant platforms of social interaction. “We men, we got on splendidly,” noted an expellee who found accommodation in one of Essen’s young men’s shelters [*Ledigenheim*].²⁷ Neighbours quickly found common topics of conversation: discussing the war, its aftermath, and more pressing needs such as housing, canteens or work opportunities. New housing developments, often dubbed ‘New Koreas’

²³ Duberg, *Der Junge*, 342-344.

²⁴ Rosemarie Grusdas, *Von Ostpreussen nach Berlin: Ein Marjellchen vom Lande auf dem Weg zur Stadt* (Berlin: Wissenschaft-und-Technik Verlag, 1997), 172-212.

²⁵ Marzinko, *Erinnerungen*, 22-23.

²⁶ Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, IGB, Luser.

²⁷ Ibid.

or 'Marshall's Estates' in commemoration of contemporary international politics that boosted West Germany's housing construction, similarly broke the boundaries between expellees and local West Germans as both groups came to live side by side in newly-built homes and apartments. In marked contrast to the early occupation years, newly arriving residents could count on mutual aid whether they were expellees or not. One expellee family, for instance, arrived from rural Franconia, Bavaria, to a new housing development in North-Rhine-Westphalia and although the head of family had secured a job ahead of time, they badly lacked furniture for the new flat. However, their new neighbours, locals from the vicinity, helpfully lent chairs and tables and thus permitted the family to spread the purchase of costly furniture. There were no inhibitions because one family was local and the other of expellee background.²⁸

Urban centres held no monopoly for the improved relations between expellees and locals. Several expellees perused for this study thought that in rural areas expellees already mixed with locals during the occupation years.²⁹ As the economic recovery got underway, pressure on local resources in rural areas eased and led to a more amicable relationship. Expellees, who chose to remain in the countryside, felt increasingly more welcome. In some cases they won the respect of the locals by establishing prospering firms or companies indispensable to the local economy. As one of the interviewed expellees suggested, once locals saw that one could and wanted to work they started to accept the presence of the newcomers. His own experience had been

²⁸ Tietze, *Mainwärts*, 113.

²⁹ Interview K. W., September 1989; and Interview W. S., 6 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow; Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978; and Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

very positive as he found friends and clients for his barber business among the local population.³⁰ Another expellee, who eventually became a prospering farmer, was similarly positive about his experience with the local population which, he claimed, recognized him as their equal as he modernized and successfully expanded his farm. He was eventually admitted to the *Stammtisch* [table for regulars] at the local tavern.³¹ As in urban centres, locals and expellees increasingly joined a similar life course. In rural Hesse, for example, some of the expellees preferred to stay in the area, buying, like locals, new homes on the outskirts of the villages and commuting to work to nearby urban centres.³² Relations also improved in Wolfsburg, Lower Saxony, where the Allies' closure of the Volkswagen plant in 1945 initially pitted locals against expellees. Once the plant re-opened in 1947, two generations of expellees emerged: a 'first generation' which arrived at Wolfsburg's vacated barracks following the repatriation of Nazi Germany's forced foreign workers in 1945/46 and a 'second generation' that came as a result of the plant's re-opening and its rapid expansion. Apparently, for the 'first generation' of expellees it took longer for differences to be set aside and gain acceptance from the local population, whereas the 'second generation' interacted more readily with locals and other newcomers.³³ Needless to add, Wolfsburg's two 'expellee generations' thus also epitomized the contrasting dynamics of integration between urban and rural settings.

³⁰ Interview W. S., 6 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow.

³¹ Interview K. W., September 1989, *ibid.* Similarly Interview A. and E. H., 7 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow.

³² Jacobi, *Wir*, 144-156.

³³ Monika Uliczka, *Berufsbiographie und Flüchtlingsschicksal: VW-Arbeiter in der Nachkriegszeit* (Hanover: Hahn, 1993), 373.

Ultimately, West Germany's recovery and political consolidation permitted expellees to negotiate a distinctive West German identity that made them feel at home and part of the local community. On an individual level they were satisfied to have gained permanent jobs and stable earnings to pay for household bills, rent or mortgages. Elderly expellees were similarly pleased to receive stable income by way of monthly compensation payments. For a people, who were utterly dispossessed and marginalized in the aftermath of World War II, the greatly improved living standards of the late 1950s imparted immense satisfaction. Quite symptomatically, one expellee family, who moved into a newly-built detached home, felt like "kings". As the family father recalled, they were very pleased, "first because we were under our own roof and secondly we had a little bit of land so that we could plant vegetables." For expellees like this family such a move definitely conferred a sense of achievement.³⁴ "What a momentous event it was," wrote another expellee in her memoirs to describe her emotions when she and her three children moved into a newly-built home after nine years of "homelessness" [*Heimatlosigkeit*].³⁵ On a collective level expellees shared with locals the sentiment of having risen from the rubble and built a powerful economic country that they could be proud of and revere. As one expellee typically put it, he had "done his bit for the country's recovery."³⁶ Expellees took pride alongside locals in the industry and hard

³⁴ Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB, Lusir. Similarly see Interview O. S., 9 October 1981 and 29 January 1982; and Interview H-G. S., n.d., *ibid.*

³⁵ Blanckenburg, *Flucht*, 53-54.

³⁶ Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 102.

work that had achieved political stability and unprecedented levels of affluence.³⁷ One expellee's metaphor captures perhaps best the way expellees viewed West Germany's collective achievement. In his recollections he thought that, albeit somewhat naively, Germans from every social and regional background had worked hard together just like a "whole hive of bees."³⁸

Expellees, it must be said, took particular credit for their contribution to the FRG. On construction sites and elsewhere they felt they had 'held their own' at the expense of their health and physical wellbeing.³⁹ Indicative of the self-satisfaction that expellees felt, one of them, for instance, prided himself on the fact that for 13 years he had not taken a single day of vacation. Working six days a week, he had often spent his Sundays completing the most pressing jobs for the construction company he worked for. Thus, with hindsight the expellee, who originally had been a well-to-do farmer in Eastern Poland, felt that he and other expellees like him had worked hard and been pivotal to the FRG's economic and political consolidation.⁴⁰ Moreover, the mass arrival of immigrants from the Mediterranean since the late 1950s allowed expellees to use ethnic categorizations in order to qualify their rise from the margins of West German society. It was they, as expellees believed, who had accepted the jobs that locals shunned and that by the 1970s only 'guest workers' were willing to do. Frequently, they thought that they

³⁷ Interview W. P., 11 January 1988; and Interview W. S., 6 May 1989, IGB, Wustrow; L. Z., *Aus meinem Leben*, IGB, *Deutsches Gedächtnis*; Trossowski, *Alles in allem*, 123.

³⁸ G. H., *Aufzeichnungen*, 54, IGB Kempowski.

³⁹ Interview H.-G. S., n.d.; Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981; and Interview K. B. and wife, 4 March 1981, IGB, Lusir; Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 102; Basch, *Erinnerungen*, 90-94.

⁴⁰ Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 102.

had shown no fear of manual work and that they had laboured in dusty and noisy environments bound to harm their health. Without them, or so expellees thought, West Germany would not have risen to prosperity in the way that it did.⁴¹

Considering the scale of destruction and the tremendous challenge of integrating several million expellees, for most West Germans, expellees included, the rise from penury to prosperity appeared to be a ‘miracle.’ People assumed that certain regional character traits influenced the making of this prolonged period of economic and political stability. Silesians, according to this line of argument, supported the ‘miracle’ because of their presumed “stern determination,” whereas East Prussians allegedly helped because of their “loyal diligence” and “kind-hearted sturdiness”. Danube Swabians, to give another example, assisted West Germany’s political and economic consolidation thanks to their purported “stout vigour” and “unbroken joviality.”⁴² Since the late 1940s such regional character traits were repeatedly brought up to explain the rapid incorporation of expellees into West German society, above all, at the rallies of expellee organizations and homeland societies. In their official speeches expellee and/or government leaders frequently hailed such regional characterizations as the FRG’s guiding force. Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, speaker of the Sudeten-German Homeland Society, repeatedly invoked the Sudeten Germans’ presumed qualities and those of the various other expellee groups as the driving force of German society. At a rally in Ansbach, Bavaria, in 1951 Lodgman von Auen typically outlined the various strands that

⁴¹ Appelt, *Zeitzeuge*, 185.

⁴² Herbert Krimm, ed., *Das Antlitz der Vertriebenen: Schicksal und Wesen der Flüchtlingsgruppen* (Stuttgart: J. F. Steiner, 1949), 23-23, 47, 74.

allegedly made up the Sudeten German people, namely German Bohemians [Deutschböhmen], Moravians [Mähren], Sudeten Silesians and other German-language groups once scattered across Czechoslovakia. Despite this variety, he nevertheless went on to suggest common traits among the Sudeten-German people and claimed, for instance, that they shared a sense of creativity, industry and commitment.⁴³ Wenzel Jaksch was no different and similarly honoured ethno-regional identities as the ‘economic miracle’s’ driving force. In his inaugural speech for the presidency of the expellee umbrella organization, the BdV, in 1964 he suggested, for example, that expellees could take pride in their contribution to the country’s reconstruction as German Balts, Sudeten Germans, Russian Germans or Danube Swabians. As such, they had been, he claimed, just as important to West Germany’s economic and political success as the *Rheinländer*, the citizens of the Hansa towns, the Swabians, Franconians or Bavarians.⁴⁴

A host of homeland events, publications and films similarly sustained this discourse about the connection between regional expellee cultures and West Germany’s ‘miracle.’ Homeland books, calendars and almanacs, for example, linked the regional heritage of expellees to the FRG’s success and so typically reproduced landscapes,

⁴³ Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, Die Volksgruppe auf deutschem Boden und im Blickfeld des Auslandes, Rede am Sudetendeutschen Tag in Ansbach, 13 May 1951, SudAr, Nachlass Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, CV/1 I 6.31.A. On the construction of the Sudeten-German identity in the context of West German society, see in particular Eva Hahn, “Die Sudetendeutschen in der deutschen Gesellschaft: Ein halbes Jahrhundert politischer Geschichte zwischen ‚Heimat‘ und ‚Zuhause‘,” in Jörg K. Hoensch and Hans Lemberg, eds. *Begegnung und Konflikt: Schlaglichter auf das Verhältnis von Tschechen, Slowaken und Deutschen, 1915-1989* (Essen: Klartext, 2001), 249-270.

⁴⁴ Wenzel Jaksch, Rede anlässlich der Wahl zum Präsidenten des Bundes der Vertriebenen, Vereinigten Landsmannschaften und Landesverbände, 1 March 1964, SudAr, Nachlass Wenzel Jaksch, P1/7.

monuments and buildings or recipes, legends and short stories characteristic of one particular town or region. Since 1945 over 500 different homeland books have been published in multiple editions and have proven hugely popular with expellees.⁴⁵ Similarly, since 1945 countless folkdance events and exhibits which highlight regional traditions and cultures have taken place in the FRG, notably also during the ‘homeland days’ [*Heimattage*] of the various expellee organizations. On such occasions attendees frequently dress in traditional costumes whilst performing dances typical of the home region. They also frequently set up so-called ‘*Heimat* museum lounges’ [*Heimatstuben*], which portray traditional living styles, artwork and industries of regional expellee groups.⁴⁶ Furthermore, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s a host of *Heimat* or ‘*Papa’s*’ films exhibited how traditional values of expellee groups and others informed West Germany’s political and economic recovery. *Waldwinter* [Winter Forest], for instance, showed the modernization of a small provincial town in Bavaria thanks to a Silesian baron. In *Grün ist die Heide* [The Heath is Green] the story comes to a happy end when the main protagonists, two expellees from Pomerania, finally settle in an idyllic region of Lower Saxony. *Grün ist die Heide* was hugely popular and became the biggest box office film of 1952. By the end of the decade, it had become the most successful *Heimatfilm* of the 1950s with over 19 million viewers.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Jutta Faehndrich, “Erinnerungskultur und Umgang mit Vertreibung in Heimatbüchern deutschsprachiger Vertriebener,” *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 52:2 (2003), 193-222.

⁴⁶ Schoenberg, *Germans*, 112-117.

⁴⁷ As quoted in Moeller, *War Stories*, 126-139.

Thus, amidst a society that valued the *Heimat* and regional identities, expellees increasingly took pride in their origins. In marked contrast to their former identity as impoverished and displaced people, their regional heritage became widely associated with West Germany's successful recovery. As one expellee from Breslau (Wrocław) put it, he and his fellow compatriots from Silesia were an active "kind of people," inclined to rise up from the ashes.⁴⁸ Another expellee made a similar remark in his autobiography and claimed that a certain Pomeranian philosophy of life, including dedication, ambition as well as soberness and loyalty, necessarily helped him to come to terms with the sweeping changes of the post-war period.⁴⁹ As yet another expellee quite simply put it, "I am proud to be an East Prussian, just the sound of the name spurs me on."⁵⁰ Moreover, as the stigma of expellees as an impoverished and/or backward people faded, over the course of the post-war decades West German peers increasingly approved of their regional heritage. Expellee dialects that once had been the object of xenophobic ridicule became acceptable. The experiences of an expellee from Danzig (Gdansk) are a case in point. After he had been subjected to bigotry in rural Schleswig-Holstein, the expellee came to Frankfurt to work with a telecommunications company. As he spoke a clearly enunciated High German, typical of his native Danzig (Gdansk), he gained the favour of the firm's middle- and upper-class clientele, who struggled to understand the dialect of co-workers originating from nearby Hessian villages. Apparently, even though the expellee exposed himself to criticism for the tips he pocketed, his colleagues

⁴⁸ Interview A. H., 28 August 1988, IGB, Nachkriegseliten.

⁴⁹ Klaus von Bismarck, *Aufbruch aus Pommern: Erinnerungen und Perspektiven* (Munich: Piper, 1992).

⁵⁰ G. H., *Aufzeichnungen*, 3, IGB, Kempowski.

appreciated him as the *Danziger* and, as such, gave him the orders from the more affluent clientele of middle and upper-class background.⁵¹ His heritage no longer posed an obstacle; rather, as it seemed to the expellee, it gained him repute and distinction.

The celebration of regional identities conveyed the presumed “true” values of the German people, which supposedly underpinned the country’s success in the aftermath of Nazi Germany’s demise.⁵² Still, as far as Jaksch, Lodgman and other expellee and government officials were concerned, such a discourse also sustained calls for the *Heimatrecht* [right to a native land] and the construction of a free and federated Europe along ethnic lines. These were, as we have seen in chapter four, two major goals of the organized expellee movement.⁵³ To achieve them, expellee leaders strove to preserve regional German cultures from Eastern and Central Europe in the hope of establishing regional expellee diasporas. As Lodgman von Auen suggested in 1950: “the Sudeten Germans endeavour to preserve their culture, their consciousness of the homeland and [therefore] the claim to the homeland.”⁵⁴ Consequently, to Lodgman and others, the celebration of regional identities demonstrated the vitality of a banned people, whose culture and traditions they endeavoured to keep alive in order to realize what they thought to be a ‘god-given’ right. In so doing, they benefited from the financial assistance of both the federal and state governments which, according to the Federal Expellee Law of 1953, were called on to help sustain and promote the cultural heritage of the “expellee areas”

⁵¹ Duberg, *Der Junge aus der Altstadt*, 342.

⁵² Applegate, *Nation*, 240-242.

⁵³ See p. 212-215.

⁵⁴ Rudolph Lodgman von Auen, “Wenn das deutsche Volk zur Nation werden soll, Programmatische Rede am Sudetendeutschen Tag in Kempten,” *Ostdeutsche Zeitung - Die Stimme der Vertriebenen*, 4 June 1950.

