

VIOLENCE AND ARBITRARINESS DURING THE EXPULSION OF GERMANS FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA: PAGES FROM THE REPORT OF THE U.S. LIAISON OFFICER

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The expulsion of the German minority from Czechoslovakia immediately after the Second World War remains a sensitive and much disputed topic. The recent political changes in Central Europe have added further sharpness and vehemency to the discussion. The plethora of publications devoted to the expulsion, appearing primarily but not solely in Germany, has until recently been largely based on Western documentation. Although Prague has contributed some of the sources¹, greater access to archives in the Czech and Slovak republics, as well in the former Soviet Union, should increase our knowledge and understanding of the topic.

One major source of information available in the West was apparently unknown to scholars²: the report of Colonel John H. Fye of the United States Army (Field Artillery). Fye served as the American Liaison Officer with the Czechoslovak General Staff from 1 December 1945 to 30 November 1946. As Deputy Chief of Staff of the XII U.S. Corps (Third Army) at the end of the war, Fye was placed in charge of all Displaced Persons camps, movements, the repatriation of Displaced Persons and related matters in the territory occupied by the XII Corps in Bohemia, which extended from approximately Kraslice (Graslitz) in western Bohemia to České Budějovice (Budweis) in southern Bohemia. As a result of his duties, Fye made contacts, and formed friendships with many Czech officials, both civil and military, from Prague. Just before the withdrawal of the XII Corps from Czechoslovakia, its Commanding General was asked by the Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defense to post Fye to the Czechoslovak General Staff in Prague, because an American officer would be needed at the headquarters in connection with the impending expulsion of the German minority (the Sudeten Germans) to the American Zone of occupation in Germany. Fye was indeed assigned the task.

At the conclusion of his assignment, Fye prepared a report which he addressed to the Commanding General of the U.S. Forces European Theater³. The most important

¹ Král, Václav (ed.): *Die Deutschen in der Tschechoslowakei 1933–1947. Dokumentensammlung*, Praha 1964.

² According to Carol A. Leadenham, Assistant Archivist for Reference, Hoover Institution Archives: "... collections do not list any publications that quoted from the Fait collection. This file is not complete, however ...".

³ United States Forces European Theater (USFET), A. P. O. 751.

office records were appended to his report. Because of the controversial nature of much of the material at the time, the author advised that it be classified "Restricted."

Two copies were made of the report; the original was handed to Colonel Stanley Mickelsen, chief of G5, USFET. This copy never left the division. It was apparently destroyed there. A second copy was retained by Margaret Eleanor Fait, a G5 staff member, who eventually deposited it at the archives of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace in Stanford, California⁴. It is assumed that Fait's is the only existing copy of this important source on the expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia.

Fait left a dramatic description of the preparation of the report:

Col. Fye says very little about the USSR pressure on him or on this project in the attached report. I saw him in Prague in early November, 1946.

He had no notice of my arrival although proper clearance had been obtained, I thought.

I went to the Czechoslovak General Staff Hq. which was completely ringed with USSR – not Czech – soldiers. It took me approximately two hours to reach Col. Fye, progressing through various offices and interviews – some Russian, some Czech.

When he saw me, he was extremely upset and asked that I leave immediately. He said he would contact me where I was staying at the Ambassador Hotel.

When he arrived at the hotel, he requested that we talk in the middle of the lobby. His eyes constantly searched for NKVD operatives as he explained. I requested a report of the entire expellee program.

He agreed to me[et] with me when he got out of Czechoslovakia but said he could bring little with him.

I made arrangements for him to spend 10 days in Frankfurt before returning to the U. S. Because of the nature of the material, he worked in a locked room in the Intelligence Section.

He made two copies and gave them to me. I gave one to my "boss," Col. Stanley Mickelsen, G5, USFET. The other is here. Col. Mickelsen's copy never moved out of the division and was subsequently destroyed, I believe.

