“GATEWAY TO FREEDOM”: THE FRIEDLAND REFUGEE TRANSIT CAMP AS REGULATING HUMANITARIANISM, 1945-1960

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ABSTRACT

(Under the direction of Konrad H. Jarausch)

Using the refugee transit camp located in Friedland, Lower Saxony as a case study, this dissertation examines the efforts in West Germany to aid and resettle millions of persons displaced during and after World War II. These uprooted populations included foreign victims of the Nazi regime (forced laborers, prisoners of war, and concentration camp survivors), Germans evacuated from bombed-out cities, Germans fleeing or expelled from from Eastern Europe, and German soldiers who were demobilized and released from prisoner of war camps. Established by order of the British military government in September 1945, the camp at Friedland functioned as the lynchpin for a system designed to collect, aid, register, and resettle displaced populations as quickly as possible. As such, this study describes the operation of the camp as a regulating form of humanitarianism that not only aided refugees with food, shelter, and medical services, but also turned unmanageable masses into settled individuals with claims on the postwar welfare state. Between 1945 and 1960, the camp processed over 2.1 million individuals. Given the scope of the crisis, this intervention to ameliorate suffering and restore social order depended on the work of German civil authorities, the British military government, and German, British, and international charities.

This study of the Friedland camp makes three major contributions to scholarship on postwar displacement in Central and Eastern Europe. First, it demonstrates how improvisational efforts at Friedland became formalized into a comprehensive system of regulation in which the
camp played a crucial role. Second, examination of groups processed at Friedland shows that the postwar unsettling of populations was both broader in scope and longer lasting than previously recognized. Groups whose dislocation was tied to the war included evacuees, released military and civilian prisoners of war, young refugees from the Soviet zone, and “resettlers” who left Poland. Third, this dissertation deconstructs the mythology of Friedland as the “Gateway to Freedom” by analyzing credible elements of myth, counter-examples to it, and officials’ cultivation of the camp’s public image.
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The archivists and staff at the Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv in Hannover provided much friendly assistance. I owe them a particular debt for tracking down de-Nazification files for many of the camp staffers when I could give them only names and dates of birth. In Göttingen, archivists at the city and county archives and the Protestant Kreiskirchenarchiv were always eager to assist, as was Waltraud Schmidt at the Caritasstelle in Friedland. Joachim Mrugalla and his colleagues from the Bundesverwaltungsamt—Friedland Außenstelle deserve special mention for generously agreeing to allow access to the camp’s registration files and for their help in explaining the organizational system.

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I could not have asked for a better academic home than the Department of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. My fellow graduate students have been wonderful colleagues and friends. Julie Ault was always willing to provide a critical eye on papers, grant applications, and chapters. She has been a great friend and provider of lemon bars. Likewise, conversations with Ned Richardson-Little helped me to better understand my own project, and he regularly offered a sympathetic ear (and a place to stay in Berlin). In addition to their friendship, Aaron Hale-Dorrell, Jonathan Hancock, Tom Goldstein, Friederike Brühöfener, Philipp Stelzel, Kristen Dolan, and Alex Ruble all offered me invaluable advice on scholarship and the profession. I wish I could say more about each of them, but I would also like to thank my colleagues Christina Carroll, Scott Krause, Peter Gengler, Lorne Hillaker, Lars Stiglich, Zach Smith, Dan Giblin, and David Williard.

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Eastern European history as well as posed incisive questions about my dissertation. I have valued my opportunities to discuss German history and scholarship on fascism and genocide with Tobias Hof, and I am grateful he could serve on my committee. I would also like to particularly thank Karen Hagemann for her unstinting support of this project, constructive feedback, and pushing me to be bold in arguments and engagement with other scholarship. I had the opportunity to learn from Carol Helstosky, Susan Schulten, and Gabi Kathöfer at the University of Denver. All of them played important roles in my development as an historian.

I am fortunate to have worked with my advisor, Konrad Jarausch. He provided clear direction, insight, and all kinds of support, from helping me recognize my own arguments to last-minute letters of recommendation. When a camp employee finishing his doctorate in Göttingen tried to prevent a transfer to a faraway facility, the assistant director supported the move: “Die Lagerleitung ist der Ansicht, daß die beabsichtigte Doktor-Arbeit schon seit längerer Zeit hätte durchgeführt werden können.” The same could have been said about this dissertation. I therefore owe Konrad Jarausch much gratitude not only for his patience, but also his willingness to help me with a writing program to complete the project.

Finally, I cannot imagine completing this dissertation without the support of my family. David and Evelyn Lowry were always interested and happy to help in any way they could. My grandparents, Helen and Bill Holmgren, were curious to know more about the dissertation and my studies, and visiting with them has been a joy. William and Andrew Holmgren, my brothers, provided much needed perspective from their own graduate studies, and my sister-in-law, Alex, always found time for me and made me look forward to working with the UNC Center for European Studies. My parents, Jean McSpadden and David Holmgren, along with my stepparents, Ernest McSpadden and Paula Stock, have been sources of encouragement,
sympathy, and strength. I cannot thank them enough for everything they have provided, but I am especially grateful that they taught me the value of an education.

I count myself as lucky to have had Sarah Lowry at my side throughout my studies. Sharing successes with her made them so much sweeter, and she got us through the difficult times as well. Thanks to her friendship and steady partnership, I am glad that I can say we are finally done with our dissertation.
PREFACE

Over the past seven years, when my conversations with Germans have turned toward research, typically there has been some form of the question, “Why are you, an American, interested in this topic of Friedland?” This question is natural, and it is one I admit to having asked myself often while researching and writing this dissertation. Many Germans have heard of the “Gateway to Freedom,” especially those of older age cohorts or from the Göttingen area, but it is not self-evident that a foreigner would know of the camp, much less spend years of his life on the topic.

Oddly enough, my path to Friedland began in the former Yugoslavia. I had long been interested in that region and the wars during the 1990s. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in a University of Denver “service-learning” course in Sarajevo and Vareš after my freshman year at DU in 2005. While I was teaching English in Vareš, some of the older students shared their experiences of the war. I was intrigued by the issues of flight and resettlement in the city as well as the good interethnic relationships between Croatian and Bosniak teenagers compared to rumored animosity between the adults there. Years later, when I was choosing a topic for my senior thesis, I had wanted to address those issues with respect to Yugoslavia after World War II. My advisor, Carol Helstosky, wisely suggested that given my knowledge of German and lack of knowledge of Serbo-Croatian, it might make more sense to write about Germans expelled after World War II. The topic was a fascinating for me, particularly because it was so unknown in America despite widespread interest in World War II.
When I first met with Konrad Jarausch as a prospective student for UNC-Chapel Hill, he encouraged me to continue research in the area of expulsions if I still found it interesting. He also helpfully suggested that before leaving Germany for North Carolina, I might look into the history of the Friedland camp near Göttingen where I was working as an English teaching assistant. Representatives of the camp administration kindly give me a short tour of the facility and sat me down with the two-volume camp Chronik, a collection of newspaper articles, memoranda, and photographs saved over the years. It quickly became evident that the Friedland camp was interesting as more than just a facility for expellees. The diversity of people aided at Friedland along with the contentious relationship between German and British administrations seemed to offer a wider perspective on the questions that most interested me: How do societies return to normal after the devastation of war? How can refugee crises be resolved quickly without leading to lasting irredentist political conflict?

Politics are often an unspoken aspect of the question about my research on Friedland and the displacement of Germans. Indeed, much of the early research done on expulsions served the purposes of documenting German claims against eastern neighbors, demonstrating communist repression, and creating exculpatory narratives of the war through focus on German victimhood. The displacement of Germans during and after the war is still a politically charged issue. That much was clearly apparent when I attended a conference at Friedland sponsored by the Bund der Vertriebenen (Federation of Expellees). When the topic of expellee “integration” arose, audience members angrily proclaimed that there had been no need for integration, because they had always been German. My only interest in these sorts of politics is to document and analyze instances in which they intersected with operation at Friedland. I have no desire to perpetuate the
political projects involved in the early forms of research on German displacement, but the
unsettlement did produce problems that, along with the solutions to them, are worth study.

As numerous studies of nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe have reminded their
readers, the naming of cities, regions, and the like is also a political matter. Refugee officials in
the federal and Lower Saxon ministries were well aware of that fact. For example, archival
records include directions on how to refer to Poland. In the effort to avoid antagonizing Polish
authorities, officials were to refer to “Poland and the Polish-administered eastern territories,” as
opposed to “Poland and the Polish-occupied eastern territories” (in both cases leaving aside the
fact that those eastern territories were internationally recognized as parts of the existing Polish
state).

For sake of clarity, I have referred to towns and cities by their official names in their
country after 1945. In some cases, they are followed by the German name. When there was a
common English name, I used that (hence, Poznań followed by Posen, but Warsaw instead of
Warszawa). That is not to imply any ongoing German claim to any of the cities but rather to
avoid confusion, because the German sources rarely used Polish, Czech, or other languages’
names for towns and cities. Indeed, for small towns in rural Eastern Europe, some guesswork
was required to translate the German name into a present-day location. For German cities, I have
maintained German spelling unless the city is particularly well known by its English equivalent
(hence, Göttingen, Braunschweig, Hannover rather than Gottingen, Brunswick, and Hanover; but
Cologne and Munich rather than Köln and München).

The names of states and regions present other difficulties. In the German case, many of
the states did not actually exist throughout the period of this study. Lower Saxony did not
become a political entity until November 1946, and Thuringia was dissolved along with other
East German states in favor of districts in 1952. To avoid awkwardness throughout, I simply refer to the state names regardless of the date. I have chosen the states’ English names because of the need to use them adjectivally (e.g. Lower Saxon instead of niedersächsisch). At the country level, I refer to West Germany and East Germany to include the occupation periods, while the Federal Republic of Germany and German Democratic Republic refer specifically to the states from 1949 onward.

Finally, the changing political structures in West Germany can also potentially create awkwardness and confusion. The refugee ministry in Lower Saxony, for example, used a variety of names. People referred to it in many other ways as well. In the interest of simplicity, I refer to it as the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees or state refugee ministry rather than longer variants, such as the Lower Saxon Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and the War-Damaged.
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INTRODUCTION

On a snowy morning in late November 1945, a young British volunteer named David Sainty made his first trip into Soviet-occupied Thuringia to bring elderly and infirm refugees to the newly opened refugee camp in Friedland, a small town in British-occupied Lower Saxony. In addition to collecting an ambulance-load of paralyzed and elderly individuals, Sainty and his colleagues gathered vital information about displaced populations in the Soviet zone. The British Army of the Rhine unit administering the Friedland camp had become increasingly disconcerted by the piecemeal reports from the individuals who crossed at border checkpoints and along the so-called “Green Frontier” (grüne Grenze). The military government was most alarmed about rumors of a “queue on the other side of the barrier stretching for anything up to 20 kilometres.” They also feared that there was “no provision whatever for [those] people on the Russian side” and that the Russians had “disbanded the Red Cross in their zone.” To the officials of the British military government, such masses of underfed and under-provisioned refugees threatened both order and the general state of health in their zone. Across the border in Arenshausen, Sainty observed that the Russians, in fact, were running their own transit camps and that the Red Cross was functioning along the frontier. As to the masses, Sainty could at least provide reassurance in the form of the approximate figure of 6,000 people and some stragglers nearer to Heiligenstadt on the morning of November 26. Of course, he had to admit, “beyond that we don’t know.”

Although the Friedland camp has long enjoyed characterizations as a center of humanitarian aid and a “Gateway to Freedom,” concerns about insecurity posed by the inter-

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zonal traffic of unsettled populations led to the camp’s construction in September 1945. Myriad reasons accounted for this two-way, cross-border flow. Wartime evacuees journeyed home, while expellees from Eastern Europe sought new a start. Still others searched for missing family members or tried to retrieve property from former homes. Outright smuggling accounted for yet another segment of the regular border traffic. In addition to the humanitarian concern for these masses, uncontrolled movement between zones also presented dangers, both real and perceived. These unsettled populations threatened to overrun overcrowded cities. Supposed criminal elements among them profited from chaos and scarcity while exacerbating both problems. Government administrators also recognized that uncontrolled movement of exhausted refugees presented a major epidemiological risk. The refugee and transit camp at Friedland thus was much more than the humanitarian Gateway to Freedom of popular memory. Rather, the Friedland camp played a crucial role in the maintenance of a border regime and the implementation refugee policies of western occupied Germany and, later, the West German government.

The twentieth century was the century of the camp. Despite Zygmunt Bauman’s evocative phrasing that “the shadows cast by Auschwitz and the Gulag seem by far the longest,” his discussion of the camp ignores the related development of refugee camps. The modern camp structure contributed to an increased scope and speed of killing in concentration and extermination camps, but the institution of the refugee camp has likewise allowed for greater, faster, and more effective responses to humanitarian disasters. Compared to the literature on Nazi and Soviet camps, refugee camps have received relatively little scholarly and public

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2 Succeeding the Ages of Reason, Enlightenment, and Revolutions respectively in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, Zygmunt Bauman suggests that the twentieth century will be known as the “Age of the Camps.” See Zygmunt Bauman, Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 192.

3 Ibid., 193.
attention. Yet, if one takes seriously the notion of the century of the camp, the role played by refugee camps in providing for stability in the second half of Europe’s twentieth century requires critical attention in much the way scholars have examined the camp in the history of the murderous first half-century. Indeed, unsettlement in the form of millions of non-German Displaced Persons and millions more Germans expelled from Eastern Europe was a major consequence of World War II. Solving that problem profoundly affected the formation of the postwar order, such that the refugee camp should be taken as a starting point for analyzing Europe’s recovery from war.4

The refugee transit camp at Friedland is therefore the point of departure for this study of the postwar project of resettling and reordering displaced populations after the disruptions of dictatorship and war. A case study of the Friedland camp is an especially useful method for examining solutions to the postwar problem of unsettlement, because the camp functioned as a lynchpin in the process of resettling displaced populations. This study addresses key issues at each step in the process of unsettlement, registration, and resettlement. Moreover, the periodization from 1945 to 1960 reveals crucial information about changes to the groups housed at Friedland and how those groups were treated. At its most basic level, the Friedland facility functioned as a containment system for holding and eventually distributing displaced individuals, including: civilian evacuees and expellees, released prisoners of war, refugees from the Soviet Zone/German Democratic Republic, orphaned or otherwise unsupervised children, foreigners who lost Displaced Person status or who entered Germany illegally after the war, and so-called German “resettlers” who left Eastern Europe after the official end to expulsions in 1949. As

4 Tony Judt includes Europe’s displaced populations as one of the crucial legacies of the war to be overcome in the postwar recovery, though his discussion of the camp system for surmounting the problem focuses on the charges of UNRRA and the IRO. See Judt, Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945 (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 21-32.
such, the many shifts in the camp populations speak to a wide range of problems and attempted solutions regarding the reestablishment of social order during the foundational years of the Federal Republic of Germany.

At the Friedland camp, the German and Allied response to this near overwhelming displacement problem consisted of what this study identifies as a “regulating humanitarianism.” One of the camp’s primary purposes was to provide humanitarian aid to persons crossing into the western zones, but the size of the postwar population displacement necessitated an orderly acceptance in these areas. Regulating humanitarianism offers an analytical framework for examining the attempts to order refugees’ acceptance and resettlement. The concept derives from a critical engagement with Michel Foucault’s discussions of security and the application of Foucauldian theory in social sciences studies of refugee camps.\(^5\) Camp regulations helped to restore discipline, ensure hygiene, and reestablish authorities’ knowledge of the populace through the reconfirmation of the individual identities. Yet, while the Foucauldian, discipline-oriented approach is useful for understanding camp regulation, it also exhibits a tendency to overemphasize the state’s coercive powers while undervaluing charitable impulses among administrators and the society at large. By approaching the camp’s operation as having exhibited a regulating humanitarianism, this dissertation suggests that Allied and German authorities created the disciplining environment as a necessary and humane means to collect and identify the uprooted masses, to deliver aid to them, and finally to distribute them to the areas most capable of absorbing them amidst material scarcity and social upheaval.

Analysis of the Friedland camp as an example of a regulating, humanitarian approach to displacement rests upon four questions about the camp’s relationship to political, social, and cultural issues beyond its confines. First, what do administrative records reveal about Allied and German authorities’ views of the displacement problem and their attempts to enact policy at a practical level? At Friedland, refugee policy and practicable methods intersected and informed each other in the attempt to quickly resolve displacement. Second, who worked in the camp, and how might their individual histories have informed the camp’s operation? Examination of the personnel records and camp regulations demonstrates the significant influence of staffers with military and Red Cross backgrounds. Third, who were the camp’s residents, particularly in regard to gender, age, occupation, place of origin, and official classification upon arrival? Demographic information about camp populations throws into relief the contours of postwar displacements and contextualizes operation at Friedland. Fourth, what were the residents’ experiences of the camp and what role did a stay at Friedland play in the longer process of resettlement for the different resident populations? The every-day history of life at Friedland recaptures individual perspectives on camp life, and this individual-oriented approach clarifies how Friedland specifically helped in their resettlement. In the case of each question, this study also investigates continuities and ruptures over the course of the camp’s first fifteen years of operation.

By addressing the larger question of Friedland’s contribution to restoration of social order and the above questions, one necessarily speaks to crucial issues in postwar German history. These areas of study that are distinct from the displacement problematic but nonetheless related to it include the relationship between the military government and German authorities, the
uneven process and results of de-Nazification, and the redefinition of German citizenship to account for new social groups with special claims to the welfare state.

**Historiography**

This dissertation contributes new scholarship to three interrelated historiographies. First and most directly, the project addresses the relatively small group of histories of the camp itself. Second, the history of the Friedland camp speaks to the growing body of scholarship on the displacement and resettlement of Germans and other national or ethnic groups during and after World War II. Finally and most broadly, this project engages with the scholarship concerning the successful establishment of a stable, prosperous democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany. By addressing all three of these historiographies, this dissertation contributes to scholarly understanding of how the Friedland camp created the preconditions necessary for reestablishment of an orderly, cohesive West German society. That contribution in turns sheds further light on narratives of the Federal Republic’s successful material and political reconstruction after World War II.

Histories of the Friedland transit camp can be divided into two separate categories: commemorative and scholarly works. Celebratory volumes coinciding with major anniversaries were the first major publications about the camp.6 These publications are rich in information, but they offer little in the way of analysis or argumentation with which to engage. Aside from their useful descriptions of early camp operation no longer available in archives, commemorative camp histories are perhaps most important for understanding the creation of a popular

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imagination of the Friedland camp. Indeed, later chapters of this study rely on the commemorative works to analyze the developing mythologization of Friedland in the 1950s, as well as for the histories’ reporting of daily life and routines in the camp. Nevertheless, this dissertation engages more with the second, later-emerging category of scholarship. Such analyses initially focused on institutional and policy histories but have also begun to include cultural and memory studies.

Academic scholarship on Friedland began with Dagmar Kleineke’s 1992 dissertation on the camp from 1945 to 1955.\(^7\) Best described as a focused institutional history, the study concentrated on issues such as funding, the establishment of a sub-camp for vagrant youths, and the religious charities operating in the camp. Indeed, Kleineke’s dissertation is representative of the movement in German historical scholarship toward rediscovering local histories that began in the 1980s. Lacking explicit argumentation or discussion of broader issues in the postwar period, her study discusses the camp in isolation from the problems it was meant to resolve. The result is a carefully researched, valuable overview of the camp’s history but one that leaves scholarly space for an analysis of how the camp operated within the shifting political, social, and material circumstances of Germany in the decades after World War II.\(^8\)

Since the publication of Kleineke’s dissertation, academic interest in the Friedland camp has grown. Andrea Riecken’s discussion of the camp within the context of health policy and

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\(^8\) For instance, she is dismissive of analyzing relationships between the German and British authorities over the camp, which she characterizes as “obviously follow[ing] the ‘climate’ of high politics and in most instances can be seen as a reflection of the ‘normalizing’ relationships between victors and vanquished.” Kleineke, “Entstehung und Entwicklung,” 3.
refugee reintegration in the British zone offers a compelling account of Friedland’s history because it links the camp to German attempts to address the general problem of public health through the Friedland facility. In an investigation of the social and moral burdens represented in the homecomings of German POWs, Frank Biess has likewise located the Friedland facility within a network of transit camps for returning POWs who had been released from Soviet prisons without the necessary documentation. Finally, Friedland has featured in postwar cultural and memory studies, such as Robert Moeller’s discussion of returning prisoners of war and Birgit Schwelling’s article on public memory and the construction of the Friedland memorial. Sasha Schießl has likewise contributed scholarship on the development of the “Gateway to Freedom” mythos within the context of Cold War West German politics.

None of these studies has examined the camp’s role in the restoration of social order in postwar Germany. Kleineke’s dissertation offered little reference to the stability and security problems addressed through Friedland, while Riecken and Biess respectively treated the camp one-dimensionally as a site for dealing with the single issues of health policy and POWs. By examining Friedland’s history in terms of both the institution and populations processed there, this dissertation offers a more systematic accounting of the camp’s role in addressing the re-

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creation of social stability. In doing so, the study examines how the camp contributed to the resettling of the various uprooted populations with whom the camp was charged, thereby engaging with a growing historiography on that subject.

Much like the historiography on Friedland, scholarship on the related issues of wartime and postwar population displacements has received increasing attention since the 1980s. This body of works falls into two general categories. The first category consists of studies focusing on non-German populations, such as groups affected by other postwar population transfers and myriad groups of displaced persons in Germany after the war. Historians have tended to treat these groups, often officially recognized by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency as “Displaced Persons” (DPs), separately from the second category: the Germans displaced through the war, flight, and the expulsions agreed to at Potsdam. Although there was some early acknowledgement of direct links between the displacements of different national or ethnic groups during and after the war, only recently have historians begun treat these displacements as part of a broader phenomenon of massive social engineering projects in modern Eastern Europe. As such, after a brief summary of works recognizing the interconnectedness of postwar displacements, the discussion of the displacement historiography must necessarily be split between scholarship on the dislocations of non-German and German populations.

Population displacements in the form of expulsions or exchanges have a long historical record, but historians have noted the phenomenon’s peak in Europe following World War II. Joseph Schechtman’s 1962 account of population transfers between 1945 and 1955 was one of the first scholarly examinations of displacements as a postwar phenomenon affecting nearly all of Eastern Europe. To Schechtman, such “redistribution” was “unprecedented in scope,” and

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13 Officially recognized Displaced Persons are capitalized, while “displaced persons” refers to them generally.
while the expulsion of German minorities was the most prominent of the transfers, persistent and otherwise irreconcilable national conflicts were at the root of each of the many cases.\textsuperscript{14}

More recent histories of population displacements in postwar Europe have likewise emphasized the interconnectedness of the forcible resettlement of various nationalities. They have also begun to develop the link between postwar displacements and those dislocations begun as part of wartime efforts to reengineer Europe’s national and social composition. In his 1985 study, Michael Marrus argues, “the emergence of a new variety of collective alienation” constitutes a crucial element of modern European refugee crises.\textsuperscript{15} In addition to his measured discussion of the Nazi uprooting of both German and non-German populations for their racial remaking of the East, Marrus identifies key continuities in interwar, wartime, and postwar European governments’ distaste for refugee masses and their desire to keep them at arm’s length. Gustavo Corni and Tamás Stark have argued that mass population transfers are a modern phenomenon “connected to the emergence of a strong idea of nation during the 1800s, which played an essential role in legitimizing political systems on the way to democratization.”\textsuperscript{16} Whereas states had earlier imposed a dominant nationality through legal codes and language, population transfers gained favor as a solution to the problem of multinational states (however artificial or constructed the problem may have been) in the twentieth century. The national remaking of Eastern Europe during World War II extended the underlying logic of physically removing undesired groups through ethnic cleansing. The Nazis’ \textit{Heim ins Reich} program and

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*Generalplan Ost* were not the only examples of such thinking; it was also evident in Italian attempts to colonize Slovenia and exchanges involving Hungary and Rumania.¹⁷

Millions of non-German persons separated from their homes and homelands by war and Nazi persecution posed significant problems for the administration of Germany. At the end of the war, as many as eight to eleven million non-Germans found themselves in occupied Germany, whether as former forced laborers, POWs, or other victims (and some former allies) of the Nazi regime.¹⁸ Excepting the official histories of UNRRA and other relief organizations, scholarship on DPs has emerged only since the 1980s. Mark Wyman’s 1989 study was one of the first attempts to address the administrative, cultural, and every-day aspects of DP history, but most studies have focused on either institutions or nationalities.¹⁹ Atina Grossman’s examination of interactions between Jewish DPs, Allies, and Germans gave little attention to other national groups, while histories of relief organizations and camps treated the subject in a top-down manner.²⁰ Gerard D. Cohen’s recent book offers an excellent synthesis of institutional and national histories in his case study of the International Relief Organization. He argues that the DP problematic affected the beginning Cold War, the emergent international human rights

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¹⁷ Ibid., Chapters 2-3.


movement, and the governance of international migration.\textsuperscript{21} According to Cohen, IRO resettlement was “an unprecedented instance of planned population redistribution,” though DP populations were hardly the only instances of such redistributive efforts in postwar Germany.\textsuperscript{22}

The first scholarship on German displacement developed in the 1950s and concentrated on the process and trauma of expulsion. Such studies had the political goal of establishing a narrative of German victimization at the hands of Eastern European nationalities and documenting lost lands and property for remunerative claims. Through its focus on the horrors of expulsion, this scholarship also implicitly fed into an uncritical and taken-for-granted narrative of the expellees’ easy integration into Germany society after their arrival. In the past quarter century, however, a second strand of research on expellees has turned to the issue of integration. More critically minded than their earlier counterparts, these researchers have increasingly questioned how unproblematic the integration really was and, more provocatively, if one should even speak of a successful integration at all.\textsuperscript{23}

The first significant historical account of the expulsion of Eastern Europe’s German populations emerged in the 1950s with the publication of \textit{Documentation of the Expulsion of Germans from East-Central Europe} by the Ministry for Expellees, Refugees, and the War-Damaged.\textsuperscript{24} Like much of the scholarship on expellees that followed in the next twenty years, the

\textsuperscript{21} Cohen, \textit{In War’s Wake}, 8.

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 11.

\textsuperscript{23} Expellee scholarship does not constitute the sole subject of German-centered studies of displacement, given that there is a smaller but related field of studies on the return of German prisoners of war after the war. Important works on the release and reintegration of POWs into civil society include Biess, \textit{Homecomings}; Benjamin Bieber, \textit{Wie Kriege Enden: Die Reintegration von Soldaten in Nachkriegsgesellschaften} (Hamburg: Kovač, 2002); Birgit Schwelling, \textit{Heimkehr, Erinnerung, Integration: der Verband der Heimkehrer, die ehemaligen Kriegsgefangenen und die westdeutsche Nachkriegsgesellschaft} (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010).

Schieder project narrowly focused on German suffering during the expulsion with little discussion of their integration.25 The Schieder volumes thus contrasted notably with the Schechtman example of early American scholarship, given Schechtman’s argument that the German example was one among many transfer programs, though also “the most spectacular result of this momentous population movement.”26

The scholarship on the expulsion of Germans was also highly politicized within the context of competing victimhood narratives and the Cold War. It was a federal ministry that commissioned the Schieder volumes, after all, with the purpose of documenting German claims to lost property and homelands. Yet, the most polemical account of the expulsions can be found in Alfred Maurice de Zayas’s highly controversial work. He excoriated Eastern European and particularly Russian brutality during the expulsions, while also decrying Anglo-American complicity at the Potsdam Conference.27 Schieder and de Zayas’s works thus serve as important reminders of how scholarship on the expulsions could be highly politicized within the Cold War context. Filled with anti-Communist tropes, these books painted Germans as victims. Moreover, they elided Germans’ wartime roles as perpetrators and Nazi resettlement initiatives that accounted for the first uprooting of ethnic German communities.28

25 The fact that these volumes are now considered a major part in creating German memory culture of the expulsion, however, testifies to their importance. See in particular, Robert Moeller, War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 51-87.


With a few exceptions early scholarship focused strongly on the process of the expulsion, while the focus in the past twenty years has shifted to the issue of integration.²⁹ Paul Lüttinger’s 1989 quantitative analysis of expellee integration can therefore be seen as a landmark text. Questioning what he called “the myth of a speedy and successful integration,” Lüttinger studied micro-census information from 1971 and concluded that the first generations to experience full integration were actually the children of refugees and expellees.³⁰ Whereas earlier scholarship on the expulsion had assumed that difficulties in integration were overcome through Germany’s economic revitalization in the 1950s, Lüttinger’s work challenges the foundational mythology that expellees’ hard-work and clear belonging to the German national community meant a speedy, problem-free integration.

Following in Lüttinger’s path, new scholarship on expellee issues shares a basic skepticism about the ease of integration. Reinhard Rohde examines social strife between expellees and native residents of small agricultural communities, where, he argued, village elites played a crucial role in “othering” the newcomers.³¹ Based on interviews with expellees in small communities, Rainer Schuzle further argues that no matter the expellees’ personal or professional successes, the experience of expulsion and loss “continues to have an important


The highly politicized nature of scholarship on the expulsions has also led to major disputes outside the historical profession, such as the German-Polish arguments over a Berlin museum dedicated to documenting the expulsion.

²⁹ Aside from Schechtman’s discussion of integration, the Ministry for Expellees produced one other early report. See *Die Eingliederung der Flüchtlinge in die deutsche Gemeinschaft* (Bonn: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, 1951).

³⁰ Paul Lüttinger, *Die Integration der Vertriebenen: eine empirische Analyse* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1989), 35.

³¹ Rainhard Rohde, ”Der Hejder ist eben ein anderer Menschenschlag als der ostelbische Mensch“ in *Zwischen Heimat und Zuhause: Deutsche Flüchtlinge und Vertriebene in (West-) Deutschland 1945-200*, ed. Rainer Schulze, Rainhard Rohde, and Rainer Voss (Osnabrück: Secolo Verlag, 2001).
bearing on their lives and keep them different from the natives.”

Finally, Andreas Kossert claimed that refugees and expellees faced a cold reception based upon racial and religious prejudices against them, though he overstated the novelty of his argument.

A variety of social factors have also driven the new critical interest in expellee integration. The difficulties of integrating guest workers and their families into German society after it became clear many would not return to their countries of origin contributes to the interest in the example of expellee integration. An even more important subtext can also be seen in the consequences of the collapse of Eastern European communism in 1989: the difficult integration of the former GDR into the Federal Republic and the problem represented by waves of “late resettlers” (Spätaussiedler) from the former Eastern Bloc who immigrated to Germany based upon a right of return for ethnic Germans.

Although recent expellee scholarship offers a much-needed critical approach, the narrow focus on the process’s faults obscures significant successes. The difficulties that these studies have documented, though not insubstantial, reveal much more about expellees’ expectations and disappointments than a truly failed integration. Complaints, for instance, also functioned as claims on political parties and the state. In many ways, the disappointments speak to the overall success of the integrative project. While the shortcomings of the integrative process might have resulted in bitterness, there is little evidence of outright failure, such as through radicalization or


33 Andreas Kossert, Kalte Heimat: Die Geschichte der deutschen Vertriebenen nach 1945 (München: Siedler, 2008), esp. 74-84, 229, and 325.

a widespread social paralysis preventing individuals from building new lives.\textsuperscript{35} Also problematic in these histories of expulsion and integration is the overlooking of crucial intermediary steps in redistributing expellees (or other dislocated German populations) and establishing their claims to the subsequent welfare programs that aided their integration. In that sense, a case study of Friedland reveals much about how German and Allied authorities were able to solve problems posed by mass displacement and create the preconditions for integrative successes that naturally and necessarily happened within communities rather than within the camp itself.\textsuperscript{36}

The question of the expellees’ successful integration into the Federal Republic in turn raises the broader issue of accounting for the successes of the postwar West German state. Indeed, a fundamental issue in writing the history of postwar Germany is accounting for how Germany, which was responsible for two World Wars and the Holocaust, emerged from the material, political, and social rubble left by National Socialism and World War II to create a prosperous model democracy. Histories concentrating on Germany post-1945 further complicate this issue of continuities and ruptures as well as the related question of accounting for the establishment of democracy in the Federal Republic. By presenting 1945 as a defining caesura in Germany history, the so-called “zero hour” of occupation, this approach denies any major positive or negative continuity with Germany’s past. Edgar Wolfrum, for example, argued that Germany’s successful democracy “proved and [continues to prove] itself after all catastrophes of


\textsuperscript{36} Meryn McClaren may go too far in using the term integration within the camp setting, but she is right to suggest that refugee communities within longer-term residential camps (as opposed to a transit camp like Friedland) assisted the process by jumpstarting new social networks and helping refugees realize that return was not an option. See Meryn McClaren, “‘Out of Huts Emerged a Settled People: Community Building in West German Refugee Camps,’” \textit{German History} 28 (2010), 21-43.
the German history as a stroke of luck.” In a different interpretive paradigm, Heinrich August Winkler explained Germany’s postwar success as product of its social and political Westernization. Criticizing the notion of Westernization and its implicit association with a German Sonderweg, Konrad Jarausch instead drew upon the postwar discourse of civilization and historian Dan Diner’s concept of a “rupture of civilization at Auschwitz” to describe a process of German “recivilization” through a renewed commitment to human rights and the reemergence of civil society. Thus, while major surveys of postwar Germany recognize the significant success of Germany’s postwar reconstruction and social rehabilitation, there is little consensus on how to describe the achievement and its roots.

This study of the Friedland transit camp thus speaks to three interconnected levels of postwar German historiography. Most directly, there must be a reorientation of scholarship on Friedland toward locating camp operation within postwar efforts to reestablish social order amidst difficult material and political conditions. A case study of Friedland therefore necessarily speaks to the issues of mass displacement, German and otherwise, in the wake of World War II and how to account for the successes of redistributing and ultimately integrating the uprooted masses. Integration did not and could not occur during an individual’s brief stay at the Friedland camp, and this dissertation makes no such claims. Nevertheless, the vast majority of scholarship on the problem of displaced German populations has dealt with integration issue, meaning that


38 On German Westernization, see Heinrich August Winkler. Der lange Weg nach Westen (Munich: Beck, 2000); and Ronald J. Granieri has reinforced this notion of Westernization through his discussion of the FRG’s commitment to the “Abendland” and the western political sphere in The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003).

this project must in turn account for that scholarship and how the Friedland facility contributed to the larger process of resettling uprooted Germans, whether expellees, refugees, or returning POWs, as well as the other non-German populations also processed at the camp. Expellee integration has long served as a hallmark accomplishment in narratives of the Federal Republic’s overall successes, and by clarifying issues of resettlement, Friedland’s history has a bearing on this third, broadest level of German historiography. By examining the aid and resettlement operations at Friedland, my dissertation explains the crucial intermediary step between displacement and reintegration, a signal success of Germany’s postwar return to order.

Theory, Methods, and Sources

This study situates the history of Friedland camp within the framework of a regulating humanitarianism that can be seen in rise of refugee camps as a systematic response to displacement since World War II. In the case of Friedland, the concept of regulating humanitarianism offers an analytical approach to understanding camp operation within the broader context of postwar German society, particularly given the level of material scarcity and social upheaval. Indeed, after Germany’s defeat in 1945 both the occupational authorities and the German population faced a grim society of rationing. “Normal consumers” received a ration of 860 calories.40 Aside from foodstuffs and myriad other consumer goods, housing was subject to ration regimes, because the 4 million housing units destroyed during the war amounted to 25 percent of Germany’s 1939 capacity.41 By the time the Friedland camp opened in September 1945, the military government in nearby Göttingen was allotting the city’s residents a mere 3.25

40 Judt, Postwar, 21.

square meters of living space per person and demanding that anyone with additional room
register for the assignment of another homeless person.\textsuperscript{42}

In this context, the Friedland camp played a critical role in collecting and redistributing
displaced persons, thereby organizing need away from cities already stretched beyond capacity.
This dissertation therefore introduces the notion of regulating humanitarianism to capture the
overriding concern with restoring social order while also acknowledging that the camp provided
significant humanitarian services, if necessarily in a strictly controlled manner. Such an
understanding of a regulating humanitarianism represents a conceptual response to Michel
Foucault’s discussions of security and to a social sciences literature that has applied Foucauldian
theory to refugee camps.

Foucauldian theory provides a foundation for examining how the state uses social
categorization of refugees along with refugee camps as instruments of government for social
control. In his lectures to the College de France, Foucault called for a discussion of how
“artificial multiplicities are to be constructed and organized according to the triple principle of
hierarchy, precise communication of relations of power, and functional effects specific to this
distribution, for example, ensuring trade, housing, and so on.”\textsuperscript{43} The lectures demonstrate a need
to critically assess how social categories as well as spaces such as camps are constructed with
clear social goals in mind. As Foucault later noted, the security concerns of space are also closely
tied to surveillance of the population, particularly when social order is threatened by the influx of
unknown populations, such as “beggars, vagrants, delinquents, criminals, thieves, murderers, and

Schmelling (Göttingen: Erich Goltze KG, 1985), 117.

\textsuperscript{43} Michel Foucault, Security, Territory, Population, 17.
so on, who might come […] from the country.”

This fear of the potential disruption caused by unknown populations speaks to processes at the heart of Friedland’s operation: the collection and registration of the incoming masses in order to establish their identities before admittance and redistribution to West German society.

Sociologists Bülent Diken and Carsten Laustsen have further developed ideas on how these Foucauldian concerns with space and security affect the position of refugees in host societies. Based upon their survey of contemporary refugee policies and debates in Europe, they argue that refugees occupy a necessarily ambivalent position in society’s eyes: “Our society seems unable to decide whether the asylum seeker is the true subject of human rights […] or simply a criminal, a thief, who threatens ‘us’ with abusing ‘our’ welfare system.”

The refugee seems particularly dangerous to order because of his or her social ambivalence. In the eyes of the state, “the refugee represents the nomadic excess that the state seeks to capture and normalize through panoptic confinement, e.g. in refugee camps.”

By confining refugees to the camp rather than allowing them to move freely within the host society, the state is able to impose the order of a sedentary existence on refugees while simultaneously excluding them from the broader community and thereby avoiding social disruption.

Jennifer Hyndman’s analysis of population tracking in refugee camps demonstrates how concerns for order affect the practical level of camp operation. In her discussion of situation reports and headcounts, she defines the refugee camp in Foucauldian terms as “a standardized, generalizable technology of power in the management of displacement […] entailing the

\[44\] Ibid., 18.

\[45\] Bülent Diken and Carsten Laustsen, *The Culture of Exception: Sociology Facing the Camp* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 79.

\[46\] Ibid.
management of space and movement for ‘peoples out of place.’”\textsuperscript{47} The refugee camp imposes order, which is particularly important for the distribution of aid. Feeding refugees is a crucial part of displacement management, and camp authorities and aid agencies work to ensure the most cost-effective implementation of this sort of welfare program. Hyndman notes, “accurate refugee numbers are important for procuring funds and food rations […] but refugees have not willingly subjected themselves to the methods these counts employ.”\textsuperscript{48} Authorities engage in a “coercive exercise” by forcing refugees into enclosures to ensure an accurate count, while refugees seek to “maximize [rations] by resisting counting procedures that might reduce the number of extra ration cards circulating in the camps.”\textsuperscript{49} One thus observes camp regimes engaging in a Foucauldian process of turning individuals into “instruments of government” both to assure order and to maximize the efficiency of aid distribution.\textsuperscript{50}

Hyndman’s description of coercive camp regimes also raises the fundamental issue of the individual refugee’s agency. Foucauldian analysis has the potential to turn the refugee into the subject or conduit of governmental control while ignoring the extent to which refugees contest the camp regime. To borrow terminology from historians of everyday life, does the victim of displacement not exert his or her own obstinacy known as “Eigensinn” to maximize benefits at the camp?\textsuperscript{51} In fact, administrative records at Friedland are replete with examples of that

\textsuperscript{47} Lisa Malkki quoted in Jennifer Hyndman, \textit{Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 120.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 127.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 130, 141.

\textsuperscript{50} Michel Foucault quoted in ibid., 124.

obstinate form of agency. Although outright physical confrontation between staff and residents was rare, refugees lied to, cajoled, and even bribed camp staff for more rations and desired transit permits. As this dissertation demonstrates, camp residents also deceived administrators in the effort to prevent the state from accurately identifying them. In some cases, residents lied in order to escape criminal charges and arrest. In other instances, they made false statements to obtain a more favorable classification and the accompanying access to specific welfare provisions, because official recognition at camps such as Friedland was the first step in the creation of large classes with special claims on the postwar German welfare state. The response from the Foucauldian perspective may well be to reemphasize that camp residents are nonetheless forced into situations of panoptic confinement and that they become enmeshed in systems of governmentality by dint of engaging with the camp regime. Nevertheless, this study demonstrates that such a constraining formulation of camp residents as mere subjects misses the complexities of the relationships between residents and camp authorities.

In addition to the question of agency, there are other compelling reasons to take Foulcauldian theory as a starting point rather than to adopt it wholesale as the theoretical backbone for the concept of regulating humanitarianism. The preceding social sciences approaches relying on an uncritical use of Foucault’s work suffer from the crucial drawback of ignoring or otherwise obscuring the humanitarian side of camp operation in favor of focusing on the coercive aspects. Still, an approach to the camp that uncritically focused on its operations as a product of a non-contextualized humanitarianism would nevertheless prove shortsighted as well. After all, Lynne Hunt and Samuel Moyn have demonstrated that the concept of human rights from which humanitarianism stems needs to be historicized, or understood as a product of certain
historical contexts with specific meanings rather than as a timeless given. Giving the cultural
and temporal contingencies of the meanings of humanitarianism, this dissertation generally
understands it to consist of improving welfare and ameliorating suffering.

The language of humanitarianism was quite common in postwar discussions of displaced
populations, and a major concern of this study is what was humanitarian about Friedland. The
humanitarian nature of services such as the providing of food, shelter, and clothing are easy
enough to recognize, even if pragmatic considerations coexisted with the readily apparent
altruistic ones in these cases. Search services for missing relatives at Friedland likewise provide
a clear example of enmeshed humanitarianism and pragmatism. Families could be reunited with
longed-for relatives, thereby shifting the burden of primary care from the state. Confirmation of
death through search services may have provided emotional closure, but the information also had
significant implications for the disposition of property and civil status.

Other elements of camp operation and decisions taken by camp authorities were less
obviously humanitarian. Delousing with DDT powder and invasive medical exams, both of
which were mandatory, certainly speak to a Foucauldian sense of the state’s coercive powers.
The camp administration also regularly returned vagrant adolescents to the Soviet sector where
they faced the compulsory work in the uranium mines of the Wismut SAG (Sowjetische
Aktiengesellschaft). The stranding of resettlers in the GDR due to the British High

human rights are primarily a product of the Enlightenment. Samuel Moyn rejects ancient, Enlightenment, and even
the post-WWII UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights in favor of events in the 1970s as the source of the
present-day international conception of human rights. See Samuel Moyn, The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History
(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

53 Examples include Potsdam Agreement’s “humane” transfers and German references to iterations of “menschlich,”
“würdig,” and “humanitär” in government documents and the press.

54 On youths who arrived at Friedland in their attempt to escape forced labor in the mines, see “Wandernde
Jugendliche” Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 39 (141-46), NHStA; and Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
Commissioner’s refusal of transports in 1950 raised questions about what humanitarianism meant in the context of Friedland.\textsuperscript{55} The highly regimented and bureaucratized camp space, including all sorts of questioning, paperwork, and transit permits did not always seem particularly humanitarian to contemporary observers. In fact, the camp’s bureaucratic nature produced many complaints and even became subject of a parliamentary investigation in 1955.\textsuperscript{56}

Grievances or present-day objections should not be dismissed out of hand, but one may nevertheless note that a humanitarian logic drove these seemingly hard-hearted decisions as well. Medical intervention at Friedland allowed for the discovery and treatment of threatening medical conditions that might have led to epidemics elsewhere. Strict controls of movement and resettlement assignments prevented overcrowding in areas unable to house more refugees. The Friedland bureaucracy legalized claims and pre-entitled residents as members of special categories deserving compensation and welfare benefits. Naturally, one should maintain a critical perspective on the camp involving the identification and investigation of problems or perverse outcomes. Nevertheless, the resettlement of displaced populations with the promise of further state assistance was a humanitarian process, particularly given the alternative of a vagrant underclass spurned by the reflexively self-defensive communities that Foucault and subsequent scholars recognized. As such, analysis of Friedland further historicizes the notion of humanitarianism by demonstrating what was considered humane in specific moments of Germany’s postwar history and within the context of mass destruction and mass population displacement. Discussion of regulations locates humanitarianism within a specific historical

\textsuperscript{55} See “German Refugees from Poland,” \textit{Times}, 4 March 1950; and “Attempts to upset German economy,” \textit{Manchester Guardian}, 7 March 1950; and Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

\textsuperscript{56} On the investigation by the Parliamentary Committee for War-Victim and Returnee Issues (\textit{Bundestagausschuss für Kriegsopfer- und Heimkehrerfragen}), see Chapter 6 of this dissertation.
problematic, while the notion of humanitarianism contextualizes regulation and coercion as tools for providing aid and allowing the absorption of displaced populations rather than as ends unto themselves.

A variety of methods support this regulating-humanitarianism methodology in analysis of the Friedland camp. First, an administrative historical approach helps to address the Foucauldian aspects of control and observation inherent to refugee camp operation. Because administrative history is concerned with goals along with the methods for achieving them, this first method is also intertwined with policy discussions in postwar Germany. A prosopography of the camp’s staff comprises the second method for examining the institution, because the issue of who ran the camp helps to explain how and why it operated in a particular manner. Such a focus on administrative matters, however, is limited in what it reveals about the populations at Friedland. Discussion of camp residents relies on statistical analysis to uncover key information about their size and characteristics. Despite their effects on the camp, the different populations cannot be systematically addressed through administrative documentation alone. As in the case of the camp’s staff, this study explores various subgroups of the Friedland populations through prosopographical analysis to determine common features that affecting their displacement, treatment at Friedland, and ultimate resettlement. Lastly, examination of everyday life in the camp sheds light on how camp residents experienced the humanitarian regulation at the camp and the various ways in which they pursued self-interest in their interactions with the camp bureaucracy.

At the level of sources, the administrative history of the camp relies on documents produced by the camp administration, state and federal agencies, and the various charities active in Friedland. Examination of a wide variety of internal memoranda, administrative directives
(Verwaltungsvorschriften and Lageranordnungen), and interagency correspondence reveals that lines of authority often proved confusing to camp and military government officials as well as to administrators within German agencies. Disentangling power relations between different levels of German civil government, the British military government, and nongovernmental organizations constitutes a significant portion of the administrative history.

The administrative records largely come from the Friedland camp collections, the collections of the Hildesheim Regierungspräsident and Flüchtlingsdezernat, and the Lower Saxon Ministries of Refugee Affairs and Interior as well as State Chancellery, all located at the Lower Saxon State Archive in Hannover. Other such sources were located in the British National Archive’s holdings of British Army of the Rhine military government reports and Civilian Control Council for Germany records. Likewise, an examination of administrative and legal documents (particularly Verwaltungsstreitsachen—administrative litigation—heard in Hildesheim courts) at the State Archive in Hannover demonstrate the involvement of the Friedland camp administration in translating legal codes into practicable methods for classifying and redistributing populations. Discussion of charitable organizations’ involvement in the camp also relies upon records held by the County Church Archives of the Evangelical Church in Göttingen and the Friedland office of the Catholic Caritas organization.

The second question of what camp staffing reveals about postwar conditions and the priorities of the various authorities is answered by combining a prosopography of camp staff with analysis of various regulations governing the camp’s staff. Personnel lists for permanent and wage-earning employees are an important starting point for quantifying Friedland’s workforce and, in some cases, determining demographic markers such as age and sex. Also valuable are the nearly 40 files on key camp personnel from the Göttingen de-Nazification committee,
which reveal information about past employment, political associations, and war records.\textsuperscript{57} These de-Nazification files for the camp’s departmental heads and labor council representatives allow for an even more detailed quantification and qualitative description of common traits and an analysis of how personal histories affected the camp’s operation. Other crucial sources include personnel files from the records of the Lower Saxon State Chancellery and the Ministries of Refugees, Finance, and Interior. Further analysis relies on records from the camp personnel council, articles and other publications about specific individuals, and first-person accounts by some staffers. Because of German privacy laws and contingent access to many of these records (particularly the de-Nazification proceedings), some individuals are referred to by pseudonym in this study. When that is the case, it is made explicit at the first mention of such individuals.

Quantitative analysis to answer the third question regarding the composition of camp populations relies on three major sources. First, this study makes use of a systematic sampling of 300 case files each from the refugee and POW registration files at the Friedland branch office of the German Federal Administrative Agency.\textsuperscript{58} Although such a sample excludes resettlers after 1958 and a few other groups, it nevertheless enables an analysis of the camp’s populations in

\textsuperscript{57} De-Nazification files present several challenges as a source, particularly because the record collections are so fragmentary. Although most camp personnel were de-Nazified in Göttingen, the proceedings were conducted wherever an individual lived at the time of his or her first application for work after the war, meaning that it can be impossible to know where some individuals’ files may be located today. In other cases, individuals may have never undergone de-Nazification (or at least not in the regions whose files are held by the State Archive), because they either stopped working at the camp before they underwent the process in Göttingen or because they first sought work after de-Nazification requirements had passed. As such, the de-Nazification files used in this study were those located by Ms. Hoffmann and her colleagues at the Lower Saxon State Archive (for which the author is deeply grateful) or those files from other regions that were copied and included in personnel records of Lower Saxon government agencies. A final concern with these documents is that it can be difficult to determine their veracity; some verifiable cases of falsified identities and/or past activities underscore this point. Discussion of the files must therefore proceed with the caveat that the analysis relies on a critical reading of who individuals claimed to be or what they claimed have done earlier in life.

\textsuperscript{58} For each sample, a random registration file was selected at the start of the letters B, M, S, and Z. Every fiftieth file thereafter was included until 75 files were collected for each letter. The \textit{Kartei} database lent itself to such systematic sampling, while the selection of the different letters and random starting points was done in the hope of avoiding biases that might emerge from the family names.
terms of age, sex, place of origin, destinations, occupation, and how these categories shifted over time and between categories of displaced individuals (e.g. women constituted a majority of refugees, men a majority of POWs). Second, the study makes use of registration files located in Hannover for a similar systematic sampling of other camp populations, such as unaccompanied minors and non-Germans classified as “infiltrees” and “former DPs.” Records from the camp’s medical office and its reports to local and state health authorities provide further information on the size of transports and the condition of the arriving individuals. Third, collections of statistical information in the Hannover archives that were gathered and analyzed by the camp staff and state and federal agencies offer both a point of comparison to the preceding two sources and further descriptive data on the camp’s residents.

Addressing the issue of the residents’ experience of the camp and how a stay in the camp fit into the process of dislocation and resettlement requires a discussion of everyday life in the camp and also an examination of records pertaining to exemplary individuals from the various categories of camp residents. Camp directives, letters written by residents, complaints about personnel and conditions along with official investigations of those complaints, and newspaper articles about life in the camp combine with memoires and interviews to provide the source base for capturing the Alltag (everyday) at Friedland. Examination of individual trajectories leading to and from Friedland relies not just upon the expected sources of memoires, interviews, and letters, but also less obvious sources, such as camp protocols, interrogations, and even lawsuits over the categorization and official recognition of individuals at the camp. One of the challenges of studying populations within a transit camp such as Friedland is that many individuals spent only a few nights there and most had left the camp within a week of their arrival.59 Taken as a whole,

a careful reading of these diverse sources helps to reveal aspects of camp life, from the grim to the uplifting, how they relate to memory and mythologization of the camp, and what the camp’s role and the longer process of unsettlement and resettlement was.

A final methodological note concerns the periodization of this project. The establishment of the Friedland camp in September 1945 provides a convenient starting point in 1945. Discussions of the history of the expulsion, personal histories of people at Friedland, and points of continuity to wartime and prewar issues do, however, push elements of the dissertation further back than the camp’s opening. Arriving at a satisfactory ending date proves more difficult. Unlike other major camps, such as at Uelzen, Gießen, Warburg, Furth, or Piding, the camp at Friedland has no closure date marking a natural endpoint for a study. Indeed, for the foreseeable future, the camp will continue to operate in its capacity as the sole federal transit facility for asylum seekers from conflict zones around the world as well as for Jews and ethnic Germans from the former Soviet bloc.

Although some parts of the project address developments after 1960 (particularly those relating to memory and myth-making), the year 1960 offers a reasonable end date for the questions investigated here. The periodization is appropriate because the research questions are decidedly focused on the surmounting of postwar challenges, a process in which Friedland’s importance dwindled along with the crisis’s extent around 1960. The period of 15 years captures the first, most critical half of the postwar generation. When the crisis receded as displacement diminished and material wellbeing increased across West Germany, camp operation had already standardized to the point that there is little of interest in archival

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60 The construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 had little effect on the camp at Friedland. The camp did process some GDR refugees flown from Berlin to Hannover and then taken to Friedland, but their relatively small number means that 1961 does not constitute a defining year in the camp’s history.
documents pertaining to resettlement post-1960. Even in a span as short as the fifteen years examined here, the diversity of camp populations with the attendant efforts by camp staff to meet the residents’ and governments’ needs in their processing provide for ample discussion material.

Another reason to end major research for the project with 1960 was that documentation from new personnel groups after 1960 reveals little new information about problems or camp operation. Already in the early 1950s, Friedland was becoming a fairly well oiled machine for implementing policies made at the federal level. Indeed, Friedland did not face truly challenging inflow levels again until the softening and ultimate fall of the Iron Curtain in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These challenges associated with receiving new waves of “late resettlers” from the Soviet bloc (*Spätaussiedler*) are discussed in the concluding sections of the dissertation but do not warrant extensive research of the intervening decades.

**Chapter Organization**

The six chapters of this dissertation are organized in a thematic and roughly chronological manner. Chapter 1 examines the long, medium, and short-term factors that led to mass population displacement at the end of World War II. The war and its immediate aftermath saw the culmination of two interrelated processes: the increasing salience of the national identity and the use of population displacement as a tool of statecraft. Central and Eastern Europe had long been home to ethnically diverse populations subject to competing communities of belonging. The nationalization of these populations begun in the nineteenth century contributed to conflict as statesmen and activists believed in a necessity for nationally homogenous states. Moreover, the mass expulsion of Germans from Eastern Europe cannot be understood without examining the causative context of World War II. Adolf Hitler’s Nazi regime and its allies tried to remake Eastern Europe along national and racial lines. German atrocities hardened Allied
resolve for expulsion as both a punishment and tool to finally bring an end of conflicts over German minority populations. These expellees along with millions of wartime evacuees and non-German Displaced Persons presented the occupying powers in Germany with the staggering task of resettling some 30 million persons (excluding demobilized soldiers) between 1945 and 1949.

Chapter 2 discusses the founding of the refugee camp at Friedland in September 1945 as well as its early operations through the spring of 1946. The chapter reconstructs the establishment of the camp and its procedures for processing the interzonal traffic as well as the characteristics of three camp populations: wartime evacuees, refugees, and Displaced Persons. A large staff was responsible for aiding these groups and constructing the camp. In addition to paid German staffers, the camp’s administration relied upon labor from prisoners of war, Displaced Persons, and German and British volunteers. The interactions between the German staff and German and British volunteers also provide insight into the reemergence of civil society and reconciliation between wartime enemies in the Göttingen region.

The third chapter examines the camp’s administration between 1946 and 1952 and addresses the question of why the facility at Friedland continued to operate after the initial waves of displacement had passed. One reason for the camp’s continued operation was growing efficiency of its staff. The promotion of Richard Krause to camp director in the spring of 1946 marked the beginning of an era in the camp’s administration that ended with the departures of Krause and the camp’s British military unit in 1952. Although the relationship between German civil authorities and the British military government at the camp was friendly during the early years, a string of new British commandants and structural changes combined to sour the cooperation between the two parties. In particular, German and British administrators clashed over questions of supply, financing, and who held authority over the camp. In 1946 and 1947,
Richard Krause led an effort to remake the camp’s staff so that it behaved more professionally in processing the populations passing through Friedland. Krause also worked assiduously to defend and improve the camp’s reputation in local press. During these six years, the camp’s staff was overwhelmingly comprised of men and former refugees, though women found paths to leadership through charity work in the camp. The chapter ends with Krause’s departure from the camp and the transfer of a new director, Franz Freßen, to Friedland.

Chapter 4 examines the populations passing through Friedland between 1946 and 1952, which are the second aspect of answering why camp operation continued during those years. The chapter begins with an analysis of prisoners of war released to their homes across the zonal boundaries. During this period, the Friedland facility was the location of debates over the definition of returnee categories, benefit and resource allocation, and distribution mechanisms for these released military and civilian prisoners. The case of Friedland also lays bare difficulties in categorizing these individuals, such that the camp’s problems with categorization ultimately worked their way up to the Federal Refugee Ministry and its interpretations of the landmark Returnee Law (Heimkehrergesetz) of 1950.

The fourth chapter also juxtaposes the arrival and treatment of two other groups. First, the camp was responsible for accepting and redistributing ethnic German resettlers from Poland beginning in 1950. Initially planned as a program for family reunification, the influx of these resettlers became a point of conflict between German and British authorities in the spring of 1950. Second, between 1947 and 1952 the camp was home to a variety of foreign nationals who had either lost their DP status or entered West Germany illegally. Accommodating these individuals became a further point of dispute between German and British authorities. These conflicts complicate the issue of German-British relations post-1949 while also offering a
corrective to narratives that assume a greater level of German sovereignty after the establishment of the Federal Republic than was actually the case.

Chapter 5 examines the development and operation of the sub-camp for transient or “wandernde” male youths from 1947 to 1951. War and displacement were powerful solvents against familial bonds. Fathers died at the front or languished in prisoner of war camps, while the chaos of flight and expulsion sometimes separated mothers from their children. Even in cases when the family unit remained intact or children could rely on family networks of uncles, aunts, and grandparents, material scarcity and uncertain employment strained familial ties. Flight from the Soviet zone over the Thuringian-Lower Saxon border was typically motivated by work conscription or domestic conflicts. This flight of Soviet-zone youths exacerbated the extant problem of transient youths in the British zone and particularly brought it to the attention of camp administrators dealing with these young illegal border crossers. Thus, the establishment of Friedland’s “Youth Reception Camp” (*Jugendauffanglager*) encapsulates the larger humanitarian and regulatory goals of the camp. Administrators used the regulating camp space to capture these youths whose unsettlement seemed so dangerous to social order. Through education, work placements, and family reunification the camp administrators hoped to redirect youthful energy from criminality to social and economic productivity.

Chapter 6 discusses camp operations between 1952 and 1960, when Friedland was responsible for “late returnees” (*Spätheimkehrer*) from imprisonment in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Refugees from East Germany’s border region in 1952 and Hungarian refugees fleeing due to the revolution in 1956 were two other groups that helped to solidify the camp’s

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61 Of course, postwar internment was not limited to men, despite depictions focusing on the masculinity of the affected populations. Particularly in the cases of the former eastern German provinces and among ethnic Germans, mothers were also separated from their families by imprisonment in labor camps.
reputation as the Gateway to Freedom. This reputation played a crucial role in decisions taken in the late 1950s and early 1960s to keep the Friedland facility open while the West German government began shutting down similar refugee camps. Although this period was crucial to the formation of the Friedland mythos, the camp issues surrounding the returnees proved quite contentious. More so than in the case of earlier returnees, late returnees raised thorny questions about complicity in Nazi crimes, whether as individual returnees or as members of the “non-amnestied” group released by the Soviet Union in 1955. Indeed, examination of press reports and investigations at the camp, state, and federal levels suggests that the camp became a site of accusations and counter-accusations over dealing with Nazi crimes. More broadly, the “Great Homecoming” (Große Heimkehr) of 1955 was an event with bitter contestation over what constituted a proper reception for the final remaining POWs of Germany’s last war while as the process of rearmament to defend against communism had begun.
CHAPTER 1
NATIONALIZATION AND POPULATION DISPLACEMENT

On September 7, 1945, the mayor of Göttingen, Erich Schmidt, wrote a plaintive letter to the governor (Oberpräsident) of the Province of Hannover. Schmidt began the letter by noting the rising number of emergency cases among refugees, and he argued for the establishment of a regulation over the governing districts (überbezirkliche Regelung) for dealing with the issue. His concern was mostly for three refugee groups for which the Friedland refugee camp would soon be responsible: young mothers with infants and small children, disabled veterans who were unable to work for the time being and could not return to their homes east of the Oder River, and lastly old and infirm persons separated from their relatives by the pressures of flight. Schmidt complained that these people wandered from place to place for months without any long-term accommodation because their taking residence (Zuzug) in various localities was prohibited. If anything, the problem was worsening because other regions had been declared emergency areas and shoved the refugees into more welcoming districts. Noting the coming hardships of winter, Schmidt called for the development of a reception station to accommodate these groups. Schmidt laid the situation bare in his closing: “Göttingen, despite constant and earnest efforts, is not in the position to help itself.”