[“*Vertreibungsgebiete*”] “in the consciousness of expellees, the German nation and the world.”⁵⁵ The law’s famed ‘cultural paragraph 96’ ensured public funding for a wide range of institutions of cultural importance, including specialized libraries, archives, museums and art and folklore groups. In addition, during the course of the 1950s and thereafter, individual West German states and regions provided further support by accepting the guardianship [*Patenschaft*] of specific expellee groups and their corresponding homeland societies. For example, in 1950 Lower Saxony agreed to be the guardian of the Homeland Society Silesia, while in 1954 Bavaria accepted the guardianship [*Patenschaft*] for the Sudeten-German Homeland Society and in 1957 North-Rhine-Westphalia did so for the Homeland Society of the Transylvanian Saxons.⁵⁶ In the eyes of government officials, financial support or guardianships were clearly justified in order to avert the submersion of German cultures from Eastern and Central Europe. As the last federal ‘expellee minister,’ Kai-Uwe von Hassel, explained, the support of regional expellee cultures not only supported the FRG’s claim to reunification with the former Prussian provinces east of the Oder-Neisse River but also the well-being of West German society. Expellees like Swabians or Bavarians had similarly been raised into environments shaped by deeply entrenched regional [*stammesmäßige*] cultures.

⁵⁵ Federal Expellee Law as quoted in Karl H. Gehrman, “Kulturpflege und Kulturpolitik,” in Edding/Lemberg, *Vertriebenen*, vol. 3, 183-184.

⁵⁶ Gehrman, “Kulturpflege”; and Mathias Beer, “...die gleichen Erinnerungen und eine ähnliche Lebensauffassung: Zur Eingliederung der Siebenbürger Sachsen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland,” *Zeitschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 23: 2 (2000), 218-227.

Uprooted from these, he claimed, expellees needed public support to help preserve these cultures and be capable of facing the challenges of everyday life.⁵⁷

Hand in hand with the celebration of these ethno-regional identities expellees relegated the homeland in their minds to a place where they once happily lived and no longer desired to reside despite the homeland societies' call to the contrary. Above all, given the comfort and affluence expellees increasingly acquired in the FRG, not one expellee earnestly intended to return to the homeland and live under less favourable economic conditions, let alone under communist rule. For many expellees post-war Central and Eastern Europe represented a mere shadow of the past; to them, it had been spoiled by the Polish, Czech and Russian people and communism. They compared the affluence of the FRG and the capitalist West to the more modest achievements of the countries east of the 'Iron Curtain' and concluded, without hesitation, that they were faring better than Central and Eastern Europeans. Visits to the homeland, as far as they were possible during the cold-war period, reinforced such widely held beliefs. One expellee, for instance, who managed to enter the 'eastern bloc' and visit his parents in Poland after 23 years of separation was, predictably, quite appalled by what he saw. As he wrote in his memoirs, in comparison to the FRG everything in Poland seemed bleak: the concrete buildings that had replaced cosy family homes, the shabby gardens and flowerbeds, the frugal meals and, in particular, the empty shelves in shops and groceries. Apparently, he was so shocked by this journey to Poland that he came back to the FRG with "strange" and

⁵⁷ Kai Uwe von Hassel, *Pflege und Erhaltung des ostdeutschen Beitrags zur deutschen Kultur*, 6 December 1968, BAKo, Bundesministerium des Inneren, B 106, file 27234.

“distressing” nightmares that haunted him for several years thereafter. What he had seen, needless to add, was no longer his *Heimat*.⁵⁸

Imbued with a heavy dose of anti-communism, expellees like the aforementioned person from Poland envisioned the homeland as a godforsaken country governed by a people against whom they were, in general, biased. To them, it was seemingly impossible that Poles, Russians or Czechs could look after their homeland with the same care and aptitude as they had. It was they as Germans who had turned the lands of Central and Eastern Europe into prosperous farming and industrial regions. Quite indicatively, although expellees analyzed herein often claimed to have enjoyed amicable relations with non-German neighbours prior to the expulsion, most considered the labour and social status of the others below that of Germans. The farms, for example, that German Balts acquired as a result of their resettlement from the Baltic to occupied Poland were apparently often in bad shape before they as Germans turned them into prosperous estates.⁵⁹ Moreover, for many expellees their view of Poles and Czechs remained heavily swayed by the expulsion of the post-war period. As one expellee wrote in language reminiscent of Nazi propaganda:

I cannot recall the *Heimat*, that is the scenery, quietude and authenticity of East Prussia, but I can remember gang rapes, killings, drunken Mongols, the total destruction of Königsberg, neglected fields in the countryside and abandoned farms with broken windows and howling dogs. When I saw fat Russian women [*Russenweiber*,

⁵⁸ J. S., *Heimat und Lebenslauf Chronik*, 180, IGB, *Deutsches Gedächtnis*. Similarly Interview A. W., n. d., *ibid.*, Wustrow; and Schneider, *Eduard Eichberg*, 240-246.

⁵⁹ Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 46-48, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

sic] sunbathing on the filthy beaches, the Baltic Sea was dead for me. I have buried this *Heimat* once and for all!⁶⁰

Thirty years after her expulsion from Königsberg (Kaliningrad), where she likely suffered a great deal under Soviet rule, this expellee continued to vilify Russians collectively, invariably pouring scorn over a people she had known for a limited time period. In a letter accompanying her memoirs, she frankly excluded any future contact with Russians: “reconciliation,” she wrote, “no thanks!”⁶¹ Not surprisingly, like other expellees who feared the homes and churches of the homeland had been desecrated by their new occupants, she refused to go back to Kaliningrad and preferred to remember a homeland of bygone times when Germans still reigned and the city purportedly still radiated splendour and industry. As another expellee noted, although he acknowledged that a new generation had grown up, who had heard of the expulsion only through hearsay or by reading history books, his generation of Germans was inalterably set against Poles, Czechs or Russians. “Too much blood,” he claimed, “had spilled before, during and after the war.”⁶²

Ultimately, as West Germany modernized and rose to general prosperity, the homeland became a figment of the expellee imagination, no longer physically existent in Central and Eastern Europe but, at best, in fragments in the FRG. In new housing developments across West Germany or in ‘expellee towns’ such as Neugablonz or Espelkamp expellees lived and walked along streets whose name struck a chord and

⁶⁰ G. P., Note pertaining to her memoirs, 8 January 1991, IGB, Kempowski.

⁶¹ G. P. to Kempowski, 8 September 1991, *ibid.*

⁶² Interview H. S. and wife, 2 February 1981, IGB, Lusir. Similarly Hans von Rieckoff, *Memoirs from My Life*, n.d., 53-61, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

seemed to indicate the continued existence of the *Heimat* from the Baltic down to the Mediterranean. Day after day in Düsseldorf's *Klein Korea* expellees could walk, for instance, through the *Breslauer, Memeler, Posener, Schlesische* or the *Sudeten Strasse*. Similarly, in southern Germany in the town of Sindelfingen new housing developments came to boast street names such as the *Esseger, Neusätzer* and *Apatiner Strasse* which were reminiscent of former Danube-Swabian settlements. Furthermore, while expellees upheld the memory of the homeland through government-funded 'homeland museum lounges' or by attending rallies organized by the homeland societies, regional expellee dialects continued to be spoken in the FRG. Similarly, typical German delicacies from Central and Eastern Europe such as Silesian sausages, *Königsberger* marzipan or Bohemian cheese roulades continued to be sold. Danube-Swabian cook books appeared and goulash became an integral part of West German cuisine.⁶³ Thus, like immigrant groups in North America in general, expellees moulded elements from their place of birth into the culture of their new home societies. For instance, comparable to Italian immigrants in North America, expellees in the FRG gathered in specific places and talked about the world around them with a value system that was familiar to them. This, ultimately, eased their settlement into the new environment.⁶⁴

⁶³ Jacobi, *Wir*, 188-212.

⁶⁴ On North American immigrant cultures, see notably Perin, "Writing," 211-212; Harney, "Ambiente," 208-224; and idem "Ethnicity and Neighbourhoods," in Robert F. Harney, ed. *Gathering Place: People and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 1-24. For the U.S., see also Kathleen Conzen's key study of the German immigrant community in nineteenth century Milwaukee, *Immigrant Milwaukee, 1836-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976).

'Euro-Canadians'

Before expellees fostered a distinctive Canadian identity, they faced two related, though distinct, manifestations of prejudice: one because they were Germans and the other because they were immigrants. As Germans, they were singled out for their ethnicity and, as such, were collectively blamed for the war and the perpetration of atrocities. As during World War I, when a massive outbreak of resentment hit Canada's German-language population hard and scores of innocent German immigrants were interned, German shops ransacked and, perhaps most evocatively, Berlin, Ontario, was renamed after Britain's Secretary of War, Lord Kitchener, World War II reignited resentment against all things German. Public scares against presumed 'subversive elements' in Canada ran particularly high at the outset of the war and in May 1940, when France fell and Britain seemed in great danger of being invaded by Nazi Germany.⁶⁵ Anti-German feelings affected German-language immigrants indiscriminately and even cost a night of imprisonment to a Swiss academic whose Prussian memorabilia seemed decidedly suspect to the police.⁶⁶ The Sudeten-German refugees were likewise unable to escape the backlash. At the outset of the war the RCMP registered the Sudeten-German refugees as enemy aliens even though, on paper, they were incontestably Czech citizens. The arrival

⁶⁵ Robert H. Keyserlingk, "Which Fatherland in War? The Canadian Government's View of German Canadian Loyalties in World War Two," in Tova T. Yedlin, ed. *Central and East European Ethnicity in Canada: Adaptation and Preservation* (Edmonton: Central and East European Studies Society of Alberta, 1985), 133-161; idem, "The Canadian Government's Attitude Toward Germans and German Canadians in World War II," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16:1 (1984), 16-28. On anti-German feelings in general, see also John H. Thompson, *Ethnic Minorities During Two World Wars* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991).

⁶⁶ Ernst Gallati, *Hermann Böschenstein: Eine Biographie* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1995), 13-15.

of such unusual settlers, clad in ties, suits and hats, in remote parts of British Columbia and Saskatchewan seemed to bring home the threat of Nazi infiltration. One Sudeten German, who relocated to Hamilton in the early 1940s encountered no less hostility in Central Canada when he tried to find a hall for social gatherings. Apparently, no one was willing to accept a handful of German-speaking anti-Nazis, except for the Hungarian community group and the CCF.⁶⁷ In Toronto a young Sudeten-German schoolboy was told to change his name from Hanns, which decidedly sounded German, to John so that he would be less exposed to the chitchat and mockery of his fellow pupils.⁶⁸ Also in Toronto, one German member of the aristocracy dropped the *von* from his name and after much hesitation legalized the shortened version under the provincial Change of Name Act. As he later wrote to his close relatives, it saved him “an awful lot of bother. [...] It causes only gossip and does not fit into this New World.”⁶⁹

After the war, the full revelation of Nazi Germany’s atrocities gave anti-German feelings new and lasting momentum as Germans were collectively accused of mass killings and genocide. Indeed, in addition to stereotypes that portrayed Germans as monocle-wearing war-mongers, the Canadian public as elsewhere in the Commonwealth or the USA vilified Germans collectively as Nazis and mass murderers.⁷⁰ The Sudeten Germans, who in the early post-war period were raising money to assist expellees in

⁶⁷ Emil Kutscha, "Sudetenklub Hamilton - 30 Jahre Pflichterfüllung," *Forward* 23:9/10 (September/October 1971), 7.

⁶⁸ Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 169.

⁶⁹ Cardinal to his mother, brother, and sister-in-law, June 7 1946, NAC, Clive Helmut von Cardinal Fonds, MG 30 E 368, vol. 1, file Correspondence 1945-1958.

⁷⁰ However, among the Canadian public Germans still enjoyed a higher standing than Jews and Japanese. See the Gallup poll as cited herein p. 133.

West Germany, quickly realized the degree to which Germans were unpopular and lumped together into one pervasive stereotype. As one of the fundraisers was apparently told by a Canadian who refused to donate money, “expellees were, after all, Germans too.”⁷¹ This type of collective stigmatization persisted throughout the early post-war period and by the mid-1950s led the German-Canadian umbrella organization, the TCA, to move against what it called “incitement against Germans” [*Deutschenhetze*]. In 1958, for example, the TCA appealed to Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for the suspension of films with a “strong tendency to create animosity and retard the assimilation of newcomers of German origin and to delay their feeling of equality as Canadians.”⁷² Through the German-Canadian press, which was fully supportive, the TCA also asked German-speaking residents of Canada to report every discriminatory incident they had previously experienced in an attempt to substantiate the organization’s campaign with relevant evidence. A few dozen letters promptly arrived within the month with one expellee explaining, for example, how a babysitter had rudely scolded her granddaughter at the local playground. She had been happily playing with the kids that the babysitter looked after until the latter realized that she was German. Apparently, the

⁷¹ Kutscha to Jaksch, 23 August 1945, NAC, Emil Kutscha Papers, MG 30 C 132, vol. 3, file Correspondence Treuegemeinschaft Sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten, 1942-1948.

⁷² TCA, CBC resolution, 16 June 1958, NAC, Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians Papers, NAC, MG 28 V 4, vol. 4, file 11, part 2. For another appeal against the dissemination of anti-German stereotypes, see also TCA, Resolution 2, Minutes of the Annual Meeting, 12 and 13 November 1966, *ibid.*, vol. 1, file 16.

babysitter then prohibited the kids from playing with German children.⁷³ Pigeonholed by other pupils, children in particular were exposed to German stereotypes and so came home from school with lowered self-esteem and refusing to speak in German with their parents.⁷⁴ One child, for example, returned one day from school asking if it were true that Jewish people were the ones that were best loved by God and that the Germans were bad. The child, as the father recalled, thereafter briefly refused to speak his mother tongue as he did not want to be recognized as German anymore.⁷⁵ The boy was far from being an isolated case. In the late 1940s and 1950s speaking German publicly in the streetcar drew immediate disapproval from fellow passengers. As several expellees suggested in their interviews, one spoke German quietly, if at all.⁷⁶

Characteristic of German immigrants in post-war Canada, expellees were consequently quite ambivalent about their cultural heritage. Most had encountered some form of prejudice against Germans since their arrival in North America and knew what it meant to be accused of such presumed Germanic virtues as obedience, duty and ruthlessness. They knew equally well how it felt to be accused of war crimes and genocide having experienced such collective indictments in person, by way of

⁷³ Hessel to TCA, 18 June 1958, *ibid.*, vol. 16, file 6. On press articles in support of the anti-German campaigns, see *Nordwesten*, 15 May 1958 and 13 July 1965; *Der Courier* 9 March 1961 and 19 September 1965.

⁷⁴ On the negative impact of anti-German feelings on children, see in particular also Gisela Forchner, *Growing up Canadian: Twelve Case Studies of German Immigration Families in Alberta* (Edmonton: University of Alberta, 1983).

⁷⁵ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection; similarly Interview Heidi Andresen, 9 November 1978, *ibid.*

⁷⁶ Interview Ernst Bollenbach, 2 August 1977; Interview Paul Roeseler, 26 March 1979; and Interview Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

conversations with friends and relatives or by listening to public broadcasts. However, the majority of the expellees whose oral histories and memoirs I analyzed, also did not seem to be too bothered about such collective presumptions. They realized that Canadians had fought against Nazi Germany and that they had lost sons, brothers or nephews. One expellee from Silesia, for example, typically acknowledged his comprehension of anti-German feelings, especially from those who had lost acquaintances or family members in Europe.⁷⁷ Yet, if expellees accepted prejudice as an outgrowth of grief, they vehemently opposed being collectively charged for atrocities they felt they did not commit and had nothing to do with. They thought that Canadians failed to understand the sort of life they had endured under an oppressive dictatorship. They felt that they were innocent and had fought the war as law-abiding citizens.⁷⁸ Ethnic German expellees in particular objected to being collectively accused for the war and the Holocaust and typically ignored the role ethnic Germans in Eastern and Central Europe had played prior and during the war. One Danube-Swabian expellee, for example, rejected any responsibility, pointing out that she, after all, had not even set foot in Germany until after the war and had never obtained German citizenship.⁷⁹ Ethnic German expellees such as the aforementioned Danube Swabian persistently used this strategy to exonerate themselves from a potential association with Hitler's National Socialism, insisting on the distinction as an "ethnic German from the East" or "*Volks-*

⁷⁷ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978; Danube-Swabian Collection; Interview Reverend Kurt Mittelstaedt, 8 September 1977; MHSO German Collection; Hans von Riekhoff, *Memoirs*, n.d., 53-61, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; Andres, *My Life*, 11-12; Von der Linde, *Uprooted*, 114.