Fye's report covers 46 double-spaced typed quarto pages, with an additional 22 documents appended. Constituting an important source of information, they include *inter alia*, minutes, agreements, directives, memoranda, and letters of the American party, along with maps, pictures, statistical charts, and examples of stationery and rubber stamps. Appendix No. 22, the Office File of the Sudeten Movement, included in the original copy of the report, has apparently been destroyed.

The report describes expulsion procedures, as observed and handled by the American Liaison Officer. Because the American Zone was the major destination of the expellees (1,750,000 of an estimated 2,500,000 Germans were to be moved to the American Zone; the rest were to go to the Russian Zone), the Liaison Officers were of key importance for the smooth execution of the operation. Consequently, Fye was very well informed, as his report demonstrates. The ten-page introduction provides the geographic, historic, and political background to the operation, followed by a brief description of American military activity on Czechoslovak territory. After discussion of administrative and technical preparations, there is the main topic: details on the movement; political, logistical, and ethical problems; execution of the expulsion,

⁴ It is part of the Margaret Eleanor Fait Collection, Box 4, Folder 16.

direct quarrels with the Czechoslovak authorities and indirect friction with the Soviets. The human side receives much attention, with focus on complaints, terror, violence, arbitrary action, deportation of the ill, infirm, and insane, and of orphans and families whose breadwinner had been imprisoned.

There is also much discussion of the routes the expulsion followed, of the rolling stock used, the personal belongings and money the expellees were permitted to take with them, as well as of the role the accompanying staff and guards played. There were the trains of those designated Anti-Fascist as well as of individual refugees who left for Germany on their own initiative, sometimes in order to avoid expulsion to the Soviet Zone. The report demonstrates that the great flight of Jews from Poland and other Eastern European countries, especially to the American Zone, was important in the ebb and flow of the Sudeten German expulsion. The famous *Brichah* (flight) from Poland following the pogrom at Kielce in the summer of 1946 particularly created obstacles in the smooth flow of the expulsion. Fye repeatedly mentioned the crowded conditions in the American Zone, the lack of space and supplies to accommodate newcomers – he occasionally cited Jewish refugees as the specific cause – which hampered operations, to the great annoyance of the Czech authorities.

The majority of locations cited in Fye's report are in Bohemia, the rest in Moravia. The expulsion of the Carpathian Germans from Slovakia is nowhere mentioned; indeed, Fye barely understood the difference between the Bohemian lands and Slovakia. At least once, two wagon loads of Gypsies were attached to a transport of Germans. German-speaking Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, who were also loaded into the trains and shipped to Germany, are not mentioned in the text⁵.

Fye's is an intelligent, low-key, yet critical and balanced report. While he had considerable understanding for the Czech point of view and for the desire to expel the Germans, he was not convinced of the justice of the undertaking. Fye was very critical of the mistreatment of the expellees, which he noted from time to time. He sought, and often achieved, corrections and improvements, which were duly recorded. His barbs were aimed at the lower, local authorities rather than the central authorities – although they were not spared, particularly several communist leaders – whose behavior was assessed as mostly fair under the existing conditions, and willing to listen. These lower authorities were members of the district and local *Národní výbory* (National Committees), municipal authorities so often filled with communists. Fye evaluated them as follows: "The Communist element however was even more violent. It not only wanted to uproot and destroy the Germans but also the Czechs who collaborated with the Germans!" The *Sbor národní bezpečnosti* (Corps of National Security; the SNB) was another culprit:

This police agency was recruited in the main from the ranks of the partisans and was predominantly filled with young revolutionists drunk with power and hatred. The Local National Committees could no more control their police force than they, the committees, could be controlled by the National Government in Praha.

⁵ See Jelinek, Yeshayahu A.: *Ha-gkhalim ha-lokhashoth: yhudim b'czechoslovakia, 1944–1950* [Jews in Czechoslovakia, 1944–1950]. *Shvuth* 13 (1988) 49.

Although the Liaison Officer reported on periods of regular, orderly expulsion, he also discussed the earlier period as well as the irregularities that occurred while he was in charge:

With the Local National Committees 'packed' with these elements and young firebrands of the revolution the XII Corps had difficult experience in preventing wholesale acts of violence and brutality upon the German population of the zone.