62 Although this dissertation refers to the geographic region of “Lower Saxony,” it should be noted that Lower Saxony as a political unit did not exist until November 1946 when it was created out of the States of Hannover, Brunswick, Oldenburg, and Schaumburg-Lippe.

The events in September 1945 raise the question of what had caused such postwar population displacement in Germany. In fact, a wide variety of groups took part in this cross-border traffic, ranging from civilians returning home after wartime evacuations to non-German Displaced Persons returning home or searching for lost family. The largest displaced population consisted of Germans in the process of expulsion from Germany’s former eastern provinces and its neighboring Eastern European states. This chapter is concerned with reconstructing the historical path that led to the expulsions.

Of course, population displacement through war, persecution, and catastrophe stretches back to the ancient world, but the phenomenon of deliberate, mass expulsion and forced population transfers was a defining feature of twentieth-century history. Already in the wake of World War I, European powers began their first experiments with expulsion and forcible transfers as modern tools of statecraft. France, for example, transferred roughly 100,000 “voluntary repatriates” from Alsace-Lorraine to Germany between 1918 and 1921.64 The Treaty of Lausanne negotiated between Greece and Turkey led to transfers that quickly outpaced Franco-German repatriations; roughly 1.2 million Greeks residing in Turkey and 365,000 Turks living in Greece were forcibly removed from their homes.65 Contemporaneous with the expulsion of Germans from Eastern Europe, the forcible population transfers on the partitioned Indian subcontinent in 1947 affected at least 10 million people.66 At the close of the century,

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expulsion continued to play a key role in the “ethnic cleansing” during the wars in the areas of the former Yugoslavia, where some 4.5 million persons suffered displacement. The scope of German expulsions exceeded these all. Postwar expulsions of Germans from Eastern Europe displaced at least 12 million people, and the figure may have exceeded 14 million, including between 500,000 and 1 million deaths.

Explaining why Germans were subject to such extensive expulsions requires consideration of a series of long, medium, and short-term factors. The roots of the expulsion reach back to the nineteenth-century rise of the nation as a predominant community of belonging in the multiethnic lands of Eastern Europe. The invention of the nation and the nationalization of populations by activist groups created a new dimension of political conflict leading to the First World War. The reification of nations through the assignment of national categories and grassroots identification with national communities also meant that nationally based conflicts affected ever more of the region’s peoples. The nationalization of Eastern European populations continued during and after World War I, while the postwar order created by the Peace of Paris led to sharper national conflicts.

In the medium-term, the failure of the minority rights protection through the League of Nations and the destabilizing influence of nationalist politics in multinational states had two effects. First, the region was primed for more violent conflict. Second, the idea that national conflict should be resolved by the creation of nationally homogenous states gained more adherents. Finally, the postwar expulsion of Germans cannot be understood without reference to

67 Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, “Opinion on situation of refugees and displaced persons in some parts of the former Yugoslavia,” by Iwinski, Doc. 7397 (Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, 1995).

68 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 1. The extent of the expulsion and death rate remain controversial, but there is relative consensus for the above figures.
the causative context of World War II. Almost immediately following the outbreak of the war, Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime began a program to remake Eastern Europe along national and racial lines, committing atrocities and privileging Germans and their allies at the expense of putatively inferior races. This wartime disruption of national communities in turn made it easier to imagine and to realize the forcible transfer of the German populations that had seemed to provoke or at least provide the pretext for war.

The Nationalization of Eastern European Populations

At its most fundamental level, nationalist conflict in Eastern Europe stemmed from the region’s patchwork of multiethnic populations. The migrations and invasions of Germanic and Slavic groups in the regions generally stretching between the Volga and Oder Rivers and between the Baltic and Adriatic Seas produced complicated patterns of settlement during the ancient and medieval eras. Germanic populations in particular grew along the Baltic Sea as a consequence of the Teutonic rule and, later, Hanseatic trade networks. Beginning in the seventeenth century, German-speaking settlers moved inland and eastward into the areas of Poland-Lithuania, along the Danube, and eventually by invitation into tsarist Russia along the Volga, the Black Sea, and in the Caucuses. Nevertheless, it is important to note that these linguistic and cultural groups did not constitute primordial nations. Instead, these populations only became nationalized during the transition to modernity in Eastern Europe. Although the descendents of various settler groups may have come to identify in national terms and engage in

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explicitly national conflicts during the twentieth century, any suggestion that their ancestors already constituted nations or that conflicts between different groups is anachronistic.

Like other communities of belonging, nations develop from the self-understanding and loyalty of their members. Benedict Anderson’s much celebrated and oft-repeated phrasing defines the nation as “an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.” Nations are simultaneously “imagined” and real in the sense that an individual conceives of himself or herself as a member of a political community connecting complete strangers through cultural ties. The imagining of the nation as a limited, definable community thus makes it real. Nations are in turn useful to both the state and its population. Anderson, for example, understands the development of nationalism as a beneficial historical phenomenon because, in his view, the nation’s sovereignty emphasizes freedom, the Enlightenment, and the Revolution in opposition to the “hierarchical dynastic realm.” John Breuilly’s discussion of nationalism is likewise crucial for understanding what advantages the national community offers to the modern state. He argues that the fundamental point of nationalism is “above and beyond all else, about politics, and […] politics is about power.” In particular, nationalist politics are useful to the modern state for their capacity for internal mobilization and coordination.

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72 Ibid., 7.


74 Ibid., 2, 353.
The European watershed for the emergence of nationalist politics occurred during the Revolutions of 1848. A combination of poor harvests and the longer-term discontentment of peasants and artisans over economic dislocation led to the outbreak of revolution in France, which then spread eastward before stopping short at the edge of Russia. For liberal and more radical revolutionaries, the question was not only the introduction of democratic institutions and the liberalization of economies, but also the extent to which European states should be reordered along national lines. In the German case, the parliamentarians in Frankfurt also confronted the issues of national unification and its ramifications for citizenship. Brian Vick has argued that the liberal nationalists at Frankfurt hoped to create an expansive, inclusive basis for German citizenship with the understanding that Protestant-German culture would predominate. The prospect of fragmentation along national lines, however, proved particularly worrisome to the monarchy in multinational Austria-Hungary and ultimately helped to scuttle a possible Greater German solution. Elsewhere in Eastern Europe, nationalist groups in the Polish, Hungarian, and Czech cases also wrestled with issue of exclusive nationalism and its effect of blunting territorial claims. Although the eventual conservative victories undermined the goals of radical and national revolutionaries, Europe’s monarchies (particularly in Austria-Hungary) increasingly had to compete with developing national consciousness for popular loyalty.

As the Revolutions of 1848 suggested, the nation constituted only one form of communal belonging among many different forms of imaginable communities. Class, religion, localities, and even monarchs could also form the basis for primary or situational self-identification. During

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76 Ibid., 214.

77 Ibid., 214-215.
the latter half of the nineteenth-century, national activists in Eastern Europe therefore not only competed with each other to increase the breadth of their communities, but they also contested other forms of group identity.

In a landmark study of the Germany minority in Prague from 1861 to 1914, Gary Cohen was one of the first historians to show the contingency of national self-identification. Cohen found that nationality was closely tied to class and cultural identity. He further argued that status as political, cultural, and economic elites became defining features of German national belonging. Crucially, Cohen also demonstrated the extent to which national identity was malleable and a product of rational class-interested choice. He found that lower-class Germans who lived in a predominantly Czech environment “faced strong pressures to assimilate with the Czechs […] in the end, many were simply absorbed into the Czech-speaking majority.”

Resistance to the permanent adoption of national identities frustrated national activists in Eastern Europe, particularly in the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In his examination of the Habsburg officer corps from 1848 to 1918—the initial period of intensified nationalist activism—Istvan Deak demonstrated that officers from the empire’s constituent groups remained stubbornly nonnational. The officers even shed ethnic identities by associating themselves with the supranational figure of the emperor and the institution of the army. The officers did eventually succumb to nationalization during the second year of World War I when combat losses had turned the professional army into a “citizens’ militia.”

Jeremy King has likewise shown that for the residents of Budejovice/Budweis, “individual choice and national

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79 Ibid., 209.

competition” slowed the nationalization process, stripping “the process of much of its seeming naturalness and irreversibility.”

Because definitions of “German,” “Czech,” and other categories were ambiguous enough to allow residents to switch between the two for their own advantage, national activists tried to force populations to adopt a single national identity during the fin de siècle. Nationalists in southern Bohemia, South Styria, and South Tyrol recast these lands as “language frontiers” to normalize national identity and to eliminate the possibility of alternative loyalties. According to Pieter Judson, these nationalists “struggled to popularize their positions among local inhabitants, to make nationalism particularly relevant to local concerns, and to bind local populations permanently to one side or the other.” At the turn of the century, children also became particular targets of national activists’ efforts. As Tara Zahra has argued, children could “slip easily between linguistic and national communities, threaten[ing] to expose the deepest assumptions of nationalist politics as myths.” Indeed, children were so important to nationalists that when a nationalist government emerged in post-World War I Czechoslovakia, the modernizing state apparatus came into increasing conflict with parents over the nationalization of the private, family sphere.

The outbreak and fighting of World War I further sharpened national divides in Eastern Europe. In Austria-Hungary, the start of the war initially caused nationalist associations to match their rhetoric to wartime patriotism, because they believed that demonstrations of loyalty through

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active participation in the war effort would be rewarded later.\textsuperscript{84} Nationalist groups in Bohemia then remained in a “holding pattern” for much of the rest of the war.\textsuperscript{85} As the war came to a close in 1918, however, the inhabitants of languages frontiers began adopting national identities in greater numbers. This phenomenon did not emerge because citizens suddenly “realized” their identities or found themselves free express national identification, but instead because claiming nationality became a requirement for acquiring aid from the Habsburg government and the successor states.\textsuperscript{86}

In Russia, worries about enemy nationalities led to harsher repression than was the case in Austria-Hungary. The tsar’s government and military particularly feared German-speaking populations as a potential fifth column. As a result, the military targeted German-speakers in the western lands of the empire through a program of expropriation, revocation of linguistic and cultural autonomy, and deportation.\textsuperscript{87} The liberalization of Russia following the February Revolution in 1917 included the revocation of measures targeting Germans, but the subsequent October Revolution undid the relaxation of these policies.\textsuperscript{88} Such repression of German-speakers contributed to the construction of Germans as an enemy nation within Russia. Yet, the crystallization of a German national identity in Russia was also part of a larger awakening of national consciousness through displacement along the front. Roughly six million people were

\textsuperscript{84} Judson, \textit{Guardians of the Nation}, 219.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 223.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 229.


\textsuperscript{88} Steinhart, “Creating Killers,” 49.
uprooted by the fighting and Russian military’s program of population displacement. This status as refugees sharpened national consciousness among the displaced minorities as well as in the minds of the groups hosting them in Russia’s interior territories.89

Fighting and occupation by German troops on the Eastern European front during World War I solidified German and local understandings of nationality. German soldiers arriving in territories of Lithuania and the Kurland were shocked by the “elective ethnicities” of the native populations. According to Germans, this national confusion and putative backwardness necessitated the introduction of German Kultur as part of a civilizing mission.90 Irrational economic policies embittered the region’s inhabitants and forced them to view conflicts with the occupation force of Ober Ost in starkly national terms.91 Indeed, German heavy-handedness proved counterproductive to winning allies among nationalists in Eastern Europe. The plan to create Lithuanian and Polish buffer states displeased both nations: Lithuanians would lose territory to the Poles, and treaties would have tightly bound the new national states to Germany militarily and economically.92 It is therefore unsurprising that German attempts to recruit nationalists to their cause were ultimately rebuffed and instead left a legacy of increased nationalization through conflict with German occupiers.

89 Gatrell, Whole Empire Walking, 160-189.


91 Ibid., 180.

92 Ibid., 202.
Minority Protection and Population Transfers

Despite the seeming triumph of Woodrow Wilson’s concept of national self-determination, the creation of national democracies in Eastern Europe mostly stemmed from a cynical *Realpolitik* rather than a liberalistic commitment to Wilsonian ideals. To be sure, national self-determination had entered the interwar political vocabulary of Eastern Europe. Yet, many of the successor states created out of the multinational empires of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia followed a multinational model.93 Multinationality and the resulting conflicts were the price paid for the creation of the medium-sized states that France and Britain preferred as counterweights to Germany and as “bastions against Bolshevism” farther east.94

The most obvious example of political realism overriding self-determination were the decisions to ensure that Germany emerged from the war with decreased territorial holdings. For instance, Article 88 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye forbade union between Germany and the rump Austrian state by declaring Austria’s independence “inalienable” and barring actions that would “by any means whatever compromise her independence.”95 Significant German-speaking minorities also lived in Czechoslovakia and Poland, both of which were created in part through the acquisition of territories from Germany and Austria. With the exception of the 1921 plebiscite in Upper Silesia, these German populations remained national minorities in the successor states rather than having the chance to join the Germany or Austria.

Indeed, plebiscites, censuses, and educational policy served as the primary battlegrounds for nationalists in Eastern Europe’s interwar states. Like the other successor states,


Czechoslovakia was neither linguistically nor religiously homogenous. To national activists, however, one of the greatest frustrations was that people who “even ‘shared’ the correct language or religion continued to be indifferent to nationalist ideology.” In an effort to address this putative problem of national indifference, Czechoslovakia’s government empowered census takers to “correct” individuals’ declaration of nationality, and citizens who claimed to be German could face criminal proceedings for declaring a “false” nationality. Czech nationalists also resumed intensive lobbying against what they viewed as concessions to the interests of national minorities, particularly when it came to schooling. Viewing bilingualism as dangerous to national identification and in a practice contemporaneously replicated in Poland, Czech nationalists attempted to define children as Czech according “objective principles.” Administrators would therefore be able to assign children to Czech schools and prevent nationally dubious bilingualism.

Although the Polish Republic was declared on October 7, 1918, the territorial reality of the Polish state remained in flux for several years. Fighting between Polish and Soviet forces as well as unresolved western borders with Germany (not to mention a southern border conflict with Czechoslovakia) initially made an accurate assessment of Poland’s national demographics difficult. These conflicts also galvanized national activists and accelerated the process of populations becoming national. When the Polish state could finally complete its first official census in 1921, there were just over one million Germans living in its territories. Crucially, the census did not include the disputed Upper Silesian region where Polish and German-speaking

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96 Judson, *Guardians of the Nation*, 240.


98 Ibid., 123-124, 139.

populations became subjects of intense international debate and radicalizing nationalist campaigns.\textsuperscript{100}

Drafts of Treaty of Versailles originally awarded the entire region to Poland until German protests prompted British Prime Minister David Lloyd George to override French and American objections and to insert a clause mandating a plebiscite. Still, Upper Silesia remained under German control until January 1920, when the treaty came into force. Thereafter came a period of intense campaigning and conflict, including sporadic violence. The elections held on March 20, 1921, nevertheless occurred in a “surprisingly peaceful atmosphere.”\textsuperscript{101} Germans won the vote with 707,488 ballots compared to 479,369 for Poland (844 communes voted for Germany, 678 for Poland), but voting failed to resolve to whom the territory belonged.\textsuperscript{102} While the plebiscite commission debated its recommendations into May, rumors of a decision favorable to German interests led to a Polish uprising in the region and German protests to the Allies that they were not honoring their obligation to maintain order under the Treaty of Versailles.\textsuperscript{103} Finally on October 15 the League of Nations put forth a proposal that was ultimately accepted by all parties. Germany received 57 percent of the region’s inhabitants and 70 percent of the territory, while the Poles received 75 percent of the coal and ore reserves along with most of the industrial capacity.\textsuperscript{104} The partition added some 350,000 Germans to Poland’s population.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 63.


\textsuperscript{102} Campbell, “The Struggle for Upper Silesia,” 372.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., 376-377. In fact, the conflict was proving intractable partly because the Entente powers, particularly Britain and France, favored different policies.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 384-385.

\textsuperscript{105} Chu, \textit{The German Minority in Interwar Poland}, 63.
As in Czechoslovakia, the German minority in Poland faced a “nationalizing state.” Poles made up only 60 percent of the overall population, but the integral nationalism of rightwing Polish parties called for a complete Polonization of the population. Polish nationalists viewed Belarusian and Ukrainian populations as nationally underdeveloped and targets for assimilation. Germans, however, were considered a developed national group insusceptible to assimilation. Polonization of western territories was therefore to proceed through “a disassimilationist approach that encouraged the German population, however defined, to leave.” Educational instruction in Polish, the closing of civil service careers to Germans (at least those who did not speak Polish), and higher taxes on German populations produced powerful incentives for emigration. Immigration to Germany also depended on pull factors, such as the prospect for returning to the top of the national-political hierarchy. By 1922 more than 140,000 Germans had abandoned Polish citizenship and Poland, and perhaps as many as 750,000 Germans had emigrated by 1939.

The minority protection system developed at the Paris Peace Conference was supposed to counterbalance nationalizing forces in Eastern Europe. As Carole Fink has argued, the formulation of minority rights was flawed from the outset, because the peacemakers developed the system to interact with individuals rather than acknowledge “dangerous overtones of failed or future claims to self-determination.” There existed a liberal veneer of individual rights, but minority protection had functioned as an extension of Realpolitik by Europe’s great powers since

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107 Chu, *The German National Minority in Interwar Poland*, 64.

108 Ibid., 65-69.

the first conventions of the 1878 Congress of Berlin and continued to do so following the Treaty of Versailles.

The first of these minority protection treaties was the so-called Little Treaty of Versailles signed on June 28, 1919. The treaty established both the interwar Polish state and the basis for subsequent minority protection treaties overseen by the League of Nations. Articles 2 through 8 of the treaty overrode any existing or future legislation and guaranteed religious freedom, conditions for the acquisition of citizenship, equality of minorities before the law, and the right to converse in minority languages in public and private.\(^\text{110}\) The granting of these rights, however, was undercut by their focus on individuals rather than official acknowledgment of minorities. Having had their fill of the issue at Paris Peace Conference and facing resolute opposition from small powers to outside control, the Great Powers then allowed the issue of minority rights to devolve to the newly created League of Nations.\(^\text{111}\) One year later in October 1920, the League of Nations formally became involved in the protection of these minority rights in its member states by creating a procedure for minority petitions to the League.

Despite the creation of a formal system for hearing and adjudicating complaints, the League’s minority protection scheme failed for a number of reasons. The process for submitting petitions was relatively open, and a committee of three was required for every “authentic petition” to the secretariat. In practice, however, the system required the cooperation of the recalcitrant accused states.\(^\text{112}\) Great Powers’ refusal to subject themselves to a universal minority rights regime further undermined the system’s legitimacy and opened space for Eastern

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\(^{110}\) Ibid., 257-258.

\(^{111}\) Ibid., 168-169.

\(^{112}\) Ibid., 277.
European states to subvert the protection system that the Great Powers showed little interest in enforcing. Another problem stemmed from perception of the groups that used the system. “Imperial minorities” including Germans accounted for upwards of 30 percent of petitions to the League, which contributed to the impression that the system served irredentist purposes, providing yet another disincentive for nationalist governments to cooperate. To be sure, the minority protection system provided some counterbalance to nationalist forces in Poland by forcing the government to navigate between the minority treaties and extremist positions. Cracks in the system nevertheless emerged, most clearly illustrated by the departure of so many Germans from Poland in addition to the 10 percent of Belarusians who emigrated from Poland in a sort of “voting-with-the-feet plebiscite.” In any event, the system became dead letter after Germany’s withdrawal from the League of Nations in 1933 and Poland’s renunciation of its obligations in September 1934.

Before the League’s minority protection system could fail, European states had begun using population transfers as an alternative solution to conflicts in multinational states. Already in 1918 France began a program to “cleanse” Alsace and Lorraine of its German-speaking populations. The French developed four classifications for the residents of these border territories: the “A” marker for those of unquestioned loyalty who lived in the region before the Franco-Prussian War, “B” for those who had at least one French parent in 1870, “C” for neutral

113 Ibid., 360.
115 Chu, The German National Minority in Interwar Poland, 70.
117 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 69.
and Allied nationals, and “D” for the 513,000 “enemy” nationals and their children.\textsuperscript{118} Persons in possession of identity cards of the “D” category were first subject to travel restrictions and economic discrimination, so German-speakers began to repatriate themselves voluntarily before the French government started to deport the remainder of the category. All told, some 100,000 people were expelled or “voluntarily repatriated” to Germany between 1918 and 1921.\textsuperscript{119}

The second major experiment with forcible population transfer in interwar Europe took place in Turkey and Greece. After defeating Greek forces near Anakara, Kemalist troops retook Greek-held territories and committed atrocities against Greek populations, particularly in Smyrna. Thus, mass flight of Greeks had already begun when peace talks opened at Lausanne in November 1922. Both Greek and Turkish representatives at Lausanne favored compulsory population exchanges, and Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan also all agreed that “unmixing populations in the Near East” was the necessary for securing peace in the region.\textsuperscript{120} Thus, the Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations signed in January 1923 provided for the removal of all persons of Greek Orthodox faith from Turkey and all persons of Muslim faith from Greece.\textsuperscript{121} Some 1.2 million Greeks and roughly 365,000 Turks so defined were then expelled, and Greece went on to engage in a similar exchange of 200,000 people with Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{118} Heinrich Himmler’s racial scientists modeled the development of \textit{Volksliste} in Poland on this French system. Ibid.

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 69-70.

\textsuperscript{120} Ahonen et al., \textit{People on the Move}, 7-8.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 8-9.
Even as the Nazi regime complained bitterly over the treatment of German-speaking minorities during the 1930s, it also engaged in a program of forced migration targeting Jews. The implementation of anti-Semitic legislation to reverse Jewish social, economic, and cultural emancipation from 1933 to 1936 had already prompted the flight of approximately 130,000 Jews from Germany by 1938. To that effect, the Nazi regime had also concluded the 1933 Haavara Agreement with Zionists in Palestine to incentivize Jewish emigration from the Reich by allowing émigrés to access the value of the property they were forced to leave in Germany.\footnote{Ibid., 62-64.}

During the Anschluss with Austria in 1938, Adolf Eichmann led the escalation of Nazi policy to deliberate expulsion. In Vienna, Eichmann perfected a system by which Jews who had been taken into custody would be released upon the receipt of documents verifying the emigration of the individuals’ families.\footnote{Saul Friedländer, \textit{Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution} vol. 1 (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), 244-248.} A final example of prewar Nazi efforts to expel Jews can be found in their transporting of some 16,000 Polish Jews back to Poland in 1938 before the Polish government could implement a program to deprive them of their Polish citizenship, which would have effectively stranded them in Germany.\footnote{Ibid., 267-268.}

In light of this common use and acceptance of population transfers and expulsions to settle nationality conflicts, it is hardly surprising that Edvard Beneš was already seeking a population transfer to resolve the Sudetendeutsche problem before the start of World War II. R. M. Douglas has argued that Beneš had the Treaty of Lausanne explicitly in mind when he proposed a deal with Hitler on September 15, 1938. Czechoslovakia would cede some 6,000 square kilometers to the Reich in return for Hitler allowing the compulsory transfer of 1.5 to 2
million Sudetendeutsche.\textsuperscript{126} Hitler never responded to Beneš’s offer. Although Beneš’s initial plan never came to fruition, it is clear that the postwar expulsions that Beneš championed and ultimately realized grew out of interwar solutions to nationality problems.

\textbf{World War II and the Unsettling of Peoples}

The first displacement and resettlement of Germans during World War II was a product of Nazi policy for the demographic remaking of Eastern Europe. Although the flight of Germans before the Red Army’s advance into East Prussia in 1945 dominates historical memory of the first displacements, the actual first uprooting of German communities in Eastern Europe began at Nazi initiative in the nearby Baltic states in 1939. In a speech to the Reichstag on October 6, Adolf Hitler announced his satisfaction with territorial demands after defeating Poland, and he went on to state that he wished to resettle the remaining German populations of Eastern Europe within the Reich.\textsuperscript{127} Hitler had already undertaken a program of population transfers to relieve his Italian ally of 60,000 Tyrolian Germans, and the timing of the speech suggests that his discussion of resettlement was prompted by concerns for Baltic Germans. In particular, Hitler wished to remove Baltic Germans as a potential point of conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, because he had received word from Moscow on September 25 that Stalin intended to claim the free hand in the Baltic secretly granted in the Non-Aggression Pact.\textsuperscript{128} To that end, Hitler formally commissioned Heinrich Himmler and the SS with the task of “retrieving Volksdeutsche and Reichsdeutsche from foreign lands […] eliminating the harmful alien

\textsuperscript{126} Douglas, \textit{Orderly and Humane}, 18.


\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 132.
segments of the population from the German *Volk* and its lands, and planning and implementing the settlement of the land designated for repatriated Germans.”129

Following Hitler’s speech, the SS branch in charge of repatriation (the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle* or VoMi) sent representatives to Estonia and Latvia to negotiate German repatriation. The Germans and Estonians quickly concluded a treaty on October 15, while negotiations over the disposition of property delayed a treaty with Latvia until the end of October.130 The transfers commenced in late 1939 and ended in early 1940 with the arrival of about 84,000 ethnic Germans from Latvia and Estonia, leaving a German minority of as little as 2,000 in the two countries.131 These transferred ethnic Germans were then housed in temporary reception camps while the Central Immigration Office in Łódź oversaw their registration, selection, and distribution for resettlement in the so-called Wartheland.132

After the relatively successful repatriation of Baltic Germans, the Nazi regime turned its attention to resettling *Volksdeutsche* from Bessarabia and Bukovina. While Hitler regarded most *Volksdeutsche* in southeastern Europe as important links between Germany and the region, the Germans of Bessarabia and Bukovina required resettlement because of Soviet pressure for promised Bessarabian territories as well as lands in northern Bukovina.133 The VoMi ultimately evacuated 93,548 Germans from Bessarabia and 43,568 Germans from Bukovina.134 Adding to these figures in 1940, Hitler also agreed to the resettlement of an additional 215,000 repatriates

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129 Ibid., 134. *Volksdeutsche* were ethnic Germans, while *Reichsdeutsche* were citizens of the German state.

130 Ibid., 159.

131 Ahonen et al., *People on the Move*, 18.

132 Ibid.

133 Lumans, *Himmler’s Auxiliaries*, 171-172.

134 Ibid., 173.
from Romania and another 180,000 from Volhynia and Galicia. Further repatriations from Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union during the following war years raised the official total of resettled Germans to 770,000.

Two of the key issues for these repatriation programs were finding temporary housing and permanent resettlement locations. In the first case, the VoMi used SS commandos, local police forces, and Volksdeutsche auxiliaries to evict Poles and Jews from entire city blocks in Łódź. Whereas the VoMi could simply throw Polish and Jewish evictees onto the streets or into camps, the VoMi within Germany proper found itself compelled to rent space or seize property under a requisitioning law of September 1939. Through these efforts, the VoMi was able create network of 1,500 to 1,800 camps to house repatriates, whether in the form of transit camps used for short periods, collection camps used for up to a week before transport, or observation camps where the VoMi could observe their charges for “political deviations or physical and spiritual deficiencies.”

The existence of such observation camps demonstrates that despite nearly a century of intensifying nationalization attempts, national identity in Eastern Europe remained mercurial. Nazi racial pseudo-science was incompatible with the diversity of populations in the region. Moreover, racial scientists faced great difficulty in producing workable standards for identifying “German” or “Aryan” individuals. The old nationalist standbys of language, religion, and

135 Ahonen et al, People on the Move, 19.
136 Ibid.
137 Lumans, Himmler's Auxiliaries, 187.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid., 188. The camps themselves functioned as small communities, complete with German mayors, police powers, and a variety of cultural and sporting activities. Ibid., 193.
marriage proved troublesome. Disappointed SS officials found that the *Volksdeutsche*, whom they expected to be carriers of German identity farther East, were in reality difficult to distinguish from their neighbors, especially when they had intermarried, converted, and spoke pidgin or otherwise incomprehensible German. Even in the Bohemian territories, “amphibians” who could switch nationalities based on situational advantages proved enormously frustrating to Nazi officials.

As a result, the SS relied on a four-tier classification system for ethnic Germans. Group I was reserved for the racially above-average, Group II for the average, Group III for the below average, and Group IV was reserved for those considered unacceptable for resettlement in the East. *Volksdeutsche* with a rural background were generally designated in Groups I–III so that they could become the peasant settlers of Himmler’s imagination, while those in Group IV were sent to the *Altreich* for what amounted to agricultural forced labor. If the Sipo-SD found the *Volksdeutsche* politically unreliable despite their putative German racial and cultural character, then they would be sent to the *Altreich* as Groups III and IV, no matter their profession. Further confusing the entire process, non-Germans with desirable “racial features” were also transferred to the *Altreich* for Germanization, while non-Germans without such features were returned home or sent to the General Government in occupied Poland. Given the often-poor farming conditions,

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142 Lumans, *Himmler’s Auxiliaries*, 191.
sense of unease about the previously evicted owners, and fears of partisan raids, resettlement often proved disappointing even for those Volksdeutsche with the best classifications.  

Nazi Germany was not the only state to engage in extensive programs of population exchange, expulsion, and resettlement during World War II. Italian policy in its annexed territories envisioned forcible transfer of politically unreliable populations. The Italians carried out a census for that purpose in southeastern France, and the occupation forces in Croatia and Slovenia targeted specific areas for forced internment and population transfers. Hungary and Romania engaged in a population exchange during 1940 and 1941. The Hungarian regime also deported 35,000 to 56,000 Serbs from its territories in 1941. Including ethnic German and Hungarian populations already discussed, the wartime Romania government had planned to expel upwards of 3.5 million non-Romanians from the Greater Romanian territories.

While Hitler and his Axis allies carried out programs of mass expulsion and killing, the Czech government in exile began lobbying the Allies for an expulsion of Germans from Czech lands once the war ended. Beneš had proposed physically removing the Sudetendeutsche problem before the war, but his position on the issue did not harden until after Soviet and American entries to the war in 1941. After a series of speeches advocating a punitive approach to Germany in 1941, Beneš committed the exile government to the expulsion of Sudeten Germans in an interview with Foreign Affairs in January 1942.  

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143 Ibid., 191, 197.
144 Ahonen et al., People on the Move, 47.
145 Ibid., 5-52.
146 Ibid., 58.
147 Beneš stated, “National minorities are always—and in Central Europe especially—a real thorn in the side of individual nations. This is especially true if they are German minorities […] It will be necessary after this war to
strengthened Beneš’s argument for expulsion. Właysław Sikorski’s Polish government in exile soon counted among Beneš’s supporters for an expulsion program when it became clear that Poland would be compensated with German territories in exchange for eastern lands lost to the Soviet Union.148

As early as 1941, Stalin had also considered the forcible transfer of German populations as a key element of any postwar settlement. Following Stalin’s line, communist factions amongst the Czechs and Poles also favored that solution.149 Abandoning any last commitment to communist internationalism, Władysław Gomułka claimed, “We must expel all the Germans because countries are built on national lines and not on multinational ones.”150 Aware of Stalin’s desire for a program of expulsions, Churchill seems to have endorsed expulsions during the summer of 1943. Stalin reaffirmed his position later in 1943 as well. That decision left the Americans as the last major power to win over. Historian R. M. Douglas has convincingly argued that Beneš almost certainly overstated Roosevelt’s support for the scheme following their only meeting in 1943—indeed, the State Department refuted Beneš’s claims to that effect—but by the end of the year, “the expulsion project had taken on a momentum that only a decision of the Big Three could have reversed.”151

Displacement of German populations toward the end of the war first occurred through flight from the advancing Red Army. The first evacuations of Germans were those of

carry out a transfer of populations on a very much larger scale than after the last war.” Cited in Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 21.

148 Ibid., 24.

149 Czech Communists in Moscow under the leadership of Klement Gottwald did not officially fall in line until May 1944. Ahonen et al, People on the Move, 66.


151 Douglas, Orderly and Humane, 28.
Volksdeutsche in Romania and the Serbian Banat in 1944, totaling nearly 150,000 persons.  

Subsequent evacuations during the summer and fall of 1944 included 300,000 Danube Germans in Yugoslavia, up to 60,000 Hungarian Germans, and an indeterminate number of Slovakia’s 140,000 German residents.  

Mass evacuation and flight from the eastern parts of the German Reich began in the winter of 1945.

On January 12, 1945, the Red Army crossed the Vistula River and drove north through the German province of East Prussia before orderly evacuations could begin. The German population fled, but the Soviet advance quickly overtook refugees. What followed was a wave of pillaging, rape, and killing. In explaining the unleashing of these destructive energies, it is important to consider that up to that point, Red Army soldiers had been fighting a hard campaign against Germany, were generally aware of German atrocities at Lublin-Majdanek, and had seen the destruction of German-occupied Soviet territories. Such experiences and knowledge combined with pilfered alcohol and the exhortations of Red Army officers and Soviet propaganda to produce the violent attacks on German civilians.  

Roughly 250,000 Germans were nevertheless able to flee westward by land. Another 650,000 fled across the frozen Vistula lagoon, and some 450,000 refugees took ferries to Gdańsk/Danzig.  

In addition to the refugees

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152 Ahonen et al, *People on the Move*, 72.

153 Ibid., 73.


from East Prussia, another 3 million Germans fled Silesia, 800,000 fled East Pomerania, 300,000 fled Brandenburg, 200,000 fled Danzig, and one million Germans fled from occupied Poland.\footnote{Ibid., 167.}

A series of so-called “wild expulsions” in the spring and summer of 1945 also preceded the beginning of officially sanctioned expulsions. For Czechs, hatred of Germans promised unity to a society “atomized” by occupation, war, and collaboration. Violent attacks on Germans “promised a measure of redemption, allowing ‘good’ Czechs, finally, the opportunity to prove their courage and patriotism.”\footnote{Bryant, \textit{Prague in Black}, 220, 222.} As the Wehrmacht abandoned Bohemia and the Red Army arrived, armed Czechs began to hunt down Germans and collaborators in reprisals that lasted until the August. During this period, between 19,000 and 30,000 Germans died, though only 6,000 died as the direct result of Czech violence. Czech military authorities and civilians drove another 600,000 and 900,000 Germans from Bohemia during the summer months of 1945.\footnote{Ibid., 235-239.}

The initial Polish expulsions of Germans had proceeded less violently than was the case in Bohemia. Still, the order to immediately expel all Germans from Polish territory introduced violence and urgency when General Karol Świerczewski issued it on June 24.\footnote{Douglas, \textit{Orderly and Humane}, 108.} Douglas notes that estimates of the number of Germans subjected to wild expulsions from Poland range between 200,000 and 1.2 million, though he suggests that a figure of 1 million is likely conservative. Indeed, one of the major difficulties in assessing the number of Germans subject to the expulsions is that some German refugees had tried to return home at the war’s end, so it is difficult to arrive at a base estimate of the number of Germans in Poland in June.\footnote{Ibid., 103, 128.}
The ongoing wild expulsions ensured that regulation of future population transfers was a topic of discussion when the British, Americans, and Soviets met at Potsdam in July and August 1945 to determine a course for the occupation of Germany. Polish and Czechoslovak authorities had tolerated violent excesses against German populations not only out of a desire for retribution but also because fear might induce more Germans to flee, presenting the Allies with a *fait accompli* on the issue of borders and transfers.\(^{161}\) Such violence led to unease among the British and Americans. Even the Soviet commanders in Berlin and along Germany’s eastern border were becoming unwilling to accept more displaced Germans.\(^{162}\) As such, the conference attendees revisited the issue of expulsions. Stalin remained unwilling to abandon plans for revising German borders and transferring populations, but he did pragmatically concede the need for better-regulated transfers.\(^{163}\)

Article XII of the conference protocol therefore stated the Allies’ agreement to the transfer of the remaining German populations in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The governments further agreed, “any transfers that take place should take place in an orderly and humane manner.” Recognizing the already existing burden presented by expellees, the document called for an “equitable distribution” to be arranged between the powers and the expelling countries. Finally, the powers “informed and requested” the governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary to “suspend further expulsions pending an examination by the Governments concerned of the report from their representatives on the Control Council.”\(^{164}\)

\(^{161}\) Ibid., 116. See also Ahonen et al, *People on the Move*, 90.

\(^{162}\) Douglas, *Orderly and Humane*, 89, 119.

\(^{163}\) Ibid., 90.

\(^{164}\) Article XII, Protocol of Proceedings, Potsdam Conference, August 1, 1945.
Unsanctioned expulsions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia nevertheless continued until December 1945. They were immediately followed by the start of officially organized transfers, plans for which had been announced by the Allied Control Council on November 20, 1945. The plans amounted to the transfer of the remaining 3.5 million Germans in Poland and 2.5 million in Czechoslovakia between December 1945 and mid-1946.\textsuperscript{165} The Soviets agreed to take 2.75 million Germans from across Eastern Europe into their zone; the Americans agreed to receive 2.25 million from Czechoslovakia and Hungary; and the British would take 1.5 million from the Polish Recovered Territories.\textsuperscript{166}

The British began to make good on their commitments under a program codenamed Swallow in February 1946. Up to 6,500 expellees arrived per day until a sea link with Gdańsk/Danzig established in March further increased the transport capacity.\textsuperscript{167} By the end of 1946, the British had managed to overfill their quota, having accepted nearly 1.65 million Germans from Poland, mostly from Lower Silesia.\textsuperscript{168} As 1946 and 1947 dragged on, the Polish government also began to include prisoners of war in their transports, bringing the totals to 593,000 Germans in 1947 and 112,250 Germans for 1948 and 1949 combined.\textsuperscript{169} In order to accommodate these staggering numbers, the British established a system of 1,051 camps, with the largest located in the Lüstringen, Poggenhagen, Uelzen-Bohldamm, and Friedland.\textsuperscript{170}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[165] Ahonen et al., \textit{People on the Move}, 93.
\item[166] Douglas, \textit{Orderly and Humane}, 125.
\item[167] Ahonen et al., \textit{People on the Move}, 94.
\item[168] Bernadetta Nitschke, \textit{Vertreibung und Aussiedlung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus Polen 1945 bis 1949} (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2003), 232.
\item[169] Ibid., 266.
\item[170] Ibid., 217.
\end{footnotes}
Evacuees and DPs

In addition to the some 12 million German expellees, occupation authorities faced the need to resettle two other displaced populations whose significance bears brief mention. The first group consisted of the Germans displaced by Allied strategic bombing meant to “de-house” the workforce driving Germany’s war machine. Britain’s bombing of Germany began at first because it was the only way for the island state to strike Germany, but in 1942 Sir Arthur Harris took control of British bomber command and argued that it was not enough to knock out individual factories. Instead, as William Hitchcock has characterized the strategy, “the city as a whole had to be destroyed.”  

The brutal mathematics of the Allied air campaign were: 2.7 million tons of bombs dropped on Germany, 3.6 million units of housing destroyed, 7.5 million Germans left homeless, and at least 305,000 Germans killed. A less obvious problem with these 7.5 million homeless Germans in the divided postwar occupation zones was that many had been evacuated during the war into regions controlled by different powers after the war. Evacuees from the Ruhr region ended up in Soviet-controlled Thuringia, Saxony, and Saxony-Anhalt. Refugees from Dresden found themselves in Lower Saxony, separated from their home city and families by the British-Soviet border. Indeed, before Operation Swallow could begin transferring Germans from Poland, the British and Soviet forces first needed to complete Operation Honeybee for the “head-to-head” exchange of evacuees with families and homes in the other zone.

172 Ibid., 188.
173 Instances of such evacuations appear, for instance, in the records of unaccompanied male youths housed at Friedland between 1947 and 1951. See Chapter 5.
The other significant displaced population in postwar Germany was not German at all. As many as eight to eleven million former forced and “voluntary” laborers, POWs, victims of the concentration and death camp systems, and former allies of the Nazi regime found themselves within Germany at the end of the war. These Displaced Persons—“civilians outside the national boundaries of their country by reason of war”—were subject to both military authorities, who saw them as a problem “chiefly […] of security and order,” and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Anglo-American military authorities sought the speediest possible repatriation, and the Soviet Union demanded the return of all of its soldiers and civilians irrespective of individual preference and without exception. Responding to these pressures, the military governments and UNRRA accomplished a feat of enormous organizational efforts by resettling the vast majority of these DPs, over 10 million, by the end of September 1945. The question remained, however, of what should be done with the hardcore of up to 1 million DPs who refused repatriation and the non-Germans who continued to flee into Germany well after the cessation of hostilities in May 1945.

**Conclusions**

Between 1945 and 1949, the Allied military governments and German officials needed to resettle a staggering 30 million displaced individuals. The displacement of roughly 18 million of these persons can be explained relatively easily as the immediate consequences of Nazi crimes.

175 William Hitchcock puts the figure at 11 million; see Hitchcock, *Bitter Road to Freedom*, 250. Gerard D. Cohen suggests that the figure of 8 million has a greater scholarly consensus; see Cohene, *In War’s Wake: Europe’s Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7. It seems that some of the disagreement stems from which groups authors classify as having been DPs, and a fair estimate would be that some 11 million non-Germans were located in Germany or otherwise freed by the collapse of the Nazi regime and Germany surrender.

176 Hitchcock, *Bitter Road to Freedom*, 250.

177 Ahonen et al, *People on the Move*, 182.
and World War II. Approximately 7 million Germans had lost their homes to the Allied strategic bombing campaigns. Another 11 million non-Germans had been brought to Germany as prisoners of war, forced laborers, and victims of racial and political persecution. The process by which a further 12 million Germans were expelled from their homes in Eastern Europe, however, developed out of a series of long, medium, and short-term factors.

The longest-range cause of the Germans’ expulsion was the increasing nationalization of populations and conflicts in Eastern Europe reaching back to the nineteenth century. The development of nations as communities of belonging that cut across traditional loyalties to locality and crown accelerated dramatically following the Revolutions of 1848. National activists engaged in a concerted effort to convince the peoples of Eastern Europe to think of themselves primarily as German, Czech, Polish, Hungarian, and the like. Although these activists suffered constant frustrations caused by individuals’ unwillingness to think nationally or commit themselves to a single nation, they had nevertheless succeeded in their efforts to inject nationality into the region’s politics before the outbreak of World War I. The effects of that war on nationality varied, but by 1918, national identification had become more widespread, and the defeat of each multinational empire opened space for more intensive activism and conflicts.

Two medium-term factors contributed to the eventual expulsions. The first of these factors was the failure of the minority protection system overseen by the League of Nations during the interwar period. Although the Great Powers had subjected the newly created successor states of Eastern Europe to conventions protecting the rights of national minorities, they had little interest in the enforcement of the regime and no desire to subject themselves to it either. The governments of the successor states walked a line between the treaties and the most radical demands of national activists, but states such as Czechoslovakia and Poland did engage in
campaigns to nationalize their populations and disadvantage minority groups. Petitions by German minorities combined with the unabashedly revisionist policies of the Weimar Republic regarding its eastern borders. The effect of that was greater intransigence on the part of the successor states that viewed the treaties as aiding German irredentism. Such intransigence was especially problematic because the system’s structure required their cooperation for the adjudication of disputes and because the system might have also been used as a shield against German irredentists.

The second medium-range factor was the increasing use of population exchanges as a tool of diplomacy and statecraft during the interwar period. The French government succeeded in the displacement of roughly 100,000 Germans from the reacquired territories of Alsace and Lorraine between 1918 and 1921. Those French efforts soon paled in comparison to exchanges at Europe’s southeastern periphery. By 1923, the Turkish and Greek regimes had forcibly transferred over 1.5 million people. Despite the hardships it caused, that transfer and the failure of the minority protection system suggested to European statesmen and diplomats that expulsions might succeed where liberal ideals and a language of rights had failed to resolve conflict. Thus, it was before the outbreak of World War II that nationalist leaders such as Edvard Beneš first entertained the notion of expulsion to finally end the conflicts surrounding German minorities in the multinational states of Easter Europe.

World War II was the final, short-term cause of the expulsions. The unsettlement of Germans in the aftermath of the war cannot be understood without reference to Nazi plans for the destruction and reordering of Eastern Europe's populations. To that end, Hitler began programs for the uprooting of German communities to resettle lands depopulated of their Slavic and Jewish owners through programs of expulsion and outright killing. German atrocities in Eastern Europe
in turn hardened the Allies' resolve for expulsion as a form of retribution and as a means to finally resolve conflicts surrounding German minorities. Having approved of mass expulsion, it remained for the Allies to coordinate with Germans in their respective zones of occupation in order to resolve the displacement before it could cause further disaster for public health or lead to radicalization against the occupation governments.
CHAPTER 2
OUT OF THE EAST AND INTO CAMPS

By the late summer of 1945, the flow of refugees into southern Lower Saxony had become untenable. This rural region had largely been untouched by the war, but its infrastructure and supplies were inadequate for refugees arriving in the small farming communities near the border with goal of reaching American-controlled Hessen or traveling farther into the British sector. Late in the summer, former German Red Cross Field Director Körber-Harriehausen requested aid from the district’s British commandant, which first came in the form of a requisitioned Jeep for transporting amputees. On September 9, the situation at the border had deteriorated further. Two days after Göttingen Mayor Erich Schmidt had pleaded for help from the German authorities for the Hanoverian Province, he wrote to the director of the Reichsbahn railroad services in Kassel with a request. He asked for trains to be routed so that they could transport the thousands of Germans arriving daily and “flooding the southern portion of the district and the city of Göttingen at such a level that their accommodation is no longer possible and their evacuation is essential.” Finally on September 17, Schmidt wrote to the commanding officer of the British 126th Military Government Detachment based south of the city to offer use of bomb-shelter beds from Göttingen and to inform him, “by order of the Military Government at Hildesheim there is to be erected at Friedland in connexion [sic] with the experimental farm a


179 Letter from E. Schmidt to Reichsbahndirektion Kassel, 9 September 1945, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. A 1,2, SAG.
reception camp for a thousand people.”180 The camp officially opened on the grounds of the Göttingen University’s experimental farm facilities a few days later, and on September 25 it received the first organized transport from the Soviet zone.

From its outset, the Friedland transit camp served two primary purposes. First, the camp was supposed to ameliorate the suffering of displaced masses along the border of Lower Saxony, Thuringia, and Hessen. The camp therefore provided refugees in the border region with food, shelter, and medical attention. Established as a transit camp, Friedland’s second purpose was to serve as a collection point for border traffic and function as a distribution mechanism for the resettlement of displaced masses. The camp accomplished that task through the control, regulation, and identification of individuals traveling into and out of the British zone.

In order to aid and regulate the displaced populations, administrators at Friedland developed a strict, disciplining camp environment. Despite the fragmented nature of the documentation from the camp’s early operation, the extant records demonstrate that the two goals of humanitarian assistance and the reimposition of order were closely aligned. The camp’s procedures for registration, medical examination, and provisioning reveal that the capacity to help thousands of refugees per day depended on the camp’s regulatory regime. Yet, the regulatory regime also relied on humanitarian efforts as a means to interact with refugees and in order to ensure their compliance. A third important feature of this camp regime was the swiftness with which it handled the refugees. By necessity and design, the individual lengths of stays during the first months of operation were very short. Refugees typically spent as little as 48 hours, because the camp and the surrounding districts could not accommodate a build-up of hundreds of thousands of refugees. Instead the camp quickly accomplished the crucial tasks of

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180 Letter from E. Schmidt to Commanding Officer of 126 Det.Mil.Gov., 17 September 1945, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. I 44, SAG.
medical examination, the registration of individuals complete with travel permits, and provisioning for journeys home or to other refugee camps.

Another set of questions raised by the events in September concern who was in charge at the camp and who provided the labor and material. When the Allied governments agreed to the German expulsions, they also agreed in principle that Germans would be responsible for the care and resettlement of expellees. In contrast to the non-German Displaced Persons who received aid through the United Nations and directly from the Allied governments, German refugees and expellees were to be a German problem solved through German means. Yet, the scope of German displacement quickly made that Allied approach to the expellees and other displaced groups unworkable. Allied efforts to resolve disorder before it could lead to a reradicalization of the German population were incompatible with a passive approach to the millions of under-fed, homeless Germans seeking accommodation.

It was therefore the British military government that ordered the construction of the refugee camp at Friedland and which nominally oversaw the camp’s operations. British supervision and requisition of materials for housing and transport, however, did not mean a significant commitment of British manpower. The local German population, particularly former Wehrmacht soldiers and German Red Cross members provided the vast majority of the labor, including construction, transport, cooking, and administration. Indeed, the camp’s double military character—overseen by British military government units and largely staffed by Wehrmacht veterans—helps to explain the establishment of the disciplining procedures that remained evident in camp operation long after the war’s end.

This chapter also addresses the question of what populations were housed in the camp. The groups passing through Friedland during its first nine months of operation (end of
September 1945 to end of June 1946) were diverse. The demographics and specific treatment of four categories of camp populations illustrated the complexity of displacement in postwar Germany. First, the British-Soviet program codenamed Operation Honeybee accounted for much of the camp’s early traffic in the form of wartime evacuees and expellees whose families or homes were in the other occupation zone. The second category was split between refugee from the Soviet zone and Germans expelled from Poland to the British zone under the auspices of Operation Swallow. Prisoners of war released by the Soviets formed a third category of the camp’s populations. Non-German Displaced Persons comprised the final group passing through the camp.

Finally, this chapter examines the history of a small contingent of British relief workers at Friedland during the winter and spring of 1945/46. These British volunteers from the International Voluntary Service for Peace (IVSP) contributed to aid efforts at Friedland by transporting infirm refugees across the zonal border to the camp and helping with construction, among other tasks at the camp. Reports sent to supervisors in Britain as well as interviews conducted with two of the IVSP workers indicate that Germans and the British at Friedland enjoyed relatively good relations despite non-fraternization orders. The volunteer contingent worked diligently to further improve relations between the recent wartime enemies, a process helped by the fact that they occupied a liminal space between British authorities and the German camp staff. Finally, examination of the IVSP efforts to organize German volunteers necessary for overcoming labor shortfalls suggests that relief work at Friedland contributed to reestablishment of local civil society through the development of civic organizations.
Refugee Crises and the Development of Camp Operation

As the desperate situation in and around Göttingen during the late summer of 1945 demonstrates, the unsettling of German populations and disorder in border regions created a series of problems for the government and residents in the region. The chaotic situation along the border endangered refugees, but it also created hardships for farmers and small communities. Refugees without families or former homes in the West tried to settle in new communities only to face rejection by a local insularity made more extreme by the hardships of scarce food and housing. Aside from the question of resources, local communities were wary of exhausted and often ill refugees, who represented a particular public health hazard the tight living conditions. Authorities in the British military and the provisional German government addressed these problems as well as the refugees’ suffering through a regulatory system that combined humanitarian goals with methods for reimposing order. Refugee transit camps such as the one established in Friedland played a crucial role in helping to bring order to the flow of displaced populations while also alleviating the refugees’ distress. Examination of the refugee crisis in the Göttingen region and then the establishment and development of the Friedland camp thus makes clear that a regulating, humanitarian framework governed the operation of both the camp and the overall system for addressing displacement. Although necessarily imperfect at times, this response played a vital role in taming unruly masses and turning them into settled, manageable individuals.

The military government established camps as official reception points in response to chaotic and often dangerous conditions along the border. Two days after the Friedland camp opened, it received an order from the British military government to help control movement along the British side of the border. As of September 28, 1945, all individual traffic to the
frontier including border crossing was forbidden. Instead, individuals were required to travel to Friedland where they would be processed and organized into closed transports that would cross the zonal border under agreements between British and Soviet authorities.\footnote{Anordnung der Mil.-Regierung für Flüchtlinge, 28 September 1945, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} Such organized transports to the Soviet zone addressed a number of concerns. Refugees traveling on their own or in small groups were vulnerable to robbery and swindle, particularly because refugees carried their remaining property and personal effects. Farmers in the border region also had reasons to dislike refugees’ uncontrolled movements. Hungry refugees stole food from fields, and the transit of people and carts across fields damaged crops.\footnote{Even after the camp brought the movements of refugees under better control, farmers continued to complain to the camp administration about problems caused by camp staff crossing the fields as well. See Lageranordnung Nr. 13, 3 August 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} Collecting refugees at Friedland and organizing them into supervised transports thus offered the means to ameliorate these problems.

Sexual assault committed by Soviet border guards made the border region unsafe for women. Norman Naimark has demonstrated that rape by Red Army soldiers continued to be a significant problem long after the infamous march into East Prussia. Rapes stemming from poor discipline continued even after the improvements to law enforcement by the fall of 1945. Records from Friedland support Naimark’s assertions that rape was an “endemic problem” in border towns and that transportation centers were especially dangerous for German women.\footnote{Norman Naimark, \textit{The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 87-89.} In September 1945, for instance, the administrator of the Göttingen district met with the local officer in charge of DP and refugee affairs for the military government, Major Oldham, about several rapes committed by Russian troops. According to the district administrator, two women had tried to cross the frontier into the Soviet zone whereupon Russian soldiers raped them and
sent them back to the British zone. In early October, one of the camp’s doctors likewise reported three incidents of refugees raped by the border guards. A group of six soldiers attacked, beat, and raped one of the women in a small town near Heiligenstadt, which was a waypoint for westbound refugees. The other two women were also passing through the same area when Soviet soldiers assaulted them, including in one case a local commandant.

The Friedland camp helped to address this problem in a number of ways. First, the camp’s medical facilities could treat the women’s injuries. Crucially for the individual woman’s health as well as for public health more generally, the camp also conducted tests for venereal diseases. The incidence of rape also seems to have decreased after the establishment of the camp. To the extent that Soviet soldiers attacked women, they seem to have targeted illegal border crossers, as this group was the only one to report rapes later into the postwar years. It is possible this decrease in assaults resulted from changes in the Soviet zone and the Red Army, though one should bear in mind Naimark’s finding that rape remained a problem in border towns well into 1946 and 1947. Given that women attempting illegal border crossings were most vulnerable, it is possible that the establishment of official transit camps at Friedland and on the Soviet side of the frontier helped to lessen the problem. Organized transports were undoubtedly safer for the women than risking encounters with soldiers at isolated border posts. Such transports nevertheless depended on the infrastructure provided by transit camps for their smooth operation.

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185 Memorandum written by Doctor Marggraf, 3 October 1945, MISC 170 Item 2616, Imperial War Museum Archive (hereafter, IWMA)

186 See report dated January 1947 in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

A key step in addressing problems caused by uncontrolled movement was the development of system for permitting transit and residential assignments. Strict limits on movement within and between districts initially served security concerns for the occupation forces, but these regulations created problems for displaced Germans even as local authorities resorted to them in the effort to avoid the burdens and epidemiological risks associated with refugees. For example, Marshal Georgy Zhukov responded to an increase in the incidence of typhoid infections in Berlin by declaring the city off-limits to migration by individuals without proper transit permits on 27 July 1945. At that point, unpermitted traffic to Berlin totaled some 4,000 to 5,000 persons per day.\(^\text{188}\) The military government for the Göttingen region likewise instituted “circulation restrictions” in June 1945 to address the related issues of displacement and housing shortages. These restrictions required that individuals acquire identity papers for the district in which they wanted to reside. Individuals wishing to travel outside the district needed to apply for permission from the local mayor or district administrator, and these authorities “must satisfy themselves that the movement is absolutely necessary.”\(^\text{189}\)

The response to an application by a Göttingen resident seeking a residence permit for her daughter and grandchildren typifies the local government’s view of the problem and its solution. In denying the application, the local refugee authority referenced strict orders preventing him from granting permission. Yet, the letter of the law was beside the point for the official who went on to lecture the applicant about the reason for the rules: “I am convinced of the necessity and sensibleness of these measures, because the unregulated influx of hundreds of thousands […]

\(^{188}\) Extract from Weekly Political Intelligence Summary, No. 303, 1 August 1945, FO 1052/314, British National Archives at Kew Gardens (hereafter, BNA).

\(^{189}\) These restrictions came into effect on June 6. “Circulation Restrictions,” n.d., Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. A 10, SAG.
poses such risks to the general population, both as regards nutrition and in terms of hygiene.” Although he recognized the “hardships that undoubtedly arise in individual cases and which seem hardly tolerable,” the official nevertheless concluded that these hardships could not enter the question because of the dangers posed by refugees.190

It is clear that movement and residence restrictions created hardships for refugees, but they also proved problematic for city officials. Rather than resolving the fundamental issue of displacement, insular-minded officials and communities merely left the problem to fester elsewhere. W. Ruediger, the administrator of the refugee facility set up in a Göttingen school, noted the false promise of restrictions and called for a more comprehensive solution in a letter to the Göttingen mayor and district administrator in early September 1945. She argued that the current refugee policies created the “social ill” (Übelstand) of refugees continuously wandering around the Göttingen district for months at a time. Even when refugees could find vacant housing, local mayors refused to consent to their taking up residence. According to the refugee camp administrator, this fact “embittered the homeless persons to the extreme.” Ruediger admitted the need to defend against an unplanned influx. Still, she argued that the city mayor and county administrator “must consider that some refugees are that the end of their strength and they need to be brought to infirmaries immediately because there is danger in further delays.”191

In October 1945, British and German provisional authorities introduced new policies to overcome regulatory and humanitarian problems posed by displacement. Transit camps played a key role in these attempts to address the displacement problematic in a systematic manner. As of October 7, 1945, an order issued by the president for the Hannover province required all

190 Letter to Frau Egelink, 10 October 1945, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. A 1, 2, SAG.

191 Letter from Flüchtlingsauffangstelle Egelbergschule to Oberbürgermeister Göttingen and Landrat Göttingen, 4 September 1945, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. A 10, SAG.
incoming refugees to pass through a transit camp. To that end, the provincial authority designated facilities at Lüneburg, Uelzen, Wittingen, Gifhorn, Braunschweig, Goslar, Osterode, and Friedland as official transit camps. No refugee would receive a ration card unless he or she entered one of these camps. Once in a camp, refugees received registration cards with a destination determined by the British military government. After arrival the destination, refugees were to have their cards stamped at the train station, which would in turn entitle them to receipt of ration cards at the appropriate office. Aid thus became contingent upon refugees entering the state-run resettlement system in order to resolve the problem of vagrant refugees. Indeed, the informational sheet distributed to refugees explicitly stated at its end: “A further moving from place to place is prohibited by indefinite order of the military government.” This system further addressed the problem of insularity in local communities, because the completed documentation was straightforward and provided no legal grounds for refusing aid to refugees.\textsuperscript{192}

Establishment of refugee transit camps throughout the British zone stemmed from two logics for managing displaced populations. First, the facilities could tame uncontrolled refugee movements by centralizing displaced individuals, thereby beginning the process of obtaining transit and residence permits for them and then providing transport to the new places of residence. Registration in the camps also enabled the state to reenter refugees into population rolls in order to restart its social bookkeeping and rebuild knowledge about the populace it governed. The second function of the camp was to begin organized state care for the individuals at the facility. Persons needing immediate medical care, such as those Ruediger mentioned, could be evaluated and treated within the camps’ medical facilities or sent to nearby hospitals. Rather than provoking bitterness through rejection from insular communities, state intervention through

\textsuperscript{192} See “Merkblatt für Flüchtlinge,” 5 October 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13, NHStA.
refugee transit camps would instead promote relief and gratitude for provisions, medical care, and shelter, all while bringing refugees into the existing ration regime.