⁷⁹ Interview Lucy Amberg, 22 March 1979; MHSO Danube-Swabian Collection.

deutsche.” In so doing, they thus repeatedly distanced themselves from the presumably more culpable German from Germany.⁸⁰

Hand in hand with anti-German feelings expellees came to feel a second form of prejudice, xenophobia against immigrants in general. Canadians singled out in particular DPs. In fact, DPs became a byword for any newcomer whose presence Canadians resented. Expellees were no exception. In her memoirs, for example, an expellee from Latvia remembered well how she was repeatedly put down as a DP even though as an ethnic German she had not come to Canada with the IRO. Fifty years later, she recalled how she used to respond, sarcastically, that she was indeed a “Delayed Pioneer.”⁸¹ Other expellees felt similarly disparaged as newcomers, in particular when they applied for jobs and like many other immigrants were told that they lacked ‘Canadian experience.’ They generally spoke a broken English and were vulnerable to exploitation, as they were unable to speak out against ruthless employers.⁸² The lack of ‘Canadian experience’ went well beyond language skills and also included a certain Canadian way of life. Especially during the first decade after the war, immigrants as so-called ‘New Canadians’ were expected to conform to middle-class ideals, notably also in terms of gender roles.⁸³ As one expellee put it, Canadian expectations entailed “in actual

⁸⁰ Interview Lucy Amberg, 22 March 1979; MHSO Danube-Swabian Collection; see also Interview Adolf Fischer, 16 November 1977, MHSO German Collection.

⁸¹ Barbara Redlich, “Ich nehme die Nummer 8!': Ein baltischer Lebensweg,” *Jahrbuch des baltischen Deutschtums*, 43 (2001), 110.

⁸² Interview Paul Roeseler, 26 March 1979; Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978, MHSO German Collection; and Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO Danube-Swabian Collection.

⁸³ Franca Iacovetta, “Making ‘New Canadians’: Social Workers, Women, and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families,” in Franca Iacovetta, Paula Draper and Robert

fact everything” from learning English and/or French to conducting oneself in an acceptable manner at work or socially. “Every Canadian that immigrants meet,” he noted, “must get the impression that immigrants are grateful for their admission to Canada and that immigrants as future citizens of the country will spare no efforts to settle and work for their new homeland.”⁸⁴

As they arrived in Canada, most expellees – or those that eventually decided to stay – were quite willing to accept these expectations. In his study, Hans Werner showed how a group of expellees in Winnipeg was poised to adjust to Canadian society.⁸⁵ Expellees knew that they were starting anew in a foreign country and that they would have to learn a new language. Thus, they prepared for their departure to Canada by reading English-language magazines, watching American movies and taking English language lessons.⁸⁶ On arrival they were keen to discover the way Canadians lived and worked and in practically every interview and autobiography of this study elaborated on their first impressions about Canada. Expellees took note of the abundance of consumer goods, fruits and vegetables, houses that were built with timber and the fact that on

Ventresca, eds. *A Nation of Immigrants: Women, Workers and Communities in Canadian History, 1840s-1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 482-513.

⁸⁴ Informationen für Canada-Auswanderer zusammengestellt von Herbert von Hahn, September 1951, BAKo, Nachlass Axel de Vries, N 1412, vol. 18, file German-Baltic Homeland Society.

⁸⁵ Werner, “Integration,” 319.

⁸⁶ Interview Ulrich and Susanne von Harpe, 15 December 1977; Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978; Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

Canadian farms men were generally expected to milk cows.⁸⁷ Similarly, they quickly became acquainted with Canada's peculiar way of consuming alcoholic beverages and learnt about gender-specific and specially-licensed parlours where they could drink beer and/or wine.⁸⁸ Interethnic and interracial relations were also part of what expellees eagerly set out to discover as they exchanged words with Canadian-born co-workers or immigrants from across Europe. One expellee, for example, who found work as a bookkeeper in Ottawa, was stupefied to see how easily French and Anglo-Canadians worked together with Jewish, Danish, German, Polish and Chinese immigrants. It was, as he thought, the "United Nations at work."⁸⁹ The troubled and unequal relationship between Canadians and Natives also quickly captured the attention of expellees. As in previous decades, early post-war (white) Canadian society racially discriminated, marginalized and coerced Natives into often remote reserves with scant economic outlets.⁹⁰ In northern Saskatchewan, for example, some of the Sudeten-German refugees

⁸⁷ Interview Ulrich and Susanne von Harpe, 15 December 1977; Interview Fritz Wieden, 1 October 1980, MHSO, German Collection; Heimo Lebenserinnerungen, 1994, 75, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

⁸⁸ Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Interview Eric Janotta, Janotta, 25 May 1979; and Interview Paul Roeseler, 3 and 10 February 1978, *ibid.*, German Collection. On Canada's peculiar drinking culture, see particularly Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003).

⁸⁹ Peter Hessel Diary, 7 March 1953, NAC, Peter Hessel Papers, MG 31 H 178, vol. 1, file Diary 1953.

⁹⁰ On native/white relations, see in particular James R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide Heavens: A History of Indian/White Relations in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 103-412. Note that while relations with natives are mentioned in over a dozen expellee memoirs and interviews, the equally problematic and racially discriminatory relations with Blacks and/or East Asians are generally ignored. Only the Sudeten-German Henry Weisbach referred to the internment of Asians during World War II and their proposed expulsion, see his "Dreizehn Jahre Emigration" *Forward* 4: 4

befriended Natives and gained insights into their marginalized position.⁹¹ For one German immigrant discrimination against Natives hit home when she unknowingly adopted a Native child and Canadians kept turning away from the baby. After a few weeks, she soon recognized the source of the problem – the race of her adoptive child – and decided to return the baby-girl.⁹² She and others quickly learnt about the terms and conditions of their Canadian engagement whether this involved fashion, food, social relations and, above all, work. Learning and experiencing Canadian ways, expellees came to see their encounters with Canadian society as a rite of passage. Insecure and badly paid jobs at the beginning of their Canadian experience were assumed to be temporary. They were, as expellees put it, the “dog years” of their Canadian experience.⁹³

With the federal government’s celebration of Canada’s pluricultural heritage since the 1960s public pressure to conform to Canadian ideals and standards gradually eased. Whereas the concept of ‘New Canadians’ generally called for the adjustment of post-war immigrants to middle-class Canadian ideals, the notion of the ‘cultural mosaic’ proposed that immigrant communities preserve their cultural heritage and so equally

(September 1951), 1. On Black and Asian relations, see James Walker, *Racial Discrimination in Canada: The Black Experience* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1985); and Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 3rd ed. (Montreal: McGill/Queen’s University Press, 2002).

⁹¹ Rabas, *Leben*, 47-48.

⁹² Greta Kadereit, *Mein Leben in Kanada: Eine deutsche Auswanderin erinnert sich* (Berlin: Frieling, 1996), 77.

⁹³ Kuester to his mother, 27 March.1952, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton; CBIAS Circular Letter no. 2, July 1953, 3, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society Papers, MG 28 V 99, vol. 3, file Circulars.

contribute to the nation's development alongside Canadians of British and French descent.⁹⁴ Expellee leaders were quick to join the new trend and actively promoted Canada's 'cultural mosaic.' It allowed them to combine the celebration of Canadian nationhood with their own cultural heritage as German Canadians, Sudeten Germans or Danube Swabians. In response to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which the federal government established in the mid-1960s in an attempt to find a new Anglo-French equilibrium, expellee leaders such as the Sudeten-German Henry Weisbach claimed, for example, that Canada's development owed as much to immigrants from Europe or the so-called 'third force' as Anglo and French Canadians.⁹⁵ Weisbach in typical fashion for contemporary immigrant community leaders thus celebrated Canada's 'cultural mosaic,' emphasizing the recent and evolving nature of Canadian nationhood. In 1956 the head of the CBIAS similarly wrote:

In our new homeland we can easily become Canadians and retain our Baltic traditions, our associations and our mother tongue. Canadians are only being shaped now and we are part of this process. We, as a people, need not change; rather we need to give what we have. We shall all become Canadians, just like British and French people all became Canadians. [...] English, Irish and Scottish Canadians talk with affection of their 'old country.' As immigrants we also have a heritage which, as sure as I am alive, is not a bad one. [...] Our heritage contributes to our new homeland like the bricks of the house that make up the Canadian nation.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Harney, "So Great," 51-98.

⁹⁵ On this Weisbach followed, not surprisingly, the line of the German-Canadian umbrella organization which he later presided. See his, "Kanada im Wandel der Zeiten," *Sudetenjahrbuch* 23 (1974), 85-87; and Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians, *Brief to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (Ottawa: private publication, 1964).

⁹⁶ CBIAS Rundschreiben, 2, June 1956, NAC, Canadian Baltic Immigration Aid Society Papers, MG 28 V 99, vol. 3, File Circulars, 1951-1959.

Danube Swabian community leaders likewise celebrated the heritage of their homeland as part of Canada's 'cultural mosaic.' The Danube-Swabian *Homeland Messenger* regularly called readers to be proud of their heritage since it "fertilized" and "enriched" the new homeland.⁹⁷ Weisbach's own publication, the *Forward*, suggested that:

As New Canadians we contribute to the life, culture and history of our new home country. We want to do this in a way that we feel entitled to, namely as part of the labour movement. Canada, too, is in need of a social order that provides justice and economic security for every individual.⁹⁸

Meanwhile, Weisbach rival Willi Wanka struck the same chord and repeatedly reminded the readers of the *Sudeten Messenger* that Canada was the product of the joint efforts of immigrants and Canadians of French and English descent and so allowed for every immigrant group, including the Sudeten Germans, the ability to take pride in their heritage.⁹⁹

However, despite the enthusiastic celebration of their heritage, most expellee leaders simply went along with the general public's increasing support for the 'Canadian mosaic.' Indeed, only one person was actually instrumental in conceptualizing and developing the concept, namely Clive von Cardinal. Since the mid-1940s, he actively supported cultural diversity and wrote several articles of notable distinction. Already during the war as a graduate student at the University of Toronto, he spoke out against the expected adjustment of immigrants to normative Canadian values and supported the

⁹⁷ *Heimatbote* 4: 34 (August 1963), 1; similarly, *ibid.*, vol. 5: 45 (July 1964), 2; vol. 6: 56 (October 1965), 2; and 15: 172 (April 1975), 4.

⁹⁸ *Forward* 9: 1 (June 1955), 2.

⁹⁹ "Unser Bekenntnis zu Kanada," *Sudeten-Bote* 3: 1/2 (July/August 1967), 3.

birth of a new “Canadian soul” out of the “Canadian polyglot panorama.”¹⁰⁰

Subsequently, while establishing his academic career and working for German-Canadian organizations, he continued to promote the pluricultural heritage of Canada’s people and in the 1960s supported the idea of a ‘third element’ in Canadian society. Returning from a professional appointment in the USA in 1966, he wrote, for example, of the “mass conformism” south of the 49th parallel that failed to recognize the immigrant’s contribution to society. In his mind, Canada’s celebration of the ‘mosaic’ fostered tolerance and mutual recognition in marked contrast to America’s celebrated melting pot.¹⁰¹ In this von Cardinal was joined by Weisbach and other expellee community leaders whose strong belief in Canada’s ‘cultural mosaic’ was closely related to the world wars and Europe’s apparent inability to come to terms with ethno-national conflicts. Canada’s ‘cultural mosaic’ and the seemingly peaceful co-existence of multiple ethnic groups appeared to them as a perfected European mix of peoples and cultures or, in short, humanity’s foremost achievement. Canada, or so von Cardinal wrote in 1953, epitomized the “true Europe,” free of ethnic strife and war.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ *Canadians All* (Autumn 1943), 34, 64.

¹⁰¹ Clive H. von Cardinal, “Mosaik und Doppel-Kultur in der kanadischen Identität,” *Nordwesten*, 1 February 1966.

¹⁰² Clive H. von Cardinal, “Das kulturelle Leben der Kanadier deutscher und ukrainischer Herkunft,” *Quarterly Bulletin of the Canadian Society for German Relief* 6:2 (Summer 1953), 1. See also his “The Hazards and Challenges of a New Canadian Identity,” *German-Canadian Yearbook* 1 (1973), 188-211; Weisbach, “Kanada,” 85-87; *Heimatbote* 4: 34 (August 1963), 1; and *ibid.*, vol. 5: 45 (July 1964), 2. I might add that Clive von Cardinal became one of Canada’s leading advocate for ethnic studies, co-founding the Research Centre for Ethnic Studies at the University of Calgary and launching the precursor to the journal *Canadian Ethnic Studies*.

In general, expellees were rather fond of this peaceful mix of European people and willingly adopted the idiom of the 'cultural mosaic.' As one expellee from East Prussia somewhat naively put it, "it's beautiful that people of so many nations live in so much harmony [...] it's only high up that they decide to go to wars. The people - they live peacefully together and their cultures can mix."¹⁰³ Another expellee from Czechoslovakia supported with similar enthusiasm the 'Canadian mosaic,' noting in her memoirs that: "In Canada different ethnic groups work together rather than fight. Jointly they create a culture of tolerance and contribute to the nation's wealth."¹⁰⁴ Again another expellee praised Canada's intercultural relations and compared them to his childhood in Pomerania where he had learned to disparage and disrespect Polish people. As he wrote in his memoirs, Canada quickly converted him into an advocate of interethnic tolerance, recalling how shortly after his arrival he had met Polish immigrants at a barn dance in Swan River, northern Manitoba. As he wrote: "I never thought that a double bed could hold seven people nor did I ever think I could fall asleep next to a Pole. But here in Canada I could sleep with six of them and this in the same bed!"¹⁰⁵ Expellees like those from East Prussia, Czechoslovakia or Pomerania thus talked or wrote fondly of the 'cultural mosaic' and thereby became firm supporters of Canada's pluricultural public policy. There were, however, critics who bewailed the folkloric representation of German culture in the 'cultural mosaic' with tokens of beer, folk dance or lederhosen.

¹⁰³ Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹⁰⁴ Rabas, *Leben*, 24.

¹⁰⁵ Von der Linde, *The Uprooted*, 141. Similarly see Interview Reverend John Goetze, 17 May 1977; Interview Margarete Wiese, 3 July 1977; Interview Ulrich and Susanne von Harpe, 15 December 1977, MHSO German Collection; and Kuester to his mother, 12 May 1951, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton.

All he could see, one columnist of the *Nordwesten* noted, after he attended a folk festival in honour of the heritage of Canada's immigrants, was an inadequate representation of German culture limited to folk costumes, *Schuhplättler* [Bavarian folk dancers], waltzes and polkas. He felt that the festival created a new simplified "fairytale" about the German-language community in Canada, missing references to such popular music styles among Germans as classical music, swing and rock'n'roll.¹⁰⁶ Another expellee similarly felt that the celebration of the 'cultural mosaic' reduced German culture to folklore and images that scarcely reflected the majority of German immigrants. Yet, as he laconically commented, "with beer, lederhosen, sausage, sauerkraut and schnitzel it is certainly easier to make friends with Canadians than with bombs, racial hatred and concentration camps."¹⁰⁷

Folklore and ethnic labels aside, expellees drew their support for Canada's 'third force' primarily from their day-to-day experience with a generation of European immigrants that, to them, seemed to share the trauma of war, loss and displacement. Already on the transatlantic ocean liners to North America, expellees felt they were figuratively as well as literally in the same boat as fellow passengers from across Europe. As they exchanged information about possible destinations or work opportunities, expellees got to know immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds and learned to appreciate these as such. DPs, which in West Germany were disparaged as 'felons' and

¹⁰⁶ *Nordwesten*, 5 March 1969.