In those early days before the Potsdam Agreement there appeared the spirit of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' which has been present throughout the entire expulsion movement on all levels of Czech agencies charged with the Sudeten evacuation.

In many areas the SNB and the Czech equivalent of the 'Carpetbaggers' went to work. Germans were driven from their homes in the middle of the night. Whole families were thrown into assembly camps, many of which were little better than the ex-German concentration camps. Men and boys were arrested for past crimes against the Czechs. Frequently families were separated, the women thrown and children being placed in one camp, the men in another.

In other areas the Germans were dispossessed gradually. In still other areas they were hardly disturbed. This action was anything but uniform.

Fye tells of complaints by the Sudeten Germans and even by many kind Czechs, and of interventions by the U.S. Army, which usually brought the complaints to the attention of the Local National Committees, "unless the act was too barbaric and demanded immediate attention."

Despite Fye's understanding of and compassion for Czech pain and past suffering, about which he offered many examples from the recent history of Bohemia and Moravia, he also objected to what he saw during the expulsion, commenting that:

This spirit has often irritated the American authorities in occupied Germany. It is needless to say that the Americans held no brief for the Germans and all they once stood for. The United States had contributed its life blood and treasure in the defeat of Nazi Germany, but a defeated people like prisoners of war are considered helpless and dependent, as well as at the mercy of the victors. As a Christian nation we believe in human treatment of the vanquished, but not so in Central Europe.

The above remarks had direct bearing on the American experience with the Czechs throughout the expulsion. Fye does not directly confirm the stories about atrocities which are so abundant in the Sudeten literature in Germany. Of course, he focuses on the period after the Potsdam Agreement, and it is generally agreed that the worst of the alleged brutalities took place prior to Potsdam. When Fye recorded inhumane treatment at the hands of various local authorities and individuals, he was primarily describing his own experience in the part of Bohemia which was directly under American rule. Turning to the post-Potsdam period, the descriptions become milder; although they still present a picture of enormous human hardship, they scarcely depict consistent brutality. Nevertheless, Fye would not have subscribed to the view that "There is no doubt that the organized transfer was effected in an efficient and humane way."⁶ His report, as well as the attached documentation, creates an impression of occasional irregularity and arbitrariness, along with some cases of premeditated wrongdoing. Fye's

⁶ Luža, Radomír: *The Transfer of the Sudeten Germans. A Study of Czech-German Relations, 1933-1962*. New York 1964, 289 (Cf. 283: "It pledged to do everything to effect the transfers in an orderly and humane manner").

report does not present a picture of organized evil, one in which earlier victims attempted to balance Nazi bestiality with brutality of their own, as numerous German works have tried to claim, but neither does the report leave the impression of Czech fairness. On the contrary. Not only the circumstances of the postwar period, but also unbridled passion marked the day.

In contemporary Czechoslovakia, reemerging from the experience of yet another totalitarian regime, there are frequent and frank discussions of this stain on the country's historical record. The crimes of the Nazis, including those of numerous Sudeten Germans, against the Czechs notwithstanding, the collective punishment of an entire minority people requires much historical research, and even more soul-searching. Colonel Fye's coolly worded, objective, and accurate report is an important document in modern Czech-German history.

The following texts constitute about 20 percent of the entire document. They were selected because of the particular interest that violence and arbitrariness during the expulsion evoked and still evokes in the Czech and Slovak republics, Germany, and elsewhere⁷.

The document contains the following chapters: Sudetenland; Early Liberation Days; Czechoslovakia's Sovereign Government Reestablished; Work Begins on the Sudetens!; US Troops Withdraw from Czechoslovakia; American Representation in Praha for Sudeten Expulsion; Potsdam Agreement becomes Effective; Proposed and Actual Sudeten Movement; January 1946 Conference to Establish Conditions of Transfer; Movement Renewed Under New Conditions; Reichsmarks; Complaints; Means of Expulsion; Rolling Stock; April 1946 Conference to Clarify Previous Condition of Transfer; Conference with the President (Beneš); Belittling Campaign; Soviet Take Begins; Pictures; June 1946 Conference on Conditions of Transfer; Elimination of Individual Entry Permit; Sick, Infirm, Aged and Insane; September 1946 Conference Looking to Closing out of Movement; Tempest in a Tea Pot; Temporary Suspension of Movement – 30 November 1946; Beginning of the End; November 1946 Conference Concerning Suspension; Our Remaining Obligation; Humane Execution Under the Potsdam Agreement; Recommendations.