The capacity of transit camps to gather information was of further benefit to intelligence officials in the British military. Refugees entering the Hanoverian province had the potential to inform the British Army of the Rhine about three critical issues. First, British Field Security Service officers asked refugees about the size and disposition of Soviet and Polish military forces. Second, refugees at Friedland reported on the process of expulsion from Poland, the refugee situation in the Soviet zone, and the size and location of any refugee columns headed to the West. Finally, refugees and expellees provided intelligence about governance, society, and the economy in Poland and the Soviet zone. Officials from the British Field Security Section at Friedland were particularly keen to find out the relationship between Poles and the Polish civil administration, Soviet policy for rationing in their occupation zone, and the extent of reconstruction and the taking of in-kind industrial reparations from the Soviet zone.  

In order to quickly accomplish the myriad regulatory goals and aid refugees, the Friedland camp set up a strictly controlled procedure for incoming persons. Issued shortly after the camp became operational on September 26, 1945, Camp Order Number 1 enumerated a procedure for camp personnel and arriving persons to follow. After the arrival and unloading of trucks, personnel sent individuals to register in tents. Only once a registration card had been obtained could persons procure their ration cards and have them stamped. Delousing and a further stamp as proof came next, and this stamp was required for obtaining food or clothing. Individuals then waited until called for a departure overseen by British soldiers. Camp personnel

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193 See Field Security Service reports from the fall 1945 in the folder: MISC 170 Item 2616, IWMA.

194 Lagerbefehl Nr. 1, 26 September 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
handed out tickets for travel to assigned destinations on the day of departure. At that point, processed persons could reclaim what possessions they had brought. The first steps of registration, medical examination, and disinfecting as well as questioning by the British security services took about 15 minutes per individual. In most cases, the camp staff tried to finish processing on the day of arrival or shortly thereafter, because a disruption in the flow of refugees (roughly 4,000 or 5,000 per day in the early months of operation) would have been catastrophic.

Registration of individual identities at Friedland served three purposes. First, refugees often needed to regain some form of personal identification. In many instances, people arrived without personal identification or any sort of papers. Expellees often had their IDs taken, while evacuees lost personal papers when their houses were bombed or caught fire. Many refugees arriving from the Soviet zone were merely in possession of a paper stating, “free of lice and infectious diseases.” In most instances, refugees simply made a legal affirmation or oath to the camp police about their names, though the camp’s investigative powers were clearly limited in its early years. David Sainty, a British volunteer in the camp, complained that time spent confirming individual identities could have been better spent providing care. He inveighed against time spent “stamping papers of all conceivable kinds. Wasted because it is impossible to check.” The first commemorative history of Friedland likewise admitted, “In isolated cases

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196 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 25.

197 Ibid.

198 See “Lageranordnung Nr. 23,” Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

199 “Report 31,” 26 November 1945, B 45 11 26 – 1 01, ASCI.
individuals may have used this opportunity to make a small name change. For individuals hoping to escape punishment for Nazi activities or crimes committed during the war, the temptation to change names must have been great, indeed.

Despite the problems associated with confirming individual identities, it was not wasted effort as Sainty claimed. One effect of registering refugees at Friedland was to restart the state’s social bookkeeping apparatus amid the upheavals of war and expulsion. Other state initiatives to assess the populace, such as a census, would have been all but impossible given the fluidity of population movements. In this sense, registration efforts at the camp functioned as a first step in authorities’ efforts to know how many people lived in a given area and who they were, no matter the difficulties in ensuring the truthfulness of registrants’ identities. That process needed to start somewhere, so it made sense to begin at the initial point of contact between refugees entering the British zone and the provisional German government overseeing them.

Establishing individual identities at the camp was also important, because individuals reentered state rolls with recognition as refugees needing further assistance. In this way, regional governments could begin to assess just how many displaced individuals needed to aid. Likewise, entry into the camp’s registration records (the Kartei) provided proof of refugee status for future welfare claims against the state. Michael Hughes has shown that discussions of financial burden sharing (Lastenausgleich) had begun in Germany during the war and continued during the early postwar period, in part because fears that the status quo of an inequitable distribution of the war’s costs would lead to political instability. Although it had not been initially clear how a program of burden sharing would proceed, both Germans and the Western occupation powers

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200 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 26.

recognized a need to include the individuals streaming through camps such as Friedland.\footnote{202}

Individuals processed at Friedland reentered government rolls, but in doing so they could also begin laying the foundation for future, special claims on state resources. In fact, early camp directives suggest that its administrators were well aware that these records would prove vital for refugees in the future. Camp Directive 4 called on the registration employees to record refugee’s names and details as exactly as possible, because it was “in the interest of the refugees themselves.”\footnote{203}

Having completed registration, individuals arriving at Friedland underwent delousing. Lice posed a significant threat to public health in postwar Germany, because they could potentially cause epidemics of typhus and trench fever. By collecting exhausted, malnourished populations in tight quarters, the camp actually constituted a particular danger zone for spreading lice and lice-borne disease to other refugees and from them to their new home communities. Medical examinations routinely revealed that roughly 20 percent of arriving persons suffered from lice.\footnote{204} As such so the camp administration mandated delousing with DDT powder for all arriving refugees. By the end of January 1946, the Göttingen office of the State Health Department could report that the delousing personnel have been greatly reinforced and put under the supervision of a doctor and “reliable” group leaders. The camp had also begun construction

\footnote{202}{This is not to suggest that the Lastenausgleich was a forgone conclusion or that it necessarily had wide-ranging material benefits for claimants. Hughes argues that it was a “hard-won compromise” reflecting political and economic realities in the FRG; see Hughes, Shouldeing the Burdens of Defeat, 194. In fact, it had not been clear that an equalization would necessarily proceed strictly along native/expellee lines; see Reinhold Schillinger, Der Entscheidungsprozess beim Lastenausgleich, 1945-1952 (St. Katharinen: Scripta Mercaturae Verlag, 1985), 289-97, and Andreas Kossert, Kalte Heimat (Munich: Siedler, 2008), 96. Actual restitution was often piecemeal and difficult to obtain, as argued by Carl-Jochen Müller, Praxis und Probleme des Lastenausgleichs in Mannheim, 1949-1959 (Mannheim: Südwestdeutsche Schriften, 1997), 375-80, and Daniel Levy, “Integrating Ethnic Germans in West Germany” in Coming Home to Germany? ed. David Rock and Stefan Wolff (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002).}

\footnote{203}{Lageranordnung Nr. 4, 28 September 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.}

\footnote{204}{Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsid ent Hannover, 8 December 1945, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.}
on a delousing barracks for refugees’ personal effects.\textsuperscript{205} Despite these efforts, illnesses did arise in the camp, such as the discovery of two cases of epidemic typhus in the camp during early January and further cases throughout February 1946.\textsuperscript{206} In the effort to protect camp employees, refugees, and public in the Göttingen region, the camp administration therefore mandated vaccinations against typhus and other diseases for the entire camp staff on penalty of immediate dismissal.\textsuperscript{207}

A relatively small camp medical staff cared for these displaced populations and conducted the necessary medical examinations. In early December 1945, roughly 15 doctors and 50 German Red Cross nurses oversaw a medical station with 40 beds. The camp’s medical stocks often bordered on insufficient, making treatment of the refugees more difficult. On the whole, evacuees from the Soviet zone tended to be healthiest, presumably because they had been living in better temporary accommodations than the expellees coming from farther east. Prisoners of war returning via the Soviet zone were consistently in the worst overall state of health. An observer from the State Health Department described their condition as “catastrophic,” “completely exhausted,” and “in an unbelievable state of malnutrition.”\textsuperscript{208} Illnesses in Friedland also contributed to particularly miserable camp conditions in late December 1945. Noting the cleanliness and sufficient number of latrines, a report complained, “unfortunately the refugees in the area show a catastrophic uncleanness and use all places in and around the barracks. The

\textsuperscript{205} Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsident Hannover, 23 January 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{206} Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsident Hannover, 8 January and also 21 February 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{207} Ibid. See also Lageranordnung Nr. 7, 30 May 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{208} Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsident Hannover, 8 December 1945, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.
latrines are only seldom visited, despite numerous signs.” Evidently illnesses and malnutrition took such a toll on camp residents that they were unable to make it to latrines in a timely manner.

After completing delousing and medical evaluations, camp residents could obtain food rations. Feeding hundreds of thousands of displaced individuals was a massive undertaking. For example, from the establishment of the camp until the end of December 1945, it distributed some 28,000 kilograms of bread and 2200 kilograms of marmalade. Later in 1946, the meals for a typical day included breakfast, lunch, and dinner. For breakfast, refugees received 178.5 grams of bread, 10 grams of meat, 8 grams of fat, and 16 grams of marmalade. Lunch consisted of 7.5 grams of meat, 3 grams of fat, and 18 grams of nutriment. Dinners included 7.5 grams of meat, 3 grams of fat, 17.7 grams of nutriment, and 17.9 grams of sugar. Vegetables for these meals were either dried or salted. Upon release from the camp, every refugee received provisions for his or her journey consisting of 250 grams of bread, 25 grams of fat, and 100 grams of meat or sausage.

Although narratives about arrival at Friedland tend to emphasize the first warm meal, first bed, and even first roof over an individual’s head in days or weeks, conditions in the early camp were primitive. When the camp opened in the fall of 1945, the cleaned and disinfected buildings of the Göttingen University’s experimental farm functioned as the first camp structures. The large cow barn became the first sleeping hall, while other buildings were repurposed for medical examinations, camp administration, and so forth. The British military government also ordered the erection of ten tents next to the barns, which were later replaced by Nissen huts (a British

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209 Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsident Hannover, 22 December 1945, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

210 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 23.

211 Aufstellung über Führung, Leistung und Bauvorhaben des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, 15 June 1946, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 13/1, NHStA.
variant of the Quonset hut). Mud became a significant problem in this camp because it stood beneath the water table, so the grounds were wet and the wood floors were constantly damp.\textsuperscript{212}

By the start of December, the IVSP volunteer Sainty described the camp as “congested and filthy, and in the bad weather […] the conditions in the camp are deplorable.”\textsuperscript{213}

These conditions prompted the camp administration to begin construction of a second facility in October 1945. Located on the other side of the Leine River and nearer to the train station, the location for the new camp was also supposed to be high enough to avoid the problems with mud and groundwater.\textsuperscript{214} When the camp moved to the new facilities on December 3, it was still processing some 5,000 persons per day with 800 to 1,000 sleeping in the camp every night.\textsuperscript{215} Of course, the camp did not actually possess the facilities for that many people to sleep indoors. During periods of heavy transport activity in the winter of 1945/46, some 2,000 to 3,000 refugees nightly slept in tents or otherwise under the stars.\textsuperscript{216} The refugee office for the Hildesheim governing district nevertheless put the camp’s capacity at as many as 8,000 persons. Much to the disappointment of these same German authorities, the comings and goings of so many individuals also meant that there was the “the same mud as in the old camp.”\textsuperscript{217}

The new camp suffered from shoddy construction as well. Royal Engineers of the XXX Corps of the British Army of the Rhine were supposed to finish the last construction in the camp

\textsuperscript{212} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 13.
\textsuperscript{213} “Report 32,” 1 December 1945, B 45 12 01 - 1 01, ASCI.
\textsuperscript{214} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 13.
\textsuperscript{215} Letter to Staatliches Gesundheitsdienst, 5 December 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA.
\textsuperscript{216} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 27.
\textsuperscript{217} Tätigkeitsbericht, 9 January 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 1, NHStA.
during December, but in Sainty’s estimation, they “made a mess of it.” Evidently, engineers trained for bridge-building and bomb disposal “were no better than the next man” when it came to laying out a well designed refugee camp. Particularly egregious in Sainty’s mind was the construction of the hospital building atop a 12-foot embankment with no entrance for vehicles, necessitating supplementary construction of a ramp. The engineers left after three weeks with their work in the camp still unfinished. After the last “pitiful remnant” departed the camp, staffers were left to sort out labor for the unfinished projects.²¹⁸

Well into the spring of 1946, improvements to the camp remained an ongoing project. In a report to German authorities in Hannover, a visiting government official at the end of February described the camp as “primitive” and “still under construction.” This official allowed that the camp administration was doing everything in its power to make the camp “fit for human habitation” (menschenwürdig), but the paucity of raw materials held back construction and renovation efforts. These conditions were proving problematic, because while they could be tolerated for the intended stay of a single day, it was increasingly common that refugees needed to remain for up to four days.²¹⁹ Thorough repairs and improvements to the camp were first undertaken in the summer of 1946 after the completion of the Operation Honeybee exchange of evacuees with the Soviet zone. Over the course of a little more than a month, the camp shut down so that the personnel could begin improving drainages and roads, building new latrines, and constructing more permanent barracks to replace some of the Nissen huts.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Report 39, 20 January 1946, B 46 01 20 - 1 01, ASCI.
²¹⁹ Bericht über die Besichtigung des Flüchtlingsdurchgangslagers Friedland b. Göttingen, 25 February 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.
²²⁰ Aufstellung über Führung, Leistung und Bauvorhaben des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, 15 June 1946, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 13/1, NHStA.
The early development of the Friedland camp thus reveals the facility as an imperfect but nonetheless crucial response to the problems posed by displaced populations. Despite difficulties with camp construction, supply shortages, and even infectious diseases, the establishment and operation of the camp was an important point of intercession in taming the chaotic conditions of peoples on the move, often with no where to settle. The self-defensive insularity of German communities necessitated the development of transit camps to collect and identify displaced individuals. Once reentered into government rolls, camp residents left Friedland with entitlements to housing and with the records necessary for claiming future welfare benefits. In this way, the regulatory system deployed at Friedland served both interests in social order and humanitarian assistance by beginning the process of resettlement. Accomplishing these tasks also meant the creation of a coercive camp environment in which provisioning was tied to participation in the registration and resettlement system.

**Camp populations**

Four general categories encompass the populations processed at Friedland during its initial operating period from September 1945 through roughly May/June 1946. The first and largest group consisted of 535,306 German evacuees exchanged between the British and Soviet sectors as part of the official program codenamed Operation Honeybee. The second category included expellees transported from Poland to the British zone as part of Operation Swallow, as well as various refugees from the Soviet sector who had not previously lived in the territories comprising the British zone. Officially entered in camp statistics as “refugees,” these two groups accounted for a total 209,797 individuals passing through the camp. German prisoners of war released by the Soviets fell into the third category numbering 12,492. Finally, 3,021 non-German
Displaced Persons accounted for a small fraction of the persons passing through Friedland.\textsuperscript{221} These groups and the efforts at Friedland to redistribute them further illustrate the complexity of the population displacement problematic in postwar Germany.

On September 30, 1945, the Policy Section for the PW and DP Division of the military government issued a report on resettlement plan for displaced Germans. The three fundamental priorities for determining resettlement assignments were: first, accommodation and food in the arrival area; second, requirements in a given area for specific categories of people; and, third, political factors outside of the military government’s control. The report further clarified that North Rhine, Westphalia, and cities including Hannover, Wilhelmshaven, and Hamburg were “restricted” for resettlement. Only miners (for the Ruhr), public utility employees, agricultural workers, transportation workers, and construction workers were excepted, meaning there was no guarantee that displaced Germans would be able to return to their former homes or find resettlement in a place of their choosing.\textsuperscript{222}

Then in October 1945, British and Soviet authorities undertook a major program to resettle displaced Germans from each other’s occupation zones. Codenamed Operation Honeybee, the resettlement action was supposed to return Germans evacuated from their homes during the war. The operation was to proceed as a “head-for-head” exchange, so that neither occupation zone would be unduly burdened. In fact, each zone would presumably expect an improvement in the refugee question as Germans returned to home areas. Policy set by British military authorities in Hannover in October 1945 called for the return of evacuees to their former homes on an organized basis. “Black” or restricted areas, of course, remained an exception to the

\textsuperscript{221} Statistics from Bericht über die Besichtigung des Flüchtlingsdurchgangslagers Friedland b. Göttingen, 25 February 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{222} Resettlement of German Population, 30 September 1945, FO 1052/315, BNA.
general rule. Individuals would be allowed to return only to families that had remained resident in those zones. In cases of entire families attempting a return, the evacuees would be housed elsewhere on a temporary basis in accordance with refugee quotas set for the British zone.223

Given its proximity to the Soviet-British zonal border and its good transit connections, the newly established camp at Friedland was an ideal facility for participating in the Honeybee exchange. All told, the Friedland camp processed some 600,000 evacuees. These evacuees also constituted the overwhelming majority of the groups passing through the camp during the course of the operation. In absolute numbers, the operation reached its highest point in November 1945 when 114,384 evacuees passed through the camp, a rate of nearly 4,000 per day. The percentage of evacuees in the overall camp traffic dropped below 50 percent only once between October 1945 and the program’s completion at the end of June 1946 (36 percent in February 1946 when there was a spike in refugee/expellee arrivals). At the end of the operation, the percentage of Honeybee participants in the camp reached as high as 88 per 100 individuals.224

By May 1946, however, the British military government had begun to sour on Operation Honeybee, in no small part because the British felt that they were being poorly used by the Soviets. In a summary of the operation, the responsible officers with the military government for the Hannover region reported a significant disparity between Russian and British tallies for the program. Whereas ledgers in British-run transit camps confirmed the transport of 1,175,603 evacuees from the Soviet zone and 400,440 evacuees to the Soviet zone, the Soviets claimed to have accepted 1,170,616 evacuees compared to 966,924 evacuees sent to the British zone. According to the memorandum, “the Russian figures bear no relation whatever to the facts, and

223 Refugee Problem, October 1945, FO 1052/315, BNA.

224 Figures from Aufstellung der Gesamt-Flüchtlingsdurchgangszahlen für die Zeit vom 20.9.1945 bis 19.9.1946, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.
they know it.” Moreover, the Soviets had begun to block incoming traffic through arbitrary variations in the daily number of accepted evacuees, refusal to accept evacuees on certain days, and refusal to accept evacuees returning to certain regions. Soviet intransigence had the effect of causing “gross overcrowding of transit camps.” When the British decided to respond in kind by ending reception of evacuees from the Soviet zone at Friedland, Soviet obstruction of eastbound traffic stopped immediately.225

Increasingly, the British also found that Germans who claimed they were evacuees were in fact traveling regularly between the two zones. In light of that circumstance, organizing transports and distributing provisions to these groups entailed a commitment of resources that no longer seemed worthwhile. Providing transport and food seemed to exacerbate the problem of undesired traffic from the Soviet zone. A communiqué to the prisoner of war and DP divisions of the military government for the Hannover region stated that information from camps at Duderstadt and Friedland confirmed headquarters’ view that most Honeybee traffic consisted of “tourists” wishing to visit the other zone for a short period. The root issue was that Honeybee transports were the only authorized method of traveling between zones. Rather than opening cross-border traffic to other groups, which would have entailed opening new processing facilities, the reporting brigadier instead expressed his desire for ending Operation Honeybee.226

225 There is no date given for the report, but it was certainly written after May 10, and it seems that the report had been given to another section of the military government and then returned on May 17. See Resume of Situation regarding Honeybee and Wasp, n.d., FO 1052/317, BNA.

226 Communication from 229/MilGov to CONCOMB PW & DP Division, 8 May 1946, FO 1052/317, BNA.
Figure 1: Overview of Persons Registered during the First Year of Operation (20 September 1945 to 19 September 1946)\textsuperscript{227}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Evacuees</th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th>Soldiers</th>
<th>Foreign Nationals</th>
<th>Sum of Entries</th>
<th>Sum of Departures</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from 20 Sept.</td>
<td>9,072</td>
<td>4,546</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>14,136</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>57,676</td>
<td>28,286</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>88,020</td>
<td>51,764</td>
<td>139,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>114,384</td>
<td>28,575</td>
<td>3,719</td>
<td>1,755</td>
<td>148,433</td>
<td>118,655</td>
<td>267,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>85,898</td>
<td>16,056</td>
<td>1,980</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>104,032</td>
<td>28,055</td>
<td>132,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>41,443</td>
<td>35,393</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>78,146</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>78,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>20,087</td>
<td>30,552</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>51,217</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>51,279</td>
<td>38,929</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>91,463</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>91,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>55,482</td>
<td>11,109</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>67,566</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>67,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>74,598</td>
<td>12,701</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>87,932</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>87,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>75,303</td>
<td>8,744</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>1,520</td>
<td>85,860</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>85,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>14,944</td>
<td>2,263</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>17,467</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17,367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>6,829</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8,203</td>
<td>2,127</td>
<td>10,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until 19 Sept.</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>14,026</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14,797</td>
<td>11,421</td>
<td>16,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>601,054</td>
<td>218,400</td>
<td>31,615</td>
<td>6,203</td>
<td>857,272</td>
<td>212,022</td>
<td>1,069,294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the official end to the exchange on June 30, 1946, a trickle of evacuees continued to arrive at the camp through September 1946.\textsuperscript{228} Roughly 15,000 evacuees came to the camp in July, and several hundred more appeared each month in August and September.\textsuperscript{229} Authorities for refugee issues in the governing district of Hildesheim had expected as much in July, when a meeting of the Refugee Committee concluded that evacuees would simply arrive as illegal

\textsuperscript{227} Reproduced from statistics in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1.

\textsuperscript{228} Communication from Regional Commissioner Hannover Region to Chairman Niedersachsen Regional Council, 13 June 1946, FO 1052/317, BNA.

\textsuperscript{229} Aufstellung der Gesamt-Flüchtlinsdurchegangszahlen für die Zeit vom 20.9.1945 bis 19.9.1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA
border crossers ("Schwarzgänger" in official parlance). The provisional German authorities therefore sought and reached an agreement with the military government whereby the Schwarzgänger would be collected throughout the Hildesheim governing district and brought to Friedland. The camp would then process the Schwarzgänger and distribute them throughout the Göttingen district. In compensation, the Göttingen district received equivalently fewer transports of expellees.230

Expellees from Eastern Europe and refugees from the Soviet zone composed the second largest category of camp residents. These two populations merit grouping into a single category because refugees from the Soviet zone undoubtedly included persons who fled or were expelled from Poland. As one of Friedland’s commemorative histories explained, “The expellees who were sent to the Soviet zone as their reception area […] so far as they could attempted to move to the West.”231 Of course, refugees from the Soviet zone also included individuals who had long resided in those territories and crossed into the west for political, economic, or other reasons. Yet, because Soviet zone refugees with expulsion backgrounds did not arrive as part of official expulsion transports, camp records did not always record them as expellees. Discussing the groups in tandem therefore helps to account for the overlap between these populations.

Records from the camp’s refugee registry (the Flüchtlingskartei) indicate that expellees from interwar Polish territories and territories ceded to Poland after World War II arrived at Friedland before the officially organized transports to the camp had commenced.232 As a rule

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230 Protokoll über die Sitzung des Flüchtlingsausschusses des Bezirkslandtages, 15 July 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 54/77 Nr. 9, NHStA.

231 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 29.

232 An interval sample of 300 files based on collecting 50 names each from six letters of the alphabet (the cards are stored alphabetically by last name) revealed 11 records listing an expulsion location in present-day Polish territories and an arrival in the Friedland camp before the beginning of the first organized expellee transports to the camp.
these expellees were women or teenage boys. Of the 11 cases, 8 were women and the other three were male adolescents. The oldest of the women was 47 years old, while the two youngest were both 17 years old. The male adolescents were respectively 16, 15, and 12 years old. The distribution of ages and genders largely conforms to the expectation that women and children were most affected by expulsions, while military-aged men were more likely to be held as prisoners of war. Presumably the hardships of individual treks to the west account for the lack of elderly expellees, though older expellees certainly arrived later in organized transports. Only one individual came from a large city (Gdańsk/Danzig), while the rest gave a rural location for their last place of residence or place of expulsion.

Organized transports of expellees from Polish territories commenced following an agreement between the British Army of the Rhine and the Soviet military administration. The agreement of February 14, 1946, provided for the transfer of 1,018,000 individuals to the British zone under the codename Operation Swallow. The first Swallow transport arrived at Friedland on March 6, 1946, and by the end of the month a total of 23 transports averaging 1,500 persons had arrived. Much to the surprise of refugee officials, the incoming transports contained a high percentage of individuals who had previously resided in the British zone. Once in the camp, the expellees and other transport members were treated to the same registration, delousing, and provisioning procedures as other populations. After completing these steps, the camp attempted to resettle the expellees within the Hildesheim governing district. Problems nevertheless emerged when a large portion of the expellees and returnees wished to take up residence with relatives elsewhere in the British zone. The refugee authority for the Hildesheim governing district thus

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233 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 29.
complained that these groups began to file petitions for reassignment immediately after arrival at resettlement destinations.\textsuperscript{234}

British frustrations with Operation Honeybee eventually affected the processing of expellees and refugees at Friedland. With the end of Operation Honeybee and the temporary closing of the Friedland camp for renovations in the summer of 1946, the military authorities ordered a tighter sealing of the border. Thereafter the camp began to check the identities of refugees and expellees more intensively. Resolution to the \textit{Schwarzgänger} problem nevertheless proved difficult, because refugees continued to cross the border illegally anyway. In August 1946, the camp collected 200 \textit{Schwarzgänger} from the refugee camp at Osterode in order to forcibly return them to the Soviet sector in exchange for prisoners of war released by the Soviets.\textsuperscript{235} Changing the reception policy for \textit{Schwarzgänger} so that the camp treated them equally to evacuees and expellees ultimately proved the only workable, humane solution, and the camp began sending them to the refugee camp at Uelzen for processing in September 1946.\textsuperscript{236}

Although Operation Swallow was renewed and expanded in scope after its initial end date of July 27, 1947, the Friedland camp’s participation in the action largely came to an end in the late summer of 1946. At that time, German and military government authorities shifted the expellees’ transit location to the refugee camp located at Marienthal near Braunschweig.\textsuperscript{237}

\textsuperscript{234} Tätigkeitsbericht (März 1946), 3 April 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 2, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{235} Tätigkeitsbericht (August 1946), 2 September 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{236} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 31. See also Tätigkeitsbericht (August 1946), 2 September 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{237} Tätigkeitsbericht (August 1946), 2 September 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA.
During its participation in Operation Swallow in 1946, the Friedland camp received a total of roughly 310,000 expellees via the Soviet zone.238

Released prisoners of war constituted the third significant group of individuals processed at Friedland. From December 9, 1945, to January 20, 1946, the British military government undertook a massive POW-release program codenamed Operation Clobber. Under the auspices of this action, all members of the Wehrmacht still held captive in British controlled Germany were to be released, with the exception of those persons who fell under specific arrest categories. Although the camp at Northeim was responsible for releases in the Göttingen region, Friedland became involved in the operation when released soldiers wished to return to homes in the Soviet sector.239

Because of its function as a border transit camp, the facility at Friedland also processed POWs released into the British zone by the Soviets. Some 31,615 POWs passed through Friedland during year from September 1945 to September 1946. In comparison to evacuees, expellees, and refugees, POW traffic at Friedland was thus initially quite small, accounting for only 4 percent of all traffic in the camp during that first year.240 In September 1946, however, British authorities designated Friedland as an official “release camp” or Entlassungslager for German POWs released from prisons in the Soviet Union, Poland, and other eastern bloc states (the subject of chapter 4). In contrast to the large, closed transports of released POWs beginning in September 1946, the POWs arriving at Friedland during the first year had been released on an individual basis. Records from the camp’s medical division make clear that as a rule the Soviets

238 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 29.

239 Communication from Major Leishman to Regierungspräsident Hildesheim, 12 December 1945, Stadtflüchtlingsamt Nr. 40 (2), SAG.

240 Aufstellung der Gesamt-Flüchtlingsdurchgangszahlen für die Zeit vom 20.9.1945 bis 19.9.1946, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.
released these first POWs due their poor health and inability to work. For instance, a report from December 8, 1945, found the health of returning POWs to be “catastrophic” due to their complete exhaustion and “unbelievable condition of malnutrition.” When the released POWs did not need to be sent to nearby hospitals for further treatment, the camp resettled them according to the same criteria as evacuees so that priority was given to family reunification and returns to former home communities.

The processing of some 4,000 non-German Displaced Persons at Friedland is initially surprising. The facility at Friedland was meant for displaced Germans, after all, while DPs theoretically fell under the remit of UNRRA. As the commanding officer for the 1002 (L/K) Military Government Detachment, Major Oldham issued orders to that effect on September 24, 1945, before the camp even official opened. Oldham stated that British authorities expected Poles to cross the zonal border with German refugees. Further, “any Poles arriving at Friedland will NOT be permitted to leave as arrangements are being made to transfer these Poles into special camps.” Whenever the camp staff discovered Polish DPs, German Red Cross nurses or members of the registration camp were to take them to the German camp director. The camp director was then to immediately contact Lieutenant Colonel Perkins, who oversaw the military government for the city and rural district of Göttingen. Presumably, Perkins would then arrange for the Poles’ transport to the Polish DP camp located in Göttingen.

Poles accounted for only one of many DP groups processed at Friedland. Records from the camp do not indicate the rate at which Poles arrived during the first few month of camp

241 Communication to Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen regarding “Beaufsichtigung der Hygiene d. Flüchtlingslager,” 8 December 1945, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

242 Letter from OC 1002 (L/K) Mil Gov Det. to Direktor Flüchtlingslager Friedland, 24 September 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
operation, but it is clear that by 1946 they constituted a small minority of DPs there. For the period lasting from January 1 to September 19, 1946, the camp statistician recorded the entry of 4,060 foreign individuals. Of them, only 62 were Poles. The largest group by far were so-called “stateless persons and Jews,” totaling 3,050 individuals. The other significant national groups included the Dutch (219), Austrians (170), Yugoslavs (112), Baltic nationalities (67), and the French (55). For these nationalities, it seems safe to assume that they were former prisoners or compulsory labors in Nazi Germany. Stranger was the presence of 41 Brazilians, 33 Americans, 16 Britons, 2 Abyssinians, 2 Chinese, and 1 Turk. The most likely explanation for many of these more unusual groups is that they may have been POWs held by the Nazi regime and then required medical care after the capitulation. Because Friedland served as the official border crossing station, all of these groups would have needed to pass through the camp as part of the organized transports crossing the border.

Analysis of the populations passing through the early Friedland camp thus demonstrates the complexity of the displacement problem during the immediate postwar period. Wartime evacuees’ returns home were suddenly made difficult by the development and increasing impermeability of zonal boundaries where no real borders had previously existed. Making such homecomings more difficult, evacuees also became caught up in Anglo-Soviet disputes over a fair distribution of these displaced Germans. Expellees and refugees likewise proved problematic. In addition to finding accommodation for hundreds of thousands of these individuals, authorities at Friedland and in the British zone more generally found themselves needing to confirm that arriving persons actually belonged in these categories. The processing of released prisoners of war likewise shows the link between demobilization and resettlement,

243 Durchgangszahlen der Ausländer i.d. Zeit v.1.1.46 b.19.9.46, n.d., Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.
suggesting that POWs also belonged to the long list of unsettled groups in postwar Germany.

Finally, the presence of non-German Displaced Persons at Friedland speaks to the international character of the wartime and postwar uprooting of peoples.

**The Camp Personnel**

The paucity of surviving documents and the chaotic conditions surrounding the initial operations at Friedland make it difficult to assess the make-up of the early camp’s staff. Reconstructing the lines of authority within the camp and the supervising agencies proves even more difficult, particularly because it appears that the camp’s staff and superiors were themselves confused on that issue. Nevertheless, it is clear that the British contingent within the camp itself was small and that the British commandants mostly acted in a supervisory role rather than running the camp’s day-to-day business. Germans constituted the overwhelming majority of the facility’s staff. Of those German employees and volunteers, former military officers and members of the German Red Cross predominated, especially in positions of authority. Finally, Polish and Ukrainian Displaced Persons contributed significant labor to the camp. In sum, examination of the camp’s staff emphasizes the transnational elements of solving the displacement problem while also suggesting that development of camp operation owed much to the military bearing of its staff.

Confusion about the camp’s staffing and lines of authority starts from the very beginning of its operation and extends from the top positions down. Even the origin of the orders to establish the Friedland facility has been a source of confusion for historians. According to Helga Hagelüken and Rainer Rohrbach, the officer in charge of the military government unit for Göttingen, Colonel Perkins, entrusted German Red Cross Field Director Körber-Harriehausen with the local supervision of refugees. Körber-Harriehausen and Perkins then decided to use the
University of Göttingen’s experimental farm in Friedland to establish the camp. A letter from the Friedland camp director Richard Krause to the Göttingen district administrator (Landrat) in February 1946, however, suggests that it was not Perkin’s unit in Göttingen, but rather the 1002 Military Government Detachment south of the city that ordered the establishment of the camp. Krause made no mention of Körber-Harriehausen, instead indicating that the Landrat’s predecessor had simply passed on the order from the military government to the mayor of Friedland. While Körber-Harriehausen was an important figure in refugee relief efforts during the summer of 1945, no documentation from the time and none of the official camp histories suggest that she exercised authority over the camp.

Answering the question of who first served as camp director also proves surprisingly difficult. The first German camp directors were Gustav Heydenreich and Dr. jur. Johannes Erasmus. According to the official history of the Friedland camp published to coincide with its twentieth anniversary, their tenures as camp directors overlapped. Heydenreich served from September 1945 through March 1946, and Erasmus ran the camp from November 1945 through January 1946. Curiously, there is little in the early camp records to suggest that the two men actually shared responsibilities. In fact, it seems most likely that Erasmus had acted as sole camp director during his tenure, given that he signed as the camp director on correspondence and camp directives (Lageranordnungen) during that shared period. As to their personal histories, Erasmus was former lieutenant colonel in the Wehrmacht, who last served with a Panzergrenadier division. There is no record of Heydenreich’s past in camp documents, ministerial personnel

245 Erstattung von Kosten für die Instandsetzung des Versuchsgutes Friedland der Universität Göttingen, 1 May 1946. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 82, NHStA.
246 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 80.
files, or the de-Nazification files for the districts Hannover and Hildesheim. Nor is it clear why Erasmus left his position at the camp in January 1946.

The circumstances of Heydenreich’s departure from the camp are somewhat clearer. According to a newspaper article from the spring of 1946, the Göttingen criminal police arrested him for graft and embezzlement, particularly the illegal distribution of order forms for rationed foodstuffs. Allegedly, when the camp could not make use of an order form for butter and other foodstuffs, Heydenreich would give it to a Göttingen merchant who was eventually caught trying to use them. Heydenreich was in prison at the end of June 1946 when his successor, Richard Krause, reported the names of replacements for Heydenreich and other implicated camp employees to the Göttingen Country Refugee Office. On July 2, 1946, Heydenreich received a one-year sentence for the offense and disappears from camp records other than a brief letter from him to the county director (Oberkreisdirektor) in 1947, in which he asked for the return of some of tools left at the camp. The transfer of German authority over the camp to Krause, a former career Wehrmacht officer, constitutes the major dividing line in the camp’s history and is therefore discussed extensively in chapter 3.

247 The absence of de-Nazification files and personnel files for either man at the Lower Saxon State Archive makes definitive statements about their histories difficult. It is possible that files pertaining to the two men were simply lost. It nevertheless seems most likely that neither of them completed the de-Nazification process before leaving the camp, meaning that a panel in a governing district other than Hannover or Hildesheim was responsible for their de-Nazification.

248 “Schiebungen im Lager Friedland,” n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA. The clipping in the archival folder does not contain the newspaper’s name, but it seems most like that it was from the Hannoversch’ Neueste Nachrichten or its affiliated newspaper, the Göttinger Abendblatt.

249 Letter from Krause to Kreisverwaltung Kreisflüchtlingsamt Göttingen, “Veruntreuung und unsachgemässe Verwendung v.Lebensmitteln,” 27 June 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.

250 Letter from Krause to Kreisflüchtlingsamt Göttingen, 6 July 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA. See also letter from Heydenreich to Oberkreisdirektor Solf, 3 January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.
If little information exists about the first German administrators of the camp, there is even less record of the British commandants at the camp. The first British commandant was Major Oldham of the 1002 (L/K) Military Government responsible for the Göttingen district. Oldham’s primary responsibility seems to have been the coordination of the various work groups in the camp, including a small contingent of British soldiers, the much larger German paid staff, German Red Cross workers, Catholic and Protestant charities, and British and German volunteers. Neither Oldham nor his successors actually engaged in the direct oversight of refugees, other than in exceptional cases. During the four months at Friedland, Oldham developed a close relationship with the German camp administrators, but he was abruptly transferred to military government work in Göttingen during January 1946.251

Oldham’s successor was Captain Howie of the Black Watch, the officer in charge of the 201(R) Military Government Detachment in Obernjesa near Friedland. As in Oldham’s case, the British records pertaining to Howie indicate the transfer orders, not the reasons behind them or the officer’s previous service record.252 As was also the case for his predecessor, Howie’s exact authority in administering the camp remains unclear. In a November 1946 note regarding de-Nazification, Howie did finally state, “the Friedland camp does not run under the Military Government, but rather under German administration.”253 Still, the British did not formally transfer the camp to Lower Saxon administration until 1947. As discussed in chapters 3 and 4, the British retained control of the camp’s prisoner of war demobilization and release functions and continued to exercise authority over which populations were sent to the Friedland camp after

251 Letter from Major Oldham to Lagerleiter Erasmus, 16 January 1946. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

252 Communication from G. G. Howie to HQ Mil.Gov. Hannover Region, 24 January 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.

253 “Niederschrift,” 1 November 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
the 1947 transfer. The British did not completely leave the camp until 1952. Thus, while *de facto* authority within the camp had passed to German administrators by the end of 1946, the lines of authority within and overseeing the camp remained tangled and a source of conflict well after the initial confusion of the first months subsided.

The camp’s staff, which exceeded 500 persons in the first month, conducted day-to-day operations.\textsuperscript{254} Their tasks included, among others, helping to transport infirm refugees to the camp, registration, overseeing delousing and medical examinations, preparing and distributing food, distributing clothing, maintaining the cleanliness of the camp, and coordinating with refugee and housing authorities in areas to which the displaced Germans wished to travel. In order to rationalize this labor, the camp administration organized the work force into a hierarchy with the German camp director overseeing a series of labor battalions (*Arbeitskommandos*) for the following areas: the camp administration and orderly room, registration and the camp records, the motor pool, construction and technical management, clothing, the kitchens, camp police and security, disinfection, medical services, the German Red Cross nurses, and the three sub-camps consisting of Nissen huts.\textsuperscript{255} A permanent camp employee headed each of these labor battalions, supervising the operation of the given battalion and work groups within it, enacting directives from the German camp administration (the British seem to have been left out of this organizational structure), and relaying information from their battalions to the camp administration.

Although information about the early battalion leaders and members of the camp’s personnel council is incomplete, de-Nazification files and personnel files from later camp

\textsuperscript{254} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 25.

\textsuperscript{255} Dienstordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland/Leine, 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 7, NHStA.
records do shed light on them as a group. Most of these men had previous experience as white-collar office workers or skilled technicians (mechanics, electricians, etc), excepting of course medical doctors. Few of them had served in the military until the outbreak of war, meaning that while career officers such as Richard Krause and later Franz Freßen did hold the position of camp director, the military background of the camp’s staff stemmed from the general wartime mobilization of German men. In the military, however, most of the camp’s leading staffers did attain the rank of a noncommissioned or commissioned officer, suggesting past command authority played a role in attainment of leadership positions at the camp. Most interestingly, the personnel in early leadership positions were divided among locals from the Göttingen city or district, individuals from the Soviet zone, and individuals from territories ceded to Poland or Czechoslovakia. The Friedland camp was not a case of locals caring for displaced populations, but rather the camp staff relied upon the leadership of persons who were affected by displacement.

Individuals with a displacement background were also well represented in the camp’s general staff. The large number of camp staffers, fluctuations in employment, and incomplete records levels make it difficult to assess the early camp staff as a whole. A personnel list for the camp registration work group does nevertheless offer further confirmation of displaced individuals being overrepresented in the camp work force in comparison to the number of

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256 De-Nazification files present many challenges as a source, ranging from the issue of evaluating the veracity of statements to manner in which the files have been archived. The files are stored in archives responsible for the governing district (Regierungsbezirk) where the de-Nazification process occurred. Records for camp employees who underwent de-Nazification before their arrival in or after their departure from the Hildesheim Regierungsbezirk under which Friedland operated are impossible to find as a practical matter. Nevertheless, files for 28 camp employees with leadership positions at Friedland could be found at the Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv—Hauptstaatsarchiv Hannover.

The de-Nazification files fall under the record signature Nds. 171 Hildesheim, NHStA. Further information from a personnel list dated 1950 (for the permanent employees still at Friedland in that year), Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 403, NHStA.
displaced Germans in the Göttingen region.\textsuperscript{257} According to a census of Lower Saxony’s population in October 1946, expellees and refugees from the Soviet zone and Berlin respectively accounted for 22,775 (17.7 percent) and 11,006 (8.5 percent) of the 128,997 people living in the city and rural districts of Göttingen.\textsuperscript{258} In the Friedland camp’s registration work group, by contrast, expellees and refugees from the Soviet zone and Berlin accounted for 20 of the 37 people.\textsuperscript{259} One should of course be cautious about generalizing from this single case. For instance, the camp administration may have preferred to have refugees and expellees work in the registration, presumably due to their potential familiarity with the regions from which camp residents came. Yet, there is no administrative record indicating such a preference in assigning camp labor based upon background. Such an overrepresentation could also be explained by a desire to find work helping fellow expellees and refugees, the taking of available work in a new home, or some combination of the two motives.

Prisoners of war provided another significant labor source early in the camp’s operation. Camp documents confirm the presence of POW labor until the middle of December 1945. In a message to the camp personnel from December 10, 1945, the camp’s British commandant, Major Oldham, explained that he had been ordered to release all members of the Wehrmacht for return to civilian life. These POWs were to be taken by train to a release and demobilization center, from which they should reach home by Christmas. Oldham valued what he felt was the high quality of their work, and he offered civilian appointments to any POW wishing to return to the

\textsuperscript{257} For the personnel list, see “Registrierung—Kommando Grützner,” 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 81, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{258} Census statistics compiled from Chart “Die Bevölkerung am 29.10.1946 nach ihrem Wohnsitz am 1.9.1939,” in Niedersachsen und das Flüchtlingsproblem: Tabellenteil, vol. 2, (Hannover: Niedersächsisches Amt für Landesplanung und Statistik, 1950), 2; Nds. 50, Nr. 493, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{259} Their previous residences were: 7 from Silesia (another 1 from Breslau), 3 from Pomerania, 3 from the Sudetenland, 2 from Berlin, 2 from the interwar Polish territories or “poln. Geb.,” 1 from the Wartheland, and 1 from Halle in Saxony.
Indeed, in a letter to the camp administration upon his transfer a month later, Oldham wrote, “as you well know, I have always had particular respect for the former members of the Wehrmacht.”

Little information exists regarding the backgrounds of these POW laborers, but one former camp employee alleged that they had been members of a Waffen-SS company. In a transcript of an interview with the public broadcaster Westdeutscher Rundfunk, the former camp statistician Karl Lattmann claimed, “back then the English regarded German soldiers, particularly from the Waffen-SS, very highly.” He went on to state, “an entire Waffen-SS company was thus employed in the camp kitchen,” and was responsible for putting together 6,000 meals per day. Regarding the December 1945 release mentioned in the memo from Oldham, Lattmann claimed that the train traveled to the POW release center at Munsterlager where they were being loaded into a sealed train headed for mines in the British-occupied Ruhr industrial region. The POWs piled out of the train when they learned of its destination, and they returned to Friedland within 8 days. According to Lattmann, a relieved Oldham praised them for their return because in their absence the camp’s provisioning system for refugees “threatened to collapse” and their labor was desperately needed.

Assessing the veracity of Lattmann’s allegations is difficult. It is clear that the camp depended on POW labor during the fall of 1945, but Lattmann is the sole source of the Waffen-SS allegation. Documents from the military government, the camp, and provisional German

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260 Memorandum, An alle Arbeitskommandos, 10 December 1945, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.

261 Letter from Major Oldham to Lagerleiter Erasmus, 16 January 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

authorities reveal nothing beyond the facts that POWs did work in camp and there was an order to release them in mid-December 1945. Ultimately, even if Lattmann’s claims are true, POW labor seems to have been menial, no matter how highly the British commandant thought of the POWs. These prisoner laborers did not hold positions of authority within the camp, so this issue speaks more to the source of labor than to any sensationalist notion of Friedland as a Nazi-run camp.

The discussion of camps in postwar Germany obviously raises questions about connections with the Nazi regime and its network of labor, concentration, and extermination camps. Indeed, postwar refugee camps were often located in former prisoner of war or concentration camps, notoriously including the Dachau camp’s housing of expellees in the American sector.²⁶³ Of course, not all Nazi camps were directed against the regime’s enemies. The Nazi regime also used an extensive camp system for the resettlement of Germans under the auspices of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. Peter Fritzsche’s study of everyday life in Nazi Germany has also emphasized the importance of “community camps” in the attempted remaking of German society into the Nazi’s racially based “people’s community” (*Volksgemeinschaft*) that transcended class and regional differences. All told, the Nazi regime administered some 3,200 military-style camps for youth labor service and thousands more camps for the use of party officials, the SS and SA, and the Reich Labor Service.²⁶⁴

The facility at Friedland, however, was not constructed until well after the Germany’s defeat and there does not seem to have been any continuity in personnel between the Nazi camp systems and the early Friedland camp. Despite the vagaries of the de-Nazification process, it is

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hardly surprising the officials from the Nazis’ punitive and slave labor camp systems were as a rule not part of the Friedland leadership. The one exception to that general statement seems to have been a member of the registration work group who much later became part of the personnel council. In this case, the staffer had previously worked as a labor “procurer” (Vermittler) in the occupied Baltic and Ukrainian regions, which undoubtedly involved acquiring and distributing Slavic slave laborers.265 As far as can be determined from available de-Nazification documents, none of the Friedland leadership had been involved in the resettlement of ethnic Germans during the war. Nor does it seem that anyone in leadership positions at Friedland had administered any “community camps” for the regime, though clearly younger staffers would have experienced Hitler Youth camps. Other staffers belonging to the Reich Labor Service had certainly been housed at a “community camp” at some point as well. Despite staffers’ exposure to “community camps,” it is difficult to identify particular operations at Friedland as influenced by the Nazi camp systems. Moreover, the men at Friedland had nearly all served in the military. Garrisons, field postings, and other military facilities would have also introduced staffers to the structured operations of camp environments.

After the discharge of the roughly 300 POWs working at Friedland, staffing in the camp became more desperate. In a report from the International Voluntary Service for Peace contingent, the IVSP leader David Sainty complained that the POWs’ 120 replacements mostly consisted of old men. When Oldham returned from a later trip to the dispersal center in nearby Northeim, he told Sainty that he had personally picked out 150 new men. The next morning, Oldham and Sainty were disappointed to discover that they would only receive 25 of the 150 selected men. When the new POWs finally arrived at Friedland, the camp discovered that they

265 See de-Nazification file in Nds. 171 Hildesheim Nr. 19790, NHStA. See also Chapter 3 for further discussion of this staffer.
were either too old to work or possessed medical certificates excusing them from labor. Other British military units in the region also exacerbated the camp’s search for German laborers by using Göttingen as for their headquarters. When the units arrived, according to Sainty, they evicted Germans from homes to make space for themselves. Evicted Germans would simply leave town, meaning that compulsory labor orders made in Göttingen did little to resolve staffing shortfalls.266

The Friedland administration finally resolved this labor problem by employing Ukrainian and Polish (DPs) housed in Göttingen. In particular, these groups contributed to renovations, repairs, and construction in the camp. Already in early January 1946, the IVSP suggested that Polish DP labor could be used in the camp if not enough Germans were available. While Sainty continued to coordinate with Frege in recruiting German university students, other IVSP members began to make inquiries with the DP camp near the former Hermann Goering Steelworks where the IVSP contingent had worked before coming to Friedland. These efforts, however, initially proved fruitless.267

The shortage of German labor reached its nadir in February 1945. Heavy precipitation that month caused continuing problems for the latrines and with mud in and around the camp, despite the move across the Leine River to higher ground at the end of 1945. Although the camp had managed to acquire some compulsory German laborers to begin work on the drainages, late in the month, the Göttingen Arbeitsamt (employment authority) reassigned these German laborers to their employers in the city. Evidently the Arbeitsamt feared that a longer work assignment would be catastrophic for those businesses. In response, the camp coordinated with

266 David Sainty, Report 39, 20 January 1946, B 46 01 20 - 1 01, ASCI.
267 Minutes of Unit Meeting, 11 January 1946, B 46 01 11 - 1 01, ASCI
officials from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) for roughly 100 Ukrainian and Polish DPs to help with drainage projects. When the commandant for the Polish DPs held back their labor, efforts by the camp, the Military Government Detachment 201 (R) Obernjesa, and UNRRA failed to reach a new agreement. Thereafter only the Ukrainians remained as auxiliary labor. In addition the drainage projects, these Ukrainians also worked through the month on barracks for the camp’s new quarantine section.\footnote{Letter from Lagerleitung Friedland to Landrat Göttingen, 27 February 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 11, NHStA.} By May 1946, the number of Ukrainian laborers had dropped to an average of 30 persons who worked with a group of ten construction workers from the camp. Their tasks included: renovating and building new latrines, erecting a building for the German Red Cross nurses, widening streets, digging a vegetable cellar for the camp kitchens, fencing in the camp with barbed wire, and converting a bathing barracks to a multi-use entertainment space.\footnote{Letter from Lagerleitung Friedland to Landrat Göttingen, 21 May 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 11, NHStA.} Over the summer of 1946, some 50 Ukrainians continued work in the camp to improve latrines, drainage and sewage, and the quarantine section of the camp, among other tasks.\footnote{“Aufstellung über Führung, Leistung und Bauvorhaben des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland,” 15 June 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.}

Receiving, aiding, and redistributing thousands of displaced Germans traveling between occupation zones on a daily basis required a large labor force. Even then, in order to processes such masses, the camp administration needed to organize labor along rationalized lines, contributing to the regimented character of staff responsibilities. Laborers at Friedland mostly consisted of Germans, both locals and persons recently resettled near Friedland, but units of the British military government supervised and contributed to these efforts. Previous military service and experience of “communal camps” for the Hitler Youth and Reich Labor Service likely
contributed to the staff’s sense of needing clear, strict regulation and divisions of responsibilities for running a successful camp. Unrecognized in previous scholarship about Friedland, the camp also depended upon the efforts of hired Ukrainian and Polish DPs in the construction and improvement of camp facilities in order to turn the Friedland camp into a permanent institution. Finally, examination of this early staff demonstrates that authority did not function in a clear dichotomy between British authority and German subordination. Instead, lines of authority for Friedland were thoroughly tangled from the beginning, helping to explain points of confusion and conflict that emerged in the Anglo-German relationship later in the camp’s history.

**British and German Volunteers, Fraternization, and Reconstructing Civil Society**

In addition to German staff and charities, the Friedland transit camp also depended on the efforts of British and German volunteers during its early operation. The first British volunteers to work at the camp were members of the British chapter of the International Voluntary Service for Peace. As members of an international organization founded by Swiss engineer Pierre Ceresole in 1920, the British IVSP unit of roughly ten people at Friedland helped by transporting injured and infirm refugees across the border, aiding the construction of new camp buildings, and contributing manpower and materiel to various other tasks in the camp.²⁷¹ The civilians of the IVSP performed an important task in helping to mediate the fraught relationship between the German staff and the occupiers overseeing them. The IVSP’s work at Friedland had the further effect of encouraging the development of nascent civil groups.

The IVSP unit that served at Friedland during the fall and winter of 1945/46 took a meandering course of providing humanitarian assistance in war-torn Europe. After completing training in Britain, the unit under the command of David Sainty landed on the Belgian coast in

early 1945 and then traveled to Arnhem where they provided medical transport services while the British military advanced into Germany. Once the British military liberated the Bergen-Belsen camp, they asked the IVSP unit to help with repatriating Dutch survivors, but according to IVSP volunteer Harold Stanley Slee, the work there was “beyond our capabilities.” The unit therefore quickly moved on to the DP camp at the former Hermann Goering Steelworks in Salzgitter. There the volunteers helped with sorting and transporting the former forced laborers. Having worked there for several months, the unit received a request to help with the establishment of the transit camp at Friedland.272

In November 1945, Sainty, Slee, and the other IVSP volunteers arrived at Friedland. At first, Sainty was frustrated in his efforts to integrate the unit into the camp’s labor groups. In a letter to a superior in Britain, Sainty complained that the British commandant had emphatically requested assistance, “but at the moment there is not much for us to do […] the actual work of the camps is being done by German civilians and prisoners and Red Cross.” Sainty felt that his group could not “very well muscle in,” so they held back for the first weeks until they could use their vehicles to begin transporting German refugees across the border.273

Transporting sick, injured, and elderly refugees to the camp was one of the most significant contributions made by the IVSP. The population transfer agreements between Poland, the Soviet Union, and Britain stipulated that the British military government would help with the transport. Yet, lack of a rail connection between Friedland and the border meant that most expellees and refugees had to cross the border on foot and walk to the zonal transit camps before rail services could again fulfill the transit agreements. When sick, injured, and elderly refugees


273 David Sainty, “Report 29,” 11 November 1945, B 45 11 11 – 1 01, ASCI.
could not cross the border under their own power, the SCI unit at Friedland drove into the Soviet zone to collect and transport them back to the camp using one of their 10 vehicles.

Having British volunteers involved in the transit also proved helpful in dealing with Soviet border guards. In contrast to the difficult, mistrusting relationship between Germans and Soviet occupiers, both Sainty and Slee recounted friendly attitudes that Soviet border guards had toward the British. Indeed, to the extent that the IVSP drivers encountered any trouble other than bureaucratic stubbornness it was when Slee did not reciprocate the guards’ friendliness. According to Slee, Soviet border guards once ordered him out of his truck after he refused to go share a drink. Another border guard patted Slee’s accompanying German nurse on the head, calling her “a pretty little thing.” Slee defused the momentarily tense situation by handing out some cigarettes, tossing the rest in the field, and driving off with a “cheerio,” while the nurse “was weeping with relief that she got away alright.”

Ten vehicles proved woefully insufficient for transporting the masses of displaced Germans along the border. In a report from December 1, 1945, Sainty complained that he was having trouble organizing more vehicles, especially when half of the presumably available, locally owned vehicles were already providing transport for profit. Sainty seemed to have his doubts about the efficacy of running transports at all. Police tried to keep the refugee columns moving along, but “every time a vehicle does draw up, the road is a little more congested.” The chaotic situation also brought out selfish tendencies among the refugees, because when one of the IVSP trucks did stop along the road, refugees would swarm it without consideration for those physically most in need of the transport.

274 Slee, Interview.

275 David Sainty, Report 32, 1 December 1945. B 45 12 01 – 1 01. ASCI.
The IVSP volunteer also found roles for themselves in the camp and elsewhere in the British sector. Volunteers helped with the construction of the new camp across the Leine, and they also helped to ensure that camp residents had adequate meals. Sometime in early December, the commandant, Major Oldham, put Sainty and the IVSP in charge of the camp’s hospital block to relieve himself of the responsibility. The IVSP thus became involved in bringing refugees to the medical barracks for mandatory examinations and coordinating closely with the German Red Cross doctors.\footnote{David Sainty, Report 33, 9 December 1945. B 45 12 09 – 1 01. ASCI.} IVSP volunteers also performed spot checks to ensure that refugees were being integrated into local communities. The IVSP and the German administrators knew that refugees could lie to administrators at Friedland in order to obtain travel permits to preferred locations. So, part of the idea behind the follow-up visits “was to avoid people saying we are from so-and-so and we ought to go back there.”\footnote{Slee, Interview.}

Sainty’s early efforts at Friedland in November and December 1945 included the recruitment of German volunteers. Having met with representatives from Caritas and Innere Mission and seen their attempts to raise volunteers at the start of December, Sainty suggested organizing students from the university in Göttingen.\footnote{David Sainty, Report 33, 9 December 1945, B 45 12 09 – 1 01, ASCI.} He proceeded to discuss volunteer work with a “professor’s wife who runs the student ‘Hilfswerke’ [relief organization] and the student head of this” sometime in the following week.\footnote{David Sainty, Report 34, 19 December 1945, B 45 12 19 – 1 01, ASCI.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{276} David Sainty, Report 33, 9 December 1945. B 45 12 09 – 1 01. ASCI.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{277} Slee, Interview.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{278} David Sainty, Report 33, 9 December 1945, B 45 12 09 – 1 01, ASCI.} \footnote{\textsuperscript{279} David Sainty, Report 34, 19 December 1945, B 45 12 19 – 1 01, ASCI.}
organization, but it seems likely he had spoken with Joachim Frege, a law student living in the town of Friedland who began recruiting friends to help on the weekends.\footnote{Bericht über den Beginn des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland im Winter 1945 / 46 und meine Beteiligung an dieser Arbeit,” 20 December 1945, B 45 12 20 – 1 01, ASCI.}

The coordination between the Sainty and the student groups led to the distribution of a flyer and printing of a newspaper article later in December that called upon students to help at the camp. The flyer proposed that students could look after children, the elderly, and the sick. It also argued, “the Göttingen student body must […] regard helpfully joining in as its foremost task.”\footnote{Handzettel des ASTA Göttingen,” 20 December 1945, B 45 12 20 – 2 01, ASCI.} Paul Stein, a fellow law student of Frege’s and a member in the student group “Die Gleichen,”\footnote{Die Gleichen was a newly founded organization that drew its membership from both anti-Nazi students and the former National Socialist student association named Kameradschaft Schlieffen. The Kameradschaft Schlieffen had been the Burschenschaft “Allemannia” before its incorporation into Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Studentenbundes (NSDStB) under the Nazi program of coordination (Gleichschaltung). Stein, who had not belonged to the Kamaradschaft Schlieffen, commented that in the society “surprisingly, there were supporters of the Third Reich and decided opponents of National Socialism bound together in openness and tolerance under the principle of life-long bond [Lebensbundprinzip].” See “Der Studentenbund ‘Die Gleichen,’” n.d., B 45 12 20 – 3 01, ASCI; and “Die Gründung der ‘Gleichen’ und ihre Entwicklung in den ersten Semestern,” n.d., B 45 12 20 – 4 01, ASCI.} wrote an article for the university newspaper about service at Friedland. After describing the difficult conditions facing expellees and refugees, Stein tried to rally students to their aid: “Opportunities to help? Hundredfold. We push and pull the carts, repair broken vehicles, carry luggage, sacks, trunks, boxes, give advice, in short, we are willing to do anything \[wir sind Mädchen für alles].”\footnote{Göttinger Universitäts-Zeitung.” B 45 12 24 – 1 01, ASCI.}

In fact, the transportation of baggage from the border to the camp was a particularly important if menial task. All sorts of refugees arrived at the border with handcarts full of possessions. From there, the refugees had to travel roughly 3 kilometers along often-muddy roads to reach the camp. In December 1945 the carts had become a point of dispute. When Field
Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery toured the camp, he ordered that the empty carts be burned, preventing the refugees from using them to transport possessions within the British zone. The order also denied use of abandoned carts to the camp, which could have used them to help the elderly, disabled, and mothers of small children.\textsuperscript{284}

The local economy responded to the market created by refugees’ needs, and residents of began to hire out their labor often at exorbitant prices. Worse, the situation was ripe for petty criminality, particularly thievery.\textsuperscript{285} The camp administration therefore felt compelled to intercede on humanitarian and legal grounds. Camp director Richard Krause wrote to the county director (\textit{Oberkreisdirektor}) in May 1946 to relay refugees’ complaints about “extortionate prices” and to ask the county for outlaw this business along the Besenhausen-Friedland road. Although Krause’s language suggested his sympathy for the refugees, his intercession stemmed from financial problems that the local transport economy was creating for the camp. Simply put, the private labor was becoming too expensive for the camp administration. Administrators felt compelled to cover the transportation costs in emergency cases, lest the refugees be financially crippled and the local population become resentful from non-payment. Along with the plea for legal intervention, Krause noted that volunteers equipped with omnibuses and trucks had been working to resolve the problem from the camp’s end.\textsuperscript{286} While the complaints suggest that volunteer labor from students and the ISVP alone were not enough to resolve the issue of

\textsuperscript{284} Montgomery’s visit to the camp seemed to have worsened German-British relations firstly because much of the camp had to be cleared in anticipation of his inspection; see Lagebericht from Oberbürgermeister Göttingen, 31 December 1945, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 1, NHStA. Literature on the camp tends to treat the destruction of the carts as having been senseless and without explanation, but IVSP volunteer Slee recalled that Montgomery was upset that the carts might overburden rail capacity in the British zone; Slee, Interview.