¹⁰⁷ Frank Otto, Letter to friends for Christmas, December 1973, NAC, Central Organization of Sudeten German Clubs in Canada Papers, MG 28 V 5, vol. 4, file 10.

‘scoundrels,’¹⁰⁸ became fellow immigrants with similar hopes and worries. Writing about his experience of the crossing, one expellee remarked: “there is a great collegiality among Polish, Ukrainian, Dutch and German immigrants [...] with growing distance to Europe many of the continent’s bad habits disappear.”¹⁰⁹ Expellees thus crossed previously inconceivable ethnic barriers, most notably with Jewish people. All of the expellees, who expressed an opinion about their contact with Jews, and they were a few, suggested that they maintained straight-forward and conflict-free relations. One expellee emphasized, for example, how he had been exposed to virtually no prejudice even though he lived for several years in Toronto’s Jewish quarter.¹¹⁰ Similarly, in the fifteen years that an expellee from Upper Silesia had worked for an Israeli firm not once had she been associated with the perpetration of the Holocaust because of her German background.¹¹¹ Another expellee opened a thriving radio store on Toronto’s Harbord and Spadina intersection and counted a large number of Jewish people amongst his clientele. As he put it, a presumed “curse turned into a blessing; relations were strictly business.”¹¹² Consequently, expellees like him thought that in Canada there were no obstacles between them and Jews.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Jacobmeyer, “Ortlos,” 367-374.

¹⁰⁹ Kroeger, *Start*, 47. Similarly Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978; and Interview Anton Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

¹¹⁰ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹¹¹ Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978, *ibid*.

¹¹² Interview Paul Kromer, 15 October 1979, *ibid*.

¹¹³ It should be added that Jews similarly avoided to talk about the Holocaust, focusing like expellees and other post-war immigrants on getting settled, see Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 72-80.

The fact that many post-war European immigrants had picked up some German as a result of the German occupation and their imprisonment, conscription, forced labour or flight doubtless strengthened the perception in a shared experience. Exchanging words in German with immigrants from Poland or Serbia helped expellees find jobs, accommodation, public houses and food stores. Expellees deliberately went to ethnic stores where they knew they could purchase goods in their mother tongue. One expellee from Toronto, for example, unable to speak English, went for the first few years regularly to the Jewish market to buy her supplies in German. She also found work through a German-language link with her Ukrainian neighbour, who helped her to overcome her doubts about employment and encouraged her to take up cleaning assuring her that she would not need much knowledge of English. Soon after, she apparently started cleaning for a wealthy Jewish family in Toronto's Forest Hill.¹¹⁴ An expellee from Yugoslavia, who went to Kitchener in the early 1950s, similarly relied on German to secure a job. As he explained, everybody knew some German in the company where he found work, not least the owner and managing director. He was a Polish Jew fluent in German.¹¹⁵ In the eyes of expellees like the one from Yugoslavia or the expellee woman in Toronto, German proved an indispensable instrument to get by and thus brought together immigrants from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. In effect, for as long as the expellees' fluency in English remained limited, German acted as a *lingua franca* among post-war immigrants in Canada.

¹¹⁴ Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978, MHSO, German Collection. Similarly see Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978; and Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978, *ibid*.

¹¹⁵ Interview Anton Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

Beyond the differences and bonds resulting from the past, expellees felt that, like them, post-war European immigrants had lived through a comparable experience in Canada. Devoid of significant means and burdened with debts toward the Canadian government for the transatlantic passage, they saw how they stayed like other immigrants in boarding houses and basic living quarters. In apartment blocks they lived next to Ukrainian or Polish immigrant families sharing a similarly frugal lifestyle with furniture purchased second-hand at the Salvation Army or the junk yard. In apartments expellees rented out rooms from Latvian or Ukrainian immigrants seeking to supplement their income by taking in boarders. Conversely, once they could, expellees similarly took in boarders in order to save money.¹¹⁶ Endemic xenophobia and precarious work arrangements strengthened this perception of a common immigrant experience. As indentured farm labourers, expellees met other immigrants scattered across nearby farms and commiserated together with them about exploitative working conditions. In some cases, expellees gained a sense of a common experience by taking over farm contracts from DPs.¹¹⁷ Other expellees worked with non-German immigrants at construction sites, assembly lines and offices, realizing that they were not the only immigrants to work casual jobs and be short of 'Canadian experience.' One expellee, who worked in Sudbury's mining industry, tellingly suggested: "whether Polish, Italian or German, we

¹¹⁶ Interview Anton Pleschinger, 30 November and 14 December 1977, MHSO, German Collection; Stella Faure, *Faure, I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 80-82; and Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 30-32, CBIAS, Memoir Collection London; De Minckwitz, "Nur mit zwei," 89-96.

¹¹⁷ Peter Hessel Diary, August 3, 1952, 112, NAC, Peter Hessel Papers, MG 31 H 178, vol. 1, file Diary February 1952 - October 1952; Kuester to his mother, 12 May 1951, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton.

all shared the same miserable working conditions.”¹¹⁸ Besides work, expellees again met immigrants from every corner of the European continent at English-language or vocational education classes. Since 1947 and the promulgation of the Canadian Citizenship Act the federal government sponsored English-language courses for immigrants. As they saw Germans, Poles, Italians, Jews, Slovaks, Greeks or Serbs gathering to learn English, expellees felt that they had gained an experience common to all post-war European immigrants and that together they had shown a common ambition to improve working and living conditions. As it were, such English-language courses also offered an opportunity to socialize and converse with other immigrants, especially for expellees who worked on remote farms or as live-in domestics and thus welcomed the break from isolation.¹¹⁹

Ultimately, by perceiving such a shared experience, expellees adopted a Euro-centric immigrant identity. As they recognized with hindsight, the extended period of economic growth allowed a generation of European immigrants, expellees included, to advance professionally and eventually attain a level of comfort that made them feel part of Canadian society and proud of their contribution to the development of their adoptive country. As a minority among a minority, they largely subsumed their ambivalent German heritage, stigmatized and prey to prejudice, into a wider immigrant whole from war-torn Europe. They believed that over the course of the years this generation of

¹¹⁸ Interview Günther Prawzick, 25 August 1982, 25 August 1982, MHSO, German Collection.

¹¹⁹ Kuester to his mother, 18 March 1951, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton; Interview Hans and Helga Warwas, 9 March 1978; Interview John Penteker, 22 June 1977; and Interview Norbert Lackner, 15 March 1978; MHSO German Collection; Interview Anton Sauer, 26 April 1979, MHSO Danube-Swabian Collection.

immigrants had started out from scratch, worked its way up, contributed to Canada's increasing wealth and achieved a level of comfort comparable to the living standards of Anglo and French Canadians. Like them, European immigrants of their age cohort no longer lived in basic rooms and shelters of immigrant neighbourhoods; instead they managed to save money for down payments and buy homes in the suburbs where, one expellee wrote, houses "shot up like mushrooms from the ground."¹²⁰ Expellees like other newcomers in the suburbs were proud homeowners and attributed this achievement to hard work and frugal living.¹²¹ That post-war immigrants typically moved to the outskirts of towns and lived in clusters was noted by one expellee couple. Apparently, they themselves did not want to replicate what they perceived to be the usual path of 'New Canadians' and instead bought a home in the countryside far removed from the hustle and bustle of the urban sprawl.¹²²

Within society at large, expellees perceived their arrival as part of a post-war European immigrant generation to have been pivotal to the country's development. To them, Canada's post-war rise to prosperity had not been realized by accident and owed a

¹²⁰ Kuester to his mother, 22 June 1953, CBIAS, Mathias F. Kuester Correspondence, Archive Edmonton.

¹²¹ Interview Ernst Bollenbach, 2 August 1977; Interview Eric Janotta 25 May 1979; Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978; and Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection; Interview Stefan Kroeg, 1 June 1978, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection; Serafina Chomitch in Yedlin, *Germans from Russia*, 171; and Stella Faure, *I Made My Home in Canada*, 1990, 100, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection.

¹²² Interview Waldemar and Hildegard von Hertenberg, 24 March 1979, MHSO, German Collection. On boarding as a financial strategy to pay off mortgages, see Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978; Johanne von Harpe, *Between then and now*, 1998, 37, CBIAS, London Memoir Collection; Heimo Bielenstein, *Lebenserinnerungen*, 1994, 131, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton; Walter Fromman, Diary entry October 1953, 17, NAC, Walter Fromman Papers, MG 31 H 166.

great deal to hardworking immigrants. They felt that they had helped transform a seemingly parochial society anchored in the British Empire into the modern and vibrant 'Canadian mosaic.' By the 1960s and 1970s such changes struck the expellees' eyes. They saw the construction of highways, growing suburbs and skyscrapers. Socially, moreover, they claimed as their achievement the marked liberalization of Canadian culture. For example, they believed they were instrumental in removing the prohibition against shop window displays on Sundays. Similarly, they took credit for the easing of alcohol and liquor licensing laws, which finally allowed public houses to serve wine to families for Sunday lunch. They flouted park restrictions and played soccer on Sundays until it became acceptable. One expellee from Czechoslovakia had certainly no doubts: in the post-war period European immigrants had radically changed the face of Toronto. From a British "city of churches," that he first encountered in the early 1940s, he saw the city transform under the impact of immigration and turn into a sprawling metropolis complete with operas, theatres and night clubs.¹²³ As another expellee commented in the Danube-Swabian monthly, Europe's post-war immigrants had helped shape neighbourhoods that in attractiveness and beauty matched the most charming European cities. Willowdale in north Toronto combined, the columnist claimed, the splendour of skyscrapers, apartment blocks, gardens and modern hotels with the beauty of European parks and boulevards.¹²⁴ The columnist's appreciation of urban planning aside, from remote north-eastern British Columbia the same sort of self-styled praise echoed the columnist's words. One Sudeten German's long list of proud contributions to his

¹²³ Ludwig Loewit, "Toronto im Wandel der Zeiten," *Forward* 19: 4 (April 1967), 4.

¹²⁴ "Willowdale meine zweite Heimat" *Heimatbote* 26: 301 (February 1986), 3.

adoptive country outlined over twenty points including the clearance of forests and moor lands, the electrification of Tupper Creek/Tomslake, the establishment of a school, a library, a shop and the complete motorization of farming.¹²⁵ Thus, whether in Toronto or in Tupper Creek/Tomslake, to expellees Canada's post-war modernization owed a great deal to the toil and spirit of a war-torn European immigrant generation.

Meanwhile, to expellees in Canada the homeland in Central and Eastern Europe increasingly became a place they no longer wanted to return to. Some expellees presumably knew from the start that Canada would remain their home. "When I came to Canada," one expellee suggested, "I was here to stay."¹²⁶ Another expellee concluded that he was right at home in Canada when two days after his arrival an Anglo-Canadian told him: "*Sei Freund mit uns now!*" ["Be friends with us now!"]¹²⁷ By the time they published memoirs and gave interviews, expellees had certainly decided to make Canada their home. They recalled the memory of the old homeland in clubs and private conversations, repelled by the contemporary state of affairs east of the 'Iron Curtain.' Visits to the homeland confirmed the state of disarray. One Sudeten German, who, as a Canadian citizen, had the opportunity to see his native country in 1960 at a time when West Germans virtually were unable to enter Czechoslovakia, was hardly impressed by what he saw after 22 years. His hometown Aussig (Usti nad labem) was no longer the

¹²⁵ Willi Schoen, "Viele Steine, wenig Brot (Teil II)," *Forward* 21: 11 (November 1969), 12-13.

¹²⁶ Interview John Penteker, 22 June 1977, MHSO, German Collection.

¹²⁷ Interview Anton Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection. Similarly Interview Ferdinand Berencz, 15 February 1978, *ibid.*; Interview Norbert Lackner, 15 March 1978; and Interview Hans-Jürgen and Mita Kumberg, 21 February 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

buoyant industrial town that he had lived in during the 1930s and instead seemed heavily polluted with, he claimed, grim figures hastily walking across soiled streets and bleak-looking buildings that were still visibly marked by Allied bombing. In Prague, which he remembered as a vibrant metropolis, he had the impression that no one was smiling amid a gloomy atmosphere. Predictably, he did not think of it as his *Heimat* anymore.¹²⁸

Marked by the Cold War and its ideological stakes, the expellee thus joined a general anti-communist discourse that viewed the lands within the Soviet sphere of influence wedged in decay and neglect as opposed to the modern, highly-industrialized and capitalist ‘West.’ However, quite remarkably, none of the expellees analyzed in this study associated the backwardness of the homeland with the people who resided there. No prejudice exuded from the narration of their life stories against Central and Eastern Europeans. Rather, it was the political system that was failing, not the people. One expellee from the Danube Plains, who by the time of his interview in the late 1970s had travelled four times to his native Romania, noted, for example, how the “system” had failed the people of his hometown. There had been, as he claimed, some improvements, but it was still a far cry from modern Canada.¹²⁹ Similarly, an expellee, who visited her native town in Lithuania after the fall of communism in the early 1990s, wrote that she had been capable of recognizing a number of buildings, including the one she grew up in. While expressing her compassion for the people who had been living in the relative poverty of her homeland, she realized how fortunate she had been to have survived an

¹²⁸ Skoutajan, *Uprooted*, 191-220.

¹²⁹ Interview Anton Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

“uphill struggle all the way” in the West.¹³⁰ She and the expellee from Romania clearly blamed communism rather than the people for the backwardness of their respective homelands.

By contrast, the place of the FRG in the Canadian expellee identity was far more ambivalent than that of the *Heimat*. For the Sudeten Germans who arrived in 1939, the FRG had never been home and so had never involved an affective bond. However, for those who were left stranded in post-war Europe, West Germany became a distinct reference point. The same was true of Austria for many Danube Swabians in Canada. Besides the experience of occupation and utter deprivation, the economic recovery of the FRG and Austria made expellees wonder whether, ultimately, they had made the right decision to immigrate overseas. Compared to Canada, by the 1970s West Germany or Austria appeared to expellees as wealthy countries with high levels of social security and virtually no unemployment. Not surprisingly, since the late 1950s a growing number of expellees returned to prospering West Germany.¹³¹ Moreover, the widely celebrated ‘economic miracle’ of the FRG improved the image of Germans among the Canadian public or so, at least, expellees felt. They could take pride in their German heritage and flaunt the achievement of the German people in the FRG.¹³² Children, one expellee suspected, were more likely to learn about their parents’ German heritage because of West Germany’s impressive economic record.¹³³ Yet, for those expellees who made

¹³⁰ Sellnie Goos, *Fleeing Home*, 159.

¹³¹ For the migration flow from Canada to the FRG, see appendix, table III.B).

¹³² Interview Margarete Schicketanz, 5 and 13 October 1977; and Interview Eric Janotta, 25 May 1979, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³³ Interview Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, *ibid.*

Canada their home, and the majority did, West Germany remained a mere station of their lives that they could visit during a holiday. For some expellees the FRG remained the locus of deprivation, displacement and xenophobia that they had experienced in the early post-war years.¹³⁴ By the 1960s, relatively affordable charter flights, frequently organized by homeland societies and German-Canadian associations, replaced the costly and week-long boat journey across the ocean to Europe and gave expellees the opportunity to meet with friends and relatives while on vacation in the FRG. An elderly expellee, who had come to live in Victoria, B.C., evocatively described what the FRG meant to expellees at the end of the 1960s: “come spring all the grandmothers here fly like birds in the air to see their loved ones overseas. Tourism to the old country is now common.”¹³⁵ Clearly, by the end of the 1970s expellees felt at home in Canada. It was a country where they had lived a significant part of their lives. They believed they had become too Canadian for West German society, used, as expellees claimed, to large cars, wide homes and the open space of the Prairies and the Canadian North.¹³⁶ As part of a generation affected by war and destruction, expellees adopted a Canadian identity built on material comfort and, last but not least, social ties. As one expellee put it, “[West]

¹³⁴ Interview Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978; and Otto Leib, 5 October 1978, MHSO, German Collection.