Appendices: 1. Map of Czechoslovakia; 2. Plan of 20 November 1945 for transfer of Sudeten Germans; 3. Flow chart based on plan and the actual execution; 4. Minutes of U.S.-Czech meeting of January 1946; 5. Minutes of U.S.-Czech meeting of April 1946; 6. Amendments, U.S.-Czech meeting of June 1946; 7. Minutes of U.S.-Czech meeting of September 1946; 8. Agreement of U.S.-Czech meeting of November 1946; 9. OMGUS TW authorizing the commencement of the movement; 10. TWX directing reduction of number of trains, 15 July 1946; 11. TWX directing further reduction in trains in October and November. 12. TWX and Memorandum on subject of Reichsmarks; 13. Selected type complaints; 14. Samples of permits used; 15. Letter to the U.S.

⁷ For another published fragment, see my *Communists and the Sudeten German Expulsion*: Pages from the Report of the U.S. Liaison Officer. In: Pal, Jonas/Pastor, Péter/Tóth, Péter Pál (eds.): *Király Béla Emlékkönyv [Béla Király Festschrift]*. War and Society. Budapest 1992, pp. 185–190.

Ambassador; 16. Translation of article in Czech (Communist) newspaper; 17. Selected pictures of Assembly Camp; 18. Extract of agreement for Sudeten transfer to the Russian Zone; 19. List of persons mentioned; 20. Rubber stamps used in the American Liaison Section; 21. Czech-U. S. organization for handling the German Expulsion; 22. Office file on the Sudeten Movement (accompanying original copy of report only).

COMPLAINTS

There have been hundreds of complaints registered during this movement. The majority of these originated of course with the Sudetens AFTER they reached the U. S. Zone. Naturally many were well founded but far greater a number were spiteful and merely an effort to degrade Czechoslovakia. Several typical complaints are attached to this report¹.

The American authorities registered numerous complaints and objections in an effort to force Czechs to keep strictly to the letter of signed agreements².

The Czechs too made complaints – the first in fact – about the severity and possibly the over-enthusiastic and unjustified rejections of Sudeten Germans by the Liaison Officers at the border inspection points.

In order to eliminate the German complaints it finally became necessary to advise all Germans, before crossing into the U. S. Zone, that if they had complaints to make, they must be presented to the OMG³ Liaison Officers at the checking points in Czechoslovakia otherwise they would not be heard after arriving in the U. S. Zone.

Prior to this action the expellees would state to the OMG Liaison Officer, who inspected them just prior to their crossing over into the U. S. Zone, that everything was in order and they had no complaints. However as soon as they reached the U. S. Zone they made endless complaints saying that they had been afraid to make the complaints on Czechoslovak soil because they might not be accepted into the U. S. Zone.

The Chief of the Expellee Section⁴ in an effort to avoid the constant receipt of complaints and also in order to carry out the terms of the agreement, notified all assembly camp commanders and heads of all District National Committees that they would be held personally responsible for all Sudeten rejections at the border. Not only did this apply to their job but the return railroad fare would be charged against them. As will be noted later this effort was circumvented in some cases by threatening the expellees at the time of their entrapment.

Very shortly after the initial movement began, the American Liaison Officer in Praha⁵ advised the Ministry of the Interior that it should set up a group of trustworthy inspectors, men who would be sincerely interested in maintaining the good reputation of the Sudeten movement.