\textsuperscript{285} A 1946 summary sent by camp administration to the Police Sonderkommando in Reiffenhausen, lists multiple instances of baggage theft in and outside of the camp of during the spring months; 8 November 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{286} Letter from Friedland Lagerleitung to Oberkreisdirektor Göttingen, 20 May 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.
predatory transportation services, the two groups were actively contributing to the amelioration of the problem.

The collaboration between the IVSP and the Göttingen student body quickly expanded in size. The volunteers took on tasks beyond helping to transport refugees and their possessions later in the winter of 1945/46. Sainty and his German colleagues worked hard to increase the number of German volunteers in January 1946, because “the permanent labour position in the camp is very bad,” particularly because desertion and other causes had decreased the number of POWs working in the camp.\(^\text{287}\) In order to increase the number of volunteers, Sainty relied upon already existing semi-formal social networks, such as Frege’s law student friends and an the association known as “Die Gleichen.” By the end of February 1946, Frege was co-responsible for coordinating a month-long effort by the IVSP and the university’s student government (\textit{Allgemeiner Studententausschuß}) that included 36 students, a German relief worker, and two British relief workers. From February 25 to March 26, 1946, the IVSP and Frege’s group completed the following tasks: assembling Nissen huts with wooden floors, the removal and transport of barracks for their reconstruction, the erection of porch roofs and a fence, snow removal, the cleaning of drainage ditches and pipes, and the transport of refugees’ luggage.\(^\text{288}\)

The cooperation between the IVSP, local volunteers, and the camp administration also raises the issue of German-British relations. Unsurprisingly, the relations between occupation force and civilian population in occupied Germany could be frosty. Patricia Meehan has argued that the British occupiers “slipped easily into the imperial mode” treating Germans as a subject people, while the hodgepodge staffing of the occupation administration with officials ignorant of

\(^{287}\) “Fortnightly Report,” 8 January 1946, B 46 01 08 - 1 01, ASCI.

\(^{288}\) “Friedland 25.02. – 26.03.1946,” n.d., 46 02 25 <> 46 03 26 – 1 01, ASCI.
the language led to a “government by interpreter.”\textsuperscript{289} Montgomery’s non-fraternization order further contributed to difficulties between Germans and the British military. The order issued in Montgomery’s March 1945 \textit{Letter by the Commander-in-Chief on Non-Fraternisation} required the British military to “keep clear of Germans—man, woman, and child—unless you meet them in course of duty,” barring soldiers from socializing or even shaking hands with the Germans before finally being lifted in September 1945.\textsuperscript{290} Even after Montgomery ended the rule, institutional inertia within the military meant that attitudes toward Germans and refraining from friendly relations were slow to change. For example, only in October 1946 did Montgomery’s successor finally countermand the standing order that required Germans to always cede right of way to British forces.\textsuperscript{291}

The issue of non-fraternization affected members of the British military stationed at Friedland. German volunteers remembered that those rules made relations between Germans and British soldiers “very complicated and not self-evident.”\textsuperscript{292} A concrete example of difficulties posed by seeming to be too friendly and the vague rules governing interactions can be seen in the previously noted transfer of Major Oldham, the initial British commandant of the camp. According to former camp staffer Karl Lattmann, the army reassigned Oldham because he had been too “German friendly.”\textsuperscript{293} Documents from Oldham and the German camp administrators make clear that the transfer ended a friendly working relationship, even if they do not explicitly


\textsuperscript{290} Ibid., 40-42.

\textsuperscript{291} Ibid., 43.

\textsuperscript{292} “Bericht über den Beginn des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland im Winter 1945 / 46 und meine Beteiligung an dieser Arbeit,” B 45 12 20 – 1 01, ASCI.

\textsuperscript{293} Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1 (1), NHStA.
state the reason for his transfer. Two notes from Oldham to the camp staff clearly indicate his collegial relationship with the German staffers as well as potentially problematic attitudes for an authority in the military government. In the release announcement for the German POWs working at the camp Oldham thanked them for their “magnificent work,” promised a position to anyone who returned after their release/demobilization, and offered to intercede on their behalves if they needed help in the future. Upon his transfer from Friedland, Oldham again expressed his thankfulness for the work of the German staff. He went on to write that he would “always think of the staff as the most loyal friends” whom he would always be willing to help in case of difficulties.

British requisitioning policy also contributed to Germans’ resentment of the occupation government, further complicating relationships between the two groups. In Göttingen, the local population complained bitterly about what they saw as wasted space and excess in British housing requisitions of 30 to 40 square meters per person for members of the occupation force. In comparison, the city’s German population was subject to rationing of living space that left of just over 6 square meters per person. Adding to resentments over the denial of using home and property, Germans in Göttingen understandably feared that troops or refugees in their homes might damage or steal their possessions.

The IVSP volunteers likewise encountered the seeming arbitrariness and callousness of housing requisitioning and actively worked to ameliorate potential conflict. When the 12 British volunteers first arrived and needed housing in a town near Friedland, a major from the local

294 Major Oldham, “An alle Arbeitskommandos…” 10 December 1945, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.
295 Letter from Major Oldham to Lagerleiter Erasmus, 16 January 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
military unit brought them to an inn with a small restaurant on a farm outside of Göttingen. The major informed the residents that he was requisitioning the home and that they had to leave within 30 minutes with nothing more than their clothes, leaving the rest of their property in the house to the unit. Feeling guilty about the Germans’ eviction, the volunteers immediately hired two of them as the cook and housekeeper to which the unit had been entitled. According to Slee, the IVSP unit and their German hosts became close friends during the course of their stay, ignoring standing attitudes against fraternization.  

This liminal role—not military but also attached to the occupying military government—makes the IVSP activities and their perspectives on Anglo-German relations worth noting. Germans regarded the IVSP aid workers differently from soldiers in the military government. Slee recalled that Germans treated IVSP workers very well because these workers wore Red Cross uniforms rather than the military uniforms of the British Army of the Rhine: “Red Cross means a hell of a lot throughout the world. And we were wearing Red Cross uniforms and doing out best to keep everybody happy.” Nor did the British volunteers experience resentment from expellees and other refugees. Slee explained that expellees at the camp were not bitter toward the British at Friedland, because “by the time we saw them, they had reconciled to it […] they were just relieved to be finishing with the travel.”

Bitterness among refugee and local populations was, however, a significant problem when displaced groups arrived in new communities. Mood reports collected from provisional, local German authorities throughout in the Hildesheim governing district make clear that insular communities facing scarcities rejected new refugee residents. In a December 1945 report,

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297 Slee, Interview.

298 Ibid.
authorities for the counties of Hildesheim and Marienburg noted local feelings that the number of refugees was too high, given the paucity of living space and the insufficient number of beds.\textsuperscript{299} The mayor of Gronau in the Hannover region reported an even worse situation. According to him, the local population made constant difficulties for the refugees. He further regretted that there was so little empathy for those affected badly by the war, such that conversations with property owners were insufficient to convince them help refugees. In the mayor’s view, “stronger and drastic measures must be made available to the local police, so that proper accommodation for refugees can be assured.”\textsuperscript{300}

Rejection by these communities led to frustration among refugees and expellees who felt they had borne a disproportional share of the war’s costs. In the spring of 1946, the county director for the border region of Duderstadt made the familiar report of homeowners refusing to take in refugees or accommodating only those refugees who could help with agricultural work. When refugees did receive a room, more often than not it was completely empty with no furniture, dishes, or utensils for the refugees to use. The county director further reported that attitudes among refugees were consequently quite poor and “bitterness has taken hold.” In his estimation, “drastic measures from the German and English authorities are necessary to overcome these untenable circumstances.”\textsuperscript{301} Noting refugees’ bitterness and resentments, the refugee authority for the Hildesheim governing district explained, “a simple inability is seen as ill will, and the thought arises, why should the still propertied here have a better situation than

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{299} Lagebericht, 4 December 1945, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 1, NHStA.
\item \textsuperscript{300} Monatlicher Lagebericht, 28 December 1945, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 1, NHStA.
\item \textsuperscript{301} Monatlicher Lagebericht, 29 March 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 2, NHStA.
\end{itemize}
themselves, and whether it would not be much more right and fair to divide what remains equally amongst everyone.”

In light of these material difficulties and growing ill feelings, the IVSP unit at Friedland began to make follow-up visits to communities in the British zone in 1946. After allocating and sending refugees to a given region, Slee recalled that he and other IVSP workers “would go on to make sure they had been properly integrated.” Yet, Slee’s account suggests that beyond the necessarily limited efforts by the small group of IVSP workers, local British authorities were unwilling to meet the requests for drastic measures made by provisional German governments. According to him, unlike the heavy-handed Soviet occupation forces, the British authorities “were trying to stay on the right side of local population. Trying not to make it difficult.”

The IVSP made its best efforts to ensure good living conditions (the Friedland unit moved on to Siegen to focus on this task in the summer of 1946), but integration into home communities would ultimately come only with improved material circumstances, while camps such as Friedland worked to keep communities from becoming too overwhelmed with refugees.

A final issue raised by the collaboration between British and German volunteer groups was the question of reconciliation. In his recollections about helping at Friedland, Frege emphasized, “the trusting collaboration of former war foes in the Friedland camp only seven months after the end of a very hard war was a decisive experience.” Paul Stein likewise reported that “evening discussions were conducive to mutual understanding” between members

302 Lagebericht des Regierungspräsidenten in Hildesheim für die Monate Januar - März 1946, March 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 2, NHStA.

303 Slee, Interview.

304 Bericht über den Beginn des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland im Winter 1945 / 46 und meine Beteiligung an dieser Arbeit, n.d., B 45 12 20 – 1 01, ASCI.
of the IVSP and Die Gleichen.\textsuperscript{305} Although the two groups had a different “ideological outlook” (\textit{Ideenrichtung}), Stein felt that the combined British and German efforts to relieve the hardships at Friedland “yielded a good synthesis.”\textsuperscript{306} An IVSP report on their activities from the fall of 1946 likewise noted the successful cooperation between British and German volunteers, which led to the creation of another four IVSP-German partnerships in Berlin, Hamburg, Twisteden bei Geldern, and Meschede. Summarizing the efforts at Meschede, the IVSP director for Germany adopted similar language to the Germans’ recollections of Friedland. He emphasized the importance of reconciliation to organization’s founding ideals and ongoing efforts: “Like the IVSP schemes after the last war, when IVSP was in its infancy, the men and women of at least two nations, former enemies, were helping […] to start building for peace.”\textsuperscript{307}

Despite its small size, the IVSP unit at Friedland played an important role in the facility’s early development. These British volunteers transported infirm refugees from across the border to Friedland and worked on other tasks in the camp. Crucially, they also helped to recruit local German volunteers at a time (winter 1946) when the camp faced a serious labor shortfall. IVSP reports and recollections by volunteers further help to illustrate the complicated relationships between Germans and the occupying British military government as well as refugees’ attitudes about their displacement vis-à-vis the British who had agreed to the eastern expulsions. Occupying a liminal space between military occupier and civilian aid workers, these IVSP staffers also helped to normalize relationships between the defeated Germans and occupying British. A final contribution had to do with normalizing civil society in Germany after years of

\textsuperscript{305} Die Gründung der ‘Gleichen’ und ihre Entwicklung in den ersten Semestern, B 45 12 20 – 4 01, ASCI.

\textsuperscript{306} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{307} Basil Eastland, International Voluntary Service for Peace - Work in Germany, 30 September 1946, B 46 09 30 - 6 01, ASCI.
Nazi rule and war. As one IVSP recalled, “Our special remit, I think, was to regenerate the local welfare organizations for the Protestant Church, the Lutheran Church, the Caritas Verband, the Arbeiterwohlfahrt.”

Conclusions

Beginning late in the summer of 1945, provisional governments within the British occupation zone faced a crisis of displaced populations. Germans who had been uprooted by wartime evacuations and postwar expulsions streamed across the zonal boundary in southeastern Lower Saxony. Although the region had largely escaped damage from the war, it was entirely unprepared to feed and shelter hundreds of thousands of refugees. Uncontrolled movement by refugees also threatened to flood the nearby city of Göttingen as well as damaged cities further into the British zone with needy persons for whom they could not care. This crisis therefore provoked a self-defensive, insular rejection of refugees even when housing was available. Rather than resolving displacement by accepting and settling refugees, local governments exacerbated the problem by attempting to shove arriving refugees to the next community down the line.

Addressing this crisis required the establishment of a system of regulation to control the movement of refugees. Refugee transit camps such as the one established at Friedland served as the institutional lynchpin for this new system. Able to capture and resettle the diverse groups of displaced Germans, these camps could then begin the process of equitably distributing uprooted individuals throughout the British zone. This regulatory intervention was simultaneously coercive and humane in its approach to subject populations. For example, the Friedland camp restricted refugees’ choice in resettlement destinations, but registration and reassignment at the camp also meant that local authorities would have no grounds to refuse accommodation to

persons who had passed through the camp. Registration at the camp had the further benefit of entering refugees into government records as persons who could later demand special welfare provisions through the postwar burden-sharing programs. The interplay of disciplining regulation and humanitarian relief also governed the development of operations within the camp. Taking health as an example, refugees were forced to submit to delousing with DDT and medical examinations in order to reduce the risks to public health presented by refugees. Yet, these same procedures benefited camp residents by improving their own health and enabling medical intervention in life-threatening situations.

The populations that initially passed through the Friedland camp offer a snapshot of the complex nature of postwar displacements. Expellees have come to dominate memories and histories of the mass unsettling of Germans during the period lasting roughly between 1944 and 1949. Friedland’s role as a border transit facility, however, meant that myriad groups passed through camp. Records from Friedland show that wartime evacuees, released prisoners of war, and non-German displaced persons comprised significant portions of the postwar population displacements in addition to the more widely recognized expellees. Moreover, examination of camp registration records and policy discussions in German and British offices blur definitions of these categories. Not all Germans claiming to be evacuees and expellees were in fact victims of damage to their homes or expulsions, but instead some Germans claimed membership in these groups in order to make it across the zonal frontier.

Finally, relief and regulation at Friedland required a considerable amount of labor. Much of the work in the camp was done by Germans, many of whom had been affected by displacement before settling at Friedland. German prisoners of war and later Polish and Ukrainian displaced persons also provided vital labor in the camp’s continuing construction and
renovation projects. A small contingent of British volunteers from the International Voluntary
Service for Peace offered additional transport and medical services. The history of IVSP
involvement in camp also demonstrates that Anglo-German cooperation in addressing the
refugee crisis contributed to reconciliation between these former enemies. Moreover, IVSP-led
attempts to organize volunteer German laborers facilitated the postwar revitalization of civic
networks in and around Göttingen. Lastly, overseeing all of these efforts was a camp
administration composed of German and British authorities. The character of this camp
administration was strongly influenced by military experience. In addition to military
government officers, the camp leadership depended upon Germans who had previously exercised
command authority in the Wehrmacht. While these British and German administrators failed to
clarify lines of authority within the camp, they were enormously successful in implementing the
strict camp environment necessary for overcoming the mass nature of the displacement crisis.
CHAPTER 3
FROM PROVISIONAL TO PERMANENT: BRITISH AND GERMAN ADMINISTRATION, 1946-1952

Having undergone significant renovation during the summer of 1946, the Friedland camp reopened during the fall of that year with the primary purpose of facilitating the release and transfer of prisoners of war across zonal boundaries. These POWs along with refugees and expellees nevertheless encountered a camp still in the midst of transformation. The new German camp director, Richard Krause, had undertaken a campaign to reform the camp’s staff in order to provide more efficient, humane care for the residents. Still, questions remained about which administrative entities, both British and German, held authority over the camp.

This chapter examines the oversight of the Friedland camp by authorities with the British military government. Although the early relationship between German and British administrators at Friedland was good, discord rather than friendly cooperation increasingly marked the British oversight that lasted until 1952. The quality of the relationship between the British and Germans partly depended on the individual British commandants. In contrast to the stable leadership under Krause and other top-level German administrators, four different British officers oversaw the military units there, and each of them interacted differently with their German counterparts. The tension also resulted from the structural factor that the German civil government’s capabilities grew while British occupation dragged on. Key points of conflict included supply, financing, and the extent to which German administrators could act independently of the British commandant.

Examination of the German administration at Friedland demonstrates the crucial role that Krause played in shaping camp operations. After his appointment as camp director, Krause
worked hard to reform the camp’s staff by increasing standards for professional conduct and dismissing employees who failed to meet these standards. In particular, Krause stamped out black-market trade and other forms of petty corruption in the effort to ensure efficient operation and to restore the camp’s public reputation. Demands for a more responsible staff also necessitated the creation of a workers’ council to protect employees’ interests. Krause further fought to improve the camp’s reputation and public faith through direct confrontations with the German press when reporters wrote unflattering or incorrect reports about the camp at Friedland.

The camp’s staff during this six-year period of reform exhibited a number of distinctive characteristics. Analysis of personnel records indicates that the upheavals began by Krause in mid-1946 ended by the close of 1947. As a result, a progressively more experienced staff was running the camp by the end of the 1940s. The composition of the camp’s staff was predominately male and disproportionately made up of former refugees, which resulted from state priorities for welfare and employment with a gendered emphasis on male breadwinners for most types of jobs at the camp. In addition to state employees, the camp at Friedland depended on charities for additional labor, financing, and supplies. Although men held most leadership positions within the camp, such charities also offered women paths to influential positions.

While camp at Friedland continued to operate as a major clearing house for populations displaced during and after the war, many other transit camps closed during the period between 1946 and 1952. When the Friedland camp was first operating in the fall of 1945, it was one of five border transit camps within the British XXX Corps District, not to mention other facilities in Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein.309 By 1952, the towns of Friedland and Uelzen hosted

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309 The XXX Corps District encompassed Province Hannover, Land Braunschweig, and Land Oldenburg. On the organization of the military government, see Barbara Marshall, *The Origins of Postwar Germany Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 17-20. The four other border transit camps were at Osterode, Goslar, Alversdorf, and
the only border transit camps in Lower Saxony. Why did the camp at Friedland survive? Indeed, in mid-1950, there were even discussions within federal and Lower Saxon refugee ministries about closing the camp. This chapter examines the first of two crucial factors that helped to ensure the camp’s operation through the period of 1946 to 1952. First, the camp administration organized an increasingly effective, experienced staff, while also jealously defending the camp’s reputation from critics. The second factor, the diverse nature of postwar displacement creating the continuing need for such a camp, is addressed in chapter 4.

**British Oversight**

Between 1946 and 1952, British commanding officers at Friedland experienced a high rate of turnover and steady deterioration of their working relationships with the camp’s German administration. During that time, the British military oversaw the release of German POWs and contributed to other areas of camp administration. In the winter of 1946, the prisoner release unit commanded by Captain Howie of the Black Watch transferred from its station in Northeim north of Göttingen to the Friedland camp.\(^{310}\) The most likely reason for the unit’s transfer was to facilitate Operation Clobber, which required the transfer via Friedland of some 120,000 British-held POWs back to their homes in the Soviet zone.\(^{311}\) For day-to-day operations, however, Howie and his subordinates respected the German administration’s authority over the camp and

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\(^{310}\) Communication from Howie to HQ Mil. Gov. Hannover Region, 24 January 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA. The unit, 201 (R) Det. Mil. Gov., had previously been responsible for prisoner release camps at Northeim and Friedland from November 18, 1945 until Howie took command of it on December 18, 1945, at which point the unit became responsible for the Northeim and Immensdorf camps. See War Diary, WO 171/7927, BNA.

\(^{311}\) Communication from Major Leishman to Regierungspräsident Hildesheim, 12 December 1945, Stadtflüchtlingsamt Nr. 40, SAG. The 120,000 POWs passing through Friedland on their way home to East Germany constituted roughly 20 percent of the POW traffic in the camp. See *20 Jahre Lager Friedland*, ed. Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte (Heidelberg, 1965), Appendix 4.
were primarily responsible for completion of D-2 Discharge Certificates (*Entlassungsscheine*) for the POWs.

Howie’s tenure in the camp demonstrated the importance of interpersonal relationships in the cooperation between German and British administrators. For example, Howie interceded in the de-Nazification process on behalf of the camp. In October 1946 Howie provided a statement with fulsome praise for a senior member of the camp administration who was facing dismissal due to difficulties with the Göttingen Main De-Nazification Committee. Howie stated that the administrator’s work “at all times has been satisfactory and he has assisted in no small measure in bringing the camp to its present state of efficiency.” He made special note of the administrator’s efforts to care for the staff’s welfare and to organize sporting activities for them, including soccer games and boxing matches. He concluded with the assessment, “I have always found him to be a loyal, hard working and pleasant man to work with.”\(^{312}\) In a subsequent memorandum in November, Howie informed the camp’s personnel that they would not undergo a de-Nazification process and that in case of difficulties they should refer the de-Nazification committee to him.\(^{313}\)

Over the course of his fifteen-month command, it seems that Howie developed a particularly close working relationship with his German counterpart, Richard Krause. When Howie (now promoted to the rank of major) was transferred to a different command in April 1947, he wrote a remarkably personal note to Krause to express his thanks for Krause’s loyal cooperation with him: “We had much in common, and I flatter myself to say that we achieved

\(^{312}\) German privacy laws bar the disclosure of the administrator’s name in connection with the de-Nazification documents. Statement by Howie, 23 October 1946, appended to de-Nazification documents, Nds. 171 Hildesheim 60034, NHStA.

\(^{313}\) Niederschrift, 1 November 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
considerable steps in the construction of a healthy organization and that we […] were able to relieve the unfortunate souls coming through the camp of some of their hardships.” Howie went on to praise Krause’s efforts to organize the sub-camp for vagrant youths, the voluntary nature of which made it all the more worthy of recognition. Howie also asked Krause to convey his thanks to the camp personnel for their readiness to cooperate and that it “was a pleasure to work with such a staff, and I wish them all the best for their future.” In closing, Howie promised to try to visit when he could and he wished “all the best for the future that a friend can wish to you and your family.”^314

Following Howie’s departure, the close cooperation and friendly relationships between German and British administrators cooled. Howie’s immediate successor in April 1948 was Major Garrow of the 68th DPACS (Displaced Persons Assembly Center Staff). Given that the Friedland camp was not responsible for the care of DPs at the time, it is not clear why the British military government transferred Garrow’s unit to Friedland. Perhaps they made the transfer because the unit possessed buses useful for transporting groups from the border to the camp. In January 1948, Garrow and his unit were transferred from Friedland. According to Krause’s memorandum to the refugee authority in Hildesheim, Garrow explained that his unit would leave the camp and be replaced by the British Army. His superiors had declared they would no longer be responsible for Friedland, because the camp was housing only German refugees and discharged POWs, whereas DPACS units were solely responsible for DPs.^315

Captain Dean and his unit, the 2nd PWDC (Prisoner of War Discharge Center), thus took over as the British presence in the camp in the winter of 1948. According to Krause, the British

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^314 Letter from Howie to Krause (translated to German by Hans Thederan), 14 April 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

^315 Aktennotiz zum Bericht an die Regierung Hildesheim, 10 February 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
Army understood its sole responsibility to be POW discharges, while the camp’s German authorities would be responsible for only civilian traffic. To that end, a British colonel suggested the formal division of the camp into a POW discharge section under British command and a civilian section under German control. Krause argued against such a division, fearing that it would create difficulties for administration and provisioning in the camp.\textsuperscript{316}

For the camp’s German administrators, it seems that there was great fear in early February that they would lose the vehicles necessary for transporting civilians to and from the camp. The 68\textsuperscript{th} DPACS unit was taking its buses with them, and Krause also received orders from postal authorities (\textit{Reichspostdirektion}) in Braunschweig that the camp was to give up all of its omnibuses. When the camp administration asked for assistance from Dean and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} PWDC, Dean refused to help, declaring that such traffic lay beyond his unit’s responsibilities and that it was a matter for German authorities alone. Krause and the Hildesheim refugee authority prevailed upon Dean that the POWs became civilians in the camp when they received their discharge certificates, meaning that the camp still required buses to transport sick and injured POWs (as civilians) to area hospitals. Because the British army still would not provide vehicles, a senior refugee ministry official requisitioned 5 buses from the Göttingen Department of Motor Vehicles (\textit{Straßenverkehrsamt}). Despite the disagreements, Dean expressed his “hope and certainty for a good working relationship” and promised army support for the camp. Shortly thereafter, Dean committed to provide 3,000 straw sacks, 1,000 beds, and several thousand blankets for POWs. The Germans agreed to construct an office for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} PWDC in the camp.\textsuperscript{317}

\textsuperscript{316} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{317} Ibid.
The dual administrative structure that developed in the camp also created confusion about British and German financial obligations. In 1949, for example, German and British administrators came into conflict over responsibility for utilities costs for newly constructed POW barracks with electrical heating and ventilation. The camp leadership argued that they had made clear to the British Army at the time of construction that they could not pay for electricity for the barracks. Dean, as camp commandant, refused to pay for the electricity, stating that he could only authorize the payment if the army were to requisition the entire camp. He did offer, however, to take up the matter with his superiors if the refugee authority in Hildesheim also refused to make the payment.\footnote{Memorandum from Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees, “Haushaltsausgaben Flüchtlingslager Friedland,” 27 June 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.}

In October 1949, Dean (now promoted to major) returned to England and was replaced by Major Middlemas as commander of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} PWDC.\footnote{Lageranordnung Nr. 132, 5 November 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} During his tenure as the unit commander, Middlemas likewise had an uneven working relationship with the camp’s German leadership. On the positive side of the ledger, shortly after his arrival Middlemas conducted an inspection of the camp and praised the German staff and administration.\footnote{Lageranordnung Nr. 134, 14 December 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} Middlemas also interceded in support of the German administration when problems with ex-DPs and Infiltrates emerged (see chapter 4).

There remained the question of to whom the camp really belonged. In the spring of 1951, Middlemas noticed renovations undertaken using repurposed camp materials. He complained to the German administration that while it was not his wish to reduce cooperation between their offices, he “would welcome it, if one were to consult with him beforehand about these plans,
changes, and use of materials.” According to Middlemas, “a reason for this is that the camp is first and foremost a British military camp.”

The German camp leadership explained to the refugee ministry in Hannover that they had, in fact, informed Middlemas about important changes and that Middlemas was complaining about even the smallest things, such as moving pipes from one room to another. Officials in Hannover responded by forwarding the entire affair to the Federal Ministry for Expellees to ask them to “once again energetically work towards abolishing the British administrative office in Friedland, which now no longer has a right to exist [Existenzberechtigung].”

On both German and British sides, there may have been increasing fatigue with the continuing British military presence in Friedland and its environs. Although there were surely problems with discipline before Middlemas’s arrival, he had to address the misbehavior of British soldiers several times in his routine orders. During January 1950, Middlemas discovered that drunken British soldiers had smashed shop windows and uprooted fences in Göttingen during the Christmas holidays. He warned, “If any further cases of willful damage occur in Göttingen, [sic] the Beer Bar at the Varsity Club will be closed.” A month later, Middlemas noted that German police in Göttingen had been working hard to prevent the spread of venereal diseases. At a garrison dance, however, British soldiers had obstructed the police who were “attempting to question suspected and known prostitutes.” Middlemas warned of severe disciplinary action if soldiers again interfered with German police. In the same routine orders,

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321 Memorandum from Middlemas to Lagerleitung, 18 May 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

322 Thederan did note that Middlemas had once again emphasized that the conflict was not meant personally, but to maintain the up-to-then good cooperation. Aktennotiz zum Schreiben der 2.PWDC vom 18.5.1951, 25 May 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

323 Memorandum by Dr. Lange, 1 June 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

324 Routine Orders, 16 January 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34 NHStA.
Middlemas explained that many officers and enlisted soldiers in the British zone were “believed to be illegal possession of firearms” that they left unguarded, with the result that “shootings have occurred, causing injuries and, in some cases, death.”

In the winter of 1951, the need for a British unit at Friedland came under serious question from German administrators. In a memorandum to his superiors at the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees, Krause addressed British responsibilities and the possible reduction of German support personnel for the 2nd PWDC. According to Krause, the practical aspects of the acceptance, processing, and distribution of POWs had always been the responsibility of German staffers. In the past, the British military units had been responsible for coordination with Soviet border authorities, but they were no longer needed for that task. Moreover, the enactment of the Returnee Law meant that POWs could attain returnee status without the D-2 Discharge Certificate issued by the British. Those factors combined with the dramatic reduction of POW transports meant that that the “presence of the 2nd PWDC no longer seems necessary.” In Krause’s eyes, the camp could undertake a substantial reduction in the number of support staffers (office workers, mess cooks, chauffeurs, and the like) for the British, who were increasingly using them for personal errands.

The arrest of Middlemas by British authorities and his replacement by Major Barrett during the summer of 1951 exacerbated the simmering tensions. As far as the German camp administration could determine, Middlemas was arrested in August for the unauthorized sale of Nissen huts and scrap from unusable huts as well as for using his position on the British housing

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325 Routine Orders, 13 February 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

326 Krause further noted that support staff for the 2nd PWDC was paid at a higher rate than their counterparts in the German camp administration who were responsible for essentially the same tasks. Memorandum on “Notwendigkeit der 2.PWDC im Lager Friedland,” 28 February 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
commission in Göttingen for personal profit.\textsuperscript{327} British authorities questioned Krause and Thederan at the camp and subsequently in Hannover. Both men insisted that they had informed the British of Middlemas’s actions to the extent that they had been aware of them. Major Barrett, however, treated Krause and Thederan with skepticism. He made “the most serious allegations” \textit{(schwerste Vorwürfe)} against the German camp leadership and threatened to have them dismissed if it were discovered that they had not adequately warned a higher British office, the \textit{Kreis} Resident Officer, or the Public Safety Officer.\textsuperscript{328}

Once taking charge of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} PWDC, Barrett renewed the conflict over the extent to which German administrators could operate independently of British authority. He informed the German leadership that no changes could be made to the buildings in Friedland without his consent because the British military had requisitioned the camp property.\textsuperscript{329} In a subsequent meeting, Thederan argued to Barrett that with respect to the dispute over the demolition of Nissen huts in the spring, the British themselves knew that the huts were good for only five years and had needed to be demolished. Barrett nevertheless thought that the Germans had undertaken the demolition prematurely.\textsuperscript{330} Barrett also criticized the German staff for their handling of released POWs. According to the German leadership, Barrett claimed that the camp used “Gestapo and Nazi methods” in processing the POWs. Camp records do not specify the allegations beyond that, but they were likely in reference to the questioning of POWs about the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{327} Middlemas allegedly took money in exchange for returning requisitioned homes to Germans. The memorandum also included an allegation that he had taken money from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} PWDC’s cantina, though that allegation was struck through with pen. Friedland Lagerleiter to Niedersächischen Minister für Vertriebene, 3 September 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
\item \textsuperscript{328} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{329} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{330} Memorandum by Hans Thederan, 10 September 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.
\end{itemize}
circumstances of their imprisonment, which was necessary for determining their eligibility for official returnee status. He warned that the director of the camp’s police (Ordnungsdienst) needed to fundamentally change their approach to the POWs. Barrett further reasserted the British military’s continuing, sole authority over the issuing of D-2 Discharge Certificates.\(^{331}\)

German administrators’ sour relationship with the British military had begun before Barrett’s arrival, of course, and his short tenure during the unit’s final months in the camp did not help the situation. For example, when the camp received firefighting equipment in September 1951, Barrett wanted the camp personnel to practice using it weekly. At some point, Thederan tried to explain to Barrett that the water supply (Wasserverhältnisse) in the camp was insufficient for firefighting and that the camp would have to resort to water from the Leine River in the event of a significant fire. Barrett dismissed the objections and accused the German leadership of using this issue to “set up opposition.”\(^{332}\) On the whole, German administrators chafed at British oversight they found unnecessary, while Barrett was likewise inclined to see an effort to undermine the British position even when German administrators were not attempting that. The situation was finally resolved with the transfer of the remaining 2\(^{nd}\) PWDC personnel and the British completely handing over the camp to the Germans on March 31, 1952.\(^{333}\) Even after the British ceded all authority over the camp, though, an interrogation team from the Field Security Service remained at Friedland until 1955 to question persons arriving at the camp.\(^{334}\)

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\(^{331}\) Friedland Lagerleiter to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebene, 3 September 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

\(^{332}\) Memorandum by Hans Thederan, 14 September 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

\(^{333}\) “Da legten die Engländer die Gewehre beiseite,” Norddeutsche Zeitung, 31 March 1952.

In addition to the roles of individual commanding officers, three general factors were at play in the sometimes-strained relationship between British authorities and German administrators. First, the nature of the British presence in Germany changed over the course of the British co-administration at Friedland. Initially the military government needed to be involved, given the size of the undertaking, the cross-border nature of the population movements, and the piecemeal character of German civil administration at the time. Over time, however, the governing organs regrew and Germans reasserted their agency, raising the question of the necessity for British oversight.

Second, the British soldiers’ own perception of their role seems to have shifted and worsened their relationship with their German counterparts. Whereas the British saw the task of overseeing the camp as important in the early going, surely soldiers themselves wondered if there were not more pressing tasks than overseeing the release of physically ruined POWs from the East a half-decade after the war. Friedland may have been close to the border, but it was not really a front for soldiers in the emerging Cold War.\textsuperscript{335}

Third, there were also strains of a colonial mindset in British attitudes toward the camp. The British presence at Friedland was a vestige of a hard-won British victory that produced hardened governing structures that persisted even after the nominally independent Federal Republic came into being.\textsuperscript{336} The British were somewhat absentee authorities in the camp, rarely appearing in matters of day-to-day administration. Yet, when troubles emerged, the British were quick to reassert their ownership and supervision of the facility. They were content to devolve managerial authority to the Germans, but they reacted unfavorably whenever they felt their

\textsuperscript{335} In fact, Barrett was transferred to Korea in mid-March 1952. “Da legten die Engländer…” Norddeutsche Zeitung.

\textsuperscript{336} Occupation statutes meant continued Allied authority through the High Commission, which affected the Friedland camp in the acceptance of resettlers from Poland; see chapter 4.
interests were challenged. Thus, although the reason for British authority over the camp was becoming less clear over time, they also saw little reason to give it away.

**Reformation of the German Administration**

When Richard Krause took over as the camp director in the spring of 1946, it marked a significant transition in the German administration of the camp. Krause was an able, energetic administrator, and he worked hard to reform the camp’s staff to make it more efficient and humane in its treatment of camp residents. Krause became camp director as a result of corruption allegations against the preceding camp director (see chapter 2), and his first priority was to improve operations and public confidence in the camp. In Camp Order Number 1, Krause explicitly called upon the staff to do everything possible to “restore the good reputation of the camp.” He further ordered that they must always remember, “the refugees are not there for us, but rather we are there for them.” Krause’s reform efforts also entailed changes in the camp’s personnel and administration, which stabilized through the year following his assumption of duties as camp director.

Although Krause was not a trained civil servant prior to joining the Friedland camp’s administration, he had previously served in the Wehrmacht as a commissioned officer with training in military administration. Born in 1911, Krause was raised and educated in Bad Saarow, Brandenburg. Lacking other professional options, Krause entered the Reichswehr in 1930. Between 1937 and 1938, Krause studied at the Army Technical School for Administration (Heeresfachschule für Verwaltung), though the outbreak of war prevented him from completing the examination in military administration. Over the course of the war, Krause received two Iron Crosses (first and second class), an Infantry Assault Badge, and a Wound Badge. He also earned

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337 Lagerordnung Nr. 1, 18 April 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
several promotions, finishing the war as a cavalry captain (Rittmeister). Initially after the war, Krause worked in agriculture near Göttingen. In November 1945, he wrote to the county administrator for Göttingen to ask about employment. He had heard that the camp had a labor shortfall and he said that he would be glad for work at Friedland in any capacity. The camp hired Krause shortly thereafter, but it is not clear what positions he held before becoming camp director.338

The exact reasons for the selection of Krause as Heydenreich’s successor are also unclear. Given Krause’s background in military administration and his competences with different types of transportation, he must have seemed an ideal candidate.339 As a military administrator, Krause would have been experienced with the logistics of transporting and organizing large numbers of people. Krause may have also benefitted from a sort of military fraternity with the early British commandants. Major Oldham, of course, had explicitly stated his respect for former Wehrmacht soldiers in his farewell address to the camp in January 1946, and Major Howie referred to Krause as a friend.340 Because Krause had not belonged to any political parties, he could also offer a politically safe administration for the camp when acceptable civil administrators may have been in short supply.341

338 See Richard Krause to Landrat Göttingen and the attached Lebenslauf, 18 November 1945, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532, NHStA. See also a transcription of Krause’s army paybook made in 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532.

339 Krause’s army paybook indicates that he was riding and driving instructor. Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532, NHStA.

340 On Oldham, see chapter 2.

341 After all, as Michael Hayse argues, “Rapid advancement in all ranks of the civil service in the Third Reich presupposed Nazi party affiliation. Moreover, the Civil Service Law of 1937 codified Nazi party oversight (although not outright control) over personnel policy.” See Michael Hayse, Recasting West German Elites: Higher Civil Servants, Business Leaders and Physicians in Hesse between Nazism and Democracy, 1945-1955 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 44.
As camp director, Krause had a wide range of responsibilities. Foremost, he was the supervisor for all camp personnel. He was also responsible for decision-making in fundamental issues of the camp’s operation, communication with British offices and with superior and equal German offices, direct supervision of the camp’s interpreter, and signing on behalf of the camp. Initially, the camp administration had deputy camp directors for internal and external affairs. Krause’s first deputy director for external affairs was likewise a former Wehrmacht officer. This young administrator had graduated from a Gymnasium in Mecklenburg mere months before the outbreak of the war and then entered the Wehrmacht. He attended and graduated from the military academy at Potsdam, ultimately earning promotion to the rank of first lieutenant as well as two Iron Crosses (first and second class) among other commendations and being wounded four times.

The upper level of the camp’s administration stabilized late in 1946 when Hans Thederan became the sole deputy camp director, a position he held until 1953. Thederan was born in Hamburg in 1913, where he lived and worked as a salesman in the foreign sales unit of a company until the outbreak of the war. From 1937 to 1938, Thederan also served as a sergeant (Hauptfeldwebel) in the Luftwaffe. His de-Nazification files show that Thederan served in the Wehrmacht from August 1939 to June 1945, though there is no indication of his rank or field of service. During the war, Thederan’s family was bombed out of its Hamburg home, and it had taken up residence in a community outside of Göttingen by the end of 1945. Thederan found work in the camp during November 1945 as the English-language interpreter for the German

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342 Dienstordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland/Leine, 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 7, NHStA.

343 De-Nazification files, Nds. 171 Hildesheim 60034, NHStA.
administration (he had “perfect command of English speech and writing”). Presumably his language and organizational skills from his earlier career made Thederan a valuable administrator, particularly in dealing with the British. He was promoted to deputy camp director sometime in the latter half of 1946.

The official regulations for the camp that came into effect on June 1, 1946, established a clear hierarchy of administrative responsibilities. Beneath the top two tiers of camp administration there was a wide array of departments. The housing portion of the camp was divided into three sub-camps, each of which had a director and deputy director. Various other departments reporting directly to the camp directors included: the main office, statistical office, registration, card index, personnel, accounting, doctors, nursing, clothing distribution, provisions distribution and various messes, maintenance, an auto pool, and police. Official regulations for employees noted that the constant stream of arrivals meant that the camp needed to be open throughout the day with reductions in staffing for the night hours. Indeed, the regulations set the minimum hourly work for employees at 48 hours per week. In return for their hard work, the military government in Göttingen had agreed to classify camp employees as heavy workers for ration allocation. Nevertheless, the commanding officer in Göttingen and former camp commandant, Major Oldham, asked the city and county directors to use their discretion, because

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344 From list of Lagerangestellten, 28 July 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 403, NHStA.

345 Although Thederan was not a member of the Nazi Party, he had belonged to National Socialist Flyer’s Corps as well as the Association for Germanness Abroad (Verein für das Deutschtum im Ausland) and the Reich Colonial League without leadership positions in any of them. In August 1946, the de-Nazification committee classified him as a nominal supporter, but they had no objections to his employment. See de-Nazification files Nds. 171 Hildesheim 28474, NHStA. See also Friedland Betriebsrat to Niedersäischen Minister für Flüchtlinge, 23 April 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.

346 Dienstordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland/Leine, 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 7, NHStA.
“it is all right [sic] as far as heavy manual workers are concerned, but I do not want office employees in general to draw the same rations.”\textsuperscript{347}

One of the first problems that Krause needed to confront was staffers’ abuse of their positions for personal gain. Here, it is worth bearing in mind that black-marketeering in a ration economy could have easily been a means to get by as opposed to profiteering. Nevertheless, trade between camp employees and incoming refugees and POWs was a serious problem. The general camp directives (\textit{Lageranordnungen}) from May 1946 to the end of the year are replete with notices of employees’ dismissal for such activities and other breaches of camp regulations. Typically listed under the “Personnel Matters” (\textit{Personalangelegenheiten}), these dismissals often gave the individual’s name and general type the offense for which the employee was fired. For instance, in November 1946: “[Herr N] has been summarily dismissed and arrested by the police for theft of baggage, falsification of residence permits, and unpermitted copying of registration certificates.”\textsuperscript{348}

Aside from possibly creating the impression of profiting from others’ misfortune, illicit trade between residents and personnel could indeed lead to corruption. In April 1946, the camp police investigated allegations that camp employees had taken payment for changing the assigned city on registration cards. Evidently three refugees had received assignments to towns against their wishes. One man from Upper Silesia had received a housing assignment to Northeim, but he wanted one for the Sauerland region of North Rhine-Westphalia where he knew someone willing to house him. A refugee from Berlin wanted a new assignment to

\textsuperscript{347} Minutes of Conference between OC Det, the Oberstadtdirektor and Oberkreisdirektor, 15 March 1946, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. B28, SAG.

\textsuperscript{348} Dismissal in Lageranordnung Nr. 24, 5 November 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.. For other examples, see among others Lageranordnungen Nr. 8, 13, 16, 22, 24, and 26, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
Struthütten, North Rhine-Westphalia. The third refugee, a woman from Saxony, wanted to have her assignment changed to an unnamed location to be with her husband. According to the first refugee, they had become aware that a camp employee was willing to change the assignment in exchange for schnapps or cigarettes. Lacking either form of payment, the woman had needed to buy cigarettes from yet another camp employee to then trade for the new registration card. All told, the employee who was selling the new permits using registration cards stolen from a table in a nearby barracks received two cigars, ten cigarettes, and a beer bottle filled with schnapps (or half-full, depending on the testimony). Evidently, enough of the transaction had occurred in front of other refugees who informed the camp police, and the police took the refugees and several camp employees into custody before the new cards could be filled out.\textsuperscript{349}

Efforts to make the camp staff more professional also meant allowing employees to organize themselves in the form of a workers’ council (\textit{Betriebsrat}). According to a statement from Krause, he had established a consultative council (\textit{Vertrauensrat}) as one of his first acts as camp director to help him look after the “orderliness, cleanliness, and social supervision of the employees.”\textsuperscript{350} One of the council’s foremost tasks was helping Krause and the rest of the camp administration prevent employees from engaging in black-market trade and exploitation. In light of the council’s early success, Krause encouraged members of the consultative council to approach the Göttingen General Trade Union (\textit{Allgemeiner Gewerkschaft}) in order to formally establish a workers’ council, which was agreed to in August and elected in September 1946.\textsuperscript{351} It seems that from the beginning Krause understood the workers’ council as an administrative

\textsuperscript{349} See interrogation records from 29 April 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{350} Krause, Stellungnahme der Betriebsleitung zur Gewerkschaft, 22 March 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{351} Ibid. See also Vorbereitungen zur Wahl eines Betriebsrates für das Flüchtlingslager Friedland/Leine, 30 August 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.
organ meant to support both workers and effective operation of the camp. Although the camp administration retained the authority for personnel matters, it was supposed to consult with the council on “fundamental decisions, employment, and dismissals.”\(^{352}\) For its part, the council understood itself as not standing “in extreme opposition to the conduct of business, rather working together with [the camp administration] to achieve the best for the overall well-being of all wage-earning and salaried employees.”\(^{353}\)

Despite those early assurances of cooperation, a conflict soon developed between Krause and the shop steward (\textit{Betriebsobmann}). The problem seems to have originated in January 1947 when Krause dismissed the registration director for black-marketeering.\(^{354}\) Krause had felt that “a summary dismissal could not be avoided,” but the workers’ council had refused it. So, Krause in consultation with the “supervising authority” fired the employee anyway.\(^{355}\) Evidently the shop steward responded badly, including organizing what one union member described as a “hate-demonstration” (\textit{Haßkundgebung}) against Krause that “aired the camp’s dirty laundry.”\(^{356}\) When the conflict came to Major Howie, he claimed overall responsibility for the camp. Howie further argued that he had expressly given Krause authority in personnel matters and he was happy with Krause’s conduct. In light of the council’s intransigence and his approval of Krause’s

\(^{352}\) Betriebsordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, April 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13, NHStA.

\(^{353}\) Auszüge aus den Protokollen des Betriebsrates, 20 September 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\(^{354}\) Lageranordnung Nr. 31, 7 January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA. See also Protokoll über die 17. Betriebsratsitzung, 6 January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.

\(^{355}\) Krause, Stellungnahme der Betriebsleitung zur Gewerkschaft. Krause did not specify if the “übergeordnete Dienststelle” was the British commandant or the German authority in Hildesheim. Most likely, he was referring to Major Howie.

\(^{356}\) Comments included in an untitled summary of allegations against the shop steward, 23 March 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.
work, Howie stated, “as far as I am concerned the works council [sic] is dissolved.”

Apparently Krause was able to convince Howie of the necessity for a workers’ council, but Thederan and two other employees called for a confidence vote on the council leadership in late April. The vast majority of eligible employees voted to remove the steward and his deputy, ending the only significant conflict between the workers’ council and Krause’s administration.

Krause’s attempts to clean up the camp, as it were, also played out much more literally. The camp administration struggled to keep the camp from devolving into a lagoon of mud due to poor drainage, the region’s notoriously wet weather, and heavy traffic. Wet conditions were also problematic for the camp’s latrines, which were a real source of concern in the spring of 1946. Indeed, the camp had run out of chlorinated lime for the latrines and had needed to resort to less effective lime wash and turf in April 1946. Latrines were thus a priority for renovations over that summer.

In 1947, Krause also enlisted his staffers in a long-running battle against the “plague of rats” (Rattenplage). The camp administration promised a reward to individual employees for every rat they caught. Employees’ enthusiasm for catching rats, however, fell off in 1948. In camp directives from March of that year, the administration complained about the lack of effort and asked employees to regain their interest in the fight.

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357 Niederschrift einer Besprechung mit dem englischen Kommandanten, 2 April 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.

358 The final tally of 166 votes was as follows: 131 no votes, 23 yes votes, and 12 spoiled ballots. Protokoll der Abstimmung anlässlich der Betriebsversammlung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, 22 April 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.

359 Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen to Oberpräsid ent Hannover, “Beaufsichtigung der Hygiene d. Flüchtlingslager,” 6 May 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.

360 Aufstellung über Führung, Leistung und Bauvorhaben des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, 15 June 1946, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 13/1, NHStA.

361 Lageranordnung Nr. 55, 21 June 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

362 Lageranordnung Nr. 80, 6 March 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
eradicate the rats or, failing that, efforts to make the staffers try to do something about the rats, the problem continued as late as 1951. A set of camp directives from that spring included special commendation for a camp employee who had “applied himself to the rat control [Rattenbekämpfung] in an outstanding manner and has so far caught well over 200 rats.”

Krause also worked diligently to improve its reputation in the press. As Sascha Schießl has argued with respect to the creation of a Friedland mythos, the camp administration did not possess a dedicated press office, and it “largely operated independently of higher authorities” to burnish the camp’s public image. The administrators also threatened publishers and radio programs that they felt “misrepresented operations at the camp.” For example, in December 1947, Krause wrote to a Hannover newspaper to dispute an article reporting that returning POWs did not receive adequate medical attention at the camp. Krause noted that the camp employed 8 doctors, one of whom was a tuberculosis specialist, as well 26 nurses. The letter ended with the statement “for the clarification of the above article, the camp administration would be pleased to welcome [your reporter to the camp] soon.” The camp administration in at least one instance went so far as to threaten legal action against a newspaper. In 1949, the Norddeutsche Zeitung published an article on a transport of children from the Soviet zone to relatives in West Germany. In the correction letter, Krause noted that the camp had already felt compelled to

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363 Lageranordnung Nr. 147, 7 April 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.


365 Lagerleitung Friedland to Hannoversche Neueste Nachrichten, 15 December 1947, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 85, NHStA.
correct the newspaper once in 1948. He closed by threatening, “Henceforth in repeated cases, we will use the legal means available to us.”

Two factors help to explain why the leadership at Friedland so jealously guarded the camp’s reputation. First, the administrators undoubtedly understood that repeated bad press would undermine state and public support for the facility. Second, the camp administrators also felt that it was important to maintain the reputation of refugee camps in general for the sake of the refugees and other populations. In one remarkable instance, Krause wrote a complaint about a report in Augsburg, Bavaria that had not mentioned Friedland at all. Apparently Krause took seriously the article’s account of a court giving a convict the choice between serving his sentence in a prison or a refugee camp. He argued that the report’s contents were “in the eyes of the Friedland camp administration, a defamation of refugee camp camps that could not have occurred in a more blatant manner [krasseren Form].” Krause further explained that refugee camps served not only refugees but also communities that could not accept them, so he felt compelled to defend refugee camps from equation to prisons. In addition to judgment’s effect on refugees’ morale, Krause asked if the court realized that “a prison and refugee camp were worlds apart.” He concluded, “If an official office comes to such a judgment, it can be no surprise that refugees and expellees are often treated as second-class human beings [Menschen 2. Klasse] by their hosts.”

Although Krause worked hard to instill politeness and respect for refugees among camp employees, the scale of operations still necessitated strict regulation. Indeed, the military bearing

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366 Lagerleitung Friedland to Norddeutsche Zeitung, 23 February 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA. For the earlier incident, see the article “Wo blieb die Viertelmillion? Dunkles Kapitel aus einem Flüchtlingslager,” Norddeutsche Zeitung, 3 December 1948, and the camp’s response: Lagerleitung Friedland to Norddeutsche Zeitung, 29 December 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA.

367 Lagerleitung Friedland to Tagesnachrichten Augsburg, 24 June 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA.
that lent itself to camp administration also led to complaints about Krause. The county director for Eckernförde, Schleswig-Holstein wrote to the county government for Göttingen to warn them about what he saw as Krause’s poor treatment of incoming refugees in 1948. On a trip to pick-up someone from the camp, the official accompanied Krause to the border for the reception of a transport. The official was horrified to see how Krause directed people at the border. While he allowed that it might be necessary to clear the streets, he had “absolutely no understanding for the corresponding directions being given in a Prussian military tone [preußischen Kommißton].” The official further recounted that Krause had exactly the same bearing and tone in his dealings with the arriving transport. Supposedly a police officer also told him that locals were fed up with Krause. In any event, the official said that he could not bear to think of refugees who had already experienced the “heaviest physical and psychological suffering,” facing such a welcome to the British zone. Despite the official’s stated confidence that the investigations would lead to the same conclusion and a “remedy” of the situation, there is no record of Krause’s superiors rebuking him, much less punishing him.368

Even though the overseeing authorities had favorable impressions of Krause and his staff, the camp briefly faced closure due to waning numbers of POW returns in 1950. In an April 1950 memorandum, an official with the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees explained that it would be reasonable to expect the closure of the camp by the end of the fiscal year, because there were only 30,000 POWs and another 25,000 resettlers left to pass through the camp.369 Officials from the federal and Lower Saxon ministries expected that a small staff might remain until March 1951 to shut down the camp, but they worried about finding work for the camp’s current

368 Kreisdirektor Eckernförde to Oberkreisdirektor Göttingen, 2 February 1948, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 105, NHStA.

369 Memorandum on “Personal im Flüchtlingsdurchgangslager Friedland,” 5 April 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.
employees. Thus, the official suggested that the remaining transit camps first look to the “qualified personnel” from Friedland.\textsuperscript{370} It seems that the impetus to close the camp had come from the Federal Ministry for Expellees, but at some point during the summer the federal ministry had decided to instead keep the camp at Friedland open and add to its responsibilities.\textsuperscript{371} Most likely, making the camp at Friedland an official border transit camp for the Federal Republic was related to the decision to continue operations there, though the decision-making process at the federal level remains unclear.\textsuperscript{372} The recommitment also entailed renovations to prepare the camp for winter and the construction of a new permanent barracks for storing baggage brought by resettlers at a total cost of 40,000 DM to the state of Lower Saxony.\textsuperscript{373}

**Camp Staff, Gendered Division of Labor, and Charities**

Staff lists made during the summer of 1950 in preparation for the camp’s expected closure provide remarkable insight into the camp’s personnel.\textsuperscript{374} First, analysis of the records indicates that the personnel upheaval had mostly ended by the close of 1946. Second, the overwhelming majority of the staff on the lists consisted of former expellees and refugees. Third, the camp had a clear gendered division of labor in which women worked as nurses and office staff, while men were responsible for skilled and unskilled labor as well as administrative

\textsuperscript{370} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{371} Memorandum from Oberregierungsrat Lange to Niedersächsisches Ministerium der Finanzen, 27 September 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 400, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{372} A brief history of the camp written by then-director Karl Gottschalk in 1961 suggests that the camp at Friedland officially became the Friedland Border Transit Camp responsible for returnees, expellees, and resettlers in 1950. In fact, the camp was not formally referred to as a *Grenzdurchgangslager* until that year, though it certainly had functioned as a transit camp and was known as a *Flüchtlingslager* and *Durchgangslager* before 1950. Overview entitled “Lager Friedland,” 6 November 1961, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 72, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{373} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{374} Statistics for this section are derived from lists of Lagerangestellte and Lohnempfänger from late July 1950. The lists were meant to help the personnel section of the refugee ministry determine possible alternative jobs when the camp closed. See Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 403, NHStA.
positions. Although women were mostly excluded from leadership positions in the camp’s German administration, some women nevertheless found their way into leadership positions mostly through charity work at Friedland.

Refugee management was not yet a specialized profession, but by 1950 most of the camp’s staff had several years of experience of working with refugees. Of the camp’s 67 wage-earning employees (*Lohnempfänger*), a clear majority began work at Friedland in 1946: 15 percent began in 1945; 57 percent in 1946; 13 percent in 1947; 9 percent in 1948; and 2 percent each in 1949 and 1950. Although a bare majority of the camp’s salaried employees (*Angestellte*) likewise began work at Friedland in 1946, the overall proportion was more tilted toward early employees: 35 percent began in 1945; 51 percent in 1946; 7 percent in 1947; 5 percent in 1948; and 1 percent each in 1949 and 1950. Several factors might explain the substantially higher percentage of salaried employees from 1945 in comparison to wage-earners from that year. As the inflow of POWs and other groups tailed off and the number of construction projects likewise decreased later into the 1940s, wage-earners responsible for manual labor would have been more likely to be dismissed. Moreover, as the West German economy began to recover after the currency reform, wage-earners may have chosen to find work in their trades elsewhere.

Two characteristics stand out from the camp’s earliest employees. First, many of them were young when they took their jobs. Second, they had previous training in their fields of work. The absence of people working outside their vocations may have resulted from non-specialists being trimmed from the camp payroll during staff reductions between 1945 and 1950. Among the camp’s longest-serving employees in 1950 were two doctors. One 35-year-old clinician lived in Göttingen and had completed his doctoral work and states exams before serving in the Wehrmacht. He held no official employment until September 27, 1945, when he took a position
with the camp’s first aid station. Another young doctor (also 30 years old in 1945) who entered camp employment in December 1945 had studied medicine in Göttingen as part of his military service. He served as a Wehrmacht medical officer from 1942 to 1945. The next-longest serving employee seems to have been a 60-year-old man who had worked in the administrations of various cable factories from 1920 to 1945. He joined the camp’s registration staff in mid-November 1945. One of the early female employees worked in the bookkeeping and correspondence offices. Only 18-years-old when she found her job at the camp in December 1945, the young woman had gone to a trade school for administration and previously worked for the public health insurance company in Göttingen.

The personnel records further reveal that refugees and expellees comprised an overwhelming majority of the camp’s staff. Of the wage-earners, 76 percent were classified as refugees, and 79 percent of the salaried employees possessed refugee status. It is not clear how many staffers might have been processed as refugees or expellees at Friedland before finding employment at the camp. Still, one of the camp’s doctors had gone through the camp as a returnee from imprisonment in the Soviet Union in 1947 and later found employment in the camp in 1948.375

Lower Saxony, of course, had taken in more expellees and refugees as a percentage of its overall population than any state other than Schleswig-Holstein.376 Nevertheless, the percentage of refugees among camp workers would have been a little more than double the percentage of

375 Richard Krause to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge, 27 March 1952, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

376 In 1950, expellees accounted for 26.8 percent of the Lower Saxon population, and Soviet zone refugees accounted for a further 3.9 percent (30.7 percent total). Expellees and refugees respectively accounted for 34.9 percent and 3.9 percent of the population in Schleswig-Holstein. Bavaria had the third highest proportion with 21 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. P. J. Bouman, G. Beijer and J. J. Oudegeest, The Refugee Problem in West Germany, trans. H. A. Marx (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), 15.
refugees in the Göttingen region. The disproportionately high percentage of expellees and refugees working in the Friedland camp staff probably resulted from their interest in helping fellow victims of displacement and their lack of rooted employment in the local economy. Indeed, expellees in West Germany faced an unemployment rate of 31.8 percent while only comprising 18 percent of the overall population in 1950. Thus, the employment opportunity presented by the camp must have been particularly welcome to refugees and expellees near Göttingen.

The piecemeal information about places of birth and residence in the personnel list makes it difficult to come to general conclusions about characteristics of the staff or what role their backgrounds and refugee status played in their employment. One of the registration employees, for example, had worked for the county savings bank in Słupsk/Stolp, Poland before entering military service in 1940. It is not clear, however, how he came to reside in a small town outside of Göttingen and find employment in the camp in February 1946. By contrast, one of the German Red Cross nurses had lived most of her life in Katlenburg just north of Göttingen. She left her position as a lab worker for a Göttingen chemical company to become a lab worker at Friedland. In many cases, however, the lists do not indicate previous places of residence or employment for employees regardless of refugee status. One such example is the typist for the camp administration, who was listed as a refugee but for whom details about education and

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377 According to the Statistisches Bundesamt, 30 to 35 percent of the population of Göttingen and its environs in 1956 was expellees or other non-natives. See map “Vertriebene und Zugewanderte in vH der Gesamtbevölkerung,” Nds. 380 Acc. 62/65 Nr. 422, NHStA.

378 The states Schleswig-Holstein, Lower Saxony, and Bavaria were hardest hit with expellee unemployment, particularly in rural regions. Werner Middlemann, “Das wirtschaftliche und soziale Problem der Vetriebenen,” (paper presented at Konferenz der Liga der Rot-Kreuz-Verbände, Hannover, Germany, 9-14 April 1951), Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.
employment are limited to vocational training in a pastry shop followed by administrative work for the Wehrmacht.