¹³⁵ Baroness Margarete von Maydell, *Tagebuchnotizen*, 35, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

¹³⁶ Ulrich von Harpe, *Looking Back*, 74-75, NAC, Ulrich von Harpe Papers, MG 31 H56; Interview Interviews Helga Andresen, 22 March 1978; Interview Henry and Hermine Weisbach, 2 and 13 April 1984, MHSO, German Collection; Interview Anton Sieber, 14 November 1977, MHSO, Danube-Swabian Collection.

Germany is beautiful, but Canada is just as beautiful. Here I have my pension, most of my children and my husband's grave."¹³⁷

All in all, as this chapter has shown, in both the FRG and Canada three comparable factors effectively shaped the formation of national identities among expellees. Firstly, in both countries expellees encountered resentments which set them apart from the rest of the population. In occupied Germany this resentment certainly bordered on outright hostility. Locals, who were frequently forced to accommodate expellees for lack of available housing, made their discontent known and condemned expellees collectively. Some of the expellees' lifestyles and dialects clashed with local customs and traditions and led to xenophobia, especially in rural regions. As we have seen, for example, local villagers disapproved of the modern lifestyle of German-Baltic woman. In Canada expellees faced the double scourge of being of German ethnicity and newcomers. The former exposed them to a pervasive Nazi stigma, whereas the latter reminded them constantly that as immigrants they inevitably lacked 'Canadian experience.' Secondly, in both countries rapid modernization and rising prosperity similarly set the stage for the development of expellee identities which were less exposed to collective stigmatization. This was in particular the case in the FRG where the 'economic miracle' eased tensions between locals and expellees. As we have seen, as West Germany's economic recovery got underway, even in rural areas locals started to accept the presence of expellees. Thirdly, in both countries government authorities and

¹³⁷ Interview Margarete Wiese, 3 July 1977, MHSO, German Collection. Similarly Annemaria Hornung to relatives, 3 January 1958, in Annemaria Hornung, *Briefe aus Kanada*, 36, CBIAS, Baltic Library Edmonton.

organized expellee groups supported an ethno-national identity with which ordinary expellees could identify. In the FRG the emphasis on the regional heritage of Germans struck a chord with expellees as they were able to assert their heritage alongside locals. Silesians could thus be just as proud of their heritage as local Bavarians or Hessians. In Canada, meanwhile, the celebration of the 'cultural mosaic' provided expellees an idiom that they could combine with their own experience as immigrants. Like Canadians of British and French descent, expellees could boast 'roots' and stress the contribution to Canada's rising prosperity and socio-cultural liberalization as part of an immigrant generation that, except for the USA, came almost exclusively from Europe.

However, West Germany's and Canada's expellee identities differed in one important way. Although they were both based on ethnicity, in terms of content and meaning they implied different boundaries. On the one hand, in the FRG the emphasis on the regional heritage of expellees (and locals) fuelled the country's redefinition as an ethnically homogenous nation. As we have seen, in the memoirs and oral histories analyzed for this study, expellees remained at a distance from their former neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe. In Canada, in marked contrast, expellees accepted these neighbours as their equals, not least because they shared with some of them a similar immigration experience. In effect, their 'Euro-Canadian' identity, albeit limited to white people only, broke ethnic boundaries in a fashion that would have been inconceivable in the FRG. That said, although further research would be required, all indications are that since the 1970s these identities have been subject to change. In particular in Canada, the age cohort which I examined, appears to have turned against the 'Canadian mosaic.' In

the twenty or twenty-five years since the oral history interviews were taken, this aging group of expellees, if still alive, has become critical of multiculturalism. One prominent German-Canadian scholar has openly come out against it.¹³⁸ The shifting boundaries of inclusion in the 'mosaic' clearly appear to be at issue behind this volte-face. The 'mosaic,' as understood by expellees and German immigrants in the 1960s and 1970s, was essentially a medley of white ethnicities that gathered together on North American ground. For expellee or German-Canadian community leaders like Henry Weisbach or Clive von Cardinal Canada consisted of a mix of white European people who proved to be able to avoid ethnic conflicts and live harmoniously together. Today, these expellees and German immigrants in their late 70s and 80s seem no longer capable of identifying with the pluri-cultural and pluri-racial 'mosaic' of twenty-first century Canada. As a perceptive member and observer of the German-Canadian community suggested, most post-war German immigrants (including expellees) appear to think of it as a set of anti-discriminatory and anti-racist laws which have been of no benefit to them.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Harmut Froeschle, *Adler auf dem Ahornblatt: Studien zur Einwanderung, Siedlung, Kultur- und Literaturgeschichte der Deutschen in Kanada* (Toronto: German-Canadian Historical Association, 1997).

¹³⁹ Interview Gerd Meinzer, 30 June 1998, MHSO, German Collection II.

Conclusion

The expulsion of just over twelve million Germans from Central and Eastern Europe doubtless had a significant impact on German society in the post-war period. In 1950 expellees represented almost one in four residents in the GDR, while in the FRG they made up just over one in six inhabitants. With a varying degree of success, both countries came to terms with this massive influx of dispossessed people and largely avoided the troubles caused, for example, by the Allied-supervised resettlement of 1.2 million ethnic Greeks in the 1920s. The latter's arrival in Greece proved extremely difficult and effectively helped pave the way to civil war.¹ By contrast, expellees never were a politically destabilizing factor in the FRG and the GDR, let alone a source of insurgency. By the late 1950s, the GDR's governing communist party declared their integration complete, while in the FRG the public celebrated their successful integration. However, a substantial number of expellees turned their back on both the GDR and the FRG. Until 1961, when the Berlin Wall was built, one million expellees left the GDR for the FRG which, courtesy of the Cold War, used this mass movement across the 'German-German' border as evidence for the superiority of the capitalist system. Even so, in the post-war decades expellees likewise left the FRG en masse. As this dissertation has shown, in Canada alone at least 85,000 expellees had settled by the late 1950s. Others went from the FRG to France, the UK, and especially to the USA, Brazil, Chile and

¹ Tridafilos Triadafilopoulos, "The Political Consequences of Forced Population Transfers: Refugee Incorporation in Greece and West Germany," in Rainer Ohliger, Karen Schönwälder and Tridafilos Triadafilopoulos, eds. *European Encounters: Migrants, Migration and European Societies since 1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 99-115.

Paraguay. In fact, by the early 1980s altogether 750,000 expellees resided in Western Europe and overseas.² Thus, as distinguished historian Klaus J. Bade pertinently noted, the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe led to a truly transnational integration process, involving multiple social and cultural settings.³

This dissertation has investigated two such settings and has juxtaposed experiences which expellees had in both the FRG and Canada. Specifically, by taking the cue from the vast scholarship on expellees in West Germany, a first aim of this dissertation has been to put expellees on the research agenda of Canadian historiography. In doing so, it has gone beyond the prevalent study of distinct regional German groups in Canadian historiography and shed light on the common experiences of expellees in Canada. Certainly, as historians and others rightly point out, expellees who settled in Canada had quite different social and cultural backgrounds and included such diverse groups as working-class Sudeten Germans, titled German Balts or peasants from the Banat, Volhynia and the Black Sea area. However, as in the FRG this collective was a recognizable group with a distinct expellee identity. In the FRG, where expellees were at first shunned and set apart from the rest of society, the emphasis on the nation's ethno-provincial roots ultimately eased their acculturation. Alongside Bavarians or Hessians, expellees as Silesians, East Prussians or Danube Swabians became an integral part of the (West) German nation. By contrast, in Canada, where expellees as immigrants and Germans encountered xenophobia and anti-German feelings, expellees saw themselves as part of a war-torn immigrant generation which started from scratch and successfully

² Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 1, 59.

³ Bade, "Sozialhistorische," 137.

settled. Canada's gradual turn toward multiculturalism in the post-war decades allowed expellees to identify themselves as Canada's 'third force' and assert themselves as immigrants alongside the presumed two founding nations of English and French heritage. In effect, contrary to some suggestions in scholarship, which purport that expellees were denied a distinct identity and so were forced to adapt to mainstream society,⁴ they willingly adopted Canada's newly celebrated 'cultural mosaic' and negotiated an identity on their own terms.

Certainly, compared to the FRG, in Canada the ethno-provincial heritage of expellees failed to endure in public discourse. Two factors chiefly explain this difference. On the one hand, in the aftermath of the war expellees and other German immigrants in Canada received no systematic public support to sustain regionally defined German identities so that only ethnic German expellee groups from north-eastern and south-eastern Europe attempted to mould their ethno-provincial heritage into the 'cultural mosaic.' Contrary to other expellee groups, these boasted strong regional identities which they had forged as German minorities before World War II. In addition, except for the Sudeten-German refugees, their pre-industrial background led them to recreate a world which they knew and understood. Hence, once resettled in Canada, they were the only groups to observe homeland traditions in formal groups and associations. In marked contrast, in West Germany government agencies and homeland societies helped forge a strong regional identity even among expellee groups which previously lacked a strong sense of their ethno-provincial heritage. This included notably expellee groups from the

⁴ Brown, "Voices," 33-57.

former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers which had to shift from a primarily Prussian to a more regional identity as Silesians or Pomeranians. As we have seen in chapter four, expellee groups from these areas founded homeland societies comparatively late. By the time expellees had formed large interest organizations in 1948, homeland societies from Silesia, East Prussia or Pomerania were effectively still a *quantité négligeable*.

On the other hand, the few expellee groups which attempted to integrate their regional identity into Canada's 'cultural mosaic,' were too small to have any lasting impact on the public. After all, in Canada expellees were a minority among a minority. Of the two million immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1945 and 1960, ethnic German expellees from south-eastern and north-eastern Europe made up perhaps 50,000 people which equates to less than 3 percent. Moreover, although they represented nearly 60 percent of Canada's expellee population, compared to the overall post-war German immigration, expellees from south-eastern and north-eastern Europe made up not even a fifth.⁵ Thus, while in the FRG a vast network of expellee organizations emerged, boasting a combined membership of nearly 2.5 million expellees, in Canada the five organizations that ethnic German expellees from south-eastern and north-eastern Europe established were comparatively small. They included the German-Baltic, Transylvanian and Danube-Swabian homeland societies as well as the two organizations founded by the Sudeten-German refugees. None of these organizations comprised more than several thousand members. Not surprisingly, such relatively small groups gained little attention

⁵ Appendix, table 3.D).

from mainstream society. Like other immigrant groups, whose regional background the wider Canadian public did not recognize, this led them to seek a public identity beyond their regional heritage.⁶

Some of the divisions among the various expellee groups in Canada clearly reflect the relatively small size of the expellee community. Certainly, the different social and cultural backgrounds of the various groups may also have played a role because they had no formal contact with each other and did not attempt to build an umbrella organization along the lines of the West German Federation of Expellees (BdV). However, given their numeric weakness, there was hardly any incentive to collaborate or to form a united expellee front. In West Germany the BdV and its precursors became a powerful political force and successfully lobbied the government for the compensation of lost assets and properties. Until parliament passed the Equalization-of-the-Burdens-Law (EBL), West German expellee organizations appealed to the wider public, staged mass rallies and lobbied politicians for compensation. In Canada, by contrast, even a joint effort would have left them with very little political clout. Moreover, under the terms of the EBL expellees who resided in Canada were equally allowed to seek compensation provided that they had lived in occupied Germany or the FRG before they moved abroad. Except for the Sudeten-German refugees and the Danube Swabians who emigrated directly from Austria, these provisions covered most expellees in Canada. Thus, while the latter two groups had good reasons to back each other's claim, most of Canada's

⁶ Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto*; Patricia K. Wood, *Nationalism from the Margins: The Negotiation of National and Ethnic Identities among Italian Immigrants in Alberta and British Columbia, 1880-1980* (Montreal: McGill/Queen's University Press, 2002).

expellees had no incentive to do so. The mixed attitude toward the German-Canadian umbrella group, the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians (TCA), precisely reflects this variable degree of interests among expellee groups. The German-Baltic association, for example, never joined the TCA because the high membership fees provided no net gain to their small organization. However, once the TCA started to provide German language teaching materials sponsored by the West German government, some individual German Balts nevertheless joined the German-Canadian umbrella organization in the early 1960s. By contrast, while the homeland society of the Danube Swabians stayed away from the German-Canadian umbrella organization, its member clubs joined the TCA. The Sudeten-German refugees, for their part, took a very active role in building and developing the TCA and Henry Weisbach, one of the two main Sudeten-German figures, even presided over the German-Canadian umbrella organization from 1966 to 1974. For Weisbach and other Sudeten-German refugees the TCA clearly served as a platform to pursue political ambitions which they had embarked on in Czechoslovakia. Ultimately, they were able to influence the TCA and gain full backing for resolutions which called on the FRG and Czechoslovakia for compensation. Thus, while small in size and politically impotent, the different interests of the various expellee groups likewise determined the varying degree of involvement in German-Canadian organizations.

A second aim of this comparative study has been the assessment of West Germany's widely acclaimed integration of expellees against Canada's celebrated record of immigration. The huge disparity in numbers has clearly dominated this comparison.

We have seen, for example, how expellees were a mass phenomenon in occupied Germany. They arrived in large groups by trek or train, lived in mass shelters and overcrowded private homes and commonly were able to collectively vent their grief and commemorate the lost homeland. Similarly, we have also seen how Allied restrictions, the lack of resources and the war-related destruction of infrastructure led to the mass impoverishment of expellees and others in occupied Germany. Countless expellees lived on the brink of starvation in the immediate post-war years. Later on, expellee interest organizations and homeland societies likewise became mass movements, second only to the trade unions. With a combined membership in the late 1950s of nearly 2.5 million, the organized expellee movement gained a prominent position in West German society and wielded considerable political influence. In the mid-1950s members of the short-lived expellee party BHE even participated in Adenauer's CDU-led federal government. In Canada, by contrast, the few expellees who in 1945 resided in the land of 'milk and honey' were scattered across a vast country and lived a very isolated experience. They were ignored by the wider Canadian public and found no compassion from fellow Canadians. The Sudeten-German prisoners-of-war who petitioned the federal government for permanent residency in view of the expulsion were left out in the cold. With a few exceptions, all of the 35,000 German prisoners-of-war brought to Canada for safekeeping were 'repatriated' to occupied Germany. The Sudeten-German refugees also felt disregarded by Canadians when they sought to assist expellees in Europe. Their call on the federal government for the immigration of at least close relatives from Europe largely fell on deaf ears. They had to wait nearly two and a half years until they were

able to welcome the first relatives. Similarly, the Sudeten-German refugees had to go a long way to raise funds and assist expellees and others in Europe. Indeed, as they quickly found out, outside the German-Canadian community, very few people in post-war Canada were willing to donate money for needy Germans. The handful of organizations which expellees founded met in clubhouses and, for the most part, remained unnoticed by the wider Canadian public. They kept, in general, a very low political profile and instead focused on social and cultural matters. They gathered in clubs, celebrated traditional holidays from the homeland and provided a sense of community.