It was suggested that these inspectors, fully conversant with the terms and conditions of the current agreements, arrive frequently and unannounced at assembly camps and shipping points where the Germans were being "processed" for expulsion. They were to have full power and authority to inspect the expellees, to interrogate them and to order any corrective measures deemed necessary. In short, to see to it that all terms and conditions of the agreement were being lived up to by the local camp officials.

This recommendation was rejected by the Expellee Section of the Ministry of Interior as unnecessary.

The recommendation had been made because the majority of the Czech field force, the local National Committees, the SNB, the assembly camp commanders and supervisors, simply ignored the numerous directives and strong letters issued by the Czech Expellee Section demanding that the conditions of the Czech-OMGUS⁶ agreements be carefully adhered to in the handling of the Sudeten shipments.

This disregard for constituted authority, the inability of the central government to enforce its will upon subordinates; the vengeful "eye for eye" attitude and policy which resulted continually in the disruption of families, the stripping of people even of the bare necessities of life, and in some reported cases of cruel and inhuman treatment in the assembly camps, indicated little progress in establishing a strong government devoted to the concepts and principles for which

the United Nations fought the recent war, the successful results of which liberated Czechoslovakia.

Not until 4 October, when OMGUS summarily advised the Czech officials that no further trains were acceptable from eight districts because of failure to comply with agreed conditions of transfer, did the Expellee Section of the Ministry of Interior initiate the inspector system. It worked so well and so thoroughly that shipments from the specified districts could be resumed in a very few days. Strangely enough the inspections were not continued and by 26 October the OMG Liaison Officer at DOMAŽLICE [Taus] was discovering flagrant violations of the transfer agreement. Not only were there violations but deliberate attempts to deceive the American authorities and threats to the expellees by the commissioners of certain districts if they complained while in Czechoslovakia.

At this point it is only fair to say that, in the main, the Czech officials on the high level in this transfer movement have been well intentioned and quite honest. Their effort to carry out Czechoslovakia's part of the conditions of transfer as prescribed in mutually agreed to and signed documents has been sincere.

However, either these officials cannot enforce their will upon their subordinates, or are fearful of future retaliation and will not adopt means and methods which would assure compliance with their directives on the subject. Even these officials look with contempt and hatred upon the Sudeten Germans. Perhaps this inner "Czech feeling" is stronger in their minds than their country's obligation to fulfill its signed agreements.

The last complaint received at the American Liaison Section from OMG Bavaria for presentation to the Czech authorities indicated the absolute willfulness of the field force to openly violate the terms of the several Czech OMGUS agreements and to circumvent instructions of the Expellee Section of the Czech Ministry of the Interior.

Two expellee trains arrived at Domažlice on the same day enroute to the reception point at Furth im Walde.

On one train the commander, a Czech officer, had assembled the Sudeten car leaders and instructed them that when the OMG Liaison Officer inspected the train, each car leader was to report everything in order in his respective car. If any complaints were made it would go hard with the car leader.

On the other train the women expellees, whose husbands were being detained in Czechoslovakia, were instructed by the assembly camp authorities to tell the OMG Liaison Officer that their husbands were dead or that their whereabouts were unknown. This was on threats of severe punishment if any of the women were rejected because of disrupted families.

The OMG Liaison Officer, upon inspecting these trains, was suspicious when he received not a single complaint. As he reported it, by using almost coercive methods the women's resistance broke down and many told of their husbands being held in work camps and prisons awaiting trial.

¹ They have not been reproduced here.

² Colonel Fye had attached the following documents, which served as agreements: Minutes of an 8 January 1946 meeting between American and Czechoslovak authorities on the subject of movement of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia to the American Zone in Germany. This document has been reproduced in Král (ed.): *Acta Occupationis* 581-82, Doc. No. 465. - Minutes of a 9 April 1946 meeting between American and Czechoslovak authorities on the subject of movement of Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia to the American Zone in Germany. See Král: *Ibid.* 590-593, Doc. No. 474. - Amendments to conditions of transfer dated 19 June 1946. *Ibid.* 476, Doc. No. 476, signed by Oberst Messec. - Minutes of a 16 and 17 September 1946 meeting held at OMGUS Headquarters regarding the transfer of Sudetens from Czechoslovakia to the American Zone in Germany. *Ibid.* 599, Doc. No. 480. - Agreement concerning the temporary [!] interruption of the transfer of Germans from the Czechoslovak Republic to the U. S. occupied zone, 12 November 1946. *Ibid.* 602-03, Doc. No. 484.