The case of one departmental director at Friedland illustrates how refugee status did not preclude the individual from having local roots. Although the personnel list labeled this particular administrator as a refugee, the de-Nazification files for him indicated that he had been born and educated in Göttingen, where he graduated from a business school in 1918. According to a de-Nazification subcommittee, in March 1919 he joined the Hessian Freikorps and fought in Munich and in the Silesian Uprisings. Regarding the following decade, the files only record that he had worked in sales before 1933 and that he had been unemployed from 1930-1934. He had most likely been living in Göttingen or somewhere else in the Hannoverian province during that period of unemployment, because in 1932 and 1933 he voted for the Deutsch-Hannoversche Partei, a right-wing, regionalist party. In 1934, he found employment as a warehouse manager for a cigarette company in Dresden where he worked until 1942. He then worked as an intermediary (Vermittler) for the Hannover Employment Authority and in that capacity he was sent to work for the Nazi occupation regime in Ukraine in 1943 and in the Reichskommissariat Ostland in 1944. He ended the war as a combat engineer stationed in Halberstadt, Saxony-Anhalt where he was captured. The likely destruction of the employee’s home in the bombing of either Dresden or Hannover was probably the reason for his refugee status. It is unclear when exactly he returned to Göttingen, but his de-Nazification questionnaire from several days after finding employment at Friedland in 1946 listed Göttingen as his current and permanent residence. Indeed, it is unsurprising that he returned to the city of his birth and youth, where most likely he still had family.379

379 See de-Nazification file Nds. 171 Hildesheim Nr. 19790, NHStA. The employee in question had initially been put in Category II. Because the main committee had no evidence other than the employee’s own testimony about his
Employing former refugees and expellees at Friedland also presented advantages to the Lower Saxon government. One way to way to resolve the question of welfare was to put refugees and expellees to work, so that they shifted from welfare rolls to payrolls. Having experienced displacement and hardships themselves, the former POWs, refugees, and expellees would have better understood the difficulties that the camp populations had faced. Camp staffers who came from the same regions as the refugees and expellees would have also been able to overcome difficulties with language. At the time, only educated persons spoke High German. Familiarity with regional dialects would have therefore been necessary. Employees from those regions could also better determine the veracity of statements made by individuals in the camp.

Some individuals passing through Friedland had incentives misrepresent their identities, making staffers’ ability to verify statements all the more important. For expellees and refugees forced to leave with few possessions and no documentation, registering at the camp and reentering government rolls could offer a sort of rebirth to escape a Nazi past. Historian Joseph Schechtman argued that the difficulty of verifying expellee claims about their former lives created bitterness in “Nazi or near-Nazi circles” toward expellees who were safe because they arrived “without their past, for it was difficult to muster the evidence necessary to indict them.” In cases of black-marketeering, individuals made false statements to provide legal cover for crossing the border. Still others sought a more favorable classification, particularly as

role in the procurement of “Ostarbeiter” in Ukraine and the RKO, he was re-classified into Category IV in 1946. It appears that he successfully appealed for re-classification into Category V in 1949.

Andreas Kossert has argued that the distinctive regional dialects and accents contributed to the alienation and exclusion of expellees from local communities. According to him, expellee parents also found it painful that their children learned local speech or High German, thereby losing the linguistic connection to their former Heimat. Andreas Kossert, Kalte Heimat: Die Geschichte der deutschen Vertriebenen nach 1945 (Munich: Siedler, 2008), 122-127.

Schechtman, Postwar Population Transfers, 322.
returnees. In the event of lost papers, camp directives required individuals to make a sworn statement to the camp police had some limited investigative powers.\footnote{See Lageranordnung Nr. 23, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.}

In the early years when camp traffic was at its highest, investigations must have been cursory indeed. A case list for February to November 1946 sent from the camp police to a special police commission included only three cases of arrests for false identifications and using falsified documents.\footnote{Nachweisung über die im Durchgangslager Friedland geführten Ermittlungen in der Zeit vom 9.2. bis 5.11.1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.} Four years later, some combination of improved investigation methods, lower traffic, and/or a change in types of traffic meant that the camp police found or suspected false identities far more often. From a list of cases sent to Friedland town police station in 1950, next to the names 41 of 48 detained individuals there were notations such as: “false sworn declaration,” “false documents,” “conman” (Schwindler), “fraudster” (Betrüger), “for verification,” and “false returnee.”\footnote{Zur Pol. St. Friedland 1950, n.d., Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 30, NHStA. Most of the other cases were for wanted individuals whose names were in the wanted list (Fahndungsbuch).}

Responsibilities for male and female employees were split along the lines typical for the early 1950s. Of the 81 salaried employees, only 25 were women. Women’s representation in the workforce was bolstered by the need for nurses to care for injured, ill, or infirm persons arriving at the camp. Eighteen of the 25 women were nurses, plus another woman worked as a doctor in the camp. The remaining six women all worked in administrative jobs (typists, switchboard operators, and so forth). Among the camp’s 67 wage-earners, the only woman was a seamstress. That disparity is unsurprising when one considers that manual laborers accounted for most of the wage-earners along with tradesmen such as carpenters, mechanics, drivers, and the like.
The lists’ lack of women working as cooks and housekeepers raises the question of whether such women were excluded from the lists or if male employees were responsible for those tasks. The camp possessed a number of different messes, including those for residents, employees, and different organizations in the camp. For example, the German Red Cross had its own separate employee mess. It may be that women working in some of those messes were not state employees, meaning that they were excluded from the state employment lists. Lists of eligible voters in elections for the employee council nevertheless indicate that the camp administration employed men in camp messes. The voter list from 1947 indicates that only men worked in the messes responsible for employees, residents, and travel provisions. The workers’ council did not formally divide housework into a separate division with a distinct voting bloc, meaning that such staff must have been attached to other divisions. Two of the sub-camps, however, had no women at all. So, male housemasters must have been doing the cleaning along with other maintenance.

The predominance of men in the staff likely resulted from the government prioritizing the employment of male breadwinners. Married men comprised clear majorities of the wage-earning and salaried employees. Single men were slightly better represented among the wage-earning employees (14 of 66 men) than the salaried employees (9 of 52 men). Of the remaining salaried

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385 The British military unit also had its own kitchen, though it appears that the Lower Saxon government was responsible for staffing the kitchen as well as for providing office workers. Indeed, state outlays for this support staff became a point of contention between the German and British administrators at Friedland. See memorandum on “Notwendigkeit der 2.PWDC im Lager Friedland,” 28 February 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34, NHStA.

386 Wählerliste, January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13. It is also worth remembering that men held by the British as POWs had provided much of the kitchen labor during the camp’s first few months of operation; see Chapter 2.
men, 15 were married without children, 25 were married with children, and 3 were divorced with children.  

Prioritizing the employment of male breadwinners came at the expense of married women who would have been double-earners. The overwhelming majority of the camp’s female employees consisted of single women, and the few married women working at Friedland had special circumstances that may explain their employment. In the case of the camp’s wage-earning employees, the sole woman was married, but she possessed refugee status and may have been married or related to a fellow wage-earner. Of the 25 women on the salaried-employee rolls, only two were married. One of the married women was a medical doctor who was a refugee from Hamburg. The other married woman was a nurse with refugee status and who also had a child. Among the single women, two of them had children, but it is unclear if they were widows or had borne the children out of wedlock. The types of work open to the single women (i.e. nurses, typists, operators, and such) were so female coded that the camp administration and state must not have considered men for those jobs.

The lists of state employees may have underreported the number of women in the camp’s workforce because they excluded workers from charitable organizations. Some nurses from the German Red Cross, of course, were on state payrolls, but it is possible that the organization also

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387 Unfortunately, the list of wage-earners does not indicate if the individuals had children. Two salaried employees listed without details of family status were excluded from these counts.

388 The female employee did not have a common family name, but there was a slightly older, married male wage-earner with the same last name.

389 Again, judging by a relatively uncommon family name, the doctor in question may have been married or related to a doctor who had directed the camp’s medical services from 1946 to 1947 and who held a professorship at the Göttingen University’s chirurgical clinic.

390 The employee lists distinguished between single, married, and divorced, but they did not include information on whether single women or men were widows/widowers.
employed women in other capacities. Certainly other charities paid for their own workers in the camp. The Protestant charity *Evangelisches Hilfswerk*, for example, was the employer for staffers of the sub-camp for vagrant male youths that operated from 1947 to 1951, though only men worked as supervisors in the youth camp. Volunteers for charitable organizations would also have been excluded from the staff lists despite contributing to the camp work force as well. It is unclear how many employees and regular volunteers the charities brought to the camp’s workforce in the late 1940s, but a report on the camp in 1956 indicated that the various charities accounted for 20 of their own paid employees and another 100 volunteers.

Despite the relatively small number of female employees, several women did take on leadership roles. In particular, women found paths to leadership through involvement in charitable organizations at the camp. Major Mitchell of the British Salvation Army, for example, directed that organization’s charitable efforts at the camp. In the case of the sub-camp for male youths, she played a consultative role in the sub-camp’s leadership (see Chapter 5). The nurses of the German Red Cross were responsible for the supervision and supply of the camp’s hospital and first-aid stations. The first head nurses, Charlotte Mietz and Ilsabeth von Rothkirch, oversaw the nurses’ hospital work and directed the nurses’ mess. Women also sometimes stood in elections for the workers’ council at Friedland. One of the Red Cross nurses, Barbara

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391 In a police report about missing rations cards, for example, the background data on youth camp staffers indicates that they were employees of the Innere Mission, not the Friedland camp, earning a between 200 and 350 DM per month. See police statements from 12 November 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA. See also Chapter 5.

392 Anecdotal evidence suggests that some nurses working in Göttingen volunteered in the camp on weekends.

393 These figures come from records prepared for a press conference on the camp’s capacity for receiving the last POW returnees from the USSR. 25 February 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 158/94 Nr. 38, NHStA.

394 Betriebsordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, April 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13, NHStA.

395 See Dienstordnung des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland/Leine, 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 7. Rothkirch replaced Mietz in December 1946. Lageranordnung Nr. 26, 25 November 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
Kramer, won a position on the council in a 1951 election and was therefore involved in negotiations over the revised collective bargaining agreement in 1953.³⁹⁶

The most prominent woman in the camp’s early history, however, was the director of the German Red Cross nurses, Head Nurse Charlotte Wagner. Wagner was born into a reasonably well-to-do farming family in a rural community near Wriezen an der Oder, Brandenburg in 1897. Growing up, Wagner attended a private school and later studied at a finishing school (*höhere Töchterschule*) and a women’s lyceum. Wagner then returned to manage the four-hectare farm that had been in her family’s possession since the eighteenth century. Wagner had only limited political engagement before the war. She voted for the conservative, nationalist *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* in 1932 and 1933, and she joined the National Socialist People’s Welfare (NSV) organization in 1938. Following her entry into the German Red Cross as a nurse in 1940, Wagner served in France (she had learned French in school). She first worked as an assistant nurse and later as a home director until being taken as a prisoner of war in 1944. Following her release in 1946, the first work she found was at Friedland in the fall of 1947.³⁹⁷

In addition to her responsibilities supervising the nurses, Wagner worked in collaboration with other charity directors at Friedland. In particular, Wagner coordinated with the directors of Caritas, *Evangelisches Hilfswerk/Innere Mission*, the Young Men’s Christian Organization, and *Bruderhilfe* (a fraternal aid organization of the Baptist Free-Church Congregation).³⁹⁸

³⁹⁶ See Protokoll über die am 26.4.1951 im Flüchtlingslager Friedland/L. durchgeführte Betriebsratswahl, 27 March 1951, and also Betriebsvereinbarung, 9 April 1953, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 64, NHStA.

³⁹⁷ In 1947, the de-Nazification commission grouped her into Category V. See de-Nazification file from 1947 in Nds. 171 Hildesheim 28504, NHStA. Wagner was also classified as a refugee, mostly likely because the family holdings in the Brandenburg would have been lost to land re-distribution. See personnel file list from July 1950 in Nds. 380 Acc. 62/65 Nr. 422, NHStA.

³⁹⁸ *Bruderhilfe*, however, only operated in the camp from 1946 to 1951, during which time it helped with the organization and distribution of clothing donations (including from American Baptists). See Karl Heinz Bleß, “Die ‘Bruderhilfe’ in Friedland,” in *Sucht der Stadt Bestes: Festschrift 100 Jahre Baptistengemeinde Göttingen*, 158
for example, the directors signed a letter to Lower Saxon Minister for Refugees Heinrich Albertz in which they protested the apparent refusal to accept German resettlers from Poland while the camp was forced to house foreigners.\(^{399}\) Indeed, over the following two years, Wagner and her colleagues paid special attention to the issue of the foreigners living in the residential sub-camp. That included working with the camp administration to organize a 1952 conference with several foreign charities to address the matter.\(^{400}\) Wagner and her colleagues from the camp charities also consulted with the Special Commission of the United Charities on Returnee Care located in Bonn in the attempt to determine the extent to which the returnee aid organization (\textit{Heimkehrerhilfe}) at Friedland could operate independently of Returnee Care in dealings with the press and undertaking donation campaigns.\(^{401}\)

Aside from Wagner and Major Mitchell, though, men held the leadership positions for camp charities. Although Göttingen and its environs were largely Protestant, the Catholic charity Caritas led by Monsignor Doctor Josef Krahe was one of the most active charities in the camp. Krahe served as the camp’s Catholic priest and oversaw the Caritas organization in the camp from 1948 to 1960. Krahe was born in Efferen near Cologne in 1914. After a semester of study at the University of Bonn, he left for the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome where he was ordained and earned his doctoral degree before returning to Germany in 1942. According to a short, celebratory biography of Krahe in a Caritas almanac, after time as chaplain in Neuß near

\(^{399}\) Hilfsverbände zu Flüchtlingsminister in Niedersachsen, 23 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

\(^{400}\) See memorandum by Hans Thederan, “Bericht über eine am 29.1.1952 im Lager Friedland stattgefundene Sitzung,” 29 January 1952, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.

\(^{401}\) Minutes of meeting with Sonderausschuss "Heimkehrerbetreuung" der vereinigten Wohlfahrtsverbände, 30 November 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 529, NHStA.
Düsseldorf and as a hospital priest in Siegburg, Krahe tried and failed to gain a position as a priest for German POWs held in France. The biographer recounts that “because [Krahe] absolutely wanted to do something for the people of his generation who still suffered the war’s consequences,” Cardinal Josef Frings suggested that Krahe take over as priest at Friedland.

Aside from holding mass and ministering to the camp’s residents, Krahe used his position as camp priest to oversee a number of charitable initiatives. In 1948 in cooperation with a Protestant pastor, most likely Gustav Baron von Girard, Krahe had helped to found the Friedland Heimkehrerhilfe organization that other charities later supported. When material donations from the other charities for returnees slackened in 1950, Caritas was the only charity that could provide the necessary items (mostly clothing) for returnees. By that time, Caritas was using seven Nissen huts provided by the camp administration and they had built their own barracks for church services. The charity also ran a camp kindergarten primarily for the supervision of orphaned children brought through the Operation Link resettlement program. Finally, Krahe oversaw the construction of a housing development near the camp with the support of the St. Stephens charity of Osnabrück, Lower Saxony during the early 1950s. In September 1953 there were already 32 completed houses and another 27 planned. Although the development was

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402 Supposedly in his wartime position as chaplain in Neuß, Krahe had taken a particular interest in caring for forced laborers, resulting in the threat from a local SS officer that Krahe would hang after the war. Later in life, Krahe rose to the rank of prelate. Hermann Mors, “‘Friedlandpfarrer bleibt sein Ehrenname,” in the Caritaskalender 1986. The excerpt was in Dagmar Kleineke’s dissertation notes, “Reste,” in the Kreisarchiv Göttingen. See also the obituary from the Hildesheim diocese, “Botschafter der Menschlichkeit,” 12 September 2005.

403 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 75.

404 Krause to Lower Saxon Refugee Ministry, “Betreuung der Heimkehrer und Flüchtlinge im Flüchtlingsdurchgangslager Friedland,” 31 October 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.

405 Vermerk by Amtsrat Gröner on charities at Friedland, 19 December 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.
intended as a form of self-help for refugees, the workers’ council asked for state funds so that camp employees could purchase residences in it.\footnote{Betriebsobmann Friedland to Regierungspräsident Hildesheim, 7 September 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 2003/015 Nr. 75, NHStA. Of course, most employees qualified as refugees.}

Under the direction of Johannes Lippert, the Protestant Evangelisches Hilfswerk was the other major religious charity in the camp. As with Caritas, much of their efforts focused on providing material aid to returnees and civilian refugees. Evangelisches Hilfswerk used five Nissen huts provided by the camp administration. Like Caritas, they built their own barracks for church services and ran a kindergarten. Finally, Evangelisches Hilfswerk paid 800 DM towards the construction costs for the youth sub-camp as well as the wages for several youth camp workers.\footnote{Vermerk by Amtsrat Gröner on charities at Friedland, 19 December 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.} Letters from Lippert to his superiors also show that from the Protestant perspective at least, there was competition between confessional charities in the camp to make the largest possible impact, thereby securing the church’s reputation.\footnote{This competition contributed to the Protestants’ decision to support the construction and operations of the youth sub-camp; see Chapter 5.}

Although nurses from the German Red Cross were paid employees of the state, the organization did make other charitable contributions in the camp. For the returnees, the German Red Cross provided clothing donations as well as tea, coffee, and pastries entailing the significant expense of 1,200 DM per month. They also provided an additional three paid helpers who worked in a barracks donated to the camp as well as supporting the Caritas kindergarten.\footnote{Vermerk by Amtsрат Gröner on charities at Friedland, 19 December 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.}

A coterie of other charities rounded out the support organizations in the camp. The Arbeiterwohlfahrt (a workers’ welfare organization) offered general support for the returnee

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\footnote{Betriebsobmann Friedland to Regierungspräsident Hildesheim, 7 September 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 2003/015 Nr. 75, NHStA. Of course, most employees qualified as refugees.}

\footnote{Vermerk by Amtsrat Gröner on charities at Friedland, 19 December 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.}

\footnote{This competition contributed to the Protestants’ decision to support the construction and operations of the youth sub-camp; see Chapter 5.}

\footnote{Vermerk by Amtsрат Gröner on charities at Friedland, 19 December 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.}
transports, including paying for two aid workers. The Young Men’s Christian Association provided further general support for processing returnees. Finally, Major Mitchell represented the British Salvation Army at Friedland. She oversaw another two paid Salvation Army staffers who helped with the distribution of material donations from Great Britain. The Salvation Army also provided several ambulances and other transport vehicles for sick and injured persons. All told, the various charities made a significant contribution to the camp’s operations, particularly in providing material donations (clothing, shoes, and so forth) for the returnees that civil authorities would not have been able to provide otherwise.410

End of an Era

In addition to the departure of the British military unit at Friedland, the departures of Richard Krause and Hans Thederan in 1952/53 marked the end of an era in the camp’s administration. On March 10, 1952, Krause took over the directorship of the new emergency reception camp for refugee youths located in Sandbostel, Lower Saxony. The reason for Krause’s transfer from Friedland to Sandbostel is unclear. Krause had taken a special interest in the sub-camp for youths at Friedland between 1947 and 1951 (see chapter 5), and in 1952 the Friedland camp faced staff reductions because POW and resettler transports had slackened in size and frequency. So, he may have requested the new assignment when the refugee youth camp group at Poggenhagen was transferred to a former POW camp at Sandbostel in 1952. Initially, the ministerial officials overseeing Lower Saxon camps did not expect that the assignment to Sandbostel would prevent Krause from continuing duties at Friedland.411 Within a month,

410 Ibid.

411 Niedersächsischer Minister für Vertiebenen to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 28 March 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532.
however, ministerial officials decided to assign the Poggenhagen camp director, Doctor Franz Freßen, to Friedland as a Krause’s replacement.

Like Krause, Freßen was a former military officer with extensive administrative experience. Freßen was born in the town of Bensberg near Cologne in 1893. Freßen passed his university matriculation exam in Düsseldorf during the spring of 1914, but mobilization for war interrupted his studies in July 1914. He served throughout World War I, reaching the rank of lieutenant. Freßen did not resume studies until 1920, and he completed his doctoral degree in political science in 1922. Freßen worked as a trainee in private industry for three years before finding a position as corporate counsel (Syndikus) for the Opladen branch office of the Düsseldorf Chamber of Craftsmen (Handwerkskammer) in 1925.412

According to de-Nazification documents, Freßen felt compelled to give up that position due to Nazi persecution in 1936. He claimed to have been automatically entered into the Nazi Party and the SA-Reserves in 1934 because he had held a local leadership position in the Stahlhelm paramilitary organization. Evidently, Freßen opposed the Nazi Party but could not secure release from the SA or party membership until 1936. Sworn statements from colleagues supported Freßen’s claim that his opposition to the Nazi Party had forced him to give up the position with the chamber.413 In a memorandum written as part of his 1951 application for restitution as a victim of Nazi persecution of civil servants, Freßen explained that he had been subject to Nazi “chicanery” beginning January 30, 1933. He therefore decided to approach an acquaintance who was a commander with the Münster artillery regiment to request reactivation

412 Melde- und Personal Bogen for Franz Freßen, 14 July 1951, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 19/76 Nr. 101/13, NHStA.

413 Decision from Spruchkammer Weilheim/Oberbayern, 14 February 1947, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 19/76 Nr. 101/13, NHStA.
for military service to escape the persecution in 1934. Nevertheless, the local Nazi Party officials delayed Freßen’s reentry into the army until 1936. Over the course of World War II, Freßen rose through the ranks from captain to colonel. Because he lost his home near Düsseldorf to Allied bombing in 1943, Freßen and his wife lived as refugees in Upper Bavaria after the end of the war.

In 1947, Freßen became the director of the camp at Poggenhagen after the preceding two camp directors there were sacked. The first director lost his job when Lower Saxon officials discovered that there was a warrant for his arrest in connection to his service as a military commandant (Kampfkommandant) in Bavaria. Allegedly, he had overseen the execution of a woman for listening to foreign radio during the war. In 1948, a court in Bavaria acquitted the first director of the charges, which the British commandant at Poggenhagen had regarded as baseless since the beginning. Much like at Friedland, the military government and German civil authorities clashed over the question of authority over the Poggenhagen camp. The British commandant had apparently liked the director and complained about the “high-handed” dismissal: “Anyway it is unknown to me that a law exists in Germany that a man is instantly dismissed for a crime for which he is not yet proved guilty.” While the commandant refused to recognize the dismissal, it seems that the German authorities prevailed with the argument that they did not need British approval for dismissing a temporary employee.

The senior official for the Hannover governing district, Regierungspräsident Theanolte Bähnisch, recommended Freßen as a replacement when the Poggenhagen deputy camp director

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414 Freßen to Regierungspräsidenten Hannover, 28 March 1952, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 19/76 Nr. 101/13, NHStA.

415 Decision from Spruchkammer Weilheim/Oberbayern, 14 February 1947, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 19/76 Nr. 101/13, NHStA.

416 See the personnel documents in Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Nr. 1422, NHStA.
proved unsuitable.\footnote{Bähnisch had been the Regierungspräsident for Hannover since 1946. According to an article published in \textit{Die Zeit}, “in the fall of 1946 when thousands of youths, orphaned and without a home [heimatlos], wandered about on Germany’s highways, [Bähnisch] founded Lower Saxony’s first youth refugee camp at Poggenhagen.” Bähnisch likely knew Freßen through university education and the civil service. Both Bähnisch and Freßen matriculated from the University of Münster in 1922 before working in the civil service, and Bähnisch’s husband, Albrecht, completed his practical training in the Münster civil service. On Bähnisch, see Ilse Langner, “Das Frauenporträt: Regierungspräsidentin Theanolte Bänisch,” \textit{Die Zeit}, 21 February 1957.} Evidently, the British military government had raised objection due to the deputy director’s Nazi past. When the first camp director tried to regain his position after his acquittal in 1948, he claimed that Bähnisch’s acquaintance with Freßen had led to the “personal intrigues” that cost him his job. Bähnisch explained that she knew Freßen and had recommended him because he was an effective administrator. She defended the hiring by noting that the state chancellery had made the decision after first trying to promote the deputy camp director.

Bähnisch further noted that the German Red Cross had disliked the first director, and the workers’ council at Poggenhagen had alleged that he had done a poor job and relied too heavily on subordinates to manage the camp. On the other hand, all parties were happy with Freßen, who kept his position until the transfer to Friedland in 1952.\footnote{Ibid.}

Upon discovering that Freßen would be the new camp director, the workers’ council at Friedland submitted a complaint to the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees. The shop steward argued that Thederan should take the directorship, because camp personnel had enjoyed priority in promotions to vacant positions in the past. The chairman further suggested that personal contact with East German authorities was a crucial component of the camp director’s work, meaning that relationships that Thederan had developed over years of service would make him a more suitable director than Freßen.\footnote{It also seems that the workers’ council viewed Freßen with suspicion: “It is apparent to the workers’ council and also the entire personnel which reasons Dr. Freßen has for taking this transfer.” The complaint did not go into further detail, and it confused officials in Hannover, who put a question mark in the marginalia next to the
explained that a promotion for Thederan was out of the question because the decision had already been made and could not be reversed. He added that because the directorship was not an open position (Krause and Freßen were simply exchanging jobs), priority for in-house promotion did not apply anyway. Schellhaus noted that the ministry valued Thederan’s work in the camp and expected him to contribute to camp operations by “making use of his good personal relationships.”

Thederan’s promotion to the level of camp director instead came as Krause’s replacement at Sandbostel rather than at Friedland. Krause lost his position as camp director at Sandbostel because of allegations of misconduct relating to an automobile accident. According to the state, in June 1952 Krause had been driving a camp vehicle recklessly and without authorization when he had an accident resulting in damage that cost 45 DM to repair. The state further alleged that under questioning in September 1952, Krause admitted to intentionally falsifying the accounting of the costs in order to hide that the car had needed repairs, whereupon the state placed him on leave. When in late September Minister Schellhaus notified Krause that the state had initiated proceedings for a summary dismissal, Krause responded by resigning his position effective November 30, 1952.

Over the course of a subsequent lawsuit by the state seeking to recover damages from Krause, his lawyer presented a far different explanation of events. The lawyer argued that the

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420 Kotzam to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge, 23 April 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.

421 Niedersächsischer Minister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge, und Kriegsgeschädigte to Betriebsrat Friedland, 28 April 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.

421 Lawsuit by State of Lower Saxony against Richard Krause, October 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532, NHStA.

422 Correspondence between Schellhaus and Krause, 23 and 25 September 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532, NHStA. It appears that Krause later worked privately as a riding instructor in Kassel, Hessen.
camp’s driver pool was short of the state’s allotment, so Krause needed to drive the vehicle for meetings with state officials in Hannover and to oversee the other camps under his direction at Loccum, Kircherode, and Poggenhagen. The lawyer rejected the claim that Krause had purposefully tried to hide the costs. He argued that a senior official had told Krause that the account for automobiles was overdrawn, so he could not book the costs to it. Supposedly Krause then shifted the expense to the account for camp trucks while also producing the repair receipts for inspection.423

Reconciling Krause’s tenure at Friedland with the Sandbostel allegations is difficult. After all, Krause was assiduous in his efforts to stamp out impropriety at Friedland. Even allowing for a gap between prescription and personal behavior, there is certainly a disconnect between the man who closed his first Friedland camp orders by calling for “justice and honor” with the accusations that he falsified accounting to hide wrongdoing at Sandbostel six years later. Krause’s confidence and independent streak that served him well in the administration of the Friedland camp may have contributed to problems that developed at Sandbostel. It is worth bearing in mind that Krause was a trained riding and driving instructor, so in combination with his position as camp director, he probably did not see an issue with his using the camp vehicles.

The worst of the alleged offences, of course, was trying to conceal the accident and expenses. There is no written record of Krause’s exact confession, so it is unclear whether he confessed to purposefully concealing the damages or just admitted to having booked the expense to a different account. It would be understandable if Krause had tried to conceal the accident from his superiors out of fear or repercussions or embarrassment. Still, he must have also known that consequences would be much worse for falsifying the accounting. Krause’s explanation of

423 Lawsuit by State of Lower Saxony against Richard Krause, October 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 532, NHStA.
his actions seems more plausible and in keeping with his past behavior. Rather than hiding anything, upon learning that the automobile repair account was overdrawn he acted too independently. He rebooked the expense to the truck repair account without first getting permission from his superiors, who then viewed Krause’s actions in an entirely different light.

Krause’s departure from the civil service created an opening for Thederan’s promotion to camp director at Sandbostel, marking an end to the formative era in the administration’s history. Thederan took the temporary position of acting camp director at Sandbostel on January 1, 1953 and was confirmed as camp director with a corresponding pay-grade increase on April 1, 1953. Despite Krause and Thederan leaving Friedland, there were not any immediate, significant changes in the operation of the camp. This absence of change speaks to two issues. First, the early administrators had set effective procedures and organization for the camp, so there was no need for reform as was the case when Krause and Thederan first took control of the camp. Second, as German civil government became more robust, there was less need and consequently less administrative leeway for camp directors at Friedland to act independently.

It is ironic but also readily explainable that the German camp administration operated relatively freely during the period under British military oversight. In fact, the British authorities may have contributed to the independence of the camp’s German administration in several ways. First, the early British commandants fostered good relations with their German counterparts, and they happily devolved much authority for camp operations to them as long as British interests in maintaining control of POW release and border traffic were untouched. Howie even interceded on behalf of the German administration when it encountered difficulties with German authorities.

424 Niedersächsischer Minister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge u. Kriegsgeschädigte to Niedersächsischer Ministerpräsident—Staatskanzlei, 23 June 1953, Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Nr. 1422, NHStA. Thederan applied for and received a pay-grade increase in 1957, despite much ministerial grumbling about his lack of a higher degree. Thederan left the directorship at Sandbostel and the civil service for unknown reasons in 1958.
and organizations (e.g. de-Nazification and the workers’ council). Howie supported Krause’s administration because he seemed run the camp in an effective manner, meaning that the British could trust in him personally and rely on him for management during the chaotic earliest years. Later, when British and German authorities soured on each other as a consequence of the growing strength of the German civil government, the increasingly antagonistic relationship may have given Krause and Thederan more operating space with respect to German civil authorities. British officials mostly left the German camp administrators to their duties, and when points of conflict arose, Krause and Thederan became important go-betweens for higher British and German offices.

Examination of the camp’s staff and personnel decisions made by refugee ministry officials leads to several further conclusions. First, operations at Friedland were largely a matter of refugees and expellees caring for fellow refugees, expellees, and released POWs. This composition of the camp staff may have helped both residents and the German government by increasing understanding between staffers and the people they processed. Second, the predominance of men and refugees in the camp staff was likely a result of the state’s efforts to keep people off of welfare rolls by employing male breadwinners and people who would have had more difficulty in finding work than the rooted, native locals. Third, although it was too early to label refugee management as a profession, by 1950 the camp staff was largely composed of individuals with years of experience working at refugee camps. The state recognized the value of such experience by prioritizing refugee camp employees for open positions at other camps, which seems to have extended beyond the civil service obligations to provide work for current civil servants generally.
Finally, an enduring legacy from Krause’s tenure was the commitment to treating incoming populations humanely. Krause took charge of the camp at a time when its reputation had reached its nadir because too many employees saw displaced individuals as targets to exploit. Of course, regulation at Friedland was necessarily impersonal and bureaucratic due to the masses involved, which could also produce undesirable residential assignments for individuals (hence the trade in residence permits). Nevertheless, Krause’s administration emphasized treating residents with dignity and respect, which also required a fairness and equality in application of rules and distribution quotas. To the extent that it was possible, the administration and charities at the camp tried to ameliorate the conditions by providing donated goods, spiritual care, and even small niceties such as coffee and tea.
CHAPTER 4
FROM PROVISIONAL TO PERMANENT II: CAMP POPULATIONS, 1946-1952

During a brief period in 1950, the camp at Friedland faced closure by officials in the federal and Lower Saxon refugee ministries. The possibility of the Friedland camp’s closure raises two questions. First, why had the camp at Friedland survived until 1950 when many other transit camps had already closed? Second, why did the camp remain in operation past that point in 1950? The increasingly experienced and effective camp staff, of course, played a role in the facility’s survival. The diverse nature of postwar displacement helps to account for why the camp operated into the 1950s. Camp operation was contingent upon continuing need for a facility to collect, register, aid, and redistribute uprooted groups well past the end of the war and initial expulsions. Although officials did not envision the camp as a permanent institution, the overall trajectory of the camp’s development from early improvisations to durable structures depended on the arrival of new groups as the inflow of other displaced populations tailed off. The arrival of three different groups at the camp during the period 1946 to 1952 therefore account for the facility’s survival: prisoners of war needing to cross the zonal boundaries, German “resettlers” (Aussiedler) from Poland who arrived at the camp as the POW traffic stalled in 1950, and finally foreign nationals who had either lost their DP status or entered West Germany illegally.

This chapter first addresses how the release and transport of prisoners of war to their homes in the British sector proved a demanding task for the camp personnel and the affected civil offices. The size of the undertaking, the POWs’ nearly uniformly poor health, and the
complexities of the POWs’ backgrounds and needs for assistance all contributed to the difficulty of their reception and release. Among many other issues, the camp and refugee authorities grappled with the question of what to do with the so-called “returnees without a homeland” (heimatlose Heimkehrer) released to West Germany rather than their former homes in Eastern Europe. Particularly after the 1950 enactment of the Returnee Law (Heimkehrergesetz), the camp’s official recognition of returnees as POWs became more difficult and contentious due to questions about individuals’ qualifications for returnee status as well as the considerable benefits enjoyed by officially recognized returnees.

The arrival of the first waves of German resettlers from Poland in 1950 put German and British authorities in conflict over the acceptance and handling of populations at Friedland. British authorities had approved of Operation Link in 1949, which was a program for transferring some 25,000 Germans from Poland in order to reunite them with families living in West Germany. When the first transports arrived, however, it became clear that many of the resettlers did not belong to the preapproved lists, and British authorities tried to prevent their acceptance into West Germany. German administrators and press decried the British refusal of the transports as inhumane and demanded their immediate acceptance into West Germany. At the heart of this dispute were two issues. First was a British misapprehension of Polish intentions to flood West Germany with refugees. Second, there was a fundamental disagreement between the British and Germans over what constituted proper regulation and humane treatment of the resettlers. In British eyes, it was neither fair nor humane to accept them if they could not be adequately housed and integrated into the German economy. From the German point of view, there was a humanitarian obligation to care for their co-nationals trapped in limbo.
Foreign nationals housed in the camp between 1949 and 1952 proved more difficult than any other group present at Friedland. These foreigners consisted of a mixture of former Displaced Persons and individuals who had entered West Germany illegally since the end of the war. The British authorities of the International Relief Organization faced the task of finding housing for them. Almost immediately upon the foreigners’ arrival, the authorities at the Friedland camp as well as local civil administrators and police protested the IRO’s decision. In the eyes of camp administrators and locals, these foreigners were a burdensome and sometimes dangerous criminal group. The resulting three-year dispute over accommodating the foreigners demonstrates the difficulties of disentangling questions of authority over the camp, even though its administration putatively lay in German hands. Indeed, the controversy even set members of the camp’s British military unit and the British Salvation Army against British authorities for the IRO in Hannover. In contrast to feelings of solidarity and obligation to their co-nationals resettling from Poland, German authorities did not view troublesome groups of foreigners in the same way.

Prisoners of War

From the time of Germany’s capitulation, the British occupation forces had grappled with the question of what to do with German soldiers in their custody. Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, the first commander of the occupation army, listed POWs among the displaced populations contributing to the “terrific” problem of governance: “We had in our area nearly one and a half million German prisoners of war. There were a further one million German wounded, without medical supplies […] In addition, there were about one million civilian refugees who had fled into our area from the advancing Russians; these and ‘Displaced Persons’ were roaming
about the country, often looting as they went.”

425 Imprisoning these captive soldiers presented the British with the dual problem of needing to provision them and removing them from an already desperately shallow pool of labor. As such, in anticipation of the coming winter, the British undertook programs to put POWs to work in agriculture through Operation Barleycorn as well as the coalmines of the Ruhr through Operation Coalscuttle during the fall of 1945.

426 The organization of these POWs into so-called “service groups” (Dienstgruppen) nevertheless proved problematic. According to Noel Annan, when General Sir Gerald Templer organized these groups, he “simply kept the German army in being—though without badges of rank.”

427 Upon learning of the program, Marshall Georgy Zhukov accused the British of violating the Potsdam Agreement, necessitating the groups’ dissolution under the program named Operation Clobber.

428 This operation, however, encompassed all German POWs captive in the British zone who did not fall under special arrest categories. In a memorandum from the military government to authorities with the Hildesheim governing district, the British explained that the operation would run from December 9, 1945, to January 20, 1946. During that time, the British planned to release 24,000 men to be settled in the cities and counties of the district according to quotas from the state employment authority. Local offices were to treat the Clobber men as refugees and register them with the competent rationing, housing, and work offices.

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426 Ibid., 51.

427 Noel Annan, *Changing Enemies: The Defeat and Regeneration of Germany* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 149-150. The POW labor early in the Friedland camp’s history (see Chapter 2) likely had been under the auspices of such a program.

428 Ibid. Reading between the lines, it seems that Zhukov’s objection was to the de facto organization of the service groups along military lines, not the use of POWs as a labor source (after all, the Soviets made extensive use of POW labor).
Indeed, because the British had agreed to resettle Sudeten German soldiers in their zone, many of them essentially had been displaced by the war. These offices were also responsible for picking out men particularly suited for work in Ruhr mines, reconstruction in Hannover, and bridge rebuilding in the Ruhr.\textsuperscript{429}

Although the facility at Friedland was already in operation as a transit camp, it was not initially responsible for releasing British-held POWs into the Soviet zone. Instead, the British made use of the camp at Poggenhagen for Clobber men being released across the British-Soviet border.\textsuperscript{430} During the fall and winter of 1945/46, the Friedland camp was nevertheless responsible for cross-border POW traffic from the Soviet zone. In the last few months of 1945, the camp had accepted roughly 8,100 POWs from Soviet captivity.\textsuperscript{431} Given that these first returning POWs had included many amputees, invalids, and the seriously ill, Soviet units must have released them due to their incapacity for work.\textsuperscript{432}

At some point during the spring of 1946, the camp at Friedland took responsibility from Poggenhagen for POW releases to the east. For their own zone, the British had set up release facilities at the so-called Munsterlager in Lower Saxony and also in the Westphalian city of Münster, but Friedland received the task of “sluicing” across the border any POWs with homes in the Soviet zone.\textsuperscript{433} The exact competences for the camps seem to have been in a state of flux,

\textsuperscript{429} HQ 117/1007 (L/R) Mil. Gov. Det. to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 12 December 1945, Stadtflüchtlingsamt Nr. 40, SAG.

\textsuperscript{430} January Tätigkeitsbericht for Flüchtlingsdezernat in Regierungsbezirk Hildesheim, 2 February 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 2, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{431} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 52.

\textsuperscript{432} Ibid. See also Chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{433} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 53. Despite the similarity of names, the Munsterlager was not located in or near Münster. At the time, the Munsterlager was a former German military installation near the town of Munster located in the Lüneberg Heath.
but the desire to organize types of traffic by camp type suggests an attempt to increase efficiency through specialization. Friedland was responsible for the transit of POWs across the British-Soviet border, Munsterlager for the actual processing and release of POWs, and Uelzen for refugees.

A pair of directives in 1947 further clarified the responsibilities. In January, the Refugee Branch of the Military Government Headquarters in Hannover ordered that POWs “willing to return to the Russian Zone will be dispatched to FRIEDLAND Camp. No compulsion will be excercised otherwise they may join relatives in this Zone or if they have none be sent to UELZEN.”434 A later directive from the Lower Saxon Ministry of Labor, Construction and Public Health explained that every German POW held in British captivity was to be brought to the Munsterlager for their official release, suggesting that the Friedland facility was merely responsible for transport to the border.435 Indeed, POWs released to the Soviet zone typically spent less than 24 hours in the camp.436 Between 1946 and 1952, the camp processed a total of 119,560 prisoners of war returning to homes in East Germany. All but a handful of returns occurred during the years 1947 (64,664 POWs) and 1948 (50,019 POWs).437

These POWs later featured in the Friedland mythology in three ways, all of which played into anticommmunist Cold War narratives. First, eastbound POWs saw the condition of their

434 Subject: Discharged Wehrmacht, 2 January 1947, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. I 73, SAG. According these orders, POWs with homes in the “Polish occupied territories” or whose homes had been destroyed were to be treated as refugees and brought to the refugee camp at Uelzen.

435 Erlaß betr. Betreuung heimkehrender Kriegsgefangener, 28 August 1947, Nds. 380 Acc. 32/97 Nr. 4, NHStA.

436 Lagerleitung Friedland to Hermann Lindemann, 20 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA. Camp directives indicate that returnees to and from the Soviet zone were housed in different sub-camps, mostly likely to simplify processing and loading transports. The camp administration also asked employees to ensure that returnees for Thuringia were seated at the front of transports in order to speed processing on the East German side. See Lageranordnung Nr. 88, 3 April 1948 and Lageranordnung Nr. 92, 5 June 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

437 Statistics in 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anhang 3.
compatriots coming from Soviet captivity and tried to instead remain in the British zone. Second, “other [POWs] appeared just days or weeks later back at Friedland or in the Uelzen emergency reception camp after their flight to the West.” Third, “many fell into captivity again, this time by the Soviets, and came many years later in the reverse direction back through Friedland.”

These narratives are surely based in truth. For example, the camp processed an application for returnee status from a man who had been captured by American forces and then arrested after his return to the Soviet zone. The man in question had served in the police in Weißenfels near the Saale River. The circumstances of his capture are unclear, but the Americans had held him at a POW camp near Koblenz until 1947, when he was released and returned to Weißenfels. There he took ill and somehow came to the attention of the police. According to him, the Volkspolizei cleared him of having been a Gestapo agent or Nazi functionary, but they still held him at the Torgau prison as a former member of the Wehrmacht. From Torgau they sent him to Russia. He arrived at Friedland with a POW release transport from Russia in 1953, and the camp sent him to Bremen.

Assessing the rate of return to Friedland after reimprisonment or flight as a refugee is nevertheless difficult. The camp administration did not keep statistics on whether POWs released by the Soviet Union or other Eastern European states had previously been through the camp. The administration of the Uelzen refugee camp may have kept records on the number of former POWs who fled back to British zone out of fear of reimprisonment. Yet, if the authorities at Uelzen did try to verify that their refugees had actually been through Friedland, they must have

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438 Ibid., 53.

439 See the application for a Heimkehrerbescheinigung in Nds. 386 Acc. 67/85 Nr. 87, NHStA. The returnee also complimented the camp staff on his treatment there, approvingly noting their equitable treatment of people with former homes in the East and West.
done so by telephone or possibly telegraph, because the camps do not seem to have corresponded officially about it.\footnote{Telegraphs are rare in the archival documents concerning Friedland, suggesting that as a rule they were not saved.} Nothing in the surviving camp directives or correspondence with higher ministerial authorities regarding returnees suggests that the administration paid much attention to the matter. Thus, while individual cases may have helped to fuel such narratives, it is doubtful that double returnees or refugees comprised a significant portion of the roughly 120,000 POWs sent eastward. Indeed, returnees to the east, who constituted just over 22 percent of POW traffic in the camp between 1946 and 1952, along with 265,506 evacuees also returned to the Soviet zone provide a counter-narrative to the dominant memory of Friedland as the Gateway to Freedom in West Germany.\footnote{Statistics calculated from 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anhang 3. On the exchange of evacuees under Operation Honeybee, see chapter 2.}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\caption{Size and Direction of Returnee Traffic, 1945-1960}
\end{figure}
In the summer of 1946, exchanges at Friedland for returnees from the Soviet zone increased in scope. The cross-border release of Soviet-held POWs was first tied to the return of refugees to the Soviet zone. According to a memorandum from the Göttingen City Refugee Office, the German civil authorities in Hildesheim instructed the camp to maintain its refugee distribution unit, particularly for illegal border-crossers from the Soviet zone, even though the camp would now be responsible for released prisoners of war. The August activity report for the Hildesheim governing district indicated that the exchange program was running despite the overall decrease in border traffic during the summer. Two-hundred refugees with residence permits for the Soviet zone came to Friedland from the camp at Osterode, and the camp at Friedland provided them transport to the border in exchange for 200 POWs held by the Soviets. A subsequent activity report from December noted the continued smooth operation of the one-for-one (Kopf gegen Kopf) transfers. The exchange had gone so well, in fact, that the camp became the sole transit point for refugees willing to return to the Soviet zone. Whereas authorities had expected difficulties in processing the simultaneous streams, the large personnel had managed the task without problem by dividing the facility in two. For their part, the British camp authorities declared that Friedland would continue those functions for a long time.

The number of westward POW returns grew massively in the following years, indicating an end to the limit of one-for-one exchanges. In 1946, the camp at Friedland processed 40,375 returnees to the British zone, and a further 65,245 POWs came in 1947. As the Soviet Union, Poland, and other Eastern European states released more prisoners, the inflow doubled in size. In

442 Vermerk, 11 July 1946, Stadtflüchtlingsamt Nr. 44, SAG.

443 Tätigkeitsbericht (August 1946), 2 September 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA.

444 Tätigkeitsbericht (November 1946), 5 December 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA. Interestingly, the report mentioned the camp’s complete administrative restructuring and more careful financial supervision by district authorities, most likely effects Heydenreich’s arrests and Krause’s subsequent reforms.
1948, the camp processed 129,281 returnees, and the releases reached their apex in 1949 when 149,688 POWs returned to West Germany via Friedland. Returnee traffic fell off sharply in the following years with 20,966 POWs passing through Friedland in 1950 and only 991 and 722 returns in 1951 and 1952 respectively. Of the roughly 450,000 returnees, nearly 90 percent of them came from Soviet captivity, followed in descending order by returnees from Yugoslavia, Poland, and various other states. The vast majority likewise consisted of former soldiers, with so-called civilian “internees” comprising only 15,000 cases.\textsuperscript{445}

\textbf{Figure 3: Overview of Returnees Registered in 1949\textsuperscript{446}}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Received from Camp Heiligenstadt</th>
<th>Received from Other Locations</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women Included in the Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>6,403</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>6,460</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>9,399</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>9,462</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>14,263</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>14,463</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>9,653</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>9,936</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>9,176</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>9,478</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>6,697</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>6,978</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>7,833</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>19,081</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>19,604</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>13,741</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>14,364</td>
<td>657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>18,927</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>19,399</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>26,587</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>27,017</td>
<td>1,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>\textbf{142,400}</td>
<td>\textbf{3,616}</td>
<td>\textbf{146,016}</td>
<td>\textbf{2,531}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sampling of returnee registration cards at Friedland offers further insight into returnees as a group.\textsuperscript{447} Given the predominantly military character of the imprisonment, it is not

\textsuperscript{445} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anhang 3.

\textsuperscript{446} Reproduced from statistics in Nds. 380 Acc. 158/94, Nr. 24, NHStA.
surprising that the overwhelming majority of returnees were male. As little as 3 percent of returnees were women, all of whom had been classified as civil internees. This sample of registration files further indicates that roughly 10 percent of the returnees were not originally from West Germany and would have therefore been classified as heimatlose Heimkehrer. Most of the returnees had served in the army, the Volkssturm (militia), or with Luftwaffe flak units. Less than 5 percent of registration cards gave Waffen-SS or SS units as the last posting. The small percentage of SS soldiers resulted in part from the relatively smaller size of SS formations in comparison to the Wehrmacht as a whole. Prisoners from SS formations also likely had a relatively low survival rate after capture, whether through execution, harsher treatment in prison camps, or simply because SS soldiers were generally kept in camps longer than normal soldiers.

When returnees arrived at Friedland, they underwent processing procedures similar to those developed for refugees and evacuees early in the camp’s operation. Camp employees met the transports at the border, where they distributed cocoa and bread before loading the returnees into vehicles to bring them to the camp. Upon arrival in the camp, the returnees were supposed to fill out political questionnaires. Official registration with the British unit at the camp ended with the completion of the D-2 Certificate of Discharge that indicated the returnee’s name and medical condition. Until the enactment of the 1950 Returnee Law, this certification was necessary for registration and aid in their destination cities. Following registration, the returnees underwent delousing and a medical examination. Those who did not need more immediate medical care then received provisions consisting of the normal ration as well as a supplemental

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447 The following figures are based upon an interval sample of 300 files developed by collecting 50 names each from six letters of the alphabet (the cards are stored alphabetically by last name) of the Heimkehrerkartei maintained by the Friedland Außenstelle of the Bundesverwaltungsamt.
ration paid for by British charities.\textsuperscript{448} By 1948, the camp administration had also set up a wash barracks for returnees complete with soap and razors.\textsuperscript{449}

Questioning by intelligence services was an important aspect of returnees’ processing at Friedland, though one that is difficult to reconstruct from archival documents. Both German and British intelligence services were interested what information POWs could provide about economic conditions and the disposition of military units throughout Eastern Europe. Reinhard Gehlen’s “Org,” the predecessor to the \textit{Bundesnachrichtendienst}, engaged in a “painstaking” questioning of POWs under the codename Hermes. The British at Friedland had a similar program under the codename Wringer.\textsuperscript{450} Camp directives provided for the division of returnees by unit to make questioning by the British Field Security Service at the camp more efficient, and directives noted that questioning was mandatory even for sick returnees.\textsuperscript{451} American intelligence services sometimes operated in the camp in addition to their British and German counterparts.\textsuperscript{452} Such questioning led to a press complaint in 1953, which characterized the British unit’s “sharp questioning” and detention of some returnees as an “abuse of these persons for British spying,” whereas the returnees reported having been left alone by East German intelligence services.\textsuperscript{453}

\textsuperscript{448} Ibid., 56.

\textsuperscript{449} Lageranordnung Nr. 88, 30 April 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/18 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{450} Helmut Roewer, \textit{Im Visier der Geheimdienste: Deutschland und Russland im Kalten Krieg} (Bergisch Gladbach: Gustav Lübbe Verlag, 2008), 126.

\textsuperscript{451} Lageranordnungen Nr. 92 and Nr. 101, 5 June and 4 September 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{452} See Chapter 5 on the alleged recruitment of youth camp resident by an American intelligence officer. On the American presence, see also “Die Amerikaner werden Sie etwas fragen,” \textit{Westfälische Rundschau}, 10 September 1955, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 87, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{453} The article further complained that the questioning was happening “under the nose” of Federal President Theodor Heuß, who had just visited the camp but declined to do anything about it. Presseausschnitt “Im Lager Friedland zurückgehalten,” November 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.
Counter-intelligence services also operated at Friedland, given the fear of infiltration of the West through displaced populations. In 1954, for example, the camp put an employee on leave in connection to the Lower Saxon State Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, LfV) questioning him about the transfer of an amnestied prisoner from East Germany and concerns for the employee’s safety.⁴⁵⁴ A 1955 memorandum from officials in the refugee ministry passed along to the director of the LfV reported that the German deputy camp director had come into conflict with the British intelligence service at Friedland. The conflict revolved around whether the British were allowed to question refugee East German youths awaiting transport to the camp at Sandbostel.⁴⁵⁵ A senior official from the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) was likewise involved in a conference organized by the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees regarding the closure of the Sandbostel camp and transfer of its responsibilities back to Friedland in 1958.⁴⁵⁶

Transport from the camp generally occurred within 24 hours of the returnees’ arrival. Initially, the camp sent returnees to the Munsterlager for their final release in specially arranged transports or, in cases of individual returnees, with prepaid train tickets.⁴⁵⁷ Female returnees, however, received train tickets directly to their home cities beginning in March 1947.⁴⁵⁸

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⁴⁵⁴ In-house memorandum “Betr. Angestellter des Grenzverkehrslagers Friedland,” 2 April 1954, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.

⁴⁵⁵ Vermerk by Oberregierungsrat Schütte of the Nds Flüchtlingsministerium and initialed by Min.-Dirigent Hoffmann of the Nds Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz, 24 June 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.

⁴⁵⁶ See the list of Teilnehmer in the meeting minutes, 4 November 1959, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 5, NHStA.

⁴⁵⁷ Lageranordnung Nr. 32, 11 January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

⁴⁵⁸ Lageranordnung Nr. 41, 15 March 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/18 Nr. 84, NHStA.
November 1948, the Munsterlager closed for the official release of returnees, meaning that the
camps at Münster and Friedland were camps still in operation for POW releases in the British
zone.\textsuperscript{459} It therefore seems that Friedland took on all responsibility for POWs released from the
Soviet Union and the other “eastern detention states” (\textit{östliche Gewahrsamsländer}) as they were
known in official parlance.

\textbf{Figure 4: Distribution of the Returnees Registered in 1949}\textsuperscript{460}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>NRW</th>
<th>Lower Saxony</th>
<th>Hamburg</th>
<th>Schles.-Hol.</th>
<th>American Zone</th>
<th>French Zone</th>
<th>To Medical Institutions</th>
<th>Returnees without a Homeland</th>
<th>Soviet Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>3,580</td>
<td>1,667</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>5,602</td>
<td>2,007</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,792</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>8,105</td>
<td>3,499</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>1,733</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,890</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>5,172</td>
<td>2,925</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>1,134</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,183</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>4,984</td>
<td>2,807</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,939</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3,607</td>
<td>2,124</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>4,109</td>
<td>2,425</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>10,754</td>
<td>5,542</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>2,016</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3,168</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>7,389</td>
<td>4,280</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>1,693</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2,795</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>10,115</td>
<td>5,676</td>
<td>1,066</td>
<td>2,257</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,448</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>13,774</td>
<td>8,196</td>
<td>1,312</td>
<td>2,969</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3,775</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77,737</td>
<td>41,407</td>
<td>7,524</td>
<td>15,266</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>28,801</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The so-called “returnees without a homeland” presented a further complication, because
unlike their comrades they could not simply be returned to former homes or their families.


\textsuperscript{460} Reproduced from statistics in Nds. 380 Acc. 158/94, Nr. 24, NHStA.
Initially, they received train tickets to the Munsterlager where search services would hopefully provide an address for family in the western zone. If not, the returnees would continue on to the camp at Uelzen for distribution in keeping with refugee quotas for various districts.\textsuperscript{461} Beginning in 1949, however, the Friedland camp took over responsibility for returnees without a homeland. The camp’s police would initiate contact with employment advisors and charities in the attempt to find work and housing placements. If no placements were available, the returnees would be released to the Friedland camp officially and then distributed as refugees according to quotas. Sick or injured among them were sent to a hospital in Göttingen or other medical facilities, and after their recovery they returned to the camp for the same processing as healthy returnees without a homeland.\textsuperscript{462}

Surviving camp records contain few individual histories of these returnees without a homeland. The paucity of individual histories may result from the absence of records from the state representatives responsible for determining residential assignments in accordance with distribution quotas, though those administrators may not have recorded extensive personal histories either. That being said, these returnees do appear in offers made by private individuals and charitable institutions to house them. Individuals or larger firms requested that the camp send them returnees who could help them in business, as was the case with many farmers and a butcher seeking an employee. In one instance, a family near Cuxhaven, Lower Saxony, registered with their local welfare office to house a returnee who might help on their farm. The wife was a local to the area, but her Rhenish husband noted that they would prefer a fellow

\textsuperscript{461} Lageranordnung Nr. 98, 24 July 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{462} Lageranordnung Nr. 129, 19 September 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
Rhinelander if possible.\textsuperscript{463} Regional kinship was not the only connection that people sought in housing offers for returnees without a homeland. Several letters included specific requests for Waffen-SS veterans, presumably because the writers were themselves former members of the Waffen-SS and felt a particular comradeship and accompanying obligation.\textsuperscript{464}

Dutch nationals who served in the German military complicated the notion of a “returnee without a homeland.” Some 100 Dutch members of the Waffen-SS Division Niederlande arrived at Friedland after release from the Soviet Union in November 1950. According to state refugee ministry memoranda, these POWs would be given the opportunity to return to the Netherlands or remain in Germany, in which case they must have qualified as returnees without a homeland.\textsuperscript{465}

For example, the camp received a 1954 application for returnee status from a Dutchman who had served in the Niederlande Division and returned from Soviet captivity to Holland via Friedland in 1953. He claimed that he had lost his Dutch citizenship upon arrival in the Netherlands, so he returned to Germany to live with his German wife in Mühlheim an der Ruhr, North Rhine-Westphalia. Having received the completed questionnaire, the camp administration conferred returnee status to him.\textsuperscript{466}

Despite efforts to process the returnees as quickly as possible, they nevertheless experienced some down time in the camp. The line for registration in particular resulted in long waits. In an effort to make waits and work more pleasant, the administration played music

\textsuperscript{463} Perhaps they thought that a returnee who had lost his or her home to bombing would count as \textit{heimatlos} as well. Declaration made to Sozialverwaltung Cuxhaven, 14 January 1954, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 4, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{464} See various letters in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 4, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{465} See memoranda from 7 and 9 November 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{466} See decision on Heimkehrerbescheinigung from 15 May 1954, Nds. 386 Acc. 67/85 Nr. 121, NHStA.
through the loudspeakers located throughout the camp. The administration also made an effort to provide reading materials to the returnees. When in 1949 a representative of the Schwäbische Illustrierte Presse wrote to the camp to offer the free distribution of newspapers for returnees at Friedland, the surprised and grateful camp administration suggested that the newspaper send between 3,000 and 5,000 copies per week. Krause noted that the returnees waiting for the finalization of their release would therefore have an opportunity to catch up on recent events.

The line between political reading materials and active campaigning was a source of controversy in 1949. The county organ of the Social Democratic Party of Germany submitted a complaint to the camp administration in which they claimed to have been told that political advertising (politische Werbung) was prohibited in the camp, but a camp employee had campaigned for himself and the Christian Democratic Union at Friedland. The SPD further complained that two camp employees were distributing flyers for the right-wing Deutsche Rechtspartei. Krause’s response confirmed that political advertisement was indeed forbidden in the camp. He was grateful for the notification about the distribution of flyers, which he had ordered the two men to cease. Regarding the employee campaigning for himself, Krause explained that the administration had lifted restrictions so that only employees who lived in the camp could campaign among other resident employees (including several SPD candidates).

467 “Friedland! Das Durchgangslager an der Leine,” 7 May 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA.

468 Correspondence between Lagerleitung Friedland and Schwäbische Illustrierte Presse, May 1949, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 85, NHStA.

469 SPD-Kreisverein Göttingen to Lagerleitung Friedland, 27 January 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA. The Deutsche Rechtspartei was a small party in the British zone that initially styled itself as a successor to the Deutschnationale Volkspartei.
Krause further suggested that the SPD was allowed to provide its party newspaper for the benefit of returnees who wished to educate themselves about current politics in West Germany.\textsuperscript{470}

The camp administration also organized cultural events for the returnees to keep them entertained and feel welcomed to their homeland. In 1947, the camp administration decided to form an entertainment group from the staff. The goal was to play music and sing for returnees in the camp and in the villages near Friedland. Any income from the performances would be “used for the benefit of the war invalids and refugees in the county.” To that end, the camp needed singers for a choir as well as an announcer, a comic, and a magician. The camp directives indicated that interested employees should register themselves with the entertainment committee of the workers’ council.\textsuperscript{471} A few months later, camp directives noted the returnees’ repeated thanks for the choir’s efforts.\textsuperscript{472}

Because it was not always possible to release returnees on the day of their arrival, the camp administration also arranged to show films to them. Evidently the camp had shown films to returnees at a substantially reduced price before 1948, when a conference of film distributors and theater owners banned the practice. The camp administration noted that the set price of 1.25 DM per attendee was far too high, so they had suspended film showings while they waited for German civil authorities and the British military government to act on the camp’s complaints.\textsuperscript{473} The camp won an exception in the spring or early summer of 1948, because it was later able to conclude a contract with a film presenter for the previous reduced price. The camp agreed to provide a space free of cost as well as member of the camp police for maintaining order. The

\textsuperscript{470} Lagerleitung Friedland to SPD-Kreisverein Göttingen, 1 February 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{471} Lageranordnung Nr. 33, 18 January 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{472} Lageranordnung Nr. 43, 29 March 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{473} Lagerleitung Friedland to Hermann Lindemann, 20 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.
presenter received .25 DM per attendee to be paid by the camp rather than by the returnees themselves.\footnote{Vertrag zwischen dem Flüchtlingslager Friedland/Leine und Herrn Fritzsche, 7 July 1948, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 30, NHStA.} Later in the year, the camp administration wrote to district refugee office in Hildesheim to request 5,000 DM so that it could offer ongoing film presentations.\footnote{Lagerleitung to Bezirksflüchtlingsamt Hildesheim, 28 December 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 9, NHStA.} Unfortunately, there is no record of the films shown at the camp, but much like newspapers would give returnees a sense of current events, films would acquaint them with popular culture after years in prison camps.