Even so, in both the FRG and Canada expellees were part of a mass of newcomers that made up over ten percent of the local population. Undoubtedly, the initial reception in war-torn and occupied Germany did not measure up to the comparatively affluent situation that greeted new arrivals in Canada. Nor did the hasty accommodation of expellees in primarily rural and unscathed areas of occupied Germany compare to the carefully planned and regulated process of immigration in Canada. However, once living conditions normalized in the FRG, North America and Western Europe's 'golden era' provided expellees with ample opportunities to establish their careers and lives. As a result, evidence suggests that, in general, expellees in the FRG and Canada integrated in strikingly similar terms. Initially, expellees in the FRG and Canada underwent a sub-stratification typical of social integration processes. In both countries they often began their working lives as cheap labourers in farming or resource-based industries like mining. During the 1950s, expellees thus gathered in states or provinces with a heavy concentration of industries. In the FRG this meant, above all, that

North-Rhine-Westphalia with its heavy industries along the Ruhr Valley attracted expellees in droves. As we have seen, between 1946 and 1970 North-Rhine-Westphalia's expellee population more than tripled and reached 2.4 million. In fact, while in 1946 one in nine expellees resided in North-Rhine-Westphalia, in 1970 one in four lived in West Germany's industrial powerhouse. In Canada, meanwhile, this meant that expellees gathered in provinces with either a concentration of manufacturing or resource and energy-based industries. This included Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario with its 'Golden Horseshoe' stretching from the eastern fringes of Toronto to Hamilton.

Later on, expellees in both the FRG and Canada experienced a high degree of upward social mobility. Several studies have suggested that expellees in West Germany almost succeeded in closing the gap between themselves and the population in general.⁷ This dissertation, by and large, confirms this finding. Over time, in the FRG and Canada expellees moved into higher status jobs and became established alongside the local population. As they suggested in oral history interviews, expellees took vocational training courses to move up professionally. Others retrained and found new and more rewarding careers. Similarly, over the course of the post-war decades the living conditions of expellees considerably improved. In the FRG expellees moved from shared accommodation in camps and private homes to apartments and houses. By 1970 nearly as many expellees in West Germany owned their own homes as the population in general. In Canada, meanwhile, expellees moved from rooms and boarding houses in immigrant

⁷ Lüttinger, "Der Mythos," 20-36; Frantziach, *Die Vertriebenen*.

neighbourhoods to suburban residences. In fact, by 1971 one hundred percent of the expellees in Canada sampled for this study were homeowners.

Nevertheless, one wonders where expellees fared better in the end. Was it in the FRG or in Canada? For several reasons, there is no straightforward answer to this question. The lack of in-depth data for the FRG has made it difficult to provide a comprehensive comparative assessment. For my investigations in the FRG I used Reichling's standard statistical publication on expellees and this has clearly not been an adequate substitute for the detailed microdata files which I used for Canada. Consequently, the lack of in-depth West German data has meant that this dissertation has only been able to unveil general trends. As such, no significant difference in the expellees' standards of living has been found between the FRG and Canada. Moreover, one must be careful when comparing absolute numbers as they do not necessarily take into account specific national characteristics. In terms of rates of homeownership, for example, Canada and the FRG considerably differed. However, compared to the local population in general, expellees in both countries owned houses at a similar ratio. Similarly, occupational differences do not necessarily reflect the degree of integration. In Canada, for instance, expellees were significantly overrepresented in industry and agriculture, reflecting primarily the emphasis which Canadian immigration officials placed on the recruitment of manual and farm labourers. Expellee farmers, in particular, saw in Canada better opportunities in agriculture than in the FRG and so moved abroad. Conversely, two factors shaped the more equal occupational distribution between expellees and the population in general in the FRG. Firstly, expellees were transplanted

to the territory of the future West German state rather than recruited by immigration officers on the basis of skills and occupations. Secondly, a number of measures led to a more equal occupational distribution between expellees and the population in general. This included tax breaks for expellee businesses, government-sponsored re-training programmes and affirmative action clauses in public employment. All in all, consequently, when judging the merits of the expellees' integration in the FRG and Canada, this dissertation adheres to the 'subjective' verdict of its subjects and concludes that, ultimately, expellees fared neither better nor worse in the FRG and Canada. Listening to the taped interviews with expellees and reading their memoirs, it is clear that in both countries they seemed to be quite satisfied with the turn their life took.

Finally, a third aim of this dissertation has been to put the agency of expellees into bold relief by using Anthony H. Richmond's multivariate systems model of international migration. As a result, I have been able to document a wider spectrum of the expulsion than the standard works on the topic. In lieu of the three archetypal forms it has followed the multiple factors which differentiate, according to Richmond, the expulsion along a continuum between *proactive* and *reactive* types of migration. Thus, I outlined six interrelated, but distinctive aspects of the expulsion, starting with the flight of Germans from Central and Eastern in the wake of Nazi Germany's expansion in the late 1930s and ending with the release of the last German prisoners-of-war in the mid-1950s. Specifically, I illustrated the expulsion as a composite set of reactive migrations which comprised a) refugees who fled from Nazi terror, b) resettlers brought 'home into the Reich,' c) evacuees moved by the German armed forces, d) refugees who fled the

Soviet army and the newly established regimes in post-war Central and Eastern Europe, e) transferees relocated according to the terms of the Allied Potsdam Agreements and, finally, f) German men and women released from P.O.W or forced labour camps. In each of these aspects ethnic nationalism and anti-communism played a key role. Besides panic reactions, herd effects and other factors, they decisively shaped and directed the population movements that made up the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe. For example, as we have seen in chapter one, ethnic nationalism permeated Nazi Germany's expansion and the Allied Potsdam Agreements which, ultimately, resulted in the near total removal of German minorities in Central and Eastern Europe.

Despite the fact that they do not fit into the conventional narratives, the Sudeten-German refugees in Canada clearly have their place in the expellee story. They certainly were a small group amid the mass of expellees, but they shared a similar experience with other émigrés who fled the Nazis and subsequently lost their homeland. Between 1933 and 1945 over half a million Germans fled the Nazis. Although most of them were of Jewish background, many of them also lost the homeland in the aftermath of World War II. Breslau [Wrocław], for instance, had a sizable Jewish community and some key figures in the expellee movement were at least in part of Jewish background. Herbert Hupka, for instance, who has Jewish ancestors, led the Upper Silesian homeland society for over 25 years until his retirement in the mid-1990s. Although he himself remained in Nazi Germany protected by his German mother, during his long career in the expellee movement he forged contacts with Jewish émigrés and survivors in Israel, where Upper Silesian homeland groups appear to have existed. Together with the Sudeten-

German refugees in Canada, these groups equally belong to the extended expellee story. This is also true for another group of Germans, namely the so-called *Aussiedler*. These ethnic Germans from Poland, Romania and the USSR were either held back or forced to live in ‘special settlements’ such as, for example, ethnic Germans from the Ukraine and the Volga region, who in 1941 were deported to southern Siberia and Kazakhstan. Between the mid-1950s and 1980s tens of thousand of *Aussiedler* arrived in the FRG and automatically obtained German citizenship. In fact, while historians have thus far been reluctant to include these *Aussiedler* in the expellee story, until the early 1980s West German officials had far less trouble to recognize them as expellees – a status which allowed them to apply for compensation under the terms of the Equalization-of-the-Burdens-Law (EBL).⁸ Consequently, they also belong to the extended expellee story which historians have yet not written.

Richmond’s model of international migration has clearly helped to distinguish an initial phase of the expulsion from a subsequent stage when expellees

⁸ I might add that since the fall of communism almost three million *Aussiedler* have arrived in the FRG from the USSR (1.7 million), Poland (790,000) and Romania (315,000). As descendants (or relatives thereof) of ethnic Germans, most of them have come to the FRG for economic reasons. In 1994 a new law drastically cut this population movement. Since then, the so-called ‘late re-settlers’ [*Spätaussiedler*] are asked to prove German ethnicity by means of a variety of tests, including basic fluency in German. The integration of this massive wave of *Aussiedler* and *Spätaussiedler* has proven more difficult than in the 1960s and 1970s. In particular the *Russlanddeutsche* [Russian Germans] live on the margins of German society, residing in old housing estates and working in unskilled positions. See Münz/Ulrich, “Changing Patterns,” 65-110; Stefan Wolff, “From Colonists to Emigrants: Explaining the ‘Return-Migration’ of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe,” in Rock/Wolff, *Coming Home*, 1-15; Klekowski von Koppenfels, “The Decline,” in *ibid.*, 102-118; Barbara Dietz, “Zuwanderung und Integration – Aussiedler in Deutschland,” *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für Geschichte* (1998), 445-472.

again moved en masse. Whereas the first phase consisted of a composite set of reactive migrations, the subsequent stage involved a series of proactive migrations which aimed at rectifying some of the consequences of the expulsion. As we have seen in chapter two, in occupied Germany a variety of factors still massively constrained this aim. Allied restrictions clearly thwarted the hopes which expellees had to move overseas and it was only by a concerted effort of German-Canadian groups that some 25'000 expellee relatives were moved to Canada through the IRO and the CCCRR. In marked contrast, the political and economic consolidation of the FRG set the stage for the 'expellee migration boom.' Within the FRG expellees were increasingly able to move freely across the country and find employment in urban centres. Similarly, after September 1950, when the Canadian government dropped the immigration ban against German nationals, expellees widely moved to Canada. As this research has shown, within the German migrant population expellees were overrepresented in both West Germany and Canada. In fact, they were twice as likely as locals to move either within West Germany or to Canada.

However, beneath this mobility, this dissertation has revealed significant differences among various expellee groups. With regard to Canada, the overrepresentation of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe among the expellee immigrant population comes as no surprise. While their settlement in Canada since the late 19th century is well documented, in the post-World-War-II decades favourable government policies and chains of migration obviously sustained this overrepresentation. However, for West Germany this dissertation has not been able to identify similar

connections. Migration chains and networks appear to have directed expellee groups from the former German territories east of the Oder/Neisse Rivers to the Ruhr area where Germans (and Poles) from Silesia and East Prussia were settling since the late 19th century. Yet, whether expellee groups from north-eastern Europe similarly followed migration chains remains to be answered by further research. This study was only able to show that they disproportionately moved from the north to the south of the FRG.

Lastly, Richmond's model of international migration and particularly Giddens' structuration theory have supported the argument of this dissertation that expellees formed viable national identities based on the reproduction and renegotiation of ethno-cultural values. The post-World-War-I peace treaties left Germans from across Central and Eastern Europe with a deep sense of injustice. While Germany lost substantial territories to Poland, ethnic German groups which had been part of the German and the Austro-Hungarian empires were denied the right-to-self-determination (e.g. in Danzig, Bohemia and Moravia or Austria). Subsequently, Nazi Germany shored up this discontent and ultimately attempted to re-order Europe's population along ethno-racial lines. However, after its downfall, this backfired and led to the expulsion of the German population from Central and Eastern Europe. This sequence of events deeply marked expellees and, following Giddens, inevitably led them to reproduce ethno-national identities. Indeed, contrary to some suggestions in scholarship, expellees and their contemporaries did not simply switch to civic forms of nationalism in the post-war

period.⁹ Rather, they continued to identify with a set of ethno-national ideas which had paved the way to the expulsion. After all, it was because they were Germans that expellees were unable to stay or return home. In the FRG this meant that expellees capitalized on their German background and together with locals developed identities as ‘German provincials.’ In Canada, by contrast, expellees were a minority among a minority and therefore constructed a viable identity as ‘Euro-Canadians’ which fitted the new national idiom.

While both of the expellee identities forged in the FRG and Canada testify to the prevalence of ethnic nationalism in the first part of the 20th century, it is clear that they were not set in stone. Depending on the context and situation, expellees adjusted the content of their identities. Thus, this dissertation is clearly in agreement with Rogers Brubaker. As he writes, national identities are no ‘cultural blocks’ frozen in time, but a “contingent, conjecturally fluctuating and precarious frame of vision and the basis for individual and collective action, rather than a relatively stable product of deep developmental trends in economy, polity or culture.”¹⁰ Expellees in both the FRG and Canada precisely adopted such ‘frames of vision’ to make sense of the world around them, assert their place and honour their origins. Moreover, on the basis of this research it is also clear that ‘national’ and ‘transnational’ are not mutually exclusive. Admittedly, expellees were unable to ‘transnationalize’ their ethno-provincial heritage and it was only in the FRG that they were able to mould this identity into the national ‘frame of vision.’

⁹ For a brief discussion of these civic forms of nationalism, see notably Knischewski, “Post-War National Identity in Germany,” 125-154.

¹⁰ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 19.

Even so, in Canada expellees were able to honour this heritage in clubs and associations. As soon as they passed through doors to a clubhouse, they entered a transnational space, they spoke in dialect and, on festive occasions, they dressed up in traditional clothing. Meanwhile, once they left the clubhouse, they moved back into the national space and again operated as 'Euro-Canadians,' calling attention to the more widely recognized contributions they made as immigrants. In effect, the 'transnational' and 'national' were perfectly complementary.

Today, as two generations have passed since Germans were expelled from Central and Eastern Europe, the structuration process suggests that expellees continue to negotiate their identities. In the new reunified Germany it appears that expellees who formerly were residents of the GDR now also celebrate the ethno-provincial heritage of the homeland. In the early 1990s homeland societies expanded with considerable ease in the new federal states of the former GDR. In Canada, meanwhile, it appears that expellees have become reluctant supporters of the 'cultural mosaic.' Moreover, with the foundation of the Toronto-based Society of German Heritage from Eastern Europe expellees have sought to gain wider publicity. Nevertheless, while such recent developments require further research, the generation which I have focused on in this dissertation is rapidly disappearing. In the long run the expulsion of Germans from Central and Eastern Europe will no longer be an 'experience,' but a historical event whose commemoration will be just as much contested. Recent developments in the FRG clearly testify to this trend. Starting in 2002, Günther Grass's publication *Crabwalk: A Novel* won a great deal of attention as he claimed to have broken a taboo. However, his