³ Occupation Military Government.

⁴ He was Dr. Anton Kučera, Plenipotentiary of the Czechoslovak Government for the transfer of Germans, Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior. Most of the Czechoslovak officials were officers of the Ministry of National Defense – General Staff, 7th Section. The other Czechoslovak officials who participated in negotiations with the U.S. Army authorities were part of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Transport. On one occasion, representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the National Bank also took part.

⁵ Colonel Fye, residing in Prague.

⁶ Occupation Military Government United States.

MEANS OF EXPULSION

While the OMGUS-ČSR agreement of 10 January 1946 contemplated only normal 40-car expellee trains carrying approximately 1200 people each, other approved methods were added as time went on.

Frequently individual Germans who wished voluntarily to migrate were allowed by the Czechs to secure a truck or purchase a railroad ticket to a specific point in the U.S. Zone. After telephonic authority was secured from OMG Bavaria in each case an individual permit for egress was issued by the American Liaison Section. Sometimes a request from USFET¹ would be received to secure the release of a certain German or the dependents of a German employed by the U.S. Government. Also, certain Germans apparently had Czech "friends at court" in high places. For these the Czechs would request an egress permit to the U.S. Zone. Finally, OMG Bavaria advised the American Liaison Section that it could issue permits for entry into Bavaria without contacting OMG each time.

This gave birth to the individual and group permit system. It grew steadily in volume until it became a recognized route by all concerned. OMG officially set up a reception rate for trucks at Furth im Walde and Wiesau. Expellees arriving by truck brought with them more personal belongings and household goods than those coming by normal expellee train; therefore OMG Bavaria welcomed that route of voluntary migration².

As a point of interest it is noted that from 1 June to 31 October 1946 ten thousand one hundred and seventy-five Germans passed from Czechoslovakia to the U.S. Zone Germany on Military Entry Permits and Group Permits. During the same period over four-thousand requests were denied. All of these requests for permits passed through the American Liaison Section for final action.

For details of the mechanics of processing applications for permits see letter of 15 August 1946 addressed by the American Liaison Section to the U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia³.

Eventually OMGUS placed certain restrictions upon the issuance of group permits, limiting each permit to exactly 10 persons, no more, no less. As a few people, 5 or 6, could not find the additional 4 or 5 to fill the group of ten, they went to lawyers for assistance. The Czech lawyers immediately found a new source of income – making up groups of ten at a very high charge for each person. They gave the German people the excuse that they had to "pay off" the Czech and American permit authorities. Upon learning this the American Liaison Officer made an official written protest to the U.S. Ambassador who forcefully took the matter up with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and secured promise of an official investigation. That was 5 September 1946. No reply has been received at the time of making this report.

The Anti-Fascist Sudeten Germans were recognized by the Czechoslovak government as worthy of special consideration. They were permitted to send representatives to the U.S. Zone to negotiate and secure for their people locations for settlement from the civil government of LANDKREISE Bavaria, Württemberg-Baden and Hessen. All such grants were passed upon by Military Government before they became effective.

On 11 April R.C.X.⁴ granted acceptance into the U.S. Zone of four Anti-Fascist trains weekly. Each train to carry 300 persons with the maximum amount of their movable possessions.

In addition, two Anti-Fascist truck convoys of twelve trucks each were authorized to be accepted at Furth im Walde and Wiesau daily.

All Anti-Fascist nominal rolls for train and truck movement were processed through the American Liaison Section before being approved, signed, and released for movement.

The trains used for Anti-Fascists were the regular 40-car expellee trains which normally carried 1200 people. With only 300 to a train there was plenty of room for all of their movable possessions.

¹ United States Forces European Theater, the U. S. Army military command in Europe.