The returnees’ stay in the camp also presented the opportunity to enquire about the status of missing soldiers through a centralized search service. In 1948, the camp developed a pictorial search service (\textit{Bildersuchdienst}) in the registration area, which the former POWs could peruse in order to identify former comrades in their military units or prison camps. Information about the status of comrades was vital for families of missing soldiers, not the least for psychological reasons, but also because it affected questions of property and civil status. The Protestant charity Innere Mission was responsible for soliciting and collecting the photographs as well for writing to family members in case of a positive identification.\footnote{Lageranordnung Nr. 76, 16 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} In May 1948, the photo catalogue contained over 14,000 pictures with individuals’ field post numbers.\footnote{“Begegnung auf dem Heimweg ins Leben,” \textit{Hamburger Allgemeine}, 25 May 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA.}

The returnees’ ragged condition played a key role in narratives about Germans overcoming British suspicion in favor of cooperation at Friedland. When the British discharge unit departed the camp in 1952, a newspaper article about their time at Friedland encapsulated the oft-repeated story about British horror at the Soviets’ treatment of POWs. Supposedly the
British had worried about possible danger from the returning soldiers, so in July 1946 they met the first Soviet transport at the border with five battle-ready tanks (Panzer in Gefechtsstellung). Upon the transport’s arrival, however, “shocked and speechless, the Tommies gaped at the platoon, a tired, grey inchworm [Heerwurm, literally army worm] creeping up, walking skeletons in tatty, filthy cotton uniforms without bags, hardly even a tin as bowl at hand.” Dropping their weapons, the British soldiers helped the returnees into the camp’s omnibuses and, “at the next transport, machine guns no longer awaited the returnees, but rather an English Quaker organization with cocoa and marmalade bread.” Neither camp documents nor British military records recorded the incident—the story may have overdramatized British expectations—but it is true that returnees from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European states tended to be in poor condition.

The camp’s medical staff inspected every person processed at Friedland, and reports from the medical station give insights into the variable condition of returnees. The yearly medical report for 1947 shows that of the roughly 65,000 returnees, the camp needed to send 10,739 (16 percent) to its hospital station. In 1948, just over 25,000 returnees (20 percent) from the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia required hospital care. The rate at which returnees needed hospital care remained constant at about 20 percent through 1949 and 1950, though the absolute number fell from 29,378 POWs in 1949 to 4,537 POWs in 1950.

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479 Jahresgesundheitsbericht für das Kalenderjahr 1947, 6 February 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA. Beginning in 1947, the camp also made use of a supplementary hospital in Göttingen, the Rohns-Krankenhaus, run by the Protestant Church Hospital in a former military garrison.

480 Jahresgesundheitsbericht 1948, 23 March 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA.

481 Jahresgesundheitsbericht 1949, 14 April 1950, and Jahresgesundheitsbericht 1950, 26 February 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA.
Prisoners of war returning to West Germany through Friedland suffered from a variety of maladies. As with refugees and evacuees, the most immediate epidemiological worry was the possibility of spreading lice that might carry spotted fever and typhus. As a result, the camp mandated delousing with DDT powder for all returnees. Fear of disease led the administration to forbid returnees from bringing luggage with them to the registration area (the camp burned the trunks).\footnote{Lagerandordnung Nr. 132, 5 November 1949, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.} Tuberculosis also posed a serious danger to the individual returnees and public health more generally. During a two-week reporting period in October 1946, the camp’s medical staff discovered that 10 percent of the 4,200 POWs suffered from tuberculosis. The public health authority for Göttingen therefore requested to keep on a permanent basis the x-ray machine given to the camp in September.\footnote{Staatliches Gesundheitsamt Göttingen (SGAG) to Oberpräsidenten Hannover, 22 October 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166. A subsequent investigation of camp personnel found two cases of infectious tuberculosis resulting in the employees’ transfer to a university clinic; SGAG to Oberpräsidenten Hannover, 18 November 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.} Malaria was of further concern to state health officials, who transferred a doctor specializing in malaria cases from the Uelzen camp to Friedland in 1946.\footnote{SGAG to Oberpräsidenten Hannover, 5 December 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.} According to a report from the malaria station at Friedland, there had been an increase in infections across Germany in 1946 and up to one-eighth of POWs returning from Eastern Europe in 1945/46 suffered from the disease.\footnote{Bericht über die Malaria in Niedersachsen 1946, 1 March 1947, Nds. 380 Acc. 50/78 Nr. 149, NHStA. Not only had German soldiers fought and been held prisoner in malarial regions (including Siberia), but there was also a less virulent form of the disease \textit{P. vivax} rather than the tropical \textit{P. falciparum} endemic to the northern regions of Lower Saxony and Holland. Emden and its environs were subject to epidemics in 1918, 1926, and 1938.}

Harsh conditions and forced labor further contributed to the poor overall health of German POWs returning from Eastern Europe. For example, on August 13 and 16, 1946, the camp received transports of 808 and 316 POWs from the Soviet Union. According to a medical
report sent to state officials, the medical and nutritional condition of these POWs was “catastrophic.” Over 60 percent of the prisoners in each transport suffered from famine edema, and over 50 percent suffered from skin diseases resulting in abscesses, boils, and the like. Only the men who had recently been released from hospitals were well nourished. Serious contagious diseases were also present: 74 typhus cases, 113 malaria cases, and 23 spotted fever cases. The medical authorities argued that the men were “entirely incapable of work,” and only after months of recovery including supplemental provisions might they be reintegrated into the economy. The overall poor health of the men in the transports also resulted from a selection bias in the Soviet camps. The POWs reported to the doctors, “The only men who are released are those who, according to Russian doctors, would become incapable of work in the coming five months.”

When so-called “Antifa-Männer” arrived at Friedland in 1949, their good health and provisioning played a central role in the controversy surrounding them. The men in question were POWs whom Soviet authorities had recruited and reeducated as German antifascists. The most famous of these anti-fascists were Generals Seydlitz and Paulus, who had surrendered at Stalingrad. Neither Seydlitz nor Paulus were among the first of the anti-fascists to arrive at the camp in 1949, though Seydlitz was one of the notable returnees during the Great Homecoming (Große Heimkehr) in 1955. In April 1949, a German wire service distributed an article about the status of POWs remaining in the Soviet Union under the sensationalist headline “Paulus—Villa Owner in Moscow.” Based on interviews with returnees from a prison camp in Krasnogorsk near Moscow, the article also reported that Paulus was ensconced in a villa while some 15,000 German POWs supposedly sat in the Butyrka Prison in Moscow. According to the returnees, there was also a “central anti-fascist school” responsible for reeducating up to 300 POWs at a

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486 SGAG to Oberpräsidenten Hannover, 20 August 1946, Nds. 380 Acc. 48/65 Nr. 166, NHStA.
time. Although the school was supposedly only in use for POWs with homes in the Soviet zone, teachers with origins in West Germany helped the Soviet instructors.\textsuperscript{487}

A transport of roughly 250 antifascists in February 1949 garnered the most outrage in the press. According to one article, the appearance of these returnees “stood in extreme contrast to the typical image,” not the least because they appeared to be well nourished, wore “first-class suits,” and showed no signs of labor exploitation (\textit{Arbeitsausnutzung}). The article explained that although the months-long reeducation program was strenuous, the students at the 40 reeducation schools lived in heated barracks and were freed of compulsory work, unlike their fellow German prisoners.\textsuperscript{488} Referring to the returnees as the “avant-garde of the Kremlin,” a report in the Bielefeld newspaper \textit{Freie Presse} likewise noted their “red and healthy” appearance. The article implicitly complained that the anti-fascists received the same half-liter of hot chocolate “welcome drink” given to normal returnees as well as the usual white rolls with marmalade and sausage.\textsuperscript{489} Both articles made special mention of the returnees’ reserved and arrogant manner.

In addition to putting the camp at the center of press reports, the return of anti-fascists also created legal issues that camp authorities needed to address. In a memorandum from the camp administration to the state refugee ministry in October 1949, Krause reported that police had needed to detain a returnee, Arno R., on accusations that he had denounced two of his comrades to East German and Soviet authorities, who arrested the men in Heiligenstadt before their transport could cross into Lower Saxony. Members of the transport made the accusation about the denunciation to Friedland authorities immediately after crossing the border, and that

\textsuperscript{487} Deutsche Pressedienst, “Paulus—Villenbesitzer in Moskau,” \textit{Westfalenpost}, 4 April 1949, Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 85, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{488} Press clipping (newspaper name was omitted), 5 February 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 100, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{489} “Ein Lager wartet,” \textit{Freie Presse}, 7 March 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 85, NHStA.
evening one of the denounced men arrived in the camp as an illegal border-crosser. Krause further explained that the other denounced man, Karl K., arrived at the camp in the evening of the following day and sought out the camp administrators to make a statement.  

Records gathered by the police for charging Arno with crimes against humanity (Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit) provide further insight into the case. Karl had been a radio operator with a panzer regiment when he fell into Soviet captivity and was imprisoned at a camp in Karanganda, Kazakhstan. At the camp, he became acquainted with Arno, with whom he often had “differences of opinion” in political debates, particularly over Russia because Arno was “Soviet friendly.” Allegedly, the men had another political argument while the transport was passing through East Germany, which led to the denunciation and Karl being pulled out of the transport a mere 200 meters from the border. Karl claimed that the only reason for his release was that the East German interpreter had botched the translation of Arno’s denunciation that labeled Karl as a “criminal” who would “deliver propaganda fuel to the Bonn traitor politicians through his anti-Soviet agitation and his horror-story propaganda.” Arno further claimed that Karl was a “neo-fascist” who had admitted that he would immediately serve the Americans in case of a war against the Soviet Union.  

The Friedland police suspected that Arno had made the accusations in order to prevent Karl from reaching West Germany where he might report on Arno’s activities in the prison camps.  

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490 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 20 October 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA. It is worth noting that there was another case of a returnee being detained for investigation as an “Antifii” the following year. See arrest list in Zur Pol. St. Friedland 1950, n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 30, NHStA.  

491 The camp administration appended Karl K.’s police statement (17 October 1949) to their memorandum. It seems that Arno R. had tried to shift the blame for the denunciation from himself to a woman in Leipzig with whom both had spoken, but the Friedland police somehow came into possession of the handwritten note that Arno had supposedly given to the East German authorities. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105.  

492 See interrogation report, 19 October 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.
Despite the overall poor condition of the returning POWs, processing at Friedland was also supposed to be a first step toward reintegration into the economy and society. As such, a representative from the labor office in Göttingen began to meet with every transport of POWs from the Soviet Union in 1948. The camp reserved a barracks in which he could meet with the transports’ members to give them career counseling. Upon receipt of their D-2 Certificate of Discharge, returnees were also entitled to a release allowance (Entlassungsgeld) of 40 DM. In the 1950s, the allowance rose to 150 DM. Returnees also received a suit, shoes, and other clothing at no cost to them.

The Lower Saxon government directed city welfare agencies to set up returnee assistance offices in 1948. The government felt that such offices were necessary to ease the accommodation of the expected flood of returnees from the Soviet Union. These offices were to help returnees with finding work and housing, complete their registration with the city, hand out ration cards, search for lost family members, and provide guidance on medical care. In order to accelerate the POWs’ return to employment and “due position the community” (ordnungsmäßigen Platz in der Gemeinschaft), the Lower Saxon Minister for De-Nazification ordered that the local committees prioritize cases for returnees released after July 31, 1948, and not delay their

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493 Lagerandordnung Nr. 100, 21 August 1948, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.

494 Deutsches Rotes Kreuz Göttingen to Wohlfahrtsministerium Hannover, 7 August 1948, Nds. 380 Acc. 32/97 Nr. 4, NHStA.

495 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Arbeit, Aufbau und Gesundheit to Regierungspräsidenten, 8 July 1950, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 15, NHStA.

496 Camp charities oversaw donations for purchasing clothing and its distribution to returnees. The camp also regularly received advertisements from clothing manufacturers offering their wares to the camp, always at a special price (Sonderpreis or Sonderangebot). The letters were much more sales pitches than expressions of sympathy for returnees, and the camp administration often turned them down for being too expensive. See correspondence in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.

497 Draft of a press release on Heimkehrerbetreuung, 25 November 1948, Nds. 380 Acc. 32/97 Nr. 4, NHStA.
decisions. It is not clear how much of an obstacle de-Nazification actually was, but Lower Saxon authorities clearly wished to clear away potential hurdles for returnees.

Reintegration into home communities and employment still proved difficult for the returning POWs. The staff at Friedland certainly worked hard to make reception a positive experience for the returnees. Yet, that was also a relatively simple undertaking because arrival at Friedland was a generally happy, discrete first-step in a much longer and more complicated process. Housing shortages, bureaucratic hurdles, and the variable strength of the labor market all caused problems and disappointment for returnees. Worse, “returnees were often barred from taking up physically demanding labor” due to the ruination of their health in prison camps at a time when “hard manual labor remained the predominant form of occupation.”

Gender norms played a significant role in those expectations and disappointments, as Frank Biess has argued: “Gainful employment, then, constituted the precondition for reestablishing men’s authorities as breadwinners and husbands within reconstituted families.”

Of course, complaints also functioned as claims on social aid. A letter from convalescent returnees to the Lower Saxon government in 1949 clearly expressed the connection between complaint and claim. The returnees at a Hannover hospital wrote, “What actually awaits each and every one of us? Not a reception-ready homeland, not a community of all beaten Germans steeped in deep ethical and social feelings.” They decried the poor living situations their families endured while the men were forced to do “reparations labor” to make good on the “guilt of German people.” As such, the returnees demanded “compensation for the reparations we paid.”

498 Rundschreiben Nr 4/48, 29 July 1948, Nds. 100 Acc 142/92 Nr. 4, NHStA.

499 Biess, Homecomings, 118.

500 Ibid., 116.
They claimed to refuse all charity in favor of that compensation as well as their integration along with “expellees and the bombed-out into the people’s body [Volkskörper] of the constitutional state through prioritized work allocation and housing opportunities.”

A reaction to such demands throughout the Federal Republic, the enactment of the Returnee Law (Heimkehrergesetz) in June 1950 provided standard benefits for POWs based on several eligibility criteria. The law set the release allowance for returnees at 150 DM and provided for clothing and basic commodities up to 250 DM in value as a transitional supplement. Article 2 of the law mandated that housing offices give priority to returnees and their families. Article 3 provided employment protections in the forms of a right to return to prewar jobs and protection from dismissal for decreased productivity if the cause of that decrease could be traced back to imprisonment or internment. Additional articles required that returnees enjoy priority in filling new jobs, allowed for allotment of funds for vocational training, and clarified rules for unemployment and health insurance.

Access to these benefits, however, depended on meeting criteria set forth in Article 1 for belonging to one of three eligible groups. The first group consisted of Germans imprisoned because of their membership in the military or in a paramilitary (militärähnlich) formation. The second group was former military or paramilitary prisoners who had been released from prison but were nonetheless forced to work in civil jobs in the detaining country. Third, civilians could gain returnee status if they had been interned in a foreign country due to their German citizenship or ethnicity (Volkszugehörigkeit), as long as that internment was not due to National Socialist activity (nationalsozialistische Betätigung) abroad. In all three cases, the individual faced the
further requirement of returning to the Federal Republic within two months of release, excepting any period of delay through no fault of one’s own.\textsuperscript{503}

The eligibility requirements led to disputes because of the nature of the POW groups passing through Friedland after 1949. For example, many of the so-called “late returnees” were members of the Waffen-SS and persons with war crimes convictions, including collective sentences for police and combat engineering units, district commandants, and roughly 20 different infantry divisions.\textsuperscript{504} Indeed, it was standard practice that when Soviet soldiers gathered prisoners for release from camps, they searched out and removed SS soldiers from the transports. In particular, they checked for the blood-type tattoos that would mark soldiers as having been in the Waffen-SS.\textsuperscript{505} Determining these individuals’ eligibility for returnee status proved difficult because of not only the disqualifying “National Socialist activities,” but also the question of whether an individual was convicted of a specific crime and thus ineligible. Part of registration at Friedland included the decision over returnee status, so the camp became involved in a series of lawsuits filed by individuals who wished to take advantage of returnee benefits but whom the camp administration had ruled as ineligible.

The lawsuit filed by Jens C. in 1959 illustrates a number of complications with the law’s eligibility requirements, especially in cases when returnees had incentive to lie about past crimes. According to court documents, Jens claimed that he had served in the \textit{Feldgendarmerie} (an army policing formation) on the eastern front between 1942 and 1945. When his unit was retreating from the advancing Red Army in April 1945, according to Jens’s lawsuit, they received orders to

\textsuperscript{503} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{504} \textit{20 Jahre Lager Friedland}, 58.

\textsuperscript{505} See memorandum from Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Kriegsgefangenenfragen Hamburg to Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Westdeutschen Länder für Kriegsgefangenenfragen, 1 August 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.
“liquidate” a group of Jewish forced laborers who had been sent from Theresienstadt to build trenches near the Moravian town of Mikulov/Nikolsburg. Jens claimed that after an argument over responsibility between German police, the commandant, and the gendarmerie (the Sicherheitsdienst unit responsible for the labor detachment had disappeared), he was ordered to carry out the executions.\(^{506}\)

In his own defense, Jens argued that he had refused the order several times. He claimed that in addition to the argument over responsibility, he had tried to avoid taking part by suggesting that the “elimination” (Ausschaltung) of laborers building tank traps would be sabotage against the army. After his third and final refusal, Jens alleged that the adjutant to the district commandant had threatened to hold a summary court-martial and shoot him, at which point he sought out two other police officers to help carry out the shootings. After the war, Jens assumed a false identity but was caught and imprisoned in East Berlin in 1949. Initially sentenced to death by a Soviet military tribunal, his sentence was commuted to life in prison sometime later. In December 1955, East German authorities released Jens from a Brandenburg prison to Friedland, where Jens received returnee status and his release allowance.\(^{507}\)

Surviving documentation does not reveal the account that Jens told workers at Friedland during his registration. Eleanore Lappin-Eppel’s summary of the executions based on records from a 1949 trial in Austria and a 1967 trial in Czechoslovakia, however, presents a more damning interpretation of events. First, it seems that the commander of the town’s police (Schutzpolizei) had decided at the end of 1944 that the 21 Hungarian Jews working at an “Aryanized” brick factory should eventually be executed to prevent them from seeking

\(^{506}\) File for Verwaltungsstreitsache, 12 February 1959, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 166/86 Nr. 7/10, NHStA.

\(^{507}\) Ibid.
vengeance after liberation. The approach of the Red Army in April 1945 forced the issue, because a police officer became alarmed that the Jewish slave laborers could make denunciations to the Soviets. At that point, the SS-Feldgendarmerie Jens C. “took the initiative” and asked the county director (Kreisleiter) if the slave laborers should be evacuated or shot. The Kreisleiter ordered the executions, and on April 14, 1945, Jens informed the police commander and asked for four police officers to help with the executions. An exhumation of the mass grave in November 1945 revealed that in addition to shooting some of the victims, the executioners had also “knocked them into the grave, stunned them with the stocks of their rifles, and buried them so that they would die of suffocation.” A court in Vienna convicted three of the police officers in 1949, though they only received sentences to hard labor ranging from 1.5 to 3.5 years. 508

In 1956, the welfare office in Hamburg became aware of the further details regarding Jens’s imprisonment. Among the charges for living under a false identity, there was also a bigamy conviction for marrying under his assumed identity. The welfare office in Hamburg decided that Jens’s imprisonment had been for bigamy, which would not fit criteria for returnee status. The Friedland camp administration revoked the status per the office’s request. That decision in 1956 spawned years of litigation revolving around the reasons for his arrest. According to the Hamburg government, Jens had first received returnee status based on the claim that the Soviet military government, not the East German government, had arrested him for the “shooting of civilians in execution of a military order.” For Friedland’s part, camp director Franz Freßen argued that such an execution was a clear crime that did not fall under provisions of the

508 Summary of the “Mikulov Massacre” in Eleonore Lappin-Eppel, Ungarisch-Jüdische Zwangsarbeiter und Zwangsarbeiterinnen in Österreich 1944/45: Arbeitseinsatz—Todesmärsche—Folgen (Vienna: LIT Verlag, 2010), 175-176. According to documents from the Hamburg Landgericht, Jens C. also faced accusations of executing people in Kharkov during his stationing there in 1943, though he denied the charge and the court could not prove it. See Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 166/86 Nr. 7/10, NHStA.
Returnee Law. Freßen wrote that if they had known in December 1955 that “the plaintiff had shot to death civilians (Jews), who had nothing to do with warfare, then it would never even have come to recognition in accordance with the Returnee Law.” Although Jens lost a lawsuit in 1957, the administrative court in Hildesheim decided for him in 1959, rejecting the Hamburg authorities’ argument that he had been imprisoned for bigamy. Instead, the court found that his imprisonment had been due to execution of a military order:

The reason for the plaintiff’s imprisonment by the Soviet occupation authority [in 1949] was the shooting of Jews in Nikolsburg. This shooting was carried out by the plaintiff on 9 April 1945 during the war and in his capacity as a sergeant in the field gendarmerie. The plaintiff was thus arrested and detained due to his activities as a soldier in the scope of his then formation. The plaintiff’s later offenses cannot change this conclusion. Therefore, there were and are the qualifications for plaintiff’s recognition as a returnee. The plaintiff’s [1955] recognition as a returnee therefore did not occur through a legal error [rechtsirrtümlich].

As a result, the court compelled the camp to reinstate Jens’s recognition as a returnee.

Authorities recognized relatively early on that the understanding of wartime imprisonment needed be expanded to account for women who had not served in the military but had nevertheless been sent to forced labor camps. Karen Hagemann is correct to emphasize that more women served in the Wehrmacht and were Holocaust perpetrators than has previously been recognized. In addition to Red Cross nurses who occupy the public imagination, some 500,000 women served in the Wehrmacht, including “160,000 who as flak helpers were directly involved in combat.” Yet, civilians such as Red Cross nurses, laborers from the Bund Deutscher Mädel,

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509 Verwaltungsstreitsache, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 166/86 Nr. 7/10, NHStA. Jens C. had said that he carried out the executions on April 9, while trial documents as well as the Database of Shoah Victims maintained by Yad Vashem suggest that the killings took place on April 14. The court’s summation seems to contain an error about the year of his imprisonment, which was given as 1947 rather than 1949 (the year of imprisonment was not in dispute).

and ethnic Germans residing in Eastern Europe were more problematic in terms of decisions about conferring returnee status. In July 1948, the first women’s transport from Siberia reached Friedland, and it consisted of a mixture of civilians and women’s auxiliary clerks, all of whom had done “men’s work” in mines. Subsequently in August, the German Red Cross engaged in discussions with Lower Saxon ministries over equal benefits for men and women released at Friedland. In November, the Prisoner of War Committee of the Zonal Advisory Council announced that Friedland would issue D-2 certificates to female civilian internees, meaning that these women would enjoy the same benefits as their male, military counterparts. The Returnee Law of 1950, of course, provided for benefits to civil internees regardless of gender.

Women who had been civil internees nevertheless experienced difficulties in obtaining returnee status. Administrative lawsuits against the Friedland camp for wrongful rejection of returnee status demonstrate that women had difficulty proving that they had actually been interned and that their internment was connected to the war or their nationality. Such was the case for one woman who sued the camp in 1957, arguing that she had actually been imprisoned as a German rather than just forcibly committed to a medical asylum.

The recognition of now-grown children as returnees likewise challenged adult male-centered notions of returnee status. In 1956, a woman sued the camp for recognition as a returnee. Court records reveal that the camp administrators denied her initial application, because they did not think confinement to a children’s home in postwar Yugoslavia constituted

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511 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 56.
512 Heimkehrerhilfe Deutsches Rotes Kreuz Göttingen to Wohlfahrtsministerium Hannover, 7 August 1948, Nds. 380 Acc. 32/97 Nr. 4, NHStA.
513 City of Hamburg, Social Agency to Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugee Affairs, 3 December 1948. Nds. 380 Acc. 32/97 Nr. 4, NHStA.
514 “Verwaltungsstreitsache,” 14 November 1957, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 166/86 Nr. 5/14, NHStA.
internment. The court reaffirmed that a children’s home could not be considered a form of “internment,” but it concluded that the particular children’s home had been located within an internment camp, meaning she qualified as a returnee.515

“Resetters” from Poland

On March 3, 1950, a standoff developed along the Thuringian-Lower Saxon border between Russian authorities, British soldiers, and West German customs officials. At issue were hundreds of resettlers from Poland whose names did not appear on official resettlement lists for the population transfer codenamed Operation Link. About seven hundred resettlers waited in the cold for transfer to Friedland while border officials tried to determine their instructions and a British officer met with his Russian counterparts. Eventually Lower Saxon Minister for Refugees Heinrich Albertz declared to the press: “Gentlemen, the explanation I have to give is short. General Robertson has refused to accept the transport.”516

Later in the afternoon, Albertz won tacit permission from the British customs inspector to deliver some supplies to the waiting transport. Eventually, Albertz secured permission to bring over all of the resettlers with the understanding that those with the proper permits would be processed normally and those without the permits would be processed as illegal border-crossers. Albertz concluded a memorandum defending his actions by noting that the entire event took on a tragic air in front of countless reporters when a refugee “climbing out of an omnibus at the

515 “Verwaltungsstreitsache,” 26 February 1958, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 166/86 Nr. 7/4, NHStA.

516 “Schlagbaum hoch für siebenhundert,” Göttinger Presse, 4 March 1950. Albertz went on to become Innensenator for West Berlin in 1961. He later served one year as the mayor of Berlin from 1966 to 1967, when he resigned amidst the fallout from the police shooting of Benno Ohnesorg.
Russian gate, after weakening during the days-long transport and finally reaching his goal, and after waiting for hours without provisions, collapsed dead.”  

The events of March 3 raise a series of questions about British and German attitudes toward the possibility of further mass displacement. First, what were the origins of this particular resettlement program and how did it develop into conflict between German, British, and Polish authorities? Second, what were the demographic characteristics of the resettler transports? Third, how did differing interpretations of humanitarian imperatives affect British and German responses to the crisis at a policy level, and how did each side employ a language of humanitarianism in advocating its approach?

In contrast to assumptions that Potsdam-sanctioned expulsions had been comprehensive, the Polish government had not completed a clean sweep of German populations by 1949. Aside from the arbitrariness of a mass undertaking such as the expulsions, according to Carl Kordell, the Polish government forced three different groups of Germans to remain in Poland for years after the war. The first group consisted of German citizens from the interwar German territory (Reichsdeutsche) who fit criteria for expulsion but were kept due to their technical expertise. The second group was comprised of Reichsdeutsche whom the Polish government viewed as “Polonized.” Third were ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) subject to imprisonment and forced labor. A Polish census in 1950 revealed the presence of some 1.1 million persons who had held German citizenship in 1945.  

In 1948 and 1949, the International Red Cross helped to broker an agreement between the West German, British, and Polish authorities for the transfer of 25,000 of those remaining

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517 Heinrich Albertz to Niedersächsischen Minsiterpräsidenten, 3 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.

Germans. According to a circular from the Red Cross Search Service in Hamburg, the Warsaw
dlegation of the International Red Cross had begun to advertise the possibility of resettlement in
West Germany during the summer of 1949. Interested persons were to register with the Working
Group of the Red Cross in Germany, which would make the necessary arrangements for permits
and so forth in the British zone. At the start of August, the program had reached the point that
transports of 1,000 persons each were ready to commence for the 25,000 people who fell under
Category A (those with immediate family able to house them). Each transport had a distribution
list for its members that gave their destinations from the state down to county and community
levels. The British military government, however, delayed the transports with the argument that
the new federal government needed to attend to the matter. On September 20, Chancellor Konrad
Adenauer declared the Federal Republic’s willingness to accept Germans still residing in Eastern
Europe, and in early November he sought and received approval from the Allied High
Commission for Germany to begin the transport of Category A members.519

Despite the creation of the Federal Republic and dissolution of the Allied Control
Council, the western occupation powers still controlled key policy areas through the Occupation
Statute and the Allied High Commission for Germany. In addition to matters of demilitarization,
control of Ruhr industries, and foreign relations, the High Commission also reserved authority
over “displaced persons [verschleppte Personen] and the reception of refugees.”520 Thus, the
nascent federal government needed to secure permission from the High Commission for the
reunification program. On November 28, the Federal Republic received approval for the
acceptance of the 25,000 Germans from Poland as well as some 20,000 more Germans from

519 Rundbrief Nr. 37, 17 November 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 518, NHStA.
520 “Besatzungsstatut,” Amtsblatt der Militärregierung Deutschland (Britische Zone) Nr. 39, 10 September 1949.
Czechoslovakia. Conditional for this approval was that the persons “exclusively belong to Category A and have relatives in West Germany.” The Allied High Commission agreed to the reception of these persons on an individual basis rather than as collective transports. Presumably, that was meant to ease the rejection of individuals without the necessary permits instead of accepting entire transports and needing to resolve the status of unpermitted resettlers.521

By accepting only resettlers belonging to Category A, the High Commission’s agreement was meant to prevent the arrival of individuals from two categories that would be more difficult to settle. Because Category A consisted of persons with “closest family (spouses, relatives in ascending and descending line, and in exceptional cases siblings),” their families rather than the state would theoretically be responsible for housing and other immediate needs.522 Members of Categories B and C, however, might require more immediate state support. Category B consisted of persons with “second degree” or more distant family relations and who did not possess as residence permit. Members of Category C had neither relatives nor a residence permit. Lacking a residence permit or close family with whom they might live, B and C cases among the resettlers needed to be treated as any other refugees without immediate family to care for them. In recognition of that burden, the British and American zones, which had been hardest hit by the initial postwar displacement, were to receive only 20 percent each of the B and C cases when it became apparent that West Germany would accept them in spite of their initial exclusion from the operation. The French zone was responsible for the remaining 60 percent of those cases.523

521 Bundesministerium für Vertriebene to Landesflüchtlingsverwaltungen, 7 December 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 518, NHStA.

522 Niedersächsischer Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten to Bundesminister für Vertriebene, 21 August 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.

523 Vermerk, 22 September 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA. A summary of the program from the German Red Cross in the spring of 1951 indicates the categories were later simplified: Category A for all persons
Sending most of the difficult cases to areas relatively unaffected by displaced Germans did not completely relieve the harder-hit regions. Indeed, the initial conditions for the program meant that areas already housing the largest proportion of expellees from Poland would necessarily receive the most people seeking reunification with family members. The disproportional impact was not lost on local communities. In an August 1949 memorandum to Lower Saxony’s refugee ministry, the director for Nienburg County expressed fears of once again being overrun with refugees. Having examined the list of 742 people arriving for family reunification, county officials concluded that they would receive over 500 more people than typical counties.  

The high number of assignments to Nienburg is consistent with census records for Lower Saxony showing that the population of expellees, refugees, and evacuees in Nienburg County (along with most counties in the eastern half of the state) was between 73 and 100 percent of the size of the native population.

A further problem with the lists was that they underrepresented the number of people needing housing. The county director in Nienburg complained that upon closer examination of the lists, his administration had discovered that a single person on the list would create a residency entitlement for more family members not yet in the West. For example, the community of Seiden was officially supposed to receive three persons, “but there are, however, 22 persons to be expected,” something typical of migration chains. Based on their calculations, local officials

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524 Oberkreisdirektor Nienburg/Weser to Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 9 August 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 518, NHStA.

525 In essence, displaced groups approached half of the total population. There were fewer displaced Germans in the northwestern half of Lower Saxony, and they accounted for almost zero percent of the population in neighboring counties of North-Rhine Westphalia. See Niedersachsen und das Flüchtlingsproblem: Die Heimatvertriebenen in Niedersachsen Reihe F Band 6, page 23, Nds. 50 Nr. 490, NHStA.
feared that the initial 742 refugees could quickly become 2,000 or 3,000 in total. The county director also explained that their search for usable mass quarters had failed, because one of the local refugee camps housed DPs while the other housed tuberculosis-infected DPs, and the former munitions depot was in poor shape after demilitarization work. In a sign of future problems with the lists at the arrival of the first transport in March 1950, discussions with the refugees living in Nienburg County revealed that some of their relatives had decided not to resettle after all. The country director suggested that the Red Cross and Polish authorities needed to reconfirm individuals’ desire to immigrate before the program began. The memorandum concluded by warning that the refugees from Poland “will have to be housed at the expense of the refugees already living here.”

Rumors about the transports’ size as well as delays caused further confusion and concern for refugee authorities. In January 1950, officials with the state refugee ministry expected that the first transports would arrive on the fifteenth of the month. The Red Cross Search Service had also warned the refugee ministry that the number of Germans wishing to resettle in the area of the British zone had risen from 25,000 to over 42,000 people. It was an open question whether all of the incoming persons qualified as having “closest relatives,” but the Federal Ministry for Refugees declared that it was determined to accept those who did not meet that criterion. Then the transports did not arrive, and in early February the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees told the authorities for the state’s governing districts to expect transports in early March. In the meantime and in anticipation of problems with Categories B and C, the governing district

526 Oberkreisdirektor Nienburg/Weser to Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 9 August 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 518, NHStA.

527 Vermerk, Niedersächsischer Ministerpräsident—Staatskanzlei, January 1950, Nds. 50 Nr. 491, NHStA.
authorities were supposed to provide the Friedland camp with lists of Category A persons already approved for resettlement in order to quickly clear the camp of the easy cases.\textsuperscript{528}

The British claimed to have been taken by surprise when the first transport arrived on March 3, 1950. In a protest sent to Polish authorities, the British ambassador explained that after approval of the program in December, the High Commission had delegated negotiations to its permit officer in Warsaw. Negotiations stalled in early February, and the British embassy in Warsaw enquired about the program. Polish authorities informed them that they “intended to discontinue discussions with the Allied High Commission Permit Officer and to include these 25,000 Germans in a transfer of refugees to Eastern Germany.” The embassy informed the High Commission about the discontinuation, and neither received word about the transports until information “reached the Land Authorities in Hesse and Lower Saxony simultaneously that a first train bringing refugees from Poland would arrive on the border of the Federal Republic on 3\textsuperscript{rd} or 4\textsuperscript{th} of March and that it was intended that a similar train should arrive at each of two border points every four days for the remainder of the year.” A calculation based on the number of registered and unregistered resettlers, the train’s capacity, and the supposed frequency of arriving transports led to British fears that as many as 180,000 resettlers might arrive over the course of the year.\textsuperscript{529}

In their protests to Poland, the Western powers engaged a language of humanitarianism to strengthen their position. The British complained that any such mass transfer “would be both arbitrary and inhumane,” while emphasizing that their initial agreement to a transfer of 25,000

\textsuperscript{528} Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge to Regierungspräsidenten, 9 February 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{529} Note Addressed by the British Ambassador, 7 March 1950, Record Group 59, 848.411/3-750, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter NARA).
individuals had been a “humanitarian concession.” In addition to explicit claims that the British had fulfilled their obligations under the Potsdam Agreement, such language of arbitrary and inhumane transfers made an implicit case for the illegality of further transfers under the principles set forth at Potsdam. The American protest likewise noted that the acceptance of the original 25,000 resettlers only had been undertaken as an “exception on humanitarian and compassionate grounds,” and the entry of individuals on that list could still occur “as an extraordinary and humanitarian move.” Both documents made clear that the border would be shut for any additional resettlers.

Although the official protest did not make any accusations about Polish motivations, the British press reported that its government thought that Poles planned to destabilize West Germany. Articles particularly focused on the High Commission’s fear for German economic stability if masses of resettlers began to move through Friedland. The Times of London suggested that the transfer was part a larger Eastern Bloc effort to “embarrass the West German economy by adding to the number who have to be fed and supported.” The Manchester Guardian reported that the British government regarded the Polish government’s actions as “a deliberate attempt to undermine the economy of the Western zones.”

The Polish government responded with a sharp protest of its own against the British. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that Polish authorities were “aiming at the reunion of German families based on an understanding concluded between the Polish Government and the Provisional Government of the German Democratic Republic, as the German authority

530 Ibid.

531 Note Addressed by the American Ambassador, 7 March 1950, 848.411/3-750, NARA.

532 “German Refugees from Poland,” Times, 4 March 1950.

533 “Attempts to upset German economy,” Manchester Guardian, 7 March 1950.
recognised by the Polish Government.” What the GDR did with the transports after receiving them was “not the matter for the Polish authorities.” The note continued with the accusation that the British alone had been responsible for “regrettable incident of the 3rd March.” The Polish government also engaged with a language of humanitarianism to defend itself and criticize the British. According to the note, the Polish government had acted out of “humanitarian considerations” in arranging the transports to reunite families in the GDR. The foreign ministry expressed that it was “astonished at the Embassy’s attempt to justify the inhuman orders” to refuse the first transport. With respect to the threatened closure of the border to any future transports, “The Ministry cannot qualify the action foreshadowed in the Note otherwise than as an anti-humanitarian action.”

The composition of the first transport gave British authorities the basis for their belief that the Polish government was attempting to destabilize the West German economy. Only 20 percent of the March 3 transport’s members appeared on the official resettlement lists. Combined with the miscommunication before the transport’s arrival, that low percentage of registered persons gave the British reason to suspect that the Polish were attempting something underhanded. Given the concern from local German administrators about having the space necessary for only those persons listed on the official manifests, fears of being overwhelmed with unregistered resettlers required no great leap.

Further adding to British fears, the first transport contained a large proportion of groups incapable of work and in need of extra state assistance, including children and the elderly. According to the medical report for the transport, “the proportion of men is too low” with 360

534 Note Addressed to British Embassy, 14 March 1950, 848.411/3-1450, NARA.

535 Note Addressed by the British Ambassador, 7 March 1950, Record Group 59, 848.411/3-750, NARA; also Heinrich Albertz to Niedersächsischen Ministerpräsidenten, 3 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.
women and 115 children (under 14 years old) compared to only 198 men. The camp medical staff also found that “the work-capable age groups are particularly poorly represented,” while there were many elderly resettlers, who mostly were traveling alone. Although the work-capable men and women were generally well nourished, the children and elderly were in “mostly poor” condition. Children would require additional resources from communities for their education. According to a memorandum from the state refugee ministry, the area around Szczecin/Stettin under Soviet occupation was the only place with German-language schools, so children from the rest of Poland whose parents had not taught them speech and writing at home were often unable to communicate in German.

Figure 5: Changes in Refugee and Resettler Traffic, 1945-1960

Bericht über den Transport von Zivilevakuierten, 13 March 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA.

Vermerk: Schulausbildung der Kinder, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519

Data compiled from 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anlage 3.
British fears about the overrepresentation of the elderly and those incapable of manual labor proved true for transports later in the 1950s as well. For example, the plurality of resettlers arriving in 1956 (38 percent) consisted of persons over 60 years old, slightly more than the total belonging to the working age groups of 22 to 40 years and 40 to 60 years (respectively 12 and 25 percent).\textsuperscript{539} Older resettlers tended to arrive from Masuria, while many resettlers from the mining region of Silesia would likewise be incapable of work, as they suffered from “extreme silicosis.” Children from Silesia showed signs of “developmental disorders and malnutrition.”\textsuperscript{540} The camp’s medical staff, however, noted a general improvement in the resettlers’ health in 1957. The age divide based on region nevertheless continued that year. The elderly resettlers tended to come from the areas of East Prussia incorporated into the Polish state, while young resettlers, the number of which had increased, tended to come from Silesia. Cases of silicosis nevertheless remained “high” among the Silesian resettlers.\textsuperscript{541}

Though confronted with the possibility of being inundated with the elderly and persons otherwise incapable of work, German politicians and the press nevertheless argued for the accommodation of resettlers on humanitarian grounds. This inclusive reaction stemmed from a sense of obligation to care for co-nationals, no matter the potential difficulties. Indeed, the poor or infirm condition of resettlers that fueled British fears about economic dislocation instead functioned as a crucial point of sympathy in German criticism of the British decision to refuse the transport. Deprivation and suffering in Poland played a key role in arguments that a

\textsuperscript{539} Niederschrift über die Besprechung mit den Flüchtlingsdezernenten, 11 April 1957, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 382, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{540} Beaufsichtigung der Hygiene, 3 July 1956, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA. In fact, when the small school in the camp needed a new teacher, the superintendent for Göttingen stated, “knowledge of the Polish language is absolutely necessary.” Schulrat Göttingen to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 22 March 1951, Hann. 180 Hildesheim Nr. 08395.

\textsuperscript{541} Beaufsichtigung der Hygiene, 3 July 1957, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA
humanitarian imperative required the Federal Republic to accept the resettlers. On the one hand, the British had argued that it was not humane to cast aside regulation, thereby encouraging further mass expulsion and forcing resettlers on communities unable to care for them. The West German position, on the other hand, was that strictly holding to regulations produced the more inhumane consequence of leaving suffering Germans standing outside at the door.

Two articles published respectively by Hannover and Göttingen newspapers typify sympathetic portrayals of the refused resettlers. In a report published on March 4, the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung described the situation on the border and the reasons for the British refusal despite their role in negotiating the population transfer in the first place. The report’s final paragraph discussed the hardships the group had faced during the intervening years. Most had come from a camp in Leszno near Poznań/Posen, where “they had been sent to work for farmers without reimbursement since 1947.” It went on to note, “an older resettler suffered a heart attack when the transport assembled behind the Soviet sentry gate.” Childhood innocence and deprivation under the Polish government also played prominent roles. The article explained that children had not been allowed to learn German, and it also recounted the common story of a journalist who gave oranges to the arriving children. After receiving the fruit, they thanked him “for the nice, colorful potatoes.”542

A few days later, the Göttinger Tageblatt published a profile of the Büttner family who had been fortunate to cross the border. The article explained that the family’s triumphant entry into West Germany largely resulted from their comparatively good financial situation in Poland. When they reached the border, the family had the appropriate entry visa from the High Commission, but procuring it had been difficult. The author wrote sardonically, “Any German

living in Poland could have this paper, if he had the money to repeatedly travel to Warsaw and to pay for the countless certificates and finally the fee of 800 zloty for the permit.” The article went on to celebrate Josef Büttner’s “sharpness” (Pfiffigkeit) in obtaining the necessary documents for his family, but it also lamented the slow process of sorting through the list of remaining persons. German bureaucrats were not at fault for the delay, as the author praised the sixteen customs officials who were working “feverishly” to produce an alphabetical list of authorized resettlers. Rather, fault lay with the Polish offices that had handed over an “arbitrarily” organized list.

Lower Saxon Refugee Minister Heinrich Albertz became a fixture in the German press and de facto spokesperson for accepting all individuals from the incoming transports. In contrast to the British, Albertz favored a more inclusive humanitarianism that likely stemmed from his previous training as a pastor and which was defined by a German obligation to care for this new wave of their ethnic brethren. Articles often included statements from him that made clear his displeasure with Robertson’s interdiction and his opinion that West Germans had a duty to come to their ethnic counterparts’ aid. A report of the first day’s standoff in the Essener Tageblatt featured Albertz, who beseeched the English border officer to allow the waiting group through. The article let the officer’s response speak for itself: “‘No,’ said the intimidated guard, ‘that won’t do. I have my orders…” That day Albertz also supposedly remarked, “Ask General


544 Ibid.


Robertson if he wants to treat human beings in the same way as the Russians treat goods.”  

A week later, he wrote to Die Welt and again decried the instructions from the High Commission that weighed on the “backs of the weakest, and divest people coming from terrible suffering of their last dignity.”

At the end of March, Albertz resumed his attacks on the British. He claimed, “what is grotesque about the Allied attitude is that those who signed the Potsdam Agreement without batting an eyelash and tolerated the expulsion of millions now in the last phase raise their objections.” Albertz argued that the incoming transports had nothing to do with mass expulsions from Poland but rather consisted of German nationals who had worked for years to secure their transfer to West Germany. Finally, according to a report, “The Minister turned against the Allied argumentation that the Polish side intended to ‘burst the West German economy’ through this resettlement.”

For Albertz, there was no question that the Federal Republic needed to accept resettlers irrespective of economic considerations.

Albertz was not alone in linking resettlers’ suffering with a humanitarian obligation to accept them. In parliamentary debate on March 23, Doctor Fritz Wenzel, an expellee and SPD delegate to the Bundestag from Lower Saxony, inveighed against the British refusal to allow the entry of all Germans wishing to resettle from Poland and Czechoslovakia. He argued that the resettlers had lived under “particular suffering, difficulties, and need” and in so doing, had suffered “outwardly and inwardly, bodily and psychologically, longer and under more repressive circumstances” than earlier expellees. According to Wenzel, the resettlers had a “moral and

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547 “Refugees Refused Entry to West Germany,” Manchester Guardian, 7 March 1950.


humanitarian demand” (moralischer und menschlicher Anspruch) for accommodation in the Federal Republic. He continued that aside from “ethical or religious sympathy,” there was no humanitarian reason to refuse their accommodation, so it was “impossible to leave these German brothers and sisters standing outside the door.”

Adenauer and the CDU also opposed the rejection of resettlers who did not appear on the officially sanctioned lists. During the March 23 debate, Federal Expellee Minister Hans Lukaschek reiterated Adenauer’s protest to the Allied High Commission that “due to humanitarian reasons [Gründen der Menschlichkeit], he was not in the position to rebuff those arriving from the border.” Lukaschek further explained that such persons were being sent to less-occupied states based on his own authority to give directives (Weisungsrecht). Another CDU delegate, Doctor Hermann Götz from Hessen, labeled the British rejection as “indefensible from a humane standpoint.” Much like Albertz, Götz referenced the Potsdam-sanction expulsions in his criticism of the British who had contributed to the problem that “ultimately has its origins in the English-signed Potsdam Agreement.” Götz also noted that as long as the Federal Republic accepted foreign asylum-seekers from communist Eastern Europe without need for preapproved residence permits, Germans from Eastern Europe must be afforded the same right.

At the policy level, the acceptance of unregistered resettlers from Poland turned into a contest of wills between the Federal Republic and the British High Commissioner, General Sir Brian Robertson. In a memorandum sent to the Lower Saxon Minister President Hinrich Kopf chastising his SPD Minister Heinrich Albertz for mischaracterizing the official position of the Federal Republic, Chancellor Adenauer explained that the Allied High Commissioners had

550 Deutscher Bundestag—50. Sitzung, 23. March 1950, Nds. 50 Nr. 491, NHStA.

551 Ibid.
petitioned the Cabinet of Germany (*Bundesregierung*) to refuse the transports from Poland and Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, German officials had “taken no measures in this direction.” Instead, Adenauer had informed the High Commissioners that the “*Bundesregierung* has no way to prevent them from crossing the border and that it considers such an action [refusal of transports] as incorrect.”

At the camp level, German civil authorities tried to win over British officers while also sidestepping Robertson’s order against accepting resettlers missing from Operation Link lists. A memorandum sent by camp director Richard Krause to Lukaschek indicates that German officials had impressed upon British army officers who oversaw the border that accepting the transports was necessary. These border officers were in turn working to convince Robertson to rescind his orders. In the meantime, it seems that Friedland received and distributed unregistered resettlers as “illegal border-crossers,” which led to arguments with the British border officers who nevertheless felt compelled try to enforce Robertson’s decree.

The dispute over unregistered resettlers came to a quiet resolution in April and May 1950. A memorandum in the Lower Saxon State Chancellery regarding an April 21 meeting between Adenauer and Robertson reveals that Robertson unofficially committed to the reception of such persons. That unofficial agreement, however, was contingent upon the American and French High Commissioners agreeing to regulations concerning the distribution of unregistered resettlers.

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552 Bundeskanzler Adenauer to Ministerpräsident Kopf, 22 March 1950, Nds. 50 Nr. 491, NHStA. Adenauer was displeased that Albertz had supposedly said that it was wrong for West German border officials to prevent resettlers from entering the Federal Republic. Albertz explained that he had not criticized the federal government over resettlers but rather over policy regarding East German political refugees as “illegal” border-crossers.

553 Lagerleitung Friedland to Bundesministerium für Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen Bonn, 21 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.

554 Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 17 April 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA. The commanding officer complained to the camp administration that the workaround was not permitted, but it does not appear that the British military prevented or even tried to stop the camp from the circuitous registration of resettlers.
persons. A subsequent memorandum from May indicated the Allied High Commission’s agreement to accept that group. It is not clear the whether Robertson had individually driven the British side of the conflict, but later in the summer and after Robertson’s departure from the High Commission, the British attitudes toward the program warmed considerably. In August, the High Commissioner for Refugees, C. Pearman-Wilson, explicitly stated his “personal and complete understanding” that German authorities needed to do everything possible to accommodate Germans displaced from Poland.

West German reception of resettlers also depended on cooperation with East German authorities. According to Richard Krause’s explanation to a conference of Lower Saxony’s district refugee authorities, when a transport from Poland arrived in the GDR, East German officials sent a manifest to the camp. Resettlers on the Operation Link lists immediately received a residence permit for the Federal Republic and were transported to Heiligenstadt for handover at the German-German border. East German authorities held the rest of the transports’ members in five “quarantine camps.” Personnel at Friedland contacted the German Red Cross Search Services with which many resettlers had registered even though those resettlers did not appear on the Operation Link lists. Typically, the camp received an answer from the Red Cross within a few hours, and persons in their registration lists also received a residence permit.

Camp administrators and representatives from the federal states at Friedland were left to resolve the difficult cases of resettlers who had no registration whatsoever. These persons needed to wait for the camp administrators to contact the community directors where they wished to

555 Vermerk, Staatskanzlei, 21 April 1950, Nds. 50 Nr. 491, NHStA.
556 Vermerk, Staatskanzlei, May 1950, Nds. 50 Nr. 491, NHStA.
557 Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 29 August 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 519, NHStA.
558 Protokoll über die Sitzung der Flüchtlingsdezernenten, 20 November 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.
resettle. The directors determined if family there could accommodate them. If so, then they too received a residence permit. If not, due to lack of space or family, they fell under the responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Expellees, which presumably determined resettlement in accordance with a refugee distribution key. This regulation for accepting unregistered resettlers proved important, because the percentage of resettlers on the official Operation Link lists remained low in subsequent transports. Between March and November 1950, the Friedland camp processed 27,584 Germans from Poland. Of them, only 16.7 percent appeared in the Polish Operation Link lists, while 52 percent appeared on the more inclusive German Red Cross Search Service lists.\footnote{559}

In the end, the resumption of mass expulsions so feared by the British never occurred. Although the British concerns were not wholly unreasonable based upon the composition of the initial transport, it does not appear that the Polish government ever planned for Operation Link to be the starting point for mass expulsion. Friedland processed 34,162 resettlers in 1950, just shy of 10,000 more resettlers than in the initial agreement. Thereafter, the Polish government actually made emigration more difficult for Germans. In 1951, Friedland received 19,010 resettlers, but the program came to a near standstill with only 8,200 resettlers total arriving over the next four years.\footnote{560}

Rather than seeking a final sweep of its German population, the Polish government seems to have pursued a selective, self-interested transfer. The resettlers sent to the Federal Republic consisted of those who had registered for emigration from Poland and with the German Red Cross for family reunification and/or were viewed as a drag on the Polish economy. A press

\footnote{559} Ibid.

\footnote{560} 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anlage 3.
release from refugee ministry in Lower Saxony, for example, noted that when larger transports resumed in 1955, a third of the resettlers were over 65 years old, but there were no young men in the transports.\footnote{Presseinformation Nr. 18/56, 20 July 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 683, NHStA.} Accounts given by resettlers in 1956 suggest that the low resettler numbers from 1952 through 1955 were due to the Polish government having made emigration difficult. A doctor from Breslau claimed that there were still thousands of Germans in the city wishing to emigrate, but they waited on approval of their applications.\footnote{“Aussiedler zwischen gestern und heute,” Ost-West-Kurier, 7 April 1956. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.} Indeed, in 1956 the Polish Red Cross informed the German Red Cross that the Polish government had decided to ease emigration restrictions for Germans.\footnote{“Polen erleichtert die Ausreise,” Die Welt, 6 September 1956, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.} Another man from Silesia said that he had been trying to arrange reunification with his family in West Germany since 1945. Money was another obstacle in his case. According to him, the Polish government did not allow Germans to leave with Polish currency, so he had needed to spend his savings on furniture, shoes, and other items at high prices in the border city of Szczecin/Stettin.\footnote{“Aussiedler zwischen gestern und heute,” Ost-West-Kurier, 7 April 1956. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.} Thus, for the Polish government, Operation Link and the ensuing crisis appear to have been a relatively limited program to allow family reunifications and simultaneously remove potential drains on the state.

During the crisis, all three sides used the language of humanitarianism to pursue their interests. For the Polish government, humanitarianism provided a justification for a program that would help its economy. Claims of humanitarianism further functioned as a rhetorical weapon to use against the British who tried to block the transports. Of course, reuniting individuals with their families did have humanitarian effects, such as psychological wellbeing and enabling families to care for relatives in need. British humanitarian protests were connected to regulation.
Their line of argumentation, which also paralleled concerns at the local level for German civil government, was that regulations protected both communities and resettlers from inhumane overcrowding and therefore needed to be respected. Absent a hard-line stance, in the British view, Polish authorities might undertake a unilateral program of mass expulsion with terrible consequences for displaced Germans and the receiving communities.

Interestingly, West Germans did not protest the possibility of another mass expulsion. Politicians and the press made extensive reference to Potsdam-sanctioned expulsions, particularly the British agreement to them, but they did not object to the prospect of Germans again being forced to leave their homes. In part, that silence must have reflected an acknowledgment that the lost *Heimat* would not be returned (despite official language that continued to refer to “Poland and the Polish-administered German territories”) and that many Germans in Poland had already lost their homes in any event. The West German humanitarian response was to emphasize their fellow Germans’ urgent needs. Existing regulatory organs would mitigate social problems to the extent that it was possible. Aspects of the British concerns still appeared in arguments between federal states over quota obligations, but the need to accept rather than bar resettlers was not in dispute. British-German policy conflicts thus owed much to the differing humanitarian goals of either preventing or ameliorating displacement.

**Foreign Nationals**

On March 22, 1951, the Gateway to Freedom became the scene of a violent crime. In a notice sent to the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees, Richard Krause explained that there had been a row between Italian and Polish refugees residing in the camp. Thaddäus B. (probably Germanized from Tadeusz), a Pole living in the camp with his wife and child while awaiting resettlement by the International Relief Organization, came into conflict with Egide B. Egidio
was an Italian who had bounced around North Africa and Europe (his former home near Trieste had fallen under Yugoslav control) before being brought to Friedland as an “infiltrree” who crossed into West Germany illegally. As far as the police could reconstruct the fight, Thaddäus had allegedly cursed Egidio as a “macaroni,” “gypsy,” and “shit,” so Egidio punched him in the jaw. In an effort to break up the fight, someone held Egidio from behind, whereupon Thaddäus struck him back. Egidio called for help from his Hungarian friend, Stefan K. Stefan punched Thaddäus, felling him and causing him to strike his head on the ground. Camp police arrested Egidio, but Stefan managed to flee on foot. According to the camp doctor’s statement, he arrived at 20:30 to find Thaddäus prone on the ground with a hematoma by the left eye, flat breathing, and pronounced blood-pressure fluctuation. The doctor transferred Thaddäus to the camp medical station, but he feared that transport to a Göttingen hospital would be too dangerous. The doctor thus stated that under this grave condition and “despite therapeutic measures,” Thaddäus died at 21:50. In agreement with Thaddäus’s “destitute” (mittellos) widow and the police, the camp administration arranged and paid for his burial in Göttingen.565

This fatal dispute raises a number of issues surrounding the foreign nationals housed at Friedland between 1949 and 1952. First are the questions of who these foreigners were and why they were residents in a transit camp years after of the war. Second, of course, is the question of criminality. The camp administration, charities, and local officials protested against housing the various foreign nationals. Accusations of violence and criminality played a central role in complaints to the IRO and other authorities, but what were sources of conflict and resentment between Germans and the foreigners? Third, how did policy conflicts over the accommodation of the foreigners play out and reach a resolution with respect to the camp at Friedland?

565 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebenen, memorandum on “besonderes Vorkommnis” and accompanying documentation, 27 March 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.
The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration repatriated a remarkable number of Displaced Persons shortly after World War II. Estimates vary, but as many as 8 to 11 million former forced and supposedly voluntary laborers, POWs, survivors of the concentration and death camp systems, and former Nazi allies were in occupied Germany in 1945. According to William Hitchcock, military authorities saw these DPs—officially, “civilians outside the national boundaries of their country by reason of war”—as primarily a problem of “security and order.” With some key exceptions, the Anglo-American military governments sought and succeeded in speedy repatriation for these DPs. The Soviet Union likewise demanded the quick return of its citizens regardless of those individuals’ wishes. By the end of 1945, UNRRA had returned between 6 and 7 million DPs to their home countries. The completion of those initial repatriations marked the beginning of what Gary Cohen calls the “second and longer phase of the DP episode,” when the International Refugee Organization (the UN successor agency to UNRRA) cared for the “last million” refugees from the war and postwar flight from their countries.

Several groups constituted this “hardcore” remainder of foreign refugees in occupied Germany. Poles brought to Germany as slave and voluntary labor accounted for half of the DPs (400,000 Poles total) in March 1946. Between 150,000 and 200,000 persons from the Baltic states as well as 150,000 ethnic Ukrainians also proved difficult to resettle and remained in Germany in the spring of 1946. Jewish survivors of the Holocaust in Germany numbered between 60,000 and 70,000 shortly after the capitulation. Their numbers increased as three other

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566 Hitchcock, *Bitter Road to Road to Freedom*, 250
567 Cohen, *In War’s Wake*, 5.
568 Ibid., 5-6.
groups of Polish-Jewish survivors poured into occupied Germany in response to persecution in Poland: camp survivors who returned to their hometowns after liberation, Jews who survived the war in Poland as partisans or in hiding, and Jews who had fled from Poland to the Soviet Union only to be repatriated after the war.\textsuperscript{569} Replacing resettled DPs, anti-communist refugees arriving from Yugoslavia, Slovakia, and Hungary bolstered the “last million” into the late 1940s.\textsuperscript{570} For all of these groups, resettlement was often complicated by the displaced individuals’ objection to repatriation and other countries’ objection to accepting them.

Although the facility at Friedland operated as a border transit camp largely used by Germans, it also processed some of these displaced foreigners. In addition to DPs passing through Friedland as part of the chaotic cross-border traffic shortly after the war, the camp also housed two groups of foreign nationals totaling 1,894 individuals between 1949 and 1952.\textsuperscript{571} The first group consisted of refugees who came to Germany without the proper permits. In a memorandum to the Lower Saxon Minister President, a high-ranking official from the refugee ministry explained that the relief detachment with the British Regional Government Office directed the camp to accept “infiltrees” (\textit{Infiltrees} as a loan-word in German) beginning in October 1949. The majority of these infiltrees consisted of former DPs whom the IRO had repatriated shortly after the war. In their home countries, these individuals became criminal offenders and fled back to Germany. The other two populations among the infiltrees were political refugees and immigrants who gave unverifiable reasons for coming to Germany.\textsuperscript{572}


\textsuperscript{570} Cohen, \textit{In War’s Wake}, 6.

\textsuperscript{571} Statistic calculated from, \textit{20 Jahre Lager Friedland}, Anhang 3. On early DP traffic, see Chapter 2.