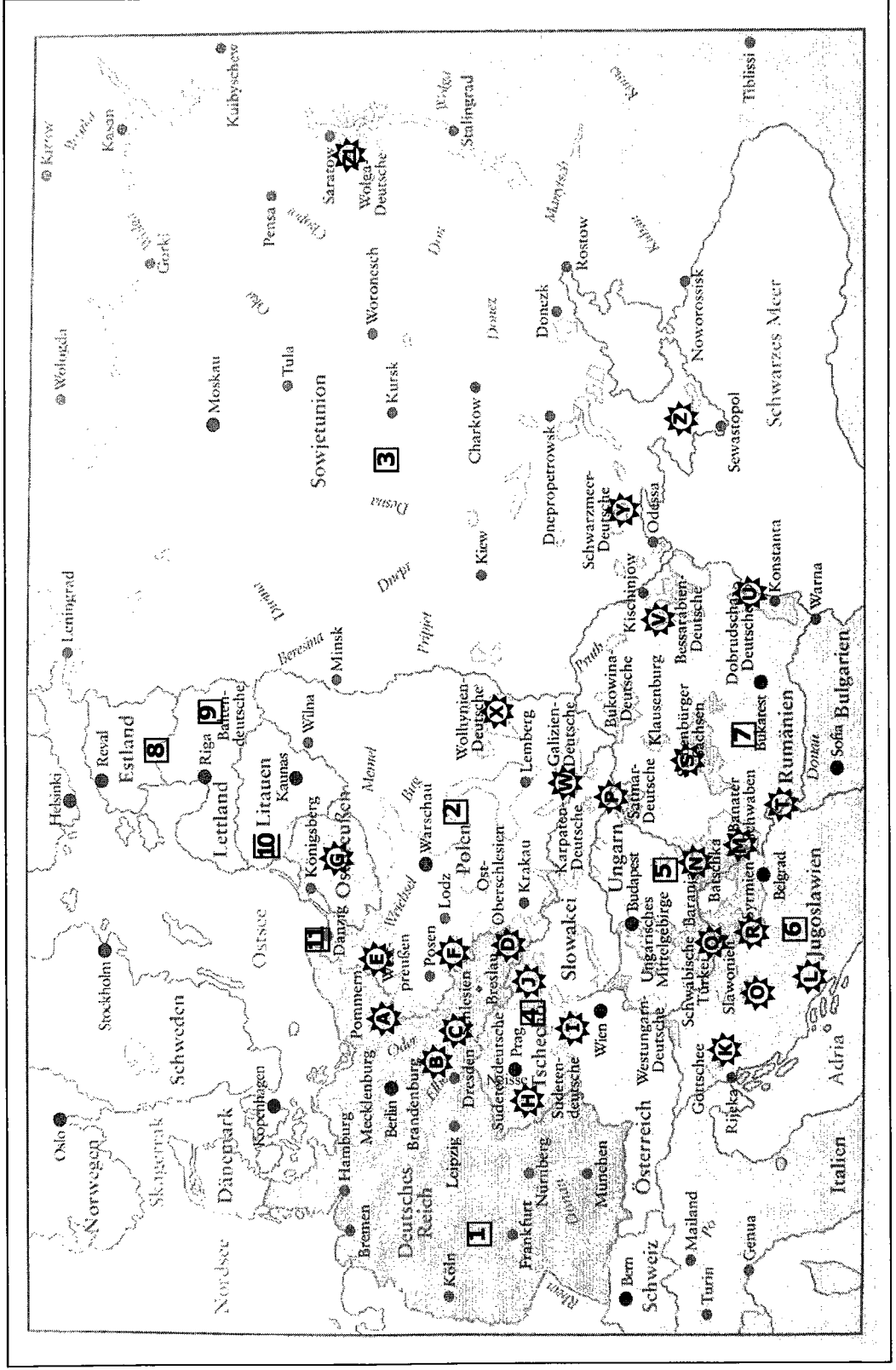
novel about the *Gustloff* – a Nazi passenger ship drowned by Soviet submarines in early 1945 and laden with thousands of Germans desperate to escape the eastern front – had nothing new for the German public and dwelt, as one historian rightly put it, “on a question that has haunted Germans since 1945.”¹¹ More recently, the call of the Federation of Expellees for a ‘Centre Against Expulsion’ led to a public outcry in the FRG and Poland.¹² While in 2006 the two-part film series *The Flight* broke previous German TV ratings with over 14 million viewers, an exhibition in Berlin at the end of the same year illustrated in detail the fate of German expellees and led to a public outrage in Poland. Apparently, as the *Gustloff*’s ship bell was on display, the Polish public called for its return to Gdansk. Needless to add, given these twists and turns around the commemoration of the expulsion, the expellee story will continue to be written and re-written.

¹¹ Robert G. Moeller, “Sinking Ships, the Lost Heimat and Broken Taboos: Guenter Grass and the Politics of Memory in Contemporary Germany,” *Contemporary European History* 12: 2 (2003), 180. See also Rainer Schulze, “Die deutsche Titanic und die verlorene Heimat: Flucht und Vertreibung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus Mittel-, Ost- und Südosteuropa in der deutschen kollektiven Erinnerung,” in *Annali dell’Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento* 29 (2003), 577-616.

¹² Pawel Lutomski, “The Debate about a Center against Expulsions: An Unexpected Crisis in German-Polish Relations?” *German Studies Review* 27: 3 (October 2004), 449-468.

Appendix


I. Map of Expellee Origins (German settlement in Europe in 1937)



Legend¹

☐ Countries

- 1 Germany
- 2 Poland
- 3 USSR
- 4 Czechoslovakia
- 5 Hungary
- 6 Yugoslavia
- 7 Romania
- 8 Estonia
- 9 Latvia
- 10 Lithuania
- 11 Danzig

(Historic) Regions 

- A Pomerania
- B Brandenburg
- C Lower Silesia
- D Upper Silesia
- E West Prussia
- F Posen (Poznań)
- G East Prussia
- H Bohemia
- I Moravia
- J Moravian Silesia
- K Gottschee (Slovenia)
- L Bosnia
- M Banat
- N Batschka
- O Slavonia
- P Satu-Mare

- Q Swabian Turkey
- R Syrmia
- S Bukovina
- T Transylvania
- U Dobruja
- V Besserabia
- W Galicia
- X Volhynia
- Y Black Sea
- Z Crimea
- Z1 Volga

¹ Map as printed in: *Flucht und Vertreibung, 267.*

II. Expellees in West Germany²

A) Expellee Share of West German Population (in %)

Census Year	FEDERAL STATES											TOTAL
	S. HO	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG
1946	32	4	23	5	6	14	1	9	19	0	6	13
1950	33	7	27	9	10	17	5	13	21	0	7	16
1970	24	13	23	16	15	18	8	17	18	4	10	17

² Unless otherwise specified, the data source for West Germany is: Reichling, *Die Vertriebenen in Zahlen*, vol. 1, 59; and vol. 2, 32, 40, 70-73. Country of origin according to pre-World War II borders; for the federal states abbreviations are: Baden-Württemberg (B. WUE), North-Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Bavaria (BAV), Hamburg (HAM), Rhineland-Palatinate (R. PAL), Berlin (BER), Hesse (HESSE), Saarland (SAAR), Bremen (BRE), Lower Saxony (L. SAX), Schleswig-Holstein (S. HO).

B) Residency in 1946 (in 1000s)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG		
Eastern Provinces	678	41	1162	18	570	127	15	98	534	0	92	3335		
Czechoslovakia	10	2	39	1	26	335	3	262	872	0	4	1554		
Eastern Europe	140	7	251	4	63	75	5	163	207	0	18	933		
Other	6	5	16	2	39	15	8	34	45	0	3	173		
Total	834	55	1468	25	698	552	31	557	1658	0	117	5995		

C) Residency in 1946 (in %)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG		
Eastern Provinces	20.3	1.2	34.8	0.5	17.1	3.8	0.4	2.9	16.0	0.0	2.8	55.6		
Czechoslovakia	0.6	0.1	2.5	0.1	1.7	21.6	0.2	16.9	56.1	0.0	0.3	25.9		
Eastern Europe	15.0	0.8	26.9	0.4	6.8	8.0	0.5	17.5	22.2	0.0	1.9	15.6		
Other	3.5	2.9	9.2	1.2	22.5	8.7	4.6	19.7	26.0	0.0	1.7	2.9		
Total	13.9	0.9	24.5	0.4	11.6	9.2	0.5	9.3	27.7	0.0	2.0	100		

D) Residency in 1950 (in 1000s)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES											TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG
Eastern Provinces	688	86	1442	36	1040	216	80	237	598	0	118	4541
Czechoslovakia	13	6	58	2	74	394	16	323	1026	0	6	1918
Poland & Gdansk	113	12	226	6	126	32	15	44	60	0	16	650
USSR (+ Baltics)	27	3	54	1	19	10	5	15	25	0	3	162
S-E. Europe of which Hungary	7	1	46	0	12	43	11	193	164	0	1	478
Yugoslavia	0	0	2	0	2	26	1	98	49	0	0	178
Rom. + Bulg.	1	0	7	0	4	11	5	52	68	0	0	148
Other	6	1	37	0	6	6	5	43	47	0	1	152
	8	7	21	3	52	20	10	45	59	0	4	229
Total	856	115	1847	48	1323	715	137	857	1932	0	148	7978

E) Residency in 1950 (in %)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES											TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG
Eastern Provinces	15.2	1.9	31.8	0.8	22.9	4.8	1.8	5.2	13.2	0	2.6	56.9
Czechoslovakia	0.7	0.3	3.0	0.1	3.9	20.5	0.8	16.8	53.5	0	0.3	24.0
Poland & Gdansk	17.4	1.8	34.8	0.9	19.4	4.9	2.3	6.8	9.2	0	2.5	8.2
USSR (+ Baltics)	16.7	1.9	33.3	0.6	11.7	6.2	3.1	9.3	15.4	0	1.9	2.0
S-E. Europe of which Hungary	1.5	0.2	9.6	0	2.5	9.0	2.3	40.4	34.3	0	0.2	6.0
Yugoslavia	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	1.1	14.6	0.6	55.1	27.5	0.0	0.0	2.2
Rom. + Bulg.	0.7	0.0	4.7	0.0	2.7	7.4	3.4	35.1	45.9	0.0	0.0	1.9
Other	3.9	0.7	24.3	0.0	3.9	3.9	3.3	28.3	30.9	0.0	0.7	1.9
	3.5	3.1	9.2	1.3	22.7	8.7	4.4	19.7	25.8	0	1.7	2.9
Total	10.7	1.4	23.2	0.6	16.6	9.0	1.7	10.7	24.2	0	1.9	100

F) Residency in 1970 (in 1000s)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG	FRG	
Eastern Provinces	453	165	1224	86	1893	356	182	474	591	24	160	5608	5608	
Czechoslovakia	13	11	57	5	144	394	40	428	924	3	11	2030	2030	
Poland & Gdansk	68	24	167	12	208	62	30	128	77	3	16	795	795	
USSR (+ Baltics)	14	7	24	2	38	16	9	57	25	2	5	199	199	
S-E. Europe	17	10	71	5	50	61	21	268	144	2	6	655	655	
Other	12	11	30	3	80	26	16	62	56	7	9	312	312	
Total	577	228	1573	113	2413	915	298	1419	1817	41	207	9599	9599	

G) Residency in 1970 (in %)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG	FRG	
Eastern Provinces	8.1	2.9	21.8	1.5	33.8	6.3	3.2	8.5	10.5	0.4	2.9	58.4	58.4	
Czechoslovakia	0.6	0.5	2.8	0.2	7.1	19.4	2.0	21.1	45.5	0.1	0.5	21.1	21.1	
Poland & Gdansk	8.6	3.0	21.0	1.5	26.2	7.8	3.8	16.1	9.7	0.4	2.0	8.3	8.3	
USSR (+ Baltics)	7.0	3.5	12.1	1.0	19.1	8.0	4.5	28.6	12.6	1.0	2.5	2.1	2.1	
S-E. Europe	2.6	1.5	10.8	0.8	7.6	9.3	3.2	40.9	22.0	0.3	0.9	6.8	6.8	
Other	3.8	3.5	9.6	1.0	25.6	8.3	5.1	19.9	17.9	2.2	2.9	3.3	3.3	
Total	6.0	2.4	16.4	1.2	25.1	9.5	3.1	14.8	18.9	0.4	2.2	100	100	

H) Population Growth Between 1950 and 1970 (in 1000s)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG	FRG	
Eastern Provinces	-235	79	-218	50	853	140	102	237	-7	24	42	42	1067	
Czechoslovakia	0	5	-1	3	70	0	24	105	-102	3	5	5	112	
Poland & Gdansk	-45	12	-59	6	82	30	15	84	17	3	0	0	145	
USSR (+ Baltics)	-13	4	-30	1	19	6	4	42	0	2	2	2	37	
S-E. Europe	10	9	25	5	38	18	10	75	-20	2	5	5	177	
Other	4	4	9	0	28	6	6	17	-3	7	5	5	83	
Total	-279	113	-274	65	1090	200	161	562	-115	41	59	59	1621	

I) Population Growth Between 1950 and 1970 (in %)

Country of Origin	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG	FRG	
Eastern Provinces	-34.2	91.9	-15.1	138.9	82.0	64.8	127.5	100.0	-1.2	-	35.6	35.6	23.5	
Czechoslovakia	0.0	83.3	-1.7	150.0	94.6	0.0	150.0	32.5	-9.9	-	83.3	83.3	5.8	
Poland & Gdansk	-39.8	100.0	-26.1	100.0	65.1	93.8	100.0	190.9	28.3	-	0.0	0.0	22.3	
USSR (+ Baltics)	-48.1	133.3	-55.6	100.0	100.0	60.0	80.0	280.0	0.0	-	66.7	66.7	22.8	
S-E. Europe	142.9	900.0	54.3	-	316.7	41.9	90.9	38.9	-12.2	-	500.0	500.0	37.0	
Other	50.0	57.1	42.9	0.0	53.8	30.0	60.0	37.8	-5.1	-	125.0	125.0	36.2	
Total	-32.6	98.3	-14.8	135.4	82.4	28.0	117.5	65.6	-6.0	-	39.9	39.9	20.3	

J) Share Growth Between 1950 and 1970

Country of Origins	FEDERAL STATES													TOTAL
	S. HOL	HAM	L. SAX	BRE	NRW	HESSE	R. PAL	B. WUE	BAV	SAAR	BER	FRG		
Eastern Provinces	-7.1	1	-10	0.7	10.9	1.5	1.4	3.3	-2.7	0.4	0.3	1.5		
Czechoslovakia	-0.1	0.2	-0.2	0.1	3.2	-1.1	1.2	4.3	-8	0.1	0.2	-2.9		
Poland & Gdansk	-8.8	1.2	-13.8	0.6	6.8	2.9	1.5	9.3	0.5	0.4	-0.5	0.1		
USSR (+ Baltics)	-9.7	1.6	-21.2	0.4	7.4	1.8	1.4	19.3	-2.8	1	0.6	0.1		
S-E. Europe	1.1	1.3	1.2	0.8	5.1	0.3	0.9	0.5	-12.3	0.3	0.7	0.8		
Other	0.3	0.4	0.4	-0.3	2.9	-0.4	0.7	0.2	-7.9	2.2	1.2	0.4		
Total	-4.7	1	-6.8	0.6	8.5	0.5	1.4	4.1	-5.3	0.4	0.3	0		

K) Internal Migration³

Year	DEPARTURES								
	CROSS-STATE			INTRA-STATE			TOTAL		
	ALL	EXPELLEES		ALL	EXPELLEES		ALL	EXPELLEES	
in 1000s	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in 1000s	in %	
1952	855.5	323.4	37.8	2131.5	544.7	25.6	2987.0	868.1	29.1
1953	927.6	341.2	36.8	2252.6	588.5	26.1	3180.2	929.7	29.2
1957	945.3	249.0	26.3	2283.2	560.9	24.6	3228.5	809.9	25.1

L) Level of Urbanization

Community Size	CENSUS YEAR												
	1950						1970						
	ALL	EXPELLEES		ALL	EXPELLEES		ALL	EXPELLEES		ALL	EXPELLEES		
in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %
Less than 500	2840	5.7	678	8.5	2590	4.5	309	3.1	3.1	2987.0	4.5	868.1	29.1
500-1000	4850	9.7	1133	14.2	3682	6.4	518	5.2	5.2	3180.2	6.4	929.7	29.2
1000-2000	5853	11.7	1284	16.1	4857	8.4	777	7.8	7.8	3228.5	8.4	809.9	25.1
2000-5000	5979	12.0	1229	15.4	6517	11.2	1176	11.8	11.8				
5000-10,000	4184	8.4	774	9.7	5532	9.5	1047	10.5	10.5				
10,000-20,000	3323	6.7	566	7.1	5419	9.3	1106	11.1	11.1				
20,000-50,000	4383	8.8	630	7.9	6894	11.9	1355	13.6	13.6				
50,000-100,000	2918	5.9	311	3.9	4187	7.2	797	8.0	8.0				
100,000-200,000	3644	7.3	373	4.7	5152	8.9	767	7.7	7.7				
200,000-500,000	4544	9.1	470	5.9	5416	9.3	867	8.7	8.7				
Over 500,000	7325	14.7	529	6.6	7793	13.4	1246	12.5	12.5				
Total	49843	100	7977	100	58039	100	9965	100	100				

³ Source: Statistisches Bundesamt, "Die Wanderungen innerhalb des Bundesgebietes 1950-1953," *Wirtschaft und Statistik* 6: 11 (November 1954), 520; "Die Wanderungen innerhalb des Bundesgebietes 1953-1957," *ibid.* 10: 10 (October 1958), 560.