² According to the Agreement of 8 January 1946, regular expellees, not Anti-Fascists, could carry along 30 kilograms of baggage per person, such as clothing and cooking utensils, and food for three days. Beginning with 5 July 1946, the Czechoslovak authorities permitted each individual to take baggage weighing up to 70 kilos. This included personal belongings and necessities of life, e.g., objects needed for pursuing one's trade or profession. The U.S. authorities instructed the expellees to take in particular those articles which were scarce in Germany. Anti-Fascists could take an almost unlimited amount of baggage.

³ Not reproduced here.

⁴ Reparation Combined Executive.

HUMANE EXECUTION OF THE POTSDAM AGREEMENT

Any compulsory migration of the magnitude of the Sudeten expulsion, by its very nature, could not avoid being cruel in many respects.

In less than one year a great mass of humanity has been uprooted and moved to an area strange, and almost foreign to that group of people.

Some of them were innocent people who had never raised so much as a word of protest against the Czechoslovak nation. Many lived on the land and in villages where their ancestors had lived for hundreds of years before them. The present Czechoslovakia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to World War I and that empire was definitely Germanic.

Among the expellees were followers of all the Christian religions and numbers of all political parties. Without doubt a very large percentage believed in Nazism and had been traitors to Czechoslovakia. Definitely, the Anti-Fascist group was composed of people who appreciated relief from Nazism but also among them were Communists who will try to undermine and destroy all western influence in U.S. occupied Germany.

Regardless of sex, age, religion, politics, or social strata this mass of people has been handled in as humane a manner by the U.S. occupation authorities as was physically possible and certainly the spirit of the Potsdam Agreement has been the constant guide of the Americans¹.

Mistakes have been made. Misunderstandings have existed between the Americans and the Czechs. Some harsh words and thoughts have passed between them but all difficulties have been adjusted sooner or later to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned. U.S. authorities have constantly endeavored to require full compliance with the Potsdam Agreement and the directives of higher echelons in the matter of humane treatment to Sudeten Germans in this expulsion².

The Americans have met the Czechs more than half way in an effort to prevent the movement from bogging down as a result of failure to fully comply with existing agreements.

All personnel of OMG Bavaria deserve the greatest credit for the patient manner and tireless effort they have displayed throughout this entire movement.

Of the three Landkreise, Bavaria's was the most difficult job in this expulsion for it not only had to absorb its quota of Sudetens but also receive, process and reship all Sudeten quotas earmarked for Hessen and Württemberg-Baden.

The Czechs are an intensely nationalistic and a patriotic people. In saying that they are extremists in temperament is not intended as disparaging. To a friend they will give their all freely, to an enemy a knife. There is no middle of the road attitude. The Germans were their bitterest

enemy. They tried to subjugate or destroy the Czechs. The Czechs therefore cannot conceive of any reason why the Germans should receive consideration now. Let them perish from the earth. The Czech cannot understand the American and his protective attitude toward the German. A fair question is – What would be the American's attitude had he been in the Czech's place?

For all intents and purposes the expulsion of the German minority is completed. Some people, including a few Czechs, think that the wholesale transfer was a mistake. To have ferreted out and to have expelled only the truly Nazi type would have been, from a practical standpoint, next to impossible and would have taken years to execute.

Time alone will tell.

¹ Bohmann, Alfred: *Menschen und Grenzen. Bevölkerung und Nationalitäten in der Tschechoslowakei*. Köln 1975, 458, n. 1 cited disapprovingly the paper that U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia Laurence A. Steinhardt presented to the American forces at the National War College in Washington, D. C. on 15 December 1947.

² Luža: *The Transfer* 288–289, termed the expulsion “organized and carried out ... efficiently and humanely,” and claimed that “The humane policies which had been enunciated were not permitted to be ignored and local shortcomings were quickly remedied.” Clearly Colonel Fye would disagree. Alfred M. de Zayas is another who disagrees with Luža (*The Legality of Mass Population Transfers: The German Experience 1945–48*. *East European Quarterly* 12/1978, 143–160, here 152–154).