\textsuperscript{572} Regierungsrat Schütte to Niedersächsischen Ministerpräsidenten, 31 January 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
According to the refugee ministry official, the infiltrees posed particular bureaucratic difficulties. One problem was that the federal government was the only German civil authority empowered to make determinations about their status and resettlement. Furthermore, federal officials needed to make those determinations in consultation with the Allied High Commission, which reserved authority in DP and refugee matters through the Occupation Statute. In the absence of clear responsibilities or a distribution key for other German states, in March 1950 Lower Saxon Refugee Minister Albertz refused to order their distribution and integration into the Lower Saxon economy until a “general regulation at the federal level can be reached.” In practice, that meant the transit camp needed to house some of the infiltrees indefinitely, particularly if the IRO could not resettle them abroad. In April 1950, the camp accommodated roughly 100 infiltrees, a mixture of new arrivals and persons who had been at the camp since September 1949. The slowing of infiltree traffic meant that the camp still held over 100 infiltrees in August, despite the administration’s preference to send them away as quickly as possible. Lower Saxon officials meanwhile waited for the federal government to find an alternative camp in North Rhine-Westphalia. At that point, the first infiltrees sent to Friedland in September 1949 still accounted for over 20 percent of infiltrees housed in the residential sub-camp.

573 Ibid.

574 Flüchtlingsminister Albertz to Land Commissioner's Office Hannover, 16 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

575 Vermerk by Regierungsdirektor Lange, 19 April 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

576 Vermerk to Niedersächsischen Minister des Innern, 8 August 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

577 Flüchtlingsminister Albertz to Bundesminister für Vertriebene, 21 August 1950, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.
At some point in 1950, the outflow of infiltrees from the Friedland camp did increase despite continued debates over their classification and distribution as refugees. In part, their continuing arrival forced the issue, because as of January 1951 the camp was receiving 40 to 50 infiltrees per month. While Lower Saxon authorities sought clarification of their responsibilities and waited on the establishment of both a distribution key and an alternative camp, the facility at Friedland had little choice but to distribute infiltrees according to slow-coming directions from the IRO and military government offices. For example, the camp took in 427 infiltrees during the reporting period lasting from September 1949 through December 1950. The IRO had managed to find overseas accommodation for 83 infiltrees, while Lower Saxon communities accepted 43 of them and American offices in Frankfurt employed 29 more infiltrees from the camp. The plurality of them (133 infiltrees) had simply left the camp of their own accord, either to escape criminal investigations or to join the French Foreign Legion. For example, 27 infiltrees implicated in a gang theft fled the camp in May 1950 before judicial procedures against them could begin.578 Aside from 6 infiltrees imprisoned for criminal activity, the camp was left housing the remaining 133 infiltrees.579

Interrogation records sent from Friedland to ministry officials in Hannover provide further details about individuals’ backgrounds and reasons for entering West Germany. The case of Ferenc K. demonstrates the upheaval of the war and postwar years as well as the interconnection of political and personal motivations for travelling to Germany. Ferenc was born and lived in Nyiregyhaza, Hungary, until September 1943, when he registered for the Nazi labor administration Organization Todt and was assigned to an engineering firm in Dresden. That firm

578 Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 16 May 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

579 Vermerk regarding Aufnahme von Ausländern im Flüchtlingsdurchgangslager Friedland, 9 January 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
sent him to Yugoslavia, Greece, and Hungary to do surveying work until he was released from
his duties in Vienna in April 1945. He fled from the Red Army to Kufstein in Austrian Tyrol
before returning to Hungary in July 1945. There he worked various odd jobs, but Ferenc ran into
trouble because he had applied for membership in the Communist Party to improve his
employment prospects. When the Party began to check its membership rolls, Ferenc fled to
Austria in 1948. Ferenc told camp officials that he lacked acceptable “identification” for the war
years. After a stint in a Viennese refugee camp, he crossed into the western zone of Germany on
his way to Brussels. After a couple of years there, he abandoned his plan to emigrate to family in
Canada, so the Brussels IRO cut him off and he crossed into West Germany illegally near
Aachen. The Frankfurt IRO office where he registered himself sent him to a refugee camp,
which then sent him to Friedland, where he told officials that he had decided to go to Canada
after all.580

The account that Sergei S. gave for his illegal entry into West Germany illustrates the
complications presented by a political refugee who did not understand his flight as a political act.
Sergei was born in Karachev, Russia, in January 1928 and lived there until German invasion and
occupation in 1941, when his family moved to a nearby village. In April 1945 the Soviet
government resettled him and his mother to Crimea. In 1948, Sergei was drafted into Red Army
and after four months in artillery school, he was deployed to a garrison outside of Potsdam.
Army life did not suit Sergei. According to him, he reached his breaking point in 1951 when he
could not determine how much longer his tour would last. So, he deserted his tank unit on
February 8 and fled to the Royal Air Force Station at Gatow just outside of Berlin. After
interrogation there, the British brought Sergei to Minden and then Bielefeld for further

580 Vernehmung Ferenc K., 9 October 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 471, NHStA.
interrogation. Months later, the British military took him to the Hannover IRO, which referred him to the state refugee ministry.581

Sergei finally received his assignment to Friedland from the refugee ministry in Hannover and was registered in the camp on August 16, 1951. In October, he was assigned to an IRO emigration camp near Lübeck, but Sergei returned to Friedland after his bid to emigrate to Canada failed in November. During his second stint at Friedland, Sergei expressed an interest in returning to Russia if the communist government fell. He also wished to move to Munich where a group of Russian anti-communists was active. Sergei did not, however, understand his defection as a political act, but rather he explicitly stated that he had never thought about communism and had never belonged to the Communist Party. He claimed that he deserted because he had not felt an “inner bond” (innere Verbindung) to the army. It is possible that Sergei was telling camp officials what he thought they would want to hear, but his case helps to show how infiltrees’ political motivations and cases for asylum could take different forms.582

Former DPs composed the second group of foreign nationals housed at Friedland. Some of these ex-DPs, as German officials termed them, had lost their official status once they had completed work contracts in Western Europe. For countries facing labor shortfalls due to wartime casualties, DPs offered a potentially valuable pool of workers. According to Gary Cohen, the IRO’s “main task was to orchestrate migration movements to meet the manpower needs or humanitarian proclivities of host counties.”583 Postwar hardships meant that countries were more interested in meeting labor needs than taking on burdensome refugee groups. As such,

581 Vernehmung Sergei S., 8 December 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 471, NHStA.

582 Ibid.

583 Cohen, In War’s Wake, 103.
the IRO “advertised DPs as a reservoir of skillful and industrious workers,” and DP camps proved attractive to recruiters because they functioned as centralized labor markets. The French population minister Robert Prigent noted, “it will be easy to examine the refugees regrouped in the camps according to their professional ability, physical shape, social background, and behavior.”

The Belgian program named “Operation Black Diamond” served as a model for Britain’s “Westward Ho!” and France’s “French Metropolitan Scheme,” and it entailed two-year labor contracts for the hardest mining tasks before participants could seek easier work. Unsurprisingly, these conditions proved undesirable for DP laborers, and 8,000 of the 32,000 working in Belgium returned to Germany after their contracts’ expiration. Officials in the host countries also became dissatisfied with the DP guest-worker programs later in the 1940s when they began to see DPs as a “problem of ‘surplus population’ hampering the stability of the continent and the prospect of European integration.”

From the German perspective, the return of workers after contract expiration was a matter of neighboring countries using Germany as a dumping ground for unwanted, problem populations in a sometimes-illegal manner. Indeed, the manner by which some DP workers returned to Germany therefore blurred the lines between ex-DPs and infiltrtees. In July 1950, for example, the “military government” (likely meaning a refugee office for the Allied High Commission) ordered the camp at Friedland to register and accommodate three Polish men. The men had worked under official migrant labor programs in Belgium and the Netherlands, but they had nowhere to go once their contracts expired and were not renewed, so they had crossed into

584 Ibid., 105.
585 Ibid.
586 Ibid., 103.
Germany illegally. The camp administration planned to send them as either to an unnamed DP camp as either infiltrrees or DPs.\footnote{587 Memorandum regarding telephone conversation with Hans Thederan, 10 July 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.}

In another case, Belgian police literally shoved a problem case, a Romanian man named Emil C., over to Germany. He had fled to Belgium via Hungary, Austria, and West Germany because of past imprisonment for having taken driving jobs without Romanian authorities’ permission and persecution following his release. It is also possible that he was fleeing additional problems in connection to revenge against a competitor who had denounced him. Emil did not mention any additional charges, but during his questioning at Friedland he bragged that he “settled the score” (\textit{abgerechnet}) with the denouncer before leaving Romania. In any event, according to him, he tried to register with the police after his arrival Belgium, but they arrested him and held him for 20 days. To release him, the Belgian police brought Emil to the German border and “shoved him off” (\textit{abgeschoben}) in the direction of Aachen. The administration at Friedland initially refused to receive Emil, but it had to accept him when he returned three days later with an assignment from the Allied High Commission office in Hannover.\footnote{588 Vernehmung Emil C., 28 February 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.}

Other ex-DPs at Friedland had lost their official status through commission of a crime, though the line between actual crimes and criminalized non-compliance could be blurry. In comments on figures given to Lower Saxon officials in a yearly report, camp director Richard Krause complained, “The Friedland camp has received an extraordinarily high percentage of former DPs who lost their DP status for criminal reasons.”\footnote{589 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 31 December 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 158/94 Nr. 24, NHStA.} Krause did not elaborate on the exact percentage of the ex-DPs released from prison nor what a normal percentage of criminal
ex-DPs would have been. Registration statistics indicate that the camp registered 270 ex-DPs in 1949, but they do not differentiate between former DPs returning from labor contracts and those who had completed prison sentences.590

Extant records offer only snapshots of the size of the ex-DP convict population at Friedland. In late March 1950, the directors of the camp’s religious charities and German Red Cross unit claimed that half of the former DPs had either been released from prison or fled other countries with law at their heels.591 Yet, in the middle of April, the camp administration reported the presence of only 8 released prisoners from Hameln, Lower Saxony in comparison to 75 infiltrtees and 8 “unclear cases.”592 In August, communications between refugee and interior ministry officials indicated that the camp held 14 ex-DPs transferred from prisons in Hameln and Werl, North Rhine-Westphalia compared to 65 ex-DPs returning from labor in England.593 Certainly, officials overseeing Friedland were also concerned that the already high percentage of ex-DP convicts would increase in the spring and summer of 1950, because the Hameln and Werl prisons were set to release roughly 700 former DPs as of late March.594 Despite those fears, nothing in camp documents or statistical records suggests that it came to a mass release.

Given that Friedland was organized on the principle of speedy processing and release, German intransigence about resettling ex-DPs made them a particular challenge for the camp.


591 The camp directors of Bruderhilfe, Caritas, Innere Mission, YMCA, and the German Red Cross all signed the complaint sent to Lagerleitung Friedland, 22 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

592 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 12 April 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

593 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten to Niedersächsisches Ministerium des Innern, 8 August 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

594 Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland to Niedersächsischen Flüchtlingsminister, 28 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
The Lower Saxon government came to an agreement with the British “DP Branch” in January 1950 to the effect that ex-DPs entitled to resettlement in Lower Saxony would be sent directly to their assigned communities, thereby bypassing the Friedland camp. Because Lower Saxon Minister for Refugees Heinrich Albertz had “refused to assign ex-DP [convicts] from camps in other states to Lower Saxon communities,” it would seem that Friedland was stuck with the more difficult convict cases. Indefinite stays in the transit camp, however, were good for no one. The austere facilities did not lend themselves to pleasant long-term accommodation, and the camp administration and charities had not wanted to accept the ex-DPs at all, much less indefinitely.

Fears of recidivism among the ex-DP convicts played a role in the decision to hold back the former convicts, regardless of the illogic it produced for the individuals and camp. An official with the Charity of Protestant Churches in Germany writing to the Federal Expellee Ministry succinctly expressed the fears and justifications for not attempting to integrate the ex-DP convicts into local communities. He not only suggested that recidivism would be a problem for communities forced to house ex-DP convicts but he also claimed that distributing criminals would make life difficult for other DPs living in Germany: “Based on recent experiences […] one must fear that the criminals, upon winning back their freedom, will immediately proceed to new violent crimes [Gewalttaten]. This will cause all of our painstaking work to build empathy among our people for the DPs’ plight and hardships to be in vain.”

595 The memorandum does not specify if the “DP Branch” was part of the IRO or the Allied High Commission. Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 31 January 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

596 Flüchtlingsminister Albertz to Bundesminister für Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen, 11 April 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

597 Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland to Niedersächsischen Flüchtlingsminister, 28 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
Problems with petty and violent criminality at Friedland gave additional weight to concerns about recidivist ex-DPs as well as infiltrtees. In his discussion of annually reported statistics, Krause told his superiors: “Whereas before Sept. 1949 hardly any thefts occurred in the camp, a large portion of returnees have been stolen from since Sept. 1949. All evidence points to the thefts having been carried out by the DPs and foreigners [infiltrrees].” In early November 1949, the camp detained three ex-DPs in connection to stealing pigs from a neighboring village. A week later, an official in Hannover asked his refugee ministry superiors for directions in light of “the hold-up of an automobile by DPs from the camp and numerous thefts and burglaries.” In December, a Czech resident was expelled from the camp and arrested, because “evidence in many cases of baggage theft from returnees pointed to him.” In another case, a Hungarian man helped four German girls flee from the camp before they could be returned to the Soviet zone.

Violence or threats of violence against fellow residents and camp staffers were a more serious problem. The confines of the camp surely exacerbated interpersonal quarrels, and political disagreements along with resentments between the various nationalities also caused conflict. Simmering tensions in the camp and surrounding community boiled over in March 1951. On March 10, a group of foreigners and members of the Sports Club Friedland brawled in front of an inn. Later in the evening, some of the foreigners ambushed and injured a camp

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598 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 31 December 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 158/94 Nr. 24, NHStA.

599 Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 5 November 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

600 Ibid.

601 Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 14 December 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

602 Besondere Vorkommnisse, 27 October 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.
employee who belonged to the club but had not participated in the initial fight. During the night, they “disturbed” the camp’s employee housing area. On March 15, a Mongolian named Badma K. fought with an Operation Link resettler in a cantina run by the camp charities. That night, Badma broke into the closed cantina and threatened a night-shift employee with a knife. Having recounted these events in a memorandum to Hannover officials, assistant camp director Hans Thederan warned that the relationship between foreigners and Operation Link resettlers was “often tense.” He noted that the camp administration asked the local police station to always keep two officers on duty for such instances.603

The case of Czesław S. illustrates just how much trouble a single volatile individual could cause. Born in 1925, Czesław was a Pole who had been deported to Siberia with his mother and father after the Soviet Union’s invasion of Poland in 1939. Czesław was sent with a military unit (presumably as part of the Armia Ludowa) to Lublin in 1944, and he was garrisoned at Rzeszów from 1945 until his desertion in 1948. After crossing into the British sector at Ratzeburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Czesław registered himself with British authorities. He bounced between DP camps and an American guard unit before arriving at Friedland in February 1951.604 A fellow resident, Leopoto, alleged that Czesław ruled his barracks and threw out anyone opposed to communism. On May 13, Czesław and Leopoto were in a heated argument when Czesław struck him with a fist and then a chair. Allegedly, Czesław grabbed a knife and threatened to kill Leopoto, whereupon Leopoto grabbed a fire iron to defend himself. Czesław stabbed Leopoto, but he survived even though other residents barred his exit for about 5 minutes.

603 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten, 17 March 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

604 Vernehmung Czesław S., 6 April 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 471, NHStA.
Later, Czesław’s threatened to “stab in the heart” anyone who accused him of spreading communist propaganda and spying for the Russians.\(^{605}\)

Despite the fight and stabbing, Czesław remained at Friedland or returned sometime during the summer. When the sub-camp director confronted him about removing a bed from the barracks in August, Czesław replied that it was no concern for administrators because, “We live here, not you. We will arrange the beds how we like.”\(^{606}\) In October, Czesław fought with another resident for reasons unknown to the camp administration, and both men sustained head injuries. Unfazed, Czesław brawled with three men the next day, which stemmed from one of the men’s desire to “create difficulties” for Badma K.\(^{607}\) Czesław finally received a prison sentence in connection with the last fight, though one of the parties complained that it was “too light.”\(^{608}\)

Thefts and violence at Friedland fit into what German and occupation officials saw as a problem of DP criminality. According to Christopher Knowles, British officers “found their sympathies lay increasingly with the local German population and came to share the Germans’ perception of DPs as lawless troublemakers.” At the August 1945 Corps Commanders Conference, Montgomery ordered that despite sympathy for victims of the Nazi regime, the “present looting and murder by Poles and Russian DPs must be stopped by ruthless means. Soldiers must shoot to kill.”\(^{609}\) American intelligence reports from April 1950 included the results from a study conducted by a Caritas publication for Germans expelled from Hungary. The journal, *Unsere Post*, found that the crime rate for foreigners was 316 cases per 100,000 persons,

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\(^{605}\) Besondere Vorkommnisse, 22 May 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

\(^{606}\) Besondere Vorkommnisse, 10 August 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

\(^{607}\) Besondere Vorkommnisse, 24 October 1951, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

\(^{608}\) Polizei Revier Friedland to Lagerleitung Friedland, 3 January 1952, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

\(^{609}\) Knowles, “Winning the Peace,” 53.
while native Germans and expellees respectively accounted for 254 and 108 cases. Foreigners particularly outpaced Germans in petty thefts, black-marketeering, and other economic crimes. The report also noted that the return of former DPs after emigration to other countries had stoked German resentment toward them.610

Although DPs and other foreign nationals clearly did commit crimes at Friedland and elsewhere in Germany, several factors contextualize the impression that DPs were exceptionally prone to criminal activity. First, as Atina Grossmann argues, German police harassed and arrested DPs for petty offenses and black market trade. Targeting by police would help to explain why the arrest rates for Germans and DPs were most disparate for petty larceny and economic crimes. Second was a sense of having nothing to lose, which Grossmann evokes in a DP leader’s description of facing “the bitter yesterday, the bad to-day, and the hopeless tomorrow.” DPs were confronted with an indefinite stay at Friedland, a camp with relatively primitive quarters and a camp administration that clearly did not want to house them. Those conditions surely led to frustration, resentment, and lashing out, particularly if they felt they had no future in German communities anyway. Finally, there was the issue of what types of people had survived to become DPs. According to Grossmann, “most observers concluded that the ‘uprooted were not fit now to take their places in a normal, law-abiding society.’” Outside observers thought that the “survival of the fittest” did not select for individuals compatible with normal society. DP leaders believed that the survivors were deeply marked: “worse than the visible scars and injuries they bear are the hurts which they carry on the inside.”611

610 Intelligence Summary for Headquarters European Command, 25 April 1950, 726A.00/5-150, NARA.

611 Grossmann, Jews, Germans, and Allies, 156-158.
It is also worth pointing out that German populations in the camp committed thefts and acts of violence as well. Refugees, returnees, and adolescents in Friedland’s youth sub-camp traded with and stole from each other and camp employees. Krause’s reformation of the camp staff had been in response to employees’ participation in those very crimes. The camp administration also needed to call for reinforcement from the town’s police force during a dispute with returnees. On July 5, 1948, the British commandant ordered the arrest of three women who had crossed over from the Soviet zone to trade currency. The women’s arrest angered returnees from England waiting to cross into the Soviet zone. A large group of returnees gathered in front of the camp police barracks, cursing them and demanding the women’s release. The camp administration called the town police force for help, and they resolved the situation by ordering the returnees back to their own barracks.\(^6\)

The camp administration also admitted to authorities in Hildesheim that it could not prevent returnees’ arguments from escalating into fights. The fights typically occurred shortly after crossing the border and involved returnees who had held leadership positions or received special treatment in prison camps. Although left unstated in the memorandum, these fights were clearly cases of revenge. One of these disputes developed into a “serious brawl” on September 5, 1949. By the time the camp police could intervene, one of the pugilists was so badly injured that a camp doctor feared he had suffered skull fracture.\(^7\)

The primary argument for relieving Friedland of the obligation to house ex-DPs and infiltrees was their criminality, but German administrators made two more arguments to that effect. First was the issue of supplies. In 1950, the directors of the camp charities wrote to

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\(^6\) [Besondere Vorkommnisse, 9 July 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.](#)

\(^7\) [Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 12 October 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.](#)
ministerial officials in Hannover to demand the removal of the “asocial element.” In addition to noting that 60 percent of the foreigners had previous convictions, the signatories complained bitterly that the foreigners claimed items from the limited clothing donations available for German refugees and resettlers only to sell them and buy alcohol with the profits.614

Summarizing the proceedings of a 1952 conference on the foreigner question, the directors of Caritas, Innere Mission, Arbeiterwohlfahrt (Workers’ Welfare Organization), and the German Red Cross explained that they had tried to help the foreigners “out of a self-explanatory demand of Christian charity.” Serious difficulties, however, emerged almost immediately. The charity directors grumbled that the foreigners “no longer approached solicitously [als Bittende] but instead made demands by claiming a right to support.“ According to the signatories, it was “pointless” to try to convince the foreigners that donations from charities abroad were insufficient to meet their demands. They again expressed frustration that the foreigners then exchanged the clothing and other donated goods for alcohol, only to return and demand more from the charities. Thus, aside from issues of over criminality, the charity directors protested that there were “sleazy” (heruntergekommen) individuals among the foreigners who “all too easily smother the good elements.”615

The second argument for removing the foreigners was that it was wrong for the British to force the camp to care for foreign nationals while denying entry to German resettlers. The charities’ 1950 complaint letter written in the midst of the Operation Link crisis cast the issue in terms of national self-defense and sovereignty. For the charities, the removal of ex-DPs and

614 Wohlfahrtsverbände Friedland to Flüchtlingsminister Albertz, 22 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

615 Bericht über eine am 29.1.1952 im Lager Friedland stattgefandene Sitzung, 29 January 1952, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 95, NHStA.
infiltrees from the camp was a necessary step toward an end goal of “the entirety leaving Germany as soon as possible.” They found it unacceptable that a “decree by the non-German ruling power” forced them to watch “our fellow German” (deutsche Mitmenschen) waiting at the border. Worse, in the signatories’ view, was the presence and proliferation of foreign “drones [Drohnen] and mostly asocial elements” in Germany. They suggested that the disputed entry of Germans into the fatherland could easily be resolved if the foreigners were to leave the “overpopulated German country.” The charity directors defended their exclusionary, nationalist views by claiming the right to self-defense: “This is simply an act of self-defense [Notwehr], which every human is permitted under natural and formal rights and which should be also be allowed for a people fighting for its life [einem um sein Leben ringendem Volk].”

The camp’s British commandant and his superiors in the British Army of the Rhine also tried to force relocation of the ex-DPs and infiltrees in early 1950. For the British military, the troublesome foreigners endangered what it considered to be the more important task of registering and demobilizing German POWs from Eastern Europe. On January 7, Major Middlemas ordered the German administration to clear the camp of all ex-DPs and infiltrees. He gave them until noon of January 9 to complete the task. Before the camp could act, the British authorities with the Control Commission for Germany (CCG) in Hannover forced Middlemas to rescind his order. From the perspective of the CCG, Middlemas had no right to order their removal, because the foreign populations were housed in the German administered portion of the camp that fell under the CCG’s remit. The CCG won its initial dispute with the military by allowing that the Rhine Army was welcome to restrict its part of the camp to returnees only, but

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616 Wohlfahrtsverbände Friedland to Flüchtlingsminister Albertz, 22 March 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
CCG officials insisted that the part under German administration was to continue housing the foreign populations.\textsuperscript{617}

Although Rhine Army agreed to such a division, it nevertheless sought a way to force the foreign populations out of Friedland entirely. Middlemas and his superiors knew that they could not compel German authorities to resolve the problem by settling the foreign populations in Lower Saxony. So, in late January 1950, the army began threatening to requisition the entire camp, which would enable it to expel the ex-DPs and infiltrees. As the refugee ministry official overseeing Friedland explained, such a requisition would close to the camp to the soon-arriving Operation Link resettlers. German officials could not simply shift the resettlement program elsewhere, because there was no other suitable camp available in Lower Saxony or other states. The German camp administration and its higher authorities wanted to remove the foreigners from Friedland, but that price was too steep. In a sign of frustration, the official closed his remarks by noting, “It would be a simple matter [\textit{ein Leichtes}] for the military government to order the accommodation of infiltrees in the ample available space at their disposal in DP camps.”\textsuperscript{618} The army never followed through on its threat to requisition the camp, but it is not clear if the officers had been bluffing or if German or British officials convinced them not to take that step. In any event, the fact that the camp was caught in a dispute between British offices in a manner threatening the arrival of resettlers helps to contextualize the demands for autonomy in dealing with foreigners and resettlers.

Conflict between the Rhine Army, IRO, and German administrators played out at the camp level for years after the army stopped its attempts at removing the foreigners wholesale. As

\textsuperscript{617} Vermerk by Regierungsdirektor Lange, 12 January 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{618} Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 31 January 1950, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
he had done since the arrival of the first ex-DPs and infiltrates 1949, Middlemas expelled troublemakers on an individual basis. For example, when two Czech nationals were arrested for thefts of returnees’ luggage, Middlemas secured permission from IRO offices in Hannover for their expulsion from the camp. The IRO agreed to the measure because the two men had broken camp rules.619

The problem was that the refugee ministry sometimes had nowhere else to put persons removed from the camp. In late May or early 1951, Middlemas expelled a Polish man named Jan S., who had committed unspecified offences against camp rules. The IRO sent Jan’s case back to the state refugee ministry, which lacked an alternative camp to Friedland and negotiated for a camp near Nürnberg to accommodate him. Jan had either lost or destroyed the letter containing that directive when he returned to Friedland to retrieve his belongings. Believing that the refugee ministry had meant to accommodate Jan at Friedland again, the camp reregistered him.620 Middlemas was furious and wrote official complaints to the Land Commission Office (LCO) of the Rhine Army in Hannover and the German camp administration. According to the LCO, Middlemas saw Jan as “more than an annoyance and [thought] that he undermined the German camp director,” so he demanded Jan’s immediate removal.621 Middlemas’s strong reaction must have been fueled by feeling undercut by both British and German offices, as evidenced by Thederan’s explanation to refugee officials that the whole affair was a “question of prestige” for

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619 Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlinge, 14 December 1949, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

620 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge to Land Commission Office BAOR Hannover, 12 June 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.

621 Land Commission Office BAOR Hannover to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge, 1 June 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
the commandant. Having sorted out the misunderstanding, the camp administration sent Jan along to the Valka camp in Bavaria. Refugee ministry officials took the incident as an opportunity to complain to the Federal Expellee Ministry that the British POW discharge unit at Friedland was “superfluous” and should be dissolved.

The dispute over housing foreigners at Friedland finally came to an end in the summer of 1952. At that point, there was enough private housing and space in residential camps that Lower Saxon officials could relieve Friedland of the responsibility. In August, administrators sent the last 36 foreigners to a residential camp in Seedorf, a community midway between Bremen and Hamburg. Friedland had become home to the roughly 2,000 foreign nationals between 1949 and 1952 in large part because no one wanted to take responsibility for them. To be sure, some of the ex-DPs and infiltrees proved so troublesome that even the most patient, sympathetic person would find it difficult to help them. The presence of former convicts among the foreigners probably made the population more difficult than was typical for DPs, a group that Germans and other Western Europeans already viewed with wariness. British officers and German authorities at Friedland had little patience and sympathy for these foreigners. German officials in particular saw them as a burdensome imposition that made the task of accepting and aiding fellow Germans more difficult, which led to a feedback loop of mutual resentment.

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622 Aktennotiz zum Schreiben der 2.PWDC vom 18.5.1951, 25 May 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
623 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Flüchtlinge to Land Commission Office BAOR Hannover, 12 June 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 472, NHStA.
624 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 49.
625 Niedersächsischer Minister der Innern to Niedersächsischen Minister für Flüchtlinge, 26 August 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.
Conclusions

The Friedland camp’s successes and difficulties in handling returning prisoners of war, German resettlers from Poland, and former DPs and infiltrees lead to several conclusions about what made Friedland an effective institution. The camp was extraordinarily successful at providing immediate aid, registering, and redistributing uprooted individuals. Particularly for POWs, whether returning to homes in West or East Germany, the camp was an efficient conduit between the estranged states. Hundreds of thousands of returnees spent less than 24 hours between arrival at Friedland and departure to their new homes following medical care, distribution of donated clothing, and their registration into special welfare class. Despite British fears, the camp also met the challenge presented by influx of resettlers from Poland by quickly processing and sending them to their families or other communities. These communities could thank the camp and its regulatory distribution schemes for taming displacement, thereby making the reception and accommodation easier.

Difficulties with the camp’s foreign populations in particular show that Friedland relied on cooperative receiving communities as much as the communities relied on the camp. Certainly there were difficult individuals among those foreigners, though returnees and resettlers had their share of difficult persons as well. Yet, Friedland had difficulty coping when communities refused or delayed acceptance of people from the camp. In the case of the ex-DPs and infiltrees, refugee officials for Lower Saxony acted on behalf of the state’s communities by refusing to accept the foreigners en masse as was the case for returnees and resettlers. Penning up the foreign populations exacerbated tensions by exposing them to austere conditions that were fine for a day or week at a time but were not meant for indefinite habitation. Resettlement and integration into communities was the key to resolving the problems associated from displacement. Keeping
displaced individuals in camps only served to prolong and worsen problems because they had no real investment the camp serving as their temporary/indefinite accommodation.

These successes and failures in the partnership between camp and communities also depended on the interplay of nationalist and humanitarian sentiments. Resettling Germans proved to be a relatively easy matter because the receiving communities had a sense of obligation to care for their co-nationals. There were, of course, some difficulties. Returnees used that language of nationalism and humanitarianism in their complaints about problems finding work and housing, though those were also partly issues of expectations and making claims on the state. Communities also feared that they would be unable to accommodate German resettlers flooding in from Eastern Europe. Despite those fears, the need for some German community to receive them was never in question; it was a matter of regulating how many individuals went to which places. Faced with British refusal to allow resettlers entry to West Germany, politicians explicitly linked nation and humanitarian obligation in their arguments to accepting co-nationals waiting at the border.

National standards excluded non-German infiltrree and ex-DP populations from that humanitarian obligation. Of course, the camp charities did speak of altruism and needing to care for them, but it is telling that they used the language of Christian love for one’s neighbor as opposed to a nationally determined humanitarian obligation. German communities simply did not want to care for and integrate foreigners when other Germans were in need. To be fair, the British, French, Belgians, and other western countries did not want to take in DPs on a permanent basis either, and they used West Germany as a dumping ground for DPs. Thus, unlike in the case of the foreign nationals or various other refugee crises worldwide, what Friedland was
most successful in was the care of Germans who wanted to integrate into new communities and their distribution to communities willing to accommodate them.
CHAPTER 5
“POOR GERMAN YOUTH”: EFFORTS TO RESTORE ORDER THROUGH THE FRIEDLAND YOUTH RECEPTION CAMP

In the spring of 1946, camp authorities at Friedland already had begun to consider youths who illegally crossed the zonal border (*jugendliche Schwarzgänger*) as a significant problem. Surviving documents do not indicate when exactly in 1946 the German and British administrators at Friedland decided that the facility should address the problem of vagrant youths through the establishment of a dedicated sub-camp. In June 1946 the German camp staff drew up a planning document for the British authorities that outlined major repair and new construction projects that would be undertaken while the camp was temporarily closed during the summer. A youth camp did not appear among the construction projects, including work on running water, electricity, and a quarantine camp. Nevertheless, the document highlighted “the care and registration of youths passing through the camp, particularly men aged 15-19 years” as a “pressing problem.”

A combination of factors contributed to the breakdown of social control over youths in Germany beginning in late 1944 and lasting through the early postwar years. Foremost, the war had worked as a solvent on familial bonds. Files containing information on the individual youths at Friedland are replete with instances of fathers serving in the military who were absent at the front, in captivity as prisoners of war, missing, or dead. Mothers, often caring for multiple

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626 Aufstellung über Führung, Leistung und Bauvorhaben des Flüchtlingslagers Friedland, 15 June 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 13/1, NHStA.

627 See folders Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 49, NHStA.
children, navigated the demands of being a breadwinner and rebuilding the destroyed cities.\textsuperscript{628} Especially for families living in the path of the advancing Red Army, the chaos of flight and later expulsions also separated children from parental authority.

Various Nazi programs and organizations had further destabilized the cohesiveness of families. For boys, the Hitler Youth offered a form of social organization separate from traditional loci of the family and school, and, moreover, it also separated youths from their homes with camp programs.\textsuperscript{629} The wartime evacuation of children from areas in particular danger from air raids also affected children from ages 3 to 14. The National Socialist People’s Welfare (\textit{Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt}) placed young children aged 3 to 10 years with host families, while the Hitler Youth took authority over male youths 10 to 14 years old.\textsuperscript{630} The League of German Girls (\textit{Bund Deutscher Mädel}) likewise challenged parental authority and drafted young women into service as nurses or for service in rural areas. Furthermore, as the fighting capacity of Germany’s military diminished, the Volkssturm drew in more and more male youths. With the defeat of the Nazi regime and disbandment of military formations, these centers of authority likewise collapsed.

As a result of dislocation and the dissolution of authority over youths, the period lasting from roughly 1944 to 1947 was one of unprecedented freedom for many adolescent Germans. It was also a time in which adult authorities (parents, social workers, police, politicians, and the like) worried about a perceived crisis of growing criminality and depravity. Looking back on that period of independence from adults, many Berliners interviewed by Kimberly Redding


\textsuperscript{629} Peter Fritzsche, \textit{Life and Death in the Third Reich} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 96-108.

\textsuperscript{630} Julie Torrie, “\textit{For Their Own Good}”: \textit{Civilian Evacuations in Germany and France, 1939-1945} (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 52.
described 1944 to 1947 as “lovely childhood years” (schöne Kinderjahre). She found that their primary concerns had been “meeting their personal needs without getting caught.” Yet, what the adolescents understood as meeting personal needs too often was black-marketeering and theft in the eyes of authorities. From the perspective of adult authorities, adolescents freed of social control became “young lawbreakers [who were] both products and perpetuators of immorality and lawlessness.”

Establishment of the Youth Reception Camp

The movement of vagrant or unaccompanied youths in the border area near Friedland therefore posed three problems for the camp. First, the border region had become increasingly violent in 1946 and 1947. In 1946, the regional police reports showed local disquiet over the murder of the Baron of Uslar-Gleichen between the border and Göttingen. The police reports likewise noted concern over roving criminal gangs. The gang problem and the arrival of supposedly uprooted, directionless young men surely fed off of each other in fueling locals’ fears. Second, once the police or other authorities apprehended vagrant youths, there remained the question of how such an individual should be classified (a refugee, an illegal border-crosser, or something else). Third, there was a question of who actually held legal guardianship for these youths. The camp was meant for the rapid redistribution of displaced populations according to a system of classification and quotas. But the issue of family reunification, which typically

631 Kimberly Redding, Growing up in Hitler’s Shadow: Remembering Youth in Postwar Berlin (Westport: Praeger, 2004), 99-100.

632 Ibid., 99.

633 Bericht über Regierungsgeschäfte, July 1946, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 3, NHStA. On other violent crimes see reports in Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 40/51 Nr. 5; Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 34; and Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA. The local tabloid press also published sensational accounts of the dangers. Cf. “Achtung, Grenzgänger!” Abendpost, 19 January 1948; “Grenzpolizei an der Arbeit,” Abendpost, 9 February 1948; and “Mit Knüppeln und Pistolen,” Abendpost, 25 March 1948.
simplified the question of where to send individuals, threatened to create confusion and delays in the cases of youths whose families were missing or remained resident in the Soviet zone. Thus, it was necessary for the camp to establish a dedicated facility that could house the youths for longer periods while it sorted out questions of guardianship and family reunification or work placements.

The decision to intervene in the youth problem also stemmed from the combination of humanitarian and regulatory concerns. In a 1948 letter in which camp director Richard Krause discussed the founding of the youth camp within context of the camp’s early operations, he tied together the two issues, arguing, “Moreover, it became evident that young illegal border-crossers simply out of humanitarian reasons could not be rushed onto the street nor be driven into the army of the black market.” As Krause likewise noted in the letter to *Hannover’sche Presse* explaining the detention of vagrant youths at Friedland, intervention by the camp to settle vagrants in orderly families and professions was in the best interests of the individual while also curtailing the beginning of a “criminal career.”

The Hildesheim District Refugee Authority (*Bezirksflüchtlingsamt*) overseeing the Friedland camp, however, initially opposed the development of a youth camp. According to a memorandum written by the youth camp director Gerhard Rüpprich, the refugee authority felt that such a youth camp lay beyond the responsibilities of a camp meant for the quick acceptance, registration, and redistribution of people crossing the zonal boundaries. Presumably, the refugee authority would have preferred that the camp hand over the young male border-crossers

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634 Krause to Lindemann, 20 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.


to the competent youth authority for the district rather than become bogged down in their longer-term housing and care. This point of dispute seems to have continued throughout the youth camp’s existence. The sub-camp closed in 1951, because the Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees felt that the youth camp had taken on the “character of a residential facility” such that “it no longer served the demands of a transit camp” and could be relieved of state support.⁶³⁷

Despite the Hildesheim District Refugee Authority’s objections to the establishment of the dedicated youth sub-camp, Krause ultimately prevailed with the help of the British Salvation Army and the Innere Mission. In his memorandum to the Innere Mission, Rüpprich argued that it was Krause’s tenacity that had made possible the erection of the youth camp. He also noted the importance of the Salvation Army allowing the use of a barracks it owned and the commitment of 6,000 RM by the Innere Mission for the construction and running costs of the facility.⁶³⁸ Krause likewise commented that construction of the youth camp had taken half a year because of “material difficulties and a scarcity of understanding on the part of German authorities.”⁶³⁹ As such, it seems that Krause was able to win approval for the construction and running of the youth camp as long as the material and financial costs would not be borne by the district or state governments.

Supporters of the project within the Innere Mission justified the significant financial commitment for the establishment and staffing of the youth camp in terms of prestige and maintaining the organization’s reputation. In his memorandum, Rüpprich argued for the Innere Mission’s continued involvement, because he felt that another organization such as the German

⁶³⁷ Letter from Oberregierungsrat Lange to Bundesminister des Innern, 8 January 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399. NHStA.

⁶³⁸ Rüpprich, “Bemerkungen…,” 29 April 1949, KKA.

⁶³⁹ Krause to Lindemann, 20 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 97, NHStA.
Red Cross, YMCA, or Catholic Caritas would be eager to step in and take the Innere Mission’s place. Rüpprich warned that an abandonment of their commitment would be “shameful for us” and lead to a “lessening of our reputation in the eyes of the Catholic Church and the foreigners.”640 Concerns about being seen as contributing less than the Catholic Church and Caritas played an important role in justifying the local Innere Mission organization’s involvement in the Youth Camp. In a 1950 letter from the Göttingen Innere Mission leadership to Bishop Johannes Lilje in Hannover, the author lamented that the Catholic Church had been the first to conceive of building a refugee settlement in the town of Friedland and that such an undertaking was presently beyond the capacity of the Innere Mission. The author nevertheless defended the Innere Mission’s work with the example of the youth camp as particularly noteworthy.641 Thus, reputational concerns and inter-confessional rivalry at the Friedland camp played a role in the Innere Mission making available the funding and personnel necessary to run the youth camp from its inception through its final year of operation.

Despite the financial commitments by the Innere Mission, it was Camp Director Krause who had final authority for operation of the youth camp when the sub-camp opened in January 1947. Indeed, he seems to have taken a great interest in the youth camp, and he wrote all official correspondence between the camp and the youths’ families. Krause seems to have worked in such close concert with the Innere Mission that the lines of authority and, indeed, the ownership of the youth camp were blurred. It took until an April 1948 meeting between the District Refugee Authority, the camp leadership, the youth camp leadership, the British Salvation Army, and representatives of the Innere Mission to officially clarify that Krause, as a representative of

640 Rüpprich, “Bemerkungen…,” 29 April 1949, KKA.
641 Letter to Bischof Lilje, 17 February 1950, KKA.
Lower Saxon refugee authorities, directed a youth camp staff whose paid members and volunteers were nevertheless employees of the Innere Mission and Protestant Church.\textsuperscript{642}

Under Krause stood the official director of the youth camp, Gerhard Rüpprich. Originally from Silesia, Rüpprich had been a Protestant pastor. He had joined the Nazi Party in May 1933, and had been active as a congregation leader for the pro-Nazi \textit{Deutsche Christen} movement. In de-Nazification proceedings Rüpprich claimed that he joined the Nazi Party in order to remain active in various local social welfare programs. He further explained his membership in the \textit{Deutsche Christen} as following from the desire to overcome divisions within German Protestantism and to use works by German writers and poets in sermons. According to him, he left the priesthood in 1940 and the Church in 1944 out of despair for overcoming confessional divisions and instead devoted himself vocationally to youth care. After release by the Russians from a brief internment as a POW, Rüpprich came to the Göttingen area in 1945 and began working as a laborer in the camp. It appears that his connections with the local organization of the Innere Mission helped to secure his directorship of the youth camp.\textsuperscript{643} As director of the youth camp, Rüpprich interviewed arrivals about their personal histories and future plans, worked with youth homes to find placements for the youths, and oversaw a small paid staff trained in youth pedagogy as well as occasional interns studying youth care.

\textbf{Operation of the Youth Camp and Daily Life}

The administration at the Friedland camp pursued two goals in their operation of the youth reception camp (\textit{Jugendauffanglager} or JAL, as it was officially termed). First and most

\textsuperscript{642} Niederschrift über eine am 16.4.1948 stattgefundene Besprechung über das Jugend-Auffanglager im Flüchtlingslager Friedland/Leine, 16 April 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105 (323-25), NHStA.

\textsuperscript{643} See the Fragebogen for Gerhard Rüpprich, 14 October 1946; the Opinion and Action Sheets of the de-Nazification committee respectively from 5 February and 12 March 1947; and transcript of testimony at a dismissal hearing, dated 21 April 1947, Nds. 171 Hildesheim 30001. NHStA.
immediately, the youth camp was supposed to resolve the question of what to do with unsupervised underage persons crossing into the British zone or who had been found in the surrounding region and who were suspected to have crossed over from the Soviet zone. As the border transit camp, the facility at Friedland was responsible for categorizing incoming populations so that they could be distributed to Lower Saxony and, later, the British zone and West German Länder according to rules set by higher British and German authorities. Youths crossing the border or traveling in the border region for myriad reasons (traveling to or searching for family, seeking work in the West, trade/smuggling, and adventure, among others) naturally fell within the camp’s remit as a population needing to be processed at a transit camp.

Because there was no youth or adolescent category, staffers needed to assess the youths in order to determine their proper categorization and subsequent distribution. For example, whereas a refugee seeking his family residing in the Western zones would most likely be reunited with them, other individuals such as work-seekers or adventurers who had left home without their guardians’ permission needed to be returned across the border. As such, the camp needed dedicated facilities to house the youths while its staffers worked to resolve such details, from initial questioning through consultation with parents and youth offices to the final determination of where to send the youth in question.

The second goal for the youth camp was to make an intervention in the youths’ lives and disrupt a cycle of escaping adult authority and wandering. The impetus for this sort of intervention stemmed from a combination of regulatory and humanitarian concerns. As previously noted, the camp administration not only feared that unsupervised adolescents might contribute to criminality, but they also felt that it was a humanitarian imperative to save youths from a way of life harmful to society and the youths themselves. Intervention at Friedland
involved much more than providing food, medical care, and shelter, though naturally those were priorities as well. The camp took youths into custody and through a variety of means it could once again place youths under competent authorities, whether those were family, non-family guardians, or work placements. Thus, the preexisting resources at the disposal of camp administrators, including communications, search services, and networks of charitable organizations, could be brought to bear on the youth problematic.

The ultimate purpose of such intervention was for the camp to help restore social order by transforming vagrant youths into hardworking, productive members of society. To that end, the youth camp operated as a kind of pedagogical space for reforming bad behaviors and instilling traditional values, such as hard work, frugality, and comradeship. Although the JAL operated under the transit camp’s principle of settling individuals elsewhere as quickly as possible, when youths were in the camp the administrators worked hard to teach them to be good members of society. That meant fostering a sense of personal responsibility and respect for others, as well as contributing to their academic and vocational education. To accomplish those goals, not to mention helping to ease the burdens of running the sub-camp, the camp administrators put their charges under strict rules, found work for them in the camp and for local tradesmen and farmers, and closely observed how the individual youths interacted with each other.

When an unaccompanied minor arrived at Friedland, the camp’s staff pulled him or her out of the general camp population and began resolving the question of the youth’s status. Once the youth had been separated, members of the JAL staff would question him or her ascertain his or her background. In most cases, the youths also wrote a brief summary of their lives up to that point (*Lebenslauf*). From there, the camp administration went about resolving the question of
guardianship, typically starting with letters to the adolescent’s parents, other kin, or sometimes the responsible youth office. In these communications, the camp authorities reported the youth’s explanation for his or her vagrancy and arrival at the camp. The letters also related the youth’s wishes for the immediate future, such as a work placement or family reunification. At the end of the letters, they inquired what the responsible person wished for the camp to do with the youth. Typically that meant asking whether there was a place for the youth at home and if he should be sent there or found a placement with an employer or other youth home.⁶⁴⁴

While the camp staff communicated with families, youth offices, and prospective employers, adolescents resided in the youth camp where they faced a tightly regulated life under house rules (*Hausordnung*). Indeed, the *Hausordnung* underscores efforts to control the youths in the camp and how new lives for adolescent males would be based upon productivity and the order of gainful employment. To begin with, the youth camp administrators required residents to work within the camp or for farmers or artisans in the surrounding area. Residents were responsible for keeping their beds and the common living areas clean and orderly. Any trading, buying, or selling of items was prohibited in the attempt to prevent the development of a black market, and violations would be reported to the camp police. Smoking and disorderly behavior were also strictly forbidden. Finally, youth camp residents faced a curfew from nine at night to six in the morning, during which they had to remain in the dormitory area.⁶⁴⁵

There was, of course, a gap between the rules’ prescriptions and actual behavior. Illicit trade amongst the JAL residents and also between JAL residents and members of the camp’s

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⁶⁴⁴ See folders Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 49, NHStA, for interview summaries and various notes taken by staff, *Lebensläufe* written by residents after their arrival, and correspondence between camp authorities and parents, legal guardians and Jugendämter.

⁶⁴⁵ *Hausordnung für das Jugendheim*, n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 30, NHStA.
general population was an ongoing problem. Incident reports and confessions from youths indicate that in addition to buying and selling items for currency, the most common barter materials were clothing, food, and cigarettes.\textsuperscript{646} Illicit trade in the camp was especially problematic because it encouraged pilfering of camp resources and theft from other residents.\textsuperscript{647} Smoking was another common rule violation that frustrated the youth camp staffers, because they felt that cigarettes were a frivolous waste of the wages youths earned in addition to damaging the youths’ health. One instance that stands out from the records was Rüprich’s annoyance with a resident who continued to smoke in spite of a tuberculosis infection and repeated warnings that smoking while suffering from such an infection was particularly damaging.\textsuperscript{648} In cases of serious or repeated violations of the house rules, the camp expelled residents back to the Soviet zone.

An examination of the weekly planned schedules between 1947 and 1948 shows that, with the exception of Sundays, the youths typically awoke by 6:15 in the morning, worked in or near the camp, and cleaned. When youth camp residents attended classes, the lessons concentrated on religious instruction or practical knowledge, such as geography or reading and discussing newspapers. Physical health was also important, and the schedules devoted at least several hours per week to gymnastics, sports, and personal hygiene. As a result of these efforts to provide work experience, a practical education, and cultivate physical and spiritual health,

\textsuperscript{646} See for instance, “Bericht über Tauschgeschäfte im Jugendlager,” n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 40, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{647} For example, see memo on “Besondere Vorkommnisse” 24 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 47; several confessions from youths caught breaking into an administration building, 13 October 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 45, NHStA; and the interrogation transcript of a JAL resident who stole and sold clothing from his comrades, “Vernehmung,” 20 February 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 40. NHStA.

\textsuperscript{648} See for instance records of violations of the house rules in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 40 and Nr. 42, NHStA.
residents had little unsupervised free time other than the occasional block mid-week or on
Sundays.\textsuperscript{649}

One aspect of the youths’ education that proved important was fostering their
development into good, democratic citizens. After all, the youth camp residents had mostly
grown up under Nazi rule and participated in Nazi youth organizations only to have their world
turned upside-down with Germany’s defeat in 1945. The time devoted to reading and discussing
current event in newspapers, for instance, suggests an attempt to lay the groundwork for the
adolescents’ eventual participation in an independent, critical public sphere.

The issue of political education, however, could also prove contentious when it came to
confronting Germany’s Nazi past and World War II. During April 1948, the youth camp
administration became embroiled in dispute over the adolescents singing Nazi youth songs. The
quarrel emerged when a volunteer in the camp named Staedtler sent a complaint about youth
camp director Gerhard Rüpprich to his superior, Friedland camp director Richard Krause.
According to Staedtler, a young deacon-in-training (\textit{Diakonpraktikant}) named Ehrenreich was
leading the adolescents in signing “old Nazi songs.” Staedtler did not specify the songs in
question, so it is difficult to ascertain if they were folk songs adopted and tainted by the Nazi
regime or if they were in fact overtly Nazi songs. In any case, when Staedtler challenged
Ehrenreich about the songs and his utterances of “Long live the \textit{Führer}!” and “\textit{Sieg Heil}!” the
young intern allegedly answered that democracy in Germany was absurd. Staedtler was likewise
upset by Rüpprich’s response when he demanded the youth camp director address the situation:

\textsuperscript{649} For weekly plans running from February 1947 to April 1948, see Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 38, NHStA.
“But he did not do that! In contrast, he wanted to push the blame [on me], because I had taken the situation (please note: the spirit of democracy) too seriously.”

Rüpprich defended his approach to the youths in pedagogical terms. According to a written statement by Rüpprich, when Staedtler first raised the concerns about the youths and the young intern he had calmly explained to Staedtler, “in such instances we did not interact with the youths through bans or scolding, because this would only increase their penchant for opposition [Oppositionslust], but instead clearly teach that the […] false successes of National Socialism were bought through unscrupulous politics that are also to blame for the monstrous hardship of the individual youth and his parents and the homeland.” Staedtler had apparently been unimpressed with Rüpprich’s position, instead feeling that such patience created the danger that “reactionary elements could gain a foothold and bring the fall of democracy for a second time.”

Despite Staedtler’s protestations, the camp administration ultimately sided with Rüpprich. In a special meeting of the camp leadership and a representative of the district youth office, these authorities reaffirmed the decision of the Innere Mission to sack Staedtler. Among their reasons, the committee agreed that Staedtler had technically been a volunteer of the Innere Mission rather than an employee of the camp, so the charity had the authority to dismiss him. Moreover, they argued that Staedtler had been out of line in his protests to the camp administration and, when those failed to produce the desired result, to the district de-Nazification commission. Finally, Major Mitchell of the British Salvation Army asserted that, as an adult

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650 Letter from Staedtler to Krause, 9 April 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

651 Copy of a statement by Rüpprich, n.d., Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 105, NHStA.

652 Niederschrift über eine am 16.4.1948 stattgefundene Besprechung über das Jugend-Auffanglager im Flüchtlingslager Friedland/Leine, 16 April 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.
authority figure, Staedtler should have been able to come to an understanding with Ehrenreich and that a direct and strict forbidding of such songs would have simply raised resistance from the youths. Although the youth camp leadership was not always hesitant to treat their charges strictly, in this case they felt a lighter touch was necessary to avoid hardening any anti-democratic feelings among the adolescents. Reading between the lines of the meeting’s notes, it further seems that Staedtler’s dismissal was most likely because he had proven himself to be too difficult of an employee.

**Vocational Training and Work Placements**

In addition to the political education of its residents, the Friedland youth camp also played an important role in the adolescents’ vocational training. As the *Hausordnung* stated, the youths were expected to contribute to their keep in the camp, but there was a further logic behind the compulsory labor than just paying for their expenses and avoiding disorder that might follow from idle hands. A portion of their earnings was withheld to pay for room and board, while further withholdings were placed in savings accounts to be accessed once residents moved out of the camp. The decision to allow the residents to keep the remainder as pocket money not only provided a reward for their labor, but it was presumably also meant to give them practice handling work responsibilities and money. Ideally, the youths’ labor would provide them further training and facilitate professional networks for their upcoming career.

The camp thus became something of a clearinghouse for matching young laborers with the employers. This fact was recognized both by industry in the form of work solicitations and the local labor office (*Arbeitsamt*), which felt compelled to remind camp director Krause that

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653 Ibid.
only it had the authority to parcel out laborers, no matter the age.\textsuperscript{654} Throughout 1948, the JAL was in a running dispute with local, regional, and state-level labor office administrators over the question of authority to give out work assignments. In a January letter sent from the Hildesheim District President (\textit{Regierungspräsident}) to various local labor offices and the JAL, the refugee authority forbade the JAL from overstepping the Göttingen Labor Office in finding work for youths in Lower Saxony. The administration likewise informed the JAL leadership it was “inappropriate” (\textit{unzweckmäßig}) for them to directly arrange jobs for youths with industry and labor offices in the Ruhr industrial region of North-Rhine Westphalia.\textsuperscript{655}

New rules regarding residence permits for all Soviet zone refugees in March 1948 further complicated the procurement of work and housing assignments for young refugees. On March 15, 1948, the Lower Saxon State Commissioner for Refugee Affairs (\textit{Staatskommissar für Flüchtlingswesen}) wrote that recent experiences had demonstrated that refugees from the Soviet zone could not find work or housing after temporary work assignments had ended. Nor did the commissioner think it was reasonable to expect them to return home to the Soviet zone. As such, the commissioner directed, “in order to avoid the temporarily accommodated persons becoming homeless at the end of their employment, in all future cases it must be determined if a residence permit is appropriate.”\textsuperscript{656} As such, the JAL became caught between competing demands.

Needing to maintain available spaces for newcomers, the JAL administrators were under pressure to secure housing and work for residents as quickly as possible and in accordance with

\textsuperscript{654} See, for instance, a labor solicitation from Rheinesches Stahlwerk for young, single males. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA. The folder Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 37 also contains many letters to the camp administration offering work and living space to young men and women arriving at Friedland.

\textsuperscript{655} Letter from Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Arbeitsämter Alfeld, Göttingen, Hildesheim, and Northheim and Flüchtlingslager Friedland, 5 January 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{656} Niedersächsische Staatskommissar für Flüchtlingswesen, “Ausstellung von vorübergehenden Aufenthaltsgenehmigungen,” 15 March 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.
labor office rules. Yet, in order to avoid simply shifting the problem of homelessness further down the road, the camp now needed to undertake the time-consuming measure of ensuring a residence permit for the youths.

The JAL administration considered this push-and-pull between directives untenable. In his letter responding to the commissioner, Krause asked for a special exception from the new regulations for the JAL and the youths it was resettling. According to him, the new regulations had slowed youths’ resettlement to the point that the JAL could no longer fulfill its mission. In order to justify an exception to the rules requiring a residence permit, Krause pointed to the specter of lawlessness and disorder. He argued that the implementation of the law would do nothing to prevent the youths from crossing into Lower Saxony nor cause them to return to the Soviet zone. The youths would instead find unlawful ways to care for themselves. In Krause’s telling, the proper function of the camp offered a much better alternative: “if one steers the honest elements [sauberen Elemente] to orderly paths, one can much better identify the dishonest elements [unlauteren Elemente] and steer them to places of departure, or, in the case of refugees from the East, hand them over to reform institutions.”

There is no record of an official response from the state commissioner, but it seems that the JAL administration pursued jobs and housing placements while trying to balance the demands of work office consultations and residence permits with needs of the camp and its residents. Such a balance proved difficult, and the Göttingen Labor Office once again wrote to the camp in November, calling on it to cease placing youths with employers. The labor official warned the camp that facilitating such placements had “no legal basis and was even punishable.” While the labor office was “obviously prepared to use all possible means to remedy the vagrant

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657 Draft of a letter from Krause to Niedersächsische Staatskommissar für Flüchtlingswesen, 9 April 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.
youths’ distress,” the official nevertheless demanded that all work placements be made solely through the labor office.658

To address the dispute, the JAL administration met with the County Youth Welfare Officer for Göttingen (Kreisjugendpfleger des Landkreises Göttingen), and a representative of the Göttingen Labor Office. In a subsequent statement to the Göttingen Labor Office, the JAL administrators steadfastly defended their practice of matching youths with employers. Krause explained that the camp was doing everything in its power to cope with the increased inflow of youths following the currency reform. Krause disputed the claim that the camp had behaved illegally in pursuing placements outside of the Göttingen Labor Office’s regional jurisdiction. According to Krause, too many jobs did not meet the “educational requirements” (erzieherische Anforderungen) necessary for the youths to take root in their new homes and workplaces. The JAL administration was therefore compelled to search on its own for such possibilities and to make all necessary legal arrangements with the competent local labor and youth authorities rather than with the Göttingen office.659

From the statement, it seems that despite the efforts of the youth welfare officer to find a middle ground, the camp and labor office could only reach an agreement in the week following the meeting. The statement sent from Friedland to the Göttingen Labor Office ended with four demands from the camp for continuing its cooperation with the agency. First, the labor office should send a caseworker to the camp who would handle all work placements for the City and County of Göttingen and who would provide for an equivalent placement in other regions if none was available within his jurisdiction. Second, Krause demanded recognition of the camp

658 Arbeitsamt Göttingen to Friedland Jugendauffanglager, 23 November 1948, Nds. 386. Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.

659 Friedland Jugendauffanglager to Arbeitsamt Göttingen, 10 December 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.
administration’s right to assess the educational quality of the placement before agreeing to the transfer. Third, the JAL would then be responsible for contacting the competent youth welfare organizations and for applying on behalf of the youth for a residence permit. Finally, the camp would instruct all employers in the legally correct course and suggest to them that they make the labor office aware of the open positions. It seems that the camp and labor office had reached an accord based on those demands, because the labor office made no further complaints and subsequent communications about youths’ work placements noted agreements between the labor offices for Göttingen and the respective local labor offices.

Much as the negotiations over procedures for finding work placements proved thorny, the example of an unsuccessful work placement in the summer of 1949 speaks to the difficulty of finding acceptable jobs and to the authorities’ impatience with problem youths. During August 1949, a youth camp worker, Pastor von Girard, brought the JAL into contact with the Protestant Church’s youth home in Solingen. Youth camp director Rüpprich asked the Solingen administrators to check with their local employment office about the possibilities of employing a number of young apprentices and journeymen, because the camp could no longer house them and “everything must be tried from here to settle them elsewhere.” The home’s administrators and Rüpprich then organized the transfer of eleven adolescents for whom no further vocational training or work placement could be arranged near the camp.

What initially appeared to be a normal, orderly transfer of youths from Friedland to an area capable of absorbing them was quickly upset when several of the adolescents demanded to return from Solingen to Friedland. In a letter sent with five youths back to Friedland, the

660 Ibid.
661 Rüpprich to Hilfswerk der Ev. Kirchen in Deutschland Synode Solingen, 17 August 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.
Solingen home’s director explained that these five youths under the direction of the “ringleaders” named Arlt and Wauer purportedly refused to stay in Solingen because living in Friedland had been cheaper and that certain unspecified promises had not been kept at their new home. Dismissing the youths’ complaints about wages and costs of living out of hand, the home director argued, “the reason for Arlt and comrades lies in their character, which appears to be ungovernable [zügellos].” He went on to ask what such youths actually expected from life, and he asserted, “these are youths who have earned to be treated harshly for once.” In doing so, one might still save the “poor German youth” that still want an orderly, productive life, such as the remaining youths from Friedland who refused to go along with Arlt and Wauer. 662

The comments about these adolescents from the Solingen home director are striking for their characterizations of two types of German youth. One notes the implication that some adolescents had been pampered and were in need of harsh discipline. This statement seems ironic at first glance, because many youths had lost almost everything in either expulsion, separation from their families in war, or fleeing from poor living and/or working conditions in the Soviet zone. 663 Yet, in its description of the offending adolescents and need to treat them harshly for once, the Solingen letter reproduced a language and fears of young never-do-wells who used the postwar disorder to slip away from parental authority and make easy money on the black market, all with the implicit danger of creating a more permanent criminal class. Moreover, the danger was particularly acute because the criminally minded youths exerted great influence over their otherwise honest comrades. Indeed, the Solingen home’s director felt that these particular youths

662 Hilfswerk der Ev. Kirchen in Deutschland Synode Solingen to JAL Friedland, 12 September 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.