M) Occupations in 1939

Country of Origin	SELF-EMPLOYED IN %		WORKERS/EMPLOYEES IN %				TOTAL IN 1000s
	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	OTHER	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	
Eastern Provinces	18.9	9.9	7.5	26.7	14.2	22.8	1632
Czechoslovakia	21.9	11.8	4.7	31.9	11.8	17.9	855
Poland & Gdansk	26.7	10.5	4.2	20.2	14.0	24.4	307.4
USSR (+ Baltics)	32.6	13.1	6.0	17.2	12.2	18.9	58.2
S-E. Europe of which Hungary	49.0	10.7	7.0	21.4	3.5	8.3	228.5
Yugoslavia	54.1	7.7	7.9	21.1	2.6	6.6	75.8
Rom. + Bulg.	54.0	10.0	4.5	18.0	4.5	9.0	66.7
Other	40.7	14.0	8.1	24.4	3.5	9.3	86
	4.0	14.1	2.1	24.7	15.0	40.1	47.4
Total	22.7	10.7	6.3	26.9	12.7	20.7	3128.5

N) Occupations in 1956

Country of Origin	SELF-EMPLOYED IN %		WORKERS/EMPLOYEES IN %				TOTAL IN 1000s
	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	OTHER	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	
Eastern Provinces	1.5	5.4	5.6	49.4	15.0	23.1	1489.0
Czechoslovakia	1.5	7.1	4.5	53.5	12.6	20.8	665.0
Poland & Gdansk	1.7	6.4	5.3	47.8	14.8	23.9	263.4
USSR (+ Baltics)	1.6	5.7	6.8	49.8	13.6	22.6	44.2
S-E. Europe of which Hungary	2.1	4.4	4.9	68.6	5.9	14.1	185.0
Yugoslavia	1.2	3.0	3.4	75.6	5.0	11.8	59.5
Rom. + Bulg.	3.9	5.7	7.1	60.3	7.1	16.0	56.4
Other	1.3	4.6	4.3	69.5	5.8	14.5	69.1
	0.9	13.2	1.8	32.8	20.3	31.1	45.4
Total	1.5	6.0	5.2	51.3	13.8	22.1	2692.0

O) Occupations in 1970

	SELF-EMPLOYED IN %		WORKERS/EMPLOYEES IN %				TOTAL IN 1000s
	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	OTHER	AGRICULT. & FORESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE & TRANSPORT	OTHER	
Expellees only	1.7	5.5	1.1	48.3	16.6	26.0	4239
General population	6.3	9.6	1.2	45.6	17.0	20.2	26493

III. Expellees in Canada⁴

A) German/Expellee Migration from West Germany to Canada⁵

YEAR OF MIGRATION	FROM WEST GERMANY TO CANADA			
	ALL GERMANS	EXPELLEES ONLY	EXPELLEES AS A SHARE OF GERMAN MIG. IN %	EXPELLEES AS A SHARE OF OVERSEAS EXPELLEEE MIG. IN %
1948	5000			
1949	5700			
1950	4600			
1951	28000			
1952	24400			
1953	24923	9812	39	58
1954	21692	7000	32	44
1955	13887	4997	32	32
1956	19201	5513	29	24
1957	21855	5709	26	34
1958	12176	3001	25	30
1959	9268			
TOTAL	190702	(36032)	(31)	(37)

⁴ Unless otherwise specified, the data for Canada has been calculated from a random sample of microdata files (year 1971 and 1981) as provided by the Computing in the Humanities and Social Sciences (CHASS) at the University of Toronto, Canadian Census Analyser, <http://dc1.chass.utoronto.ca/census/mainmicro>. Sample sizes are 214'019 (1971) and 243'437 (1981). Relevant cases are indicated for each table. Countries of birth are listed according to international boundaries in effect at the time of enumeration and not at the time of birth. Abbreviations are: Alberta (ALTA), British Columbia (B.C.), Manitoba (M.B.), Maritime provinces (MARIT.), Ontario (O.N.), Québec (P.Q.) and Saskatchewan (SASK.).

⁵ Source: For the years 1948-1952 and 1959: Statistisches Bundesamt, *Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1959* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960). For the other years, Statistisches Bundesamt, "Wanderung der Vertriebenen und Zugewanderten," *Statistische Berichte* (1955-1961). Expellees are only differentiated for the years 1953 to 1958. The TOTAL expellee numbers and percentages are averages of these years. The numbers for 1948-1952 are estimates by the OECD in association with the UN, ILO and ICEM.

B) German/Expellee Migration from Canada to West Germany⁶

YEAR OF MIGRATION	FROM CANADA TO WEST GERMANY			
	ALL GERMANS	EXPELLEES ONLY	EXPELLEES AS A SHARE OF GERMAN MIG. IN %	EXPELLEES AS A SHARE OF OVERSEAS EXPELLEES MIG. IN %
1953	1186	243	21	11
1954	2051	562	27	17
1955	2261	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1956	2560	677	27	18
1957	3542	915	26	19
1958	4870	1196	25	23
1959	4574	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
TOTAL	21044	(3593)	(25)	(18)

⁶ Source: Statistische Bundesamt, "Wanderung der Vertriebenen und Zugewanderten," *Statistische Berichte* (1955-1961). Expellees are only differentiated for the years 1953 to 1958. The TOTAL expellee numbers and percentages are averages of these years.

C) German/Expellee Immigrants arriving up to 1946 in Canada (1971 Census)

Country of Birth	RESIDENCE BY PROVINCE IN %							CANADA IN %	
	ALTA.	B.C.	M.B.	MARIT.	O.N.	P.Q.	SASK.	TOTAL	EXPEL. ONLY
Germany	18.4	25.1	7.8	0.6	26.3	4.5	17.3	35.9	
Poland	12.2	20.4	16.3	0.0	14.3	2.0	34.7	9.8	15.3
USSR	22.4	20.0	17.6	0.0	14.8	1.0	24.3	42.1	65.6
E.Europe	9.8	13.1	4.9	0.0	37.7	13.1	21.3	12.2	19.1
Total (499 cases)	18.4	21.0	12.4	0.2	21.6	3.8	22.4	100.0	100.0

D) German/Expellee Immigrants to Canada arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1971 Census)

Country of Birth	RESIDENCE BY PROVINCE IN %							CANADA IN %	
	ALTA.	B.C.	M.B.	MARIT.	O.N.	P.Q.	SASK.	TOTAL	EXPEL. ONLY
Germany	13.6	19.6	5.6	1.0	48.2	9.2	2.8	71.8	
Poland	27.7	21.4	15.2	0.0	27.7	0.0	8.0	11.2	39.7
USSR	13.4	25.6	19.5	0.0	31.7	3.7	6.1	8.2	29.1
Other East. Europe	17.0	9.1	4.5	0.0	59.1	9.1	1.1	8.8	31.2
Total (1000 cases)	15.5	19.4	7.7	0.7	45.5	7.7	3.5	100.0	100.0

E) German/Expellee Immigrants to Canada arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	RESIDENCE BY PROVINCE IN %							CANADA IN %	
	ALTA.	B.C.	M.B.	MARIT.	O.N.	P.Q.	SASK.	TOTAL	EXPEL. ONLY
Germany	12.0	18.6	4.7	1.4	53.1	7.9	2.2	68.3	
Poland	32.7	26.0	14.4	0.0	22.1	1.9	2.9	11.4	32.3
USSR	14.1	26.3	22.2	0.0	31.3	2.0	4.0	10.9	30.7
Hungary	17.6	5.9	5.9	0.0	58.8	11.8	0.0	1.9	5.3
Yugoslavia	7.8	9.8	2.0	0.0	72.5	7.8	0.0	5.6	15.8
Czechoslovakia	11.1	16.7	11.1	0.0	55.6	5.6	0.0	2.0	5.6
Total (912 cases)	14.9	21.7	11.0	1.0	49.8	6.6	2.3	100.0	100.0

F) Occupations of Male German/Expellee Population arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1971 Census)

Country of Birth	WORKING SECTORS IN %				
	AGRI. & FORRESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	NOT APPL.
Germany	5.2	46.8	10.6	34.3	3.1
Poland	6.9	44.8	12.1	31.0	5.2
USSR	9.3	48.8	4.7	27.9	9.3
E. Europe	11.5	50.0	9.6	26.9	1.9
Total (538)	6.3	47.0	10.2	32.7	3.7

G) Occupations of Female German/Expellee Population arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1971 Census)

Country of Birth	WORKING SECTORS IN %				
	AGRI. & FORRESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	NOT APPL.
Germany	5.7	7.5	11.1	36.7	61.1
Poland	7.0	8.8	3.5	17.5	63.2
USSR	7.0	4.7	2.3	14.0	72.1
E. Europe	0.0	21.6	8.1	29.7	59.5
Total (469)	5.5	8.5	9.2	31.8	62.0

H) Occupations of Male German/Expellee Population arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	WORKING SECTORS IN %				
	AGRI. & FORRESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	NOT APPL.
Germany	3.3	42.6	10.2	33.0	10.8
Poland	2.3	40.9	9.1	27.3	20.5
USSR	7.1	35.7	8.9	23.2	25.0
Hungary	15.2	40.1	15.2	29.5	0.0
Yugoslavia	10.0	36.7	16.7	23.3	13.3
Czechoslovakia	0.0	50.0	12.5	12.5	25.0
Total (482)	4.4	40.7	10.6	30.9	13.5

D) Occupations of Female German/Expellee Population arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	WORKING SECTORS IN %				
	AGRI. & FORRESTRY	INDUSTRY	TRADE	OTHER	NOT APPL.
Germany	2.9	12.5	11.3	35.0	61.7
Poland	0.0	3.8	9.4	20.8	66.0
USSR	6.1	8.2	4.1	18.4	63.3
Hungary	0.0	0.0	0.0	27.3	72.7
Yugoslavia	0.0	19.0	14.3	14.3	52.4
Czechoslovakia	25.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	0.0
Total (449 cases)	2.9	10.9	10.2	30.5	62.3

J) Urban Residence of German/Expellee Immigrants arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1981 Census)⁷

Country of Birth	URBAN RESIDENCE BY PROVINCE IN %									
	ALTA.	B.C.	M.B.	MARIT.	O.N.	P.Q.	SASK.	CANADA		
Germany	67.1	36.4	83.3	42.9	63.2	80.0	-	60.2		
Poland	76.2	24.0	92.9	-	69.0	100.0	-	65.5		
USSR	37.5	28.6	96.0	-	71.9	100.0	-	63.5		
Hungary	66.7	100.0	50.0	-	69.2	100.0	-	70.0		
Yugoslavia	25.0	80.0	-	-	60.0	80.0	-	61.1		
Czechoslovakia	66.7	33.3	100.0	-	90.9	100.0	-	78.9		
Total (912 cases)	65.3	35.3	88.9	42.9	64.7	82.5	-	61.8		

J) Homeownership of German/Expellee Immigrants arriving between 1946 and 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	TENURE	
	OWNED	RENT
Germany	78.5	20.1
Poland	93.2	6.8
USSR	92.5	7.5
Hungary	85.7	14.3
Yugoslavia	98.1	1.9
Czechoslovakia	100.0	0.0
Total (951 cases)	83.5	15.6

⁷ Following metropolitan areas were included in the 1981 census: Alberta: Edmonton and Calgary. British Columbia: Vancouver. Manitoba: Winnipeg. Maritimes: Halifax. Ontario: Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, St. Catharines-Niagara, Kitchener, London. Québec: Montréal and Québec.

L) Age at Immigration of German Immigrants/Expellees arriving between 1946 to 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	AGE IN %							Total
	Under 5	5 to 12	13 to 19	20 to 34	35 to 64	Over 64		
Germany	14.8	13.0	12.0	46.2	14.0	-	100.0	
Poland	0.9	10.4	24.5	44.3	19.8	-	100.0	
USSR	-	8.2	17.3	46.9	27.6	-	100.0	
Hungary	-	-	7.7	61.5	30.8	-	100.0	
Yugoslavia	-	12.2	18.4	61.2	8.2	-	100.0	
Czechoslovakia	-	5.9	5.9	70.6	17.6	-	100.0	
Total (912 cases)	10.2	11.8	14.3	47.6	16.2	-	100.0	

M) Gender Distribution of German Immigrants/Expellees arriving between 1946 to 1955 (1981 Census)

Country of Birth	GENDER IN %	
	Women	Men
Germany	45.2	54.8
Poland	47.7	52.3
USSR	49.0	51.0
Hungary	46.7	53.3
Yugoslavia	38.0	62.0
Czechoslovakia	50.0	50.0
Total (912 cases)	45.6	54.4

IV. Note on Autobiographic and Oral History Sources

This dissertation draws to a large extent on personal accounts of various types including recorded interviews, diaries, letters, personal memos and autobiographies. First of all, I perused 85 recorded interviews: 40 from the various collections of the *Institut für Geschichte und Biographie* (IGB) at the University of Hagen in Lüdenscheid, Germany, and 48 from the Multicultural History Society of Ontario (MHSO) in Toronto. For the former set of interviews recorded between 1980 and 1989, I only read the transcripts and did not listen to tapes. I selected the interviews on the basis of the place of birth as indicated in the Institute's inventory. For the second set of interviews recorded between 1977 and 1985, there were no transcripts and I therefore listened to the tapes myself. I went through all the tapes of each relevant collection (i.e. German collection I and II, Mennonite collection and Danube Swabian collection) and selected interviewees who indicated a birth place in the areas of Central and Eastern Europe which were affected by the expulsion of Germans in the aftermath of World War II.

In addition, I supplemented these sets of recorded oral histories with a set of memoirs which I assembled from two sources. On the one hand, I researched Germany's and Canada's national libraries and selected relevant autobiographies penned in particular by authors from the two groups I focus on in this dissertation (German Balts and Sudeten-German social democrats). In this way, I found altogether 44 published autobiographies. On the other hand, I also placed ads in various community newsletters and called on expellees to send me their unpublished autobiographies. Again, in both countries I targeted primarily the two groups which I focus on. In this way, I found a

substantial collection of memoirs held by the German-Baltic community in Canada, consisting in total of twelve unpublished memoirs. In addition, I found a further four unpublished memoirs written by expellees residing in southern British Columbia and Ontario. My ads in Germany yielded fewer results. Besides two unpublished memoirs, I received mostly references to works which had already been published. For the German part of my research, I used primarily autobiographies which I found at the *Institut für Geschichte und Biographie*. As part of the 'German Memory' ('*Deutsches Gedächtnis*') and Kempowski collections, I indeed found eight unpublished titles. Thus, all in all, this dissertation took into account 26 unpublished memoirs.

Most of the recorded interviews and autobiographies were taken or written in German. Among the MHSO interviews which were taken by volunteers, only two interviewees spoke English. Both had come to Canada as teenagers and so predominantly spoke English. Similarly, the majority of the memoirs were written in German. In fact, from the 70 published or unpublished autobiographies analyzed, only 11 expellees wrote their memoirs in English. However, there is a marked difference between memoirs which have been published in Canada as most of these are in English. Specifically, eight out of ten expellees residing in Canada published their memoirs in English, whereas only three of the 16 Canada-based expellees, whose unpublished memoirs I read, had also written their memoirs in English.

To allow for a less strenuous reading, I did not cite quotes in German and use footnotes for the corresponding translation. Throughout this dissertation, I translated quotes myself from German into English. Except for the recorded interviews, the

original language of the texts referred to are indicated in the footnotes. Whilst the date or location of the publication is consistently in English, I have left the titles of the archived documents or published texts in the original language.

Bibliography

1. Archival Sources

Archiv der Seliger-Gemeinde im Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn (ASG)

Emigration Kanada
Korrespondenz Franz Kögler
Nachlass Andreas Amstätter
Nachlass Ernst Fellinghauer
Nachlass Ludwig Fritsche
Nachlass Karl Geberich
Nachlass Marie Günzl
Nachlass Adolf Hasenöhrl
Nachlass Emil Kutscha
Nachlass Karl Löwit
Nachlass Heinrich Nitschmann
Nachlass Ernst Paul
Nachlass Frank J. Reilich
Nachlass Roman Wirkner

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