663 See, for example, “Wandernde Jugendliche” Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 39; and the letter from the Evangelisches Hilfswerk Hannover to Gerhard Rüpprich, 26 September 1949, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 39, NHStA.
were “not capable of being inserted into a community,” whether at a home or in German society more broadly.\footnote{Hilfswerk der Ev. Kirchen in Deutschland Synode Solingen to JAL Friedland, 12 September 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.}

A handwritten note initialed by Rüpprich at the top of the Solingen letter suggests that he shared the concerns of the Solingen home’s administrators. Initially, Rüpprich ordered that Arlt and Wauer be separated and immediately reassigned to different work placements.\footnote{Ibid.} Rüpprich further assured the Solingen administration in a later letter that the offending individuals’ pay would be docked to reimburse the home for their travel expenses.\footnote{Letter from Rüpprich to Hilfswerk, 15 October 1949, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.} In the end, the camp took an even more punitive approach. Rather than finding further work placements for Arlt and Wauer, the camp expelled the two ringleaders back to the Soviet zone and scattered the rest of the returning youths among various other work placements in order to keep from the negatively influencing other JAL residents.\footnote{Hilfswerk der Ev. Kirchen in Deutschland Synode Solingen to JAL Friedland, 12 September 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.}

**Problem Cases, Punishment, and Trauma**

Forcible return to the Soviet zone therefore functioned as a tool for youth camp administrators for rule violations in the camp. Such expulsions were also a means to ensure that supposedly irredeemable problem youths would not take up resources including jobs and home placements that could be given more deserving ones. Unfortunately, it is not clear how common that practice was, because it seems that the youth camp did not keep statistics on forcible returns. Of the 874 adolescents housed in the youth camp between January 1947 and March 1951, the camp sent 96 youths back to the Soviet zone, but the reasons for their return could have been
disciplinary, family reunification, or some combination of the two. By contrast, the camp recorded 513 work placements, which were presumably successful insofar as the youths involved did not return to the camp.668

Figure 6: Distribution of Youths from the JAL669

While some youths were criminal, lazy, or adventurers, other youths may have suffered from psychological disorders. The case of one young man sent from Friedland to a youth home near Delmenhorst in 1949 illustrates that problem. Born in Hannover in 1930, Hans S. lost both of his parents during the war. His mother died in 1943, while his father had been missing since 1944. After living for a short period with his grandparents, Hans was institutionalized in a youth home near Göttingen, which sent him to the Friedland camp in 1947 for unknown reasons.670

668 See summary of youth camp’s history entitled “Jugendauffanglager,” Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 38, NHStA.

669 Ibid.

670 Name changed in accordance with document restrictions. Letter from JAL Friedland to Jugenddorf Adelheide/bei Delmenhorst, 12 January 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 58, NHStA.
The JAL found Hans an apprenticeship with an automobile mechanic in Göttingen, but the mechanic fired him in 1948, citing his repeated failure to come to work and their fear that he could damage the reputation of the firm as well as be a poor influence over the other apprentices. The mechanic further complained that repeated warnings, lectures, and threats had been unsuccessful in changing Hans’s behavior.671

Despite these problems, the camp authorities continued to work on Hans’s behalf, because they suspected that some kind of psychological disorder caused his poor behavior. In a letter to a youth home near Delmenhorst, the camp explained that the apprenticeship had fallen through and went on to note that Hans suffered from bedwetting and other uncleanliness. In camp, his laziness at work was worsening while he increasingly could not be trusted with money. Attempts to “free him of his illness” in the camp had come to naught, so the Friedland administrators hoped that intensive care at the youth facility might help him. The camp administrators’ remarkable patience with Hans in comparison to other poorly disciplined youths seems to have resulted from their belief, expressed in the letter, that his “considerable shortcomings in character can be attributed to physical illness.”672 Evidently the youth home refused to accept Hans, so the JAL continued to house him through the summer of 1949. The seemingly inexhaustible patience continued even after Hans took 10 DM in payment from an agent of the American intelligence services to question incoming refugees about events and conditions in the Soviet zone.673 Although the file does not include any indication of where the

671 Rüpprich, Bericht über meine Rücksprache mit der Firma Münstermann, 8 November 1948, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 58, NHStA.

672 Letter from JAL Friedland to Jugenddorf Adelheide/bei Delmenhorst, 12 January 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 58, NHStA.

673 Memoranda written by Rüpprich, 2 February 1949; and Krause, 3 August 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 58, NHStA.
camp ultimately sent him, Krause maintained that Hans would benefit from living with a strict family and therapy, because he remained capable of being influenced and taught (beeinflussbar and bildbar) so that “patience and care” were appropriate in his case.\(^{674}\)

Psychological problems likewise played a role in the failed placement of Otto D., which tragically ended in suicide by drowning in the Werra River.\(^{675}\) Otto had been born and raised in Königsberg/Kaliningrad. In the immediate aftermath of the war, according to his mother, Soviet authorities had imprisoned Otto and his mother for three and a half years.\(^{676}\) During that time, the Soviets forced him to labor on a farm, where he learned some Lithuanian.\(^{677}\) Thereafter, Otto lived with his mother in the Soviet zone. A work assignment to the Aue uranium mines in late 1948 or early 1949 set in motion Otto’s migration to the British zone. As part of the program “Kinder in die Westzone,” Otto flew from Berlin to somewhere in the British zone and was then brought to Friedland to be processed on 19 January 1949. Although Otto had a grandmother and an aunt living in the British zone, neither could care for him. The grandmother’s health was too fragile, according to JAL administrators, while for unknown reasons his aunt refused to care for him. The JAL administrators then found a work placement for Otto with a farmer family near Hannoversch-Münden, where he began living and working on February 12.\(^{678}\)

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\(^{674}\) Memorandum written by Krause, 3 August 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 58, NHStA.

\(^{675}\) Name changed in accordance with German privacy laws.

\(^{676}\) Letter from Frau H. to Richard Krause, 12 June 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.

\(^{677}\) In fact, according to one townsperson near the farm to which Otto was eventually sent near Hannoversch Münden, Otto cursed at the locals in Lithuanian he had learned during his forced labor. Letter from townsperson to Frau H., 11 April 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.

\(^{678}\) Letters from Krause to Otto’s aunt, 28 January 1949, and mother, 17 February 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.
What seemed to be a normal work and living placement turned sour within the following month. In letters to his mother written March, Otto complained about the cold, food, and work on the farm. In a letter from March 22, Otto noted that the local mayor had told him that his mother would likely need to wait six months for a residence permit in the West, so he asked her to cross into the West illegally rather than waiting. Two days later, he wrote to her again to ask that she cross the border illegally.679 A statement from a local woman likewise testified to Otto’s problems in the community. She said that he had been particularly rude to the farmer’s wife and called the farmer’s family gypsies and filthy pigs (Dreckschweine).680 In a memorandum written by Rüpprich following Otto’s death, he noted that Otto had personally visited him in the camp on March 25 to ask for advice, at which time Rüpprich had advised that he try to manage until the mother could obtain the necessary paperwork to take up residence in the West. Finally, in early April, the farmer wrote to the JAL to ask that the work placement be ended and that Otto return to Friedland.

Before Otto could be returned to Friedland, he took his own life. According to the last townsperson to see him alive, Frau K., Otto received notice on a Thursday that he was supposed to return to Friedland on the following Monday. On that Friday, Frau K. noted a radical change in Otto’s behavior (he was suddenly quiet and withdrawn), and he asked Frau K. to ferry him across the Werra in her boat. She assumed that he was wanted to travel to his grandmother, so she agreed. In a letter written to Otto’s mother, Frau K. described his death once they reached the middle of the river as well as her opinion of Otto’s reasons for committing suicide:

“So, he said that he could not go to his grandmother and he did not want to go back to Friedland. Then there was a plop and I turned around immediately. I did not see Otto

679 Letters from Otto to his mother on 22 and 24 March 1949. Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.
680 Letter from townsperson to Otto’s mother, 11 April 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.
anymore, and I immediately called for help. Otto surfaced 7 to 8 meters from my boat, so at an unreachable distance from me. He called, ‘[Frau K.], [Frau K.],’ and went right back under, because there was a strong current that day. Then I only saw his red jacket shimmering and then it was over. [The host farmer] as well as his son and an acquaintance came right away with a fishing boat, but it was already too late. They only found his hat […] We were all in shock. We could not believe the terrible thing that had just happened there. He could not have fallen in the water, because the boat is 85 centimeters tall. So, he can only have had the reason that he did not want to return to the camp. There is no other explanation for it.”

When the youth camp authorities learned of Otto’s death, they strenuously denied that return to the JAL could have motivated him to take his own life. The camp did not dispute that it was a case of suicide. Indeed, they confirmed to the youth welfare office in Hannoversch Münden that the local police had ruled the death “clearly a suicide.” The leadership at Friedland nevertheless asked the youth welfare office to investigate the death, contending that it was unreasonable for the townspeople and local government to assert that distress over returning to the camp had been the cause. Sometime after a conversation with the local mayor, Rüpprich wrote a memorandum explaining why the initial explanation of motivation for suicide was incorrect. He noted that Otto had come to seek his advice only a few weeks earlier. Rüpprich also explained they had not felt compelled to have Otto escorted to the camp, because he had been coming of his own free will. Moreover, Rüpprich pointed out that Otto had “confided in [another youth from the JAL], who was a fellow East Prussian compatriot [Landsmann], and had remarked that he wished to return to Friedland.” Rüpprich also found it unlikely that Otto feared a return to Friedland, because Otto was aware that a return would mean eventually reuniting with his mother. In fact, the camp leadership went so far as to ask Otto’s mother to provide them with

681 Ibid.
682 Letter from JAL to Jugendamt Hannoversch Münden, 20 April 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.
transcriptions of her correspondence with Otto to vindicate their assertions to the youth welfare office.683

The JAL leadership’s response to the suicide and subsequent allegations raises two further issues. First, it is worth noting that in this case like many others including unflattering press reports about general camp conditions or allegations about insufficient care for returning prisoners of war, the camp leadership jealously guarded the reputation of Friedland facility.684 Although it seems that there were never explicit allegations of wrongdoing, much less criminal allegations, the camp leadership understandably wanted to refute the implication that a young man found death preferable to returning to the camp. After all, the youth camp relied upon networks of youth welfare offices, youth homes, and other authorities, not to mention the trust of those institutions and youths’ parents/guardians. However strict the discipline or difficult the surroundings in the camp may have been, the administrators of the JAL strove to create a safe environment and they needed others to believe that the camp was a safe place for youths.

The second issue that stands out from this case is the role that trauma played in difficulties with work and living assignments for youths. The camp certainly housed and resettled difficult youths. In some cases, such as the failed settlement at the Solingen home, headstrong youths accustomed to having greater control in their lives due to the breakdown of familial and social authorities may well have been unreasonable in their expectations for housing, working conditions, and pay. It is nevertheless worth emphasizing that the destructive effects of war and population displacements, which caused that very breakdown of social control, must have also had profound effects on the psyches of these teenage men. In the case of

683 Although the memorandum is unsigned, the handwriting matches Gerhard Rüpprich’s script. “Vermerk,” n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 51, NHStA.

684 These other examples are discussed in chapter 3 and in chapter 6, respectively.
Otto D, for example, it hardly seems speculative to link the trauma of forced agricultural labor as a child to extreme difficulties living and working on a farm, where he was separated from his mother and surrounded by strangers.

**Youth Camp Demographics**

A prosopographical examination of 157 adolescents housed at Friedland during the first year of the JAL’s operation demonstrates the ongoing social effects of displacement and the complexities of refugee categories.\(^{685}\) These adolescents came almost exclusively from the Soviet zone, though a division existed between longtime residents of those territories and recently arrived expellees. The 82 youth camp residents with expulsion backgrounds constituted a majority (52 percent) of the overall population in comparison to the 68 youths (43 percent) who had been previously resident in Soviet zone territories. The remaining six youths resided during and after the war in the areas comprising the Western zones. Given that expellees accounted for roughly 25 percent of the overall population in the Soviet zone, their majority presence amongst the youths speaks to a lasting transitory status after the expulsion.\(^{686}\) The overrepresentation of youths with expulsion backgrounds perhaps can be explained by their having been less rooted in local communities. They may also have had a level of comfort or confidence in traveling to find a new home that came from familiarity with displacement. The chaotic shifting of populations during the war and early postwar years likely functioned as a further solvent to familial bonds that might otherwise have kept the adolescents sedentary (or under supervision during travels).

\(^{685}\) The fragmentary and incomplete nature of the files as well as variable forms of record keeping within the camp regarding individuals in the Friedland JAL makes a systematic sampling of the years 1947 to 1951 unmanageable. The 157 files in this case are comprised of interview summaries and various notes taken by staff, *Lebensläufe* written by residents after their arrival, and correspondence between camp authorities and parents, legal guardians and *Jugendämter*. Data compiled from folders Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 49, NHStA.

One JAL resident’s personal history encapsulates all three of those elements. This youth was born to a carpenter and his wife in the summer of 1931. The family lived in the county of Ebenrode, East Prussia, until 1945. In the spring, the father was drafted into the Volkssturm while the rest of the family fled from the Red Army. During the flight, the then 13-year-old adolescent became separated from his mother and brother, and he eventually arrived at a refugee camp in Mecklenburg. He lived there for two years without his family, because, according to him, acquaintances had told him that the mother and brother had returned to East Prussia. The youth stated that he had decided to leave the Soviet zone to pursue agricultural work in the west, crossing illegally at Salzwedel, Saxony-Anhalt. From there, he reported himself to the refugee camp at Uelzen (the other major border transit camp in Lower Saxony), which then led to his transfer to Friedland. Having no family and few social ties, not to mention possessing a great deal of experience living on his own, the youth presented his decision to leave to pursue work in the west as a matter of course. In the end, the JAL procured a job for him in Ballenhausen, a small community a few kilometers from Friedland, and sent a letter to the father in the hometown in Ebenrode County.687

The camp also processed ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe who had been uprooted well before the final war years and expulsions. One such example was a JAL resident who arrived at Friedland shortly before his fifteenth birthday in 1947. This adolescent had been born in Volhynia, but he resettled with his family in Wartheland during the war, surely as part of the Heim ins Reich program. The boy and his mother then fled westward as the Red Army advanced.

687 Lebenslauf, 9 April 1947; and letter to Herr A in Schenkenhagen, Ebenrode, n.d., Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 41, NHStA.
According to the youth, he and his mother lived in county of Ostprignitz, Brandenburg in the Soviet zone until he left on his own to find agricultural work in the west.\textsuperscript{688}

The case of another youth processed in 1947 further exemplifies the influences of earlier displacement on his decision to travel into the British zone. He was born to an ethnic German baker in Bacau, Romania, where the family lived until they were brought to a resettlement camp in Baden in 1941. Eventually the family moved to Gliwice/Gleiwitz, Upper Silesia. In the course of flight from the Red Army, the boy became separated from his family, but he ultimately found housing with a farmer in the Soviet zone. Upon hearing in a letter from his aunt in Linz, Austria that the family planned to resettle in Romania, he crossed the border into the British zone, in an apparent journey to reach his family in Linz. Brought to the camp, he ultimately escaped through a bathroom window. Rüpprich suggested that the youth had feared being forcibly returned to the Soviet zone and had also wished to “illegally” travel to Austria more quickly.\textsuperscript{689}

Aside from cases of family reunification, youths themselves typically reported economic reasons for their flight to the west. The push-factor of lost or scarce work in the Soviet zone combined with a pull-factor in the perception of goods and work being more abundant in the West. The war and industrial dismantling significantly interrupted the JAL residents’ entry into professions. Notes from administrator’s interviews with youths as well as the youths’ own written accounts indicate that it was rare for an individual to have enjoyed an uninterrupted vocational education. Particularly in the cases of younger JAL residents and those from farther east, the war had prevented completion of the studies at a vocational school (\textit{Berufschule}) and sometimes even primary schooling (\textit{Volksschule}).

\textsuperscript{688} Lebenslauf, 19 August 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 44, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{689} Lebenslauf, 11 July 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 49, NHStA
Indeed, the disruption to education or poor learning for other reasons is often plainly evident in the text of the short biography (Lebenslauf) that residents wrote as part of processing procedure at Friedland. This Lebenslauf followed a more-or-less set form that combined family, school, and work histories as well as an explanation of the circumstances and motivations that ultimately led to the individual’s arrival at the camp. Handwritten by each resident, the Lebenslauf as a document conveys the level of education beyond just the recounting of years in school. Older, better-educated residents wrote in standard script with few spelling or grammatical errors. Younger and less-educated residents, including some who had not even completed their elementary education, produced documents in poor script or block-writing replete with grammar and spelling errors. Such spelling errors were often the result of phonetically spelling a word to match their accent (for example, “-unk” for the “-ung” ending).

Figure 7: Vocational Training of JAL Residents

![Type of Professional Path](chart.png)

If the level of schooling was uneven, the completion of apprenticeships was uniformly rare for JAL residents. Wartime destruction, flight, and the postwar dismantling of industry (Demontage) for sending in-kind reparations to the Soviet Union ended early work opportunities.

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690 Statistics compiled from interval sample of Lebensläufe in the folders Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 49, NHStA.
In terms of actual work experience prior to arriving at the camp, 25 percent had worked in agriculture (e.g. farming and forestry), 24 percent in industry (e.g. machine work, mechanics, smelting), and 22 percent in artisanal labor (e.g. baking, butchery, carpentry). Only 4 percent had training in a white-collar profession (typically sales), and 2 percent were on the university track in their education. Most of the remainder had no formal or informal vocational training.

Youths arriving in Friedland often claimed work conscription in the uranium mines of the Wismut SAG in Aue as their reason for flight across the zonal border. The influx of youths with this motivation seems to have reached its high point in the summer of 1949, when nearly all of the arriving adolescents claimed work conscription as the cause for their flight. Indeed, the mines’ reputation for dangerous work, meager rations, and poor living conditions had spread widely enough amongst adolescent males in the Soviet zone that they often made the decision to flee upon receipt of the work assignment from their local employment authority. Still others reported that they had tried to work at the mines but fled due to the conditions. Work conscription, however, was also most likely over-reported as a reason for flight. Subsequent investigations with families and work offices by camp administrators did periodically reveal residents’ lies about assignment to Aue. It is unsurprising that youths willing to take the risk of leaving home and crossing the zonal border might also strategically lie about reasons for flight. After all, claims about work conscription constituted a more compelling case than the truth of familial and workplace disputes in the Soviet zone.

Cases of flight due to explicitly political reasons seem to have been rare for the youth camp. That is not to say that the decision to flee from work conscription was a non-political act. Likewise, leaving for the West and its supposedly better economic opportunities was also a

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691 See files in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 54, NHStA.
political decision of sorts. Nevertheless, the youth records at Friedland reveal only one case of overt political persecution in the East. The young man in that instance was an 18-year-old originally from East Prussia whose family resettled in Sonderhausen, Thüringen after the expulsion. According to him, he became politically active on behalf of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in 1947, which made him so locally “unloved” that supporters of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) began to accost him in the street. He also alleged that a teacher associated with the socialist Free German Youth organization boxed his ear in front of the class, “because I was a CDU man.” Even then, the immediate cause for this young man’s flight was not the persecution but rather a work assignment from the local Russian commandant for him and his classmates in 1948. The youth camp’s efforts to find him work with a CDU politician ultimately came to nothing, and they could not place him in an agricultural job either. So, the camp administrators sent him back to his family in the Soviet zone some 2 months after his flight to the west.  

Female Residents and Gender in the Youth Problematic

The youths’ backgrounds and JAL’s mission also raise the question of why the camp administration established the sub-camp for male but not female adolescents. Surviving administrative documents from the JAL and camp at large are conspicuously silent on this issue. The JAL did in fact house and resettle some vagrant female youths, particularly in 1947 and 1948 before camp came to an agreement for sending them to a young women’s home in nearby Göttingen also run by the Innere Mission. One explanation for the focus on male youths is that they simply constituted the larger problem group, because only a handful of vagrant young

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692 Lebenslauf (with marginal notes by youth camp administrators) and letters from camp to the father in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 49, NHStA.

693 Mädchen Wohnheim Göttingen to JAL Friedland, 5 February 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 39 NHStA.
women arrived at the camp. Young women may have tended to remain with families to care for parents or siblings, while young men were freer (or expected) to travel west to find gainful work. Given the furtive nature of many of the journeys, most of the male adolescents had travelled alone or in small groups, and the prospect of traveling through the seemingly dangerous border region might have also depressed the number of young women willing to attempt the crossing. Rape had been a problem along the border in 1945 and 1946, but instances were still reported into 1947, and individuals approaching the border on their own or in small groups, as the youth refugees did, were most vulnerable.694

Worries about possible sexual activity presumably led the camp administration to prefer a single-sex facility. Authorities at Friedland were circumspect about the possibility of youths’ sexual activities. Still, given the opportunity to socialize more freely before arrival in the camp as well as residents’ work and vocational training outside of the camp, JAL authorities could not completely close off the young men from the possibility of such relationships. Indeed, one particularly enamored young woman wrote from Göttingen to a JAL resident and included her mother’s suggestion that the two just marry already.695 In another instance, camp director Krause interceded to delay the marriage between a still under-aged JAL resident and a young woman living nearby. Krause sent the youth across Lower Saxony to a home near the Dutch border, writing, “the entire marriage plan makes no sense and cannot be realized if [the youth in question] has no possibility of feeding himself and his wife.” Krause went on to state that young man’s character was “not entirely in order,” that he “sometimes had difficulties with the truth.” It

694 Letter from Landrat Göttingen to COO 1002 Mil.Gov.Det. Göttingen, 18 September 1945, Stadtverwaltung und Militärregierung Nr. A 10, SAG. Memorandum written by Doctor Marggraf, 3 October 1945, MISC 170 Item 2616, IWMA. See also report dated January 1947 in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 105, NHStA.

695 Letter to JAL resident, 5 November 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 45, NHStA.
would be for the best to separate him from his fiancée to see if the “love is great and honest, and if he takes his work seriously.”

Adolescent women crossed into Lower Saxony for many of the same reasons that drove their male counterparts. Female youths cited work assignments in the Soviet zone, finding better work in the West, family conflicts, and some combination of thereof as the most common reasons for their journeys. For example, one 17-year-old woman had been born in Gliwice (Gleiwitz), lost her father to tuberculosis in 1941, and fled from the Red Army with her remaining family at the end of the war. The family took up residence in Thüringen, where she received a work assignment as a maid for a Russian officer. When the officer received transfer orders to a different region of the Soviet zone, she was supposed to accompany him. Instead she fled to the British zone, eventually arriving at the Friedland camp. Twelve days later, the camp sent her to work as a maid for a Göttingen family.

At least one woman also reported work conscription at the Aue uranium mines as a reason for flight. A 19-year-old woman from Glauchau, Saxony, crossed into the West near Duderstadt in the spring of 1949. Local authorities there took her into custody and then sent her to the Friedland JAL. According to her, she had been working as a maid while her mother and sister lived on welfare. Separated from the family for unknown reasons, the father lived in a small town southwest of Hannover. In August 1948, the young woman received an assignment to the mines at Aue doing survey work underground. She found the work too difficult and also

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696 Letter to Georgsheim in Rhederfeld, 7 Nov. 1949, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 56, NHStA.

697 Lebenslauf included in a report from 29 September 1947, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 44, NHStA.
“colossally harmful to her health,” so she left her work post at the end of April 1949 and, without informing her mother, crossed the zonal boundary four days later.698

In other cases, the prospect of better work opportunities was sufficient to draw young women across the zonal boundary. In the spring of 1948, the small women’s home in the JAL housed two sisters who had come from Saxony-Anhalt to seek employment and further schooling. As in the preceding case, the parents were separated. The mother lived in Burg bei Magdeburg, Saxony-Anhalt, while the father took up residence in Göttingen following his POW release. The 19-year-old elder sister had completed her schooling in May and found work as an office maid for a lawyer in her hometown of Osterburg. She, however, decided to leave that job because it had no “opportunity for advancement.” Somehow, presumably through some connection with her father, she had arranged work as a maid for a family in nearby Kassel. The younger sister, 17 years old at the time, had decided to leave the Soviet zone with her sibling because new school regulations had made it impossible to complete her Abitur exam. Hence, she felt that there was no possibility for a livelihood (Existenzmöglichkeit) there, and she wished to complete her schooling or find work as a maid in the British zone. JAL administrators sent both of the sisters to Göttingen when the JAL closed its young women’s home and a new young women’s home opened in Göttingen in June 1948.699

Until the young women’s home in Göttingen opened, the JAL administrators had been responsible for finding residential and vocational placements for their female charges. For example, the camp administrators arranged a successful placement for a 17-year-old woman with a hotel in Hannoversch Münden. The woman had been born in Halle, Saxony, where she

698 Oberkreisdirektor Duderstadt, Memorandum on “Wandernde Jugendliche,” 2 May 1949, Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 39, NHStA.

699 Lebenslauf for each sister in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 49, NHStA.
completed her schooling in 1944. She had worked on a farm to start her compulsory year with the *Bund Deutscher Mädel*, but due to health concerns had switched to household work for a family with two children. Following the end of the war, she worked as a maid, going from one job to the next until she decided to travel to Bremen for work with an acquaintance in July 1947. Upon crossing the border illegally, she was brought into the custody of the JAL. In the camp, she requested that the administrators find her a job as a maid, because she “would like to return to orderly employment as soon as possible.” Three days after her arrival at Friedland, the camp received a labor solicitation from the hotel owner, who complained of the local labor office’s inability to find a maid for his hotel and inquired if the camp had any young women who could fill the position. The hotel owner suggested that his wife could come to the camp when the next transport arrived so that she could arrange details with whichever young woman might be interested. In a letter to the father, Krause asked for his assent to the placement, though it is unclear if he ever responded. Some two weeks after her arrival at the JAL, the young woman left for Hannoversch Münden.\footnote{Lebenslauf and correspondence in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 42, NHStA.}

As is also the case with male youths, assessing the success of placements is difficult because only problem cases reentered the camp’s records after the female youths left the JAL. The reasons for failed placements mirror those of young men: personal conflicts with families or employers, willfulness, and criminal behavior. One such conflict arose between a young woman originally from Vitkov (Wigstadt) in Moravian Silesia and her employer/host in Groß Schneen near Friedland. According to her *Lebenslauf*, she had never known her father and had lived in an orphanage since she was nine years old. She lost contact with her mother during the process of
expulsion at the end of war. She failed to find her mother when she returned to Vitkov later in 1945, so she took up residence on a farm in Ostprignitz, Brandenburg.

After her arrival at Friedland in 1947, the JAL administrators matched the young woman with a nearby family that had requested a maid from the camp. The relationship between the youth and her host/employer soured due to personal conflicts. The father complained that he had forbidden her from attending dances (Tanzvergnügen), but she went anyway and answered him rudely when confronted about it. He further noted that he did not receive support from the camp’s personnel but rather felt that they undercut his authority because her obstinacy increased after every visit from camp personnel. According to him, whenever he or his wife tried to discipline the youth, she threatened to make a complaint to the JAL, claiming, “I will be better believed than you.” The father further stated his belief that she would become a burden to the community, arguing she was from a bad family and that the apple does not fall far from the tree. As such, he fired her and sent her back to the JAL. The administrators sent her back across the zonal border to her mother in Ostprignitz, and the only subsequent record of her was the sending of 50DM back wages to her a year later.  

In one instance, a youth’s health and psychological problems made resettlement extremely difficult. Eva G. was born in Kreuzburg, Upper Silesia, in 1931. Eva’s mother and brother both died in 1945, and her father was missing despite the best efforts of the German Red Cross’s Search Service to determine his status. When Eva arrived at Friedland as a refugee from the east in August 1947, the JAL housed her and confirmed her background with a refugee

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701 It is unclear if the youth had lied to the camp about her mother being missing and/or her living situation in Ostprignitz. It might also be the case that her mother took up residence in Ostprignitz after the youth left for the British zone. Lebenslauf and correspondence in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 50, NHStA.

702 Name changed in accordance with German privacy laws.
family from Kreuzburg that had resettled to Geismar, a small town since incorporated into Göttingen. Eva had suffered from tuberculosis during the war, and as a result needed hospitalization for health problems after the camp sent her to a children’s home near Lübeck. Because she was unable to work, the home returned her to Friedland. After she spent two weeks back in the JAL, Rüpprich and his family took her in as live-in maid.  

During the subsequent period from November 1947 to August 1948, she proved difficult for Rüpprich. In his memorandum about Eva’s status, Rüpprich noted that while she was “willing and honest,” she required significant guidance because she still had not “learned to care for her hygiene and for the maintaining the cleanliness and good condition of her bedding and clothing.” Rüpprich stated that although the family provided her with ample free time, she spent hours daydreaming and doing nothing. Eva further spurned opportunities to integrate into the local community in favor of fellow “girls of vagrant backgrounds” with whom she could “revel in the vagrant life and the partially asocial high jinks and job changes.” Rüpprich lamented that he had failed to change her behaviors and to have her take root in the community. When Rüpprich had to release Eva due to financial difficulties resulting from the currency reform, she went from job-to-job and home-to-home because of poor health and the persistent psychological problems. In one instance, her demands for free time and pay further compounded the problems. Rüpprich considered life and work in a specialized youth community to be her only remaining option.  

Youth camp records also indicate one instance of young women committing theft and then fleeing back to the Soviet zone. The youth who had come to Friedland after fleeing from her  

703 Documents pertaining to Eva G. in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 46, NHStA.  
704 Ibid.
work assignment as a Russian officer’s maid had been processed through the JAL and given an assignment as a maid for a family in Göttingen. In September 1947, after roughly a month working for the family, she suddenly disappeared along with valuables, clothes, and food belonging to the family. Subsequent investigation revealed that she had traveled to meet a compatriot from her hometown in Thuringia who had also been processed at the JAL and was working as a maid for a children’s home near Hannover. Both women then returned across the border to Thuringia. Evidently the police were able to recover what remained of the stolen property and return it. The first youth was arrested and brought to trial, but the other one could not be apprehended immediately because she was recovering a maternity ward shortly after giving birth to a child conceived with a Russian.705

The establishment of the girls’ home in Göttingen in the spring of 1948 seems to have concluded the youth camp’s involvement in care for female youths. The JAL closed its small home for young women at the same time, and records indicate that the administrators would send underage female border crossers to the Göttingen home as quickly as possible. Nevertheless, examination of the young women’s lives prior to, during, and subsequent to their time at the JAL suggests that they had much in common with their male counterparts. Many of these youths had previously experienced displacement through expulsion from Eastern European states, and the turmoil of war and defeat had contributed to the breakdown of parental control. Furthermore, like the young men at the JAL, these young women had mostly sought better living and employment prospects in the west, though personal conflicts and past trauma likewise posed difficulties in the process of resettlement.

705 Report and Lebenslauf in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 44, NHStA.
Conclusions

Despite the continuing flow of young refugees from the GDR into Lower Saxony, the Friedland camp closed its youth sub-camp in March 1951. Although extant documents reveal little about the reasons for the closure, it is apparent that by January 1951 the youth camp no longer enjoyed the support of Lower Saxony’s refugee ministry, which oversaw the Friedland facility. In the midst of discussions about closing the entire camp, a senior ministry official from the state defended the camp as a whole to the Federal Minister of Interior, but he also wrote that the JAL had taken on the “character of a residential facility” such that “it no longer served the demands of a transit camp” and could be relieved of state support. When the JAL subsequently closed in March, the refugee ministry instead used dedicated camps in Poggenhagen and Sandbostel to house and care for individuals who were part of the influx of young men and women from the GDR. The new camps did, however, take advantage of the institutional experience gained by personnel at Friedland. Richard Krause left the Friedland camp to take over the administration of the camp at Sandbostel in 1952. After the refugee ministry sacked Krause, Friedland’s assistant camp director, Hans Thederan, took over the position at Sandbostel.

The administration at Friedland established and operated the JAL with the twin goals of helping uprooted youths and securing social order, but it is difficult to assess the extent to which they were successful in these goals. Aside from the question of how one could isolate the JAL’s effects on rates of youth vagrancy or crime, the loss of contact between the youths and camp administration after resettlement makes a longitudinal assessment difficult as well. It does seem that youths occasionally visited the JAL to see old friends and staffers after resettlement. There

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706 Letter from Oberregierungsrat Lange to Bundesminister des Innern, 8 January 1951, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 399, NHStA.

707 “Die Entwicklung des Jugendlagers Poggenhagen,” 11 June 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 530, NHStA.
likewise appears to have been some base-level networking or communication between former residents who were resettled near each other. Yet, with these few exceptions, only problem cases reemerged in JAL records following youths’ resettlement. As such, it is difficult to determine what happened to members of the silent majority, so to speak.

Any conclusions about the youth camp’s effects on society in the immediate border region or the British zone and early FRG must also be limited, given the JAL’s size. During its four years of operation, the youth camp processed 874 adolescents. By comparison, the Friedland camp processed nearly 700,000 individuals in total during those four years. Nevertheless, the JAL administrators’ fears of losing social control over vagrant youths were real and worth taking seriously. The Nazi regime, the war, and the defeat had all corroded traditional social controls over youths, whether that was the family or community organizations. The period roughly lasting from 1944 to 1947 was one in which youths experienced unprecedented freedom from adult supervision, only for that authority to be reasserted as social and state institutions regained their footing in 1947-1948. The JAL represents one example of that effort.

Moreover, it seems reasonable to conclude that the JAL had some effect on resocializing youths in the border and Göttingen regions. The process of being taken from a period of vagrancy, being cared for, and being reunited with family or found employment must have been a profound experience for the residents at that point in their lives. This process was characterized by a strict regulation-oriented form of humanitarianism built upon principles successfully applied to other populations at Friedland. It is instructive that the facility that proved itself vital to the process of resettling a variety of uprooted populations also addressed specific challenges presented by displaced youths. In addition to having outlined the backgrounds of youth camp residents as well as their treatment at Friedland, this chapter suggests that the young refugees
from the Soviet zone and GDR belong in the much larger history of the uprooting and resettlement of mass populations during and after World War II, particularly given the overrepresentation of youths from expulsion backgrounds.
In January 1953, Friedland’s Catholic camp priest, Doctor Josef Krahe, wrote to the state refugee ministry to appeal on behalf of a woman and expressed his shock at her suffering under the “hard fate she experienced in the postwar confusion.” According to her statement, Marie J. lost contact with her husband in 1944 while he was serving on the eastern front. Marie and her two children fled their home in Zduńska Wola (Freihaus) near Łódź as the Red Army advanced, and she left the children with her mother-in-law before returning home in the spring of 1945. Believing that her husband was dead, Marie took up with (*schloß mich an*) Herr Stephan. Marie miscarried in 1945, and at the start of 1946 she retrieved her son Egon from the mother-in-law. In June, Marie left with her son and Stephan by expellee transport for Rodenburg, Lower Saxony and then settled in Hörsten, Schleswig-Holstein. During their journey, Stephan convinced Marie to present herself as his wife, to which she agreed in those “confusing days.” Marie lived as Stephan’s wife and gave birth to two daughters in the following years. Unfortunately for Marie and Egon, Stephan’s treatment of them worsened. Feeling trapped by the deception, Marie reported that she found herself “under his thumb” (*in seiner Gewalt*) until she could no longer bear “these abuses [*Mißhandlungen*] and emotional pressure.” In December 1952, Marie and Egon fled to the Uelzen refugee camp, where she claimed to have just arrived as a refugee from Poland. Officials there sent her to Friedland, where she admitted to the deception in a long
interrogation. Having sought freedom from her abusive partner, Marie now wanted to give an honest accounting of the events “in order to finally become a free person.”

Marie’s case raises the question of what populations still needed resettlement seven years after the end of World War II and the camp’s establishment. Despite the time that had passed since the war and the largest postwar displacements, the Friedland administration began planning in January 1953 for the construction of additional barracks to increase the camp’s capacity to 800 persons at the cost of 30,000 DM. At that time, much of the camp was occupied by refugees uprooted by the East German efforts to create a “security belt” along the border with West Germany as well as overflow from North Rhine-Westphalian refugee camps. Camp officials nevertheless expected arrivals at Friedland to increase rather than tail off in the coming years. According to investigations by the German Red Cross Search Service, hundreds of thousands of Germans in Eastern Europe still waited to be released to West Germany. Camp director Franz Freßen summarized those findings in a report about populations to expect at Friedland as of July 1954: 9,375 prisoners of war; over 7,000 civilian internees; 2,600 forced laborers; over 100,000 Germans taken from the “Eastern Territories;” 2,646 resettlers from the Baltic and East Prussian areas incorporated into the Soviet Union, and 175,926 resettlers from Poland.

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708 Lagerpfarrer Josef Krahe to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 30 January 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA. Krahe asked refugee officials to intercede with the Göttingen prosecutor to drop charges for obtaining free train tickets, lodging, and meals under false pretenses, but they refused because they had no jurisdictional authority. Marie had left her daughters in Hörsten, and to the best of her knowledge, her other son was still in Poland.

709 Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 8 January 1953, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 98, NHStA.

710 Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 24 July 1954, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 20/2, NHStA. According to past experience, the camp expected 20% each of the POWs, internees, and forced laborers to resettle in the GDR. Of the 100,000 Germans taken from the Eastern Territories (East Prussia, Pomerania, the Warthegau, and Silesia), the Red Cross estimated that 29,000 had been forcibly resettled but could apply for transit permits through GDR to West Germany. Although the Red Cross had received 175,926 applications for resettlement from Poland, it estimated that over 200,000 Germans wished to resettle.
The second issue raised by Marie’s account is the association between Friedland and freedom. When Marie stated her desire to finally become a “free person,” she was referring to the lifting of the constraints created by her deceptions, such as her dependence on Stephan and the need to maintain her fictional personal history, as well as leaving behind the psychological toll of lying to others. Nevertheless, her story of escaping an abusive home environment through refugee camps offers an allegory to the political refugees and returnees seeking freedom after their release from prisons and from repression in the Eastern Bloc.

During the 1950s, Friedland cemented itself in West German public consciousness as the “Gateway to Freedom” for people arriving from the unfree east. This place in public consciousness was due to the composition of populations processed there as well as the administration’s careful cultivation and defense of the camp’s public image. Repression in the East and the Cold War also functioned as foils to the promise of freedom at Friedland. In turn, the reputation played a role in the decision to maintain Friedland as a transit camp for the Lower Saxon and federal governments when West German authorities undertook programs to close the last refugee camps in the late 1950s.

This chapter examines displaced groups in the mid-to-late 1950s in connection with the development of the freedom mythos by focusing on three different camp populations. The first group consisted of East Germany refugees who fled from their homes near the inner-German border. During the summer of 1952, the East German government undertook a program to create a secure, restricted area along the border, which involved the arrest or displacement of ostensibly unreliable individuals through Operation Vermin (Aktion Ungeziefer). Second, Friedland played host to the last POWs returning from the Soviet Union, including the large transport and accompanying celebrations in the fall of 1955. Despite the eventual emergence of exonerative
consensus narratives about POWs as representatives of German victimhood, the POWs’ returns occasioned contests over the memory of the war and a proper reception, in which East Germany played an important role. Finally, the roughly 3,500 Hungarian refugees fleeing unrest and persecution during and after their revolution of 1956 contributed to the camp’s reputation. In contrast to the earlier acrimony over ex-DPs and infiltrers, officials and the press greeted Hungarian refugees with sympathy and welcomed them to western freedom.

Refugees in Residence and Operation Vermin

In June 1952, the Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung published accounts of refugees’ flight from East Germany, headlined by the claim “Germans are being expelled by Germans.” The article explained that on the basis of the “highest orders,” the East German police were “cleaning the ‘restricted area’ along the zonal border of ‘unreliable persons.’” Over the course of the preceding weeks, the East German government had removed 4,000 border dwellers, while some 800 persons had managed to flee into Lower Saxony. The article decried the police’s brutal methods. Refugees were fleeing west to “escape their underserved fate, abandoning their possessions, often chased by the bullets of the People’s Police.” The author recounted meeting refugees who took any means of flight available to them. Refugees near Lübeck had crossed the border with horse and cart under the cover of darkness, while others arrived in Ratzeburg after rowing across the Schalsee separating Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Where the Werra River ran along the inner-German border south of Friedland, refugees had crossed in self-made emergency rafts. All along the border, the refugees “smuggled themselves across the border even though the police [VoPos] make use of their machine pistols without warning.” The article included the heart-rending case of a boy who reported, “Our father was
shot. He’s lying over there in the forest.” Having lost his father and home, the boy and his sobbing mother were left with only a shopping bag containing their worldly possessions.\(^7\)

Although camps in Uelzen, Gießen, and Berlin had been responsible for accommodating East German refugees, Friedland was tasked with housing hundreds of refugees from the border region in 1952 and 1953. This shift in responsibilities raises a number of questions. What were origins of this particular displacement and whom did it affect? Why did authorities for Lower Saxony decide to break from earlier practice of reserving Friedland for German refugees from abroad and house the East German refugees at the camp? What was life at the transit camp like for the refugees? What specific challenges did this residential population pose for the camp administration, and how did officials handle them?

The permeability of the so-called Green Frontier running between the Western and Soviet zones had long been a source of frustration for the military governments, and the problem continued after the founding of the two German states in 1949. Although guards and criminals made border-crossings dangerous, traffic between the German states allowed for employment in the other zone, family visits, illicit trade, and escape for refugees. As Edith Sheffer argues, when the western allies rejected Stalin’s suggestion for a unified, neutral German state in March 1952, Stalin urged East Germany’s communist government to rapidly implement a program to create a separate, sustainable, socialist German state.\(^7\) Securing the border was a key element of that program, so the East German Council of Ministers enacted the “Regulation Concerning Measures on the Demarcation Line between the German Democratic Republic and the Western


Occupation Zones of Germany” on May 26, 1952. Hidden behind the obfuscatory title and desire to protect from “enemy agents the economic and cultural construction of East Germany,” the law directed the Ministry for State Security to “immediately implement strict measures for the surveillance of the demarcation line,” in order to prevent the further entry of “saboteurs, spies, terrorists, and vermin [Schädlingen].” Of course, these dictates followed a strategy of blaming the West for the GDR’s own repressive measures.

The Ministry for State Security thus began to create a restricted zone and a control strip along the border in late May. The control strip extending 10 meters from the border fence was to be completely cleared of vegetation, structures, and inhabitants, while residents of the restricted zone extending 5 kilometers from the border were subject to intense surveillance, a pass system, and other restrictions. According to Sheffer’s study of the border town of Sonnenberg, locals reacted with a mixture of annoyance and fear. Some fled the region after the announcement, while others refused to help clear the control strip or crossed over to “sample Bavarian beer one more time.”

Rumors of impending deportations were followed by an official announcement of Operation Vermin (Aktion Ungeziefer) to remove “asocial” elements from the region. Political opponents, criminals, foreigners and stateless persons, and Jehovah’s Witnesses, among others, fell under that category. Officials, however, also used the program as an opportunity to rid themselves of “social vagrants: ‘the work-shy,’ ‘notorious boozers,’ or the ‘un-teachable.’” Sheffer further argues that in practice the deportations were “capricious” and “relied heavily on well-honed traditions of local recrimination” as residents denounced each other to settle scores.


Although the propaganda labeled deportees as “vermin,” many of them were in fact decent, responsible citizens, some of whom may have been opponents of the regime or specific policies and some of whom were caught up in a program that needed targets. In sum, the East German government had planned to deport 10,300 residents, but it managed only 8,300 deportations while 5,585 persons fled to West Germany (1,888 of whom had been slated for deportation).  

The paucity of available housing and space in residential refugee camps in 1952 meant that refugees from Operation Vermin needed indefinite accommodation. In mid-June, Federal Minister for Expellees Hans Lukaschek committed 10,000 DM to the Gießen refugee camp for “first aid” for these refugees. The emergency reception camp at Uelzen was also under strain, having seen an increase from 80 to 170 individuals in its daily refugee arrivals. Friedland, which was in the process of clearing its residential camp of the last ex-DPs and infiltrees, therefore received 200 refugees from the region near Heiligenstadt, even though the camp had not previously been responsible for East German refugees aside from the vagrant youths who had resided in the also closed Friedland Youth Reception Camp. In late summer, the number of refugees had risen slightly to 260 individuals, despite efforts to resettle them in less provisional housing. In addition to these refugees, the camp also accommodated over 300 refugees assigned to North Rhine-Westphalia but for whom that state had no available space in refugee camps. Lower Saxon officials hoped to complete the resettlement for the former group by the end of October, but they were unsure how long their commitment to the latter group would last.

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715 Ibid., 227-229.
716 Statistics from Pistorius, “Deutschen werden von Deutschen vertrieben.”
717 Vermerk by Regierungsrat Schütte, 29 August 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.
The decision to make camp space available to the two refugee groups was beneficial to the camp and served longer-term interests for refugee authorities. The refugees occupied the space just vacated by Friedland’s foreign populations, but their reception was at a moment when overall traffic was weak. Soviet, Polish, and Yugoslav reluctance to release POWs and German resettlers had depressed the inflow of populations to a total of 10,024 persons in 1952, including the GDR refugees.\footnote{By contrast, the camp had processed 19,010 resettlers alone the year before. See 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anlage 3.} The drop-off in the camp’s workload led officials in the state refugee ministry to suggest to the Federal Ministry for Expellees that the camp had taken on the character of a residential camp contrary to earlier operations and that its personnel should be reduced.\footnote{Ministerialrat von Grolman to Bundesminister für Vertriebene, 18 October 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.} Yet, closure of the camp never came into question. Within several months, the state ministry was making plans for expensive new barracks construction.\footnote{Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 8 January 1953, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 98, NHStA.} These barracks would help to replace the Nissen huts, which had never been pleasant (hot in the summer, cold in winter, and nearly always wet inside) and had been in use far too long. The camp’s administration likewise provisionally planned for relocating the refugees in the event that the Soviet Union resumed its POW releases in 1953.\footnote{Vermerk by Oberregierungsrat Schütte, 31 August 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.} In effect, Lower Saxon officials expected to need the facilities at Friedland when Eastern European states resumed POW and resettler releases, so housing the border region refugees and overflow from North Rhine-Westphalia was a means to avoid temporarily mothballing the camp.
Accommodating refugees from the border region at Friedland was also affected by questions of employment. In fact, some of the refugees had previously taken advantage of the porous border by working in West Germany while living in East Germany, though it is difficult to determine what percentage of the refugees lived in such an arrangement. One man who had fled with his wife and children in June 1952 claimed that the reason for his persecution in the GDR was that he had been working for the rail service in Göttingen since before World War II, and that made him politically suspect in the eyes of East German officials.\footnote{Johannes A. to Bundesminister Kaiser, 28 July 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.} For refugees without employment in West Germany, financial support depended on their expected length of stay. In an agreement reached between the camp administration and the Göttingen employment agency, the refugees were to register themselves with the agency’s camp office on the day of their arrival. If the refugee had reason to expect release within two weeks, the accompanying application for financial support would be dated but not processed. If, however, the refugee had no immediate prospects for housing and employment elsewhere, then the agency would process the application immediately and pay out the support twice per month.\footnote{Aktenvermerk über eine Besprechung zwischen der Lagerleitung des Grenzübergangslagers Friedland und dem Arbeitsamt Göttingen, 5 May 1953, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 98, NHStA.}

Because the camp could not resettle the refugees until housing in Lower Saxon communities became available, officials at Friedland and in Hannover suddenly faced the complication of arranging compulsory schooling for the children. In late July, a senior official in Lower Saxon Ministry for Refugees wrote to the Federal Ministry for All-German Affairs (\textit{Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen}, BMG) to ask for financial assistance with refugee children’s education. According to him, there were 87 children at Friedland who had reached the age of compulsory schooling and an additional 17 children who had not yet reached
that age in the GDR but who, according to Lower Saxon regulations, should have already started school during the spring. Aside from legal requirements, “because the children had already not been in class for several weeks and their idle residence [unbeschäftiger Aufenthalt] was disruptive to camp operations, a way needed to be found to bring them to classroom instruction.” The elementary school in the town was already overcrowded with 133 pupils in just two grades, and the other local schools were likewise overcrowded and too far for the children to travel. A further objection to integrating the children into local schools lay in the “entirely different teaching methods” the refugee children had experienced. From the standpoint of refugee and education officials, the only solution was the establishment of a camp school with two teachers: one teacher for grades one through four and another for grades five through eight. According to the memorandum, Lower Saxony could not bear the monthly cost of 1,300 DM, so they hoped that the BMG would make available 6,500 DM for that purpose.\footnote{Ministerialrat von Grolman to Bundesminister für gesamtdeutsche Fragen, 25 July 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 30/96 Nr. 72, NHStA.}

To the disappointment of Lower Saxon officials, the federal officials refused to help, and other difficulties also emerged. In a response from the Federal Ministry for the Interior, the author explained that federal funds could be used only in cases of “aid for the consequences of war” (Kriegsfolgenhilfe), for which teacher salaries and classroom materials (Lehrmittel) did not qualify. The official helpfully added that the ministry could in principle pay for learning materials (Lernmittel, e.g. schoolbooks) if they fell under the standards for aid for the consequences of war.\footnote{Bundesministerium der Innern to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 16 August 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 30/96 Nr. 72, NHStA.} Needing funding from other sources, the Lower Saxon government compelled North Rhine-Westphalia to cover the educational costs for the children of refugees
assigned to the Rhineland but still housed at Friedland, though the dispute required mediation at the federal level. Finding teachers also proved difficult. One of the hires, Frau R., unexpectedly left her job at end of September 1952, so the superintendent (Schulrat) in Göttingen had been forced to hire another teacher, Frau F., on an emergency basis for the next morning. Unfortunately, Frau F. suddenly took a teaching job in Westphalia within a month, leaving the position unfilled for an indeterminate period. Finally sometime in the spring of 1953, the superintendent rehired Frau R.

The camp administration and officials in Hannover also sought a solution for defraying the costs of housing and feeding the East German refugees on a long-term basis. In early August 1952, camp director Franz Freßen suggested to his superiors that on September 1 the camp should stop paying out allowances for room and board to refugees with employment. The effect would be that refugees with local employment or who received other welfare would need to pay 0.45 DM per person, per day for their various expenses. Shortly before the allowances could be revoked, a legal specialist (Amtsrat) for the refugee ministry ordered the camp to delay the charges because the measure also required approval from the social ministry. Having received no direction, Freßen pressed his superiors for an answer in late October. A decision was necessary

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726 Vermerk, Niedersächsisches Kultusministerium, 25 June 1953, Hann. 180 Hildesheim Nr. 08395, NHStA. A memorandum from the Federal Ministry for Expellees indicated that North Rhine-Westphalia refused to make the payments after the initial agreement, so federal officials had needed to resolve the conflict. Ministerialdirektor Dr. Nahm to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 4 August 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 30/96 Nr. 72, NHStA.

727 Schulrat Göttingen to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 30 September 1952, Hann. 180 Hildesheim Nr. 08395, NHStA.

728 See various communications between Schulrat Göttingen and Regierungspräsident Hildesheim in Hann. 180 Hildesheim Nr. 08395, NHStA.

729 Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 8 August 1952, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 8/2, NHStA.
because the Hessian Ministry of the Interior had refused to pay for accommodation in the cases of refugees housed at Friedland who were working in the nearby Hessian town of Eichenberg.\footnote{730} At some point in November, Lower Saxon officials finally authorized the camp to charge employed refugees for room and board, which began on December 1. The local paper \textit{Göttinger Presse} sensationally headlined its article on the refugees’ reaction as a “Revolution in the Friedland Camp.” According to the article, the refugees protested the fees and their surprising introduction. The article’s sub-heading suggested that the charges were an “unfriendly surprise Christmas gift,” and one of the refugees complained that they were being charged “at Christmas of all times.” The refugees had considered the free room and board as a form of burdens-equalization (\textit{Lastenausgleich}). In apparent agreement, the article suggested that their fate was no different from that which met millions of Germans in 1945 and 1946, implying that the “rent” was an unfair departure from earlier practice. Apparently, Freßen and other administrators were only able calm the protests with “patience and understanding,” such as acknowledging the “inopportune” (\textit{ungünstig}) timing and the refugees’ frustrations. The article’s author did also allow that the camp administration had tried to be reasonable in setting the prices in accordance with individuals’ income and by giving a price break to families with many children.\footnote{731}

In a press release from December 5, the refugee ministry defended its decision. The ministry argued that the comparison of treatment to earlier refugees was specious. Whereas expellees and resettlers had been in “need of help in the sense of welfare directives” and were as a rule accommodated for only three or four days at Friedland, the restricted area refugees “have

\footnote{730} Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 31 October 1952, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 8/2, NHStA.

\footnote{731} “Revolution im Lager Friedland,” \textit{Göttinger Presse}, 3 December 1952; press clipping in Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.
long had their workplace in the Federal Republic (Bundesgebiet) and earn their bread further without change.” According to the press release, the payments had been set in accordance with “social concerns” (nach sozialen Gesichtspunkten) and on a sliding scale in reference to individual income so that refugees would pay between 0.15 DM and 1.45 DM per person. Those charges covered housing, meals, and administrative costs, but the press release emphasized that the refugees were still exempt from the “substantially higher sundry camp maintenance costs.”

The camp administration had supposedly warned the residents of these upcoming charges in September and justified the change on basis of not unfairly privileging a specific class of a few hundred refugees through indefinite free housing and meals.\footnote{Presseinformation Nr. 55/52, 5 December 1952, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.}

Aside from the principle of paying to live in a refugee camp, residents complained that they were paying too much for low-quality housing. Johannes A., the railway worker who had fled with his wife and two daughters in June of 1952, penned a complaint to the BMG signed by other families in July 1953. Johannes claimed that the camp was charging 1.45 DM per person for inadequate meals and 24 square-meter living spaces shared by up to six families (30 people). He noted that while he paid 60 DM in fees for living at Friedland, his new accommodation in a recently constructed three-room apartment cost only 44 DM. He further complained that although light and heating were included in the rent, the electricity was shut off during the daytime hours and there was hardly ever any coal to use. As an employed resident, he was also excluded from all charitable donations and benefits. For these reasons and, ostensibly, a lack of funds, Johannes refused to pay for his last several months in the camp, which the state’s revenue services were trying to recoup from him.\footnote{Johannes A. to Bundesminister Kaiser, 28 July 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.} Refugee officials disputed Johannes’s claims. They
argued that Johannes had overestimated his costs in the complaint and that he had in fact received all benefits aside from donations for the neediest residents. The report on the situation further noted that the governmental pricing agency had set the rates, and it was disingenuous to compare the 44 DM for rent alone with the more inclusive rates in the camp.\textsuperscript{734}

Some refugees living at Friedland also banded together with local residents to complain about what they saw as misuses of funds and other resources at the camp. In an anonymous letter from the “refugees and taxpayers in Friedland/Leine,” the authors made three criticisms of the camp. First, they complained about the amount of food waste collected as slop for pigs owned by the kitchen personnel. The authors questioned, “Is cooking not donerationally? […] Or must there always be so much left that the kitchen personnel’s pigs eat their fill [\textit{satt werden}]?” Second, they claimed that the motor pool director was picked up in a large retrofitted military truck making a round trip of 20 kilometers, while other workers had to commute the same distance by bicycle. Third, the complainants criticized the camp for constructing administration barracks, “each prettier than the other,” and other expensive beautification projects. The letter asked if donations given to the \textit{SOS—Hilfe für Ostzonen Flüchtlinge} (Help for Eastern Zone Refugees) solicited by radio were being used for these projects. The complaints noted, “100,000 refugees are waiting in Berlin,” and asked, “if it would not be better to produce housing for our poor comrades [\textit{Volksgenossen}]?”\textsuperscript{735}

In a report to ministry officials in Hannover, an administrator in Hildesheim overseeing the camp largely rejected the complaints. He admitted that a truck was used for picking up

\textsuperscript{734} Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 4 September 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA; and internal memorandum to Flüchtlingsminister Albertz, 22 September 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{735} Flüchtlinge und Steuerzahler to Flüchtlingsminister Hannover, 18 March 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.
employees who lived some distance from the facility, but that was due to difficult transport connections. The motor pool director did not use this service, instead taking a public bus to the village of Klein Schneen where he and a few other camp employees could hitch a ride with a daily supply transport from Göttingen. The administrator further reported that the construction and beautification projects were in an approved budget using funds set aside for that purpose. Refugees assisted by planting gardens without using camp funds. With respect to the food waste, the administrator indicated that there was relatively little of it (just “one to two bins daily”), and it consisted solely of leftovers collected from the residential barracks where the East German refugees were living. According to him, the root of that complaint was the fact that the camp’s kitchen had actually cut back on food waste and as such locals and families of employees transferred to Sandbostel had been cut out of the division of waste for slop.\textsuperscript{736} In response to the complaint, the workers’ council planned to create an organization that would contract with the camp for buying slop and apparently use profits from selling pigs to support charitable efforts at the camp. Fearing that such an arrangement would appear as graft to annoyed locals, ministry officials ordered that the leftovers be made available for public purchase.\textsuperscript{737}

As other housing became available in 1953, both privately and in other refugee camps, administrators were able to reduce the number of East German refugees residing at Friedland. The expected arrival of 5,000 returnees released by the Soviet Union in late August also gave particular urgency to the resettlement or at least transfer of the refugees. At that time, the camp housed 406 refugees on behalf of Baden-Württemberg, 206 refugees for North Rhine-

\textsuperscript{736} Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebene, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{737} Lagerleitung Friedland to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 29 May 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA; and internal memorandum to Referat I of the refugee ministry, 17 August 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 401, NHStA.
Westphalia, and 78 refugees from the restricted zone. Whereas Baden-Württemberg made two camps available for accommodation of its refugees, Lower Saxon officials were forced to search out other options for the refugees in the latter categories. These officials also secured a guarantee from the Rhenish social ministry in Düsseldorf that it would no longer send its refugees to Friedland. The camp administration began clearing the facility of refugees by sending 80 to a facility in Loccum, and if the returnees from the Soviet Union did begin to arrive, the camp would distribute the remaining refugees between four other refugee camps.738

Faced with a sudden, unexpected influx of East German refugees in 1952, state officials had turned to the Friedland camp as a robust, well-functioning institution. Indeed, housing the refugees at Friedland solved the problems of accommodating new refugees and making the continued operation of the then-underused camp more efficient. The decision also had the effect of making the Friedland camp even more durable as an institution. Investments in physical improvements created permanent structures where provisional ones had once stood. The camp also became more resilient in a bureaucratic sense. The camp benefitted from inertia in the direction of continued operation, and the arrival of refugees seeking freedom from East Germany demonstrated an ongoing need for adaptable institutions available for mass accommodation on short notice.

The Last Homecomings

On October 17, 1955, Friedland was overrun with politicians, dignitaries, reporters, and onlookers. These outsiders came for the arrival of the first transport of 599 prisoners of war following negotiations to secure the release of the last 10,000 German POWs still in the Soviet Union. Federal President Theodor Heuss greeted the POWs and offered his “heartfelt welcome”

738 Vermerk by Oberregierungsrat Schütte, 31 August 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.
on behalf of the German people. After other speakers had their turns, Wilhelm Wolff, a 60-year-old colonel from Hannover, spoke on behalf of his fellow returnees and assured his audience in the camp that “these men standing here are just as innocent as those men who returned home up to 1948.”739 Two months later another group of POWs offered a similar message, though much more stridently and with much subsequent protest. This second group claimed to have been held in the Soviet Union despite their innocence, and they swore an oath “before the German people and on the dead of the German and Soviet militaries that we have not murdered, raped [geschändet], or plundered.”740

The provocative oath speaks to the fact that during the last “homecomings” of POWs and internees, Friedland became a site of contestation over memory of the war. The arrival of these last returnees was of course a cause for celebration for waiting families and society at large. Yet, recognition of the homecoming meant acknowledging the war in which members of SS and police formations as well as the regular army had in fact murdered, raped, and plundered in what Germans conceived of as a “war of annihilation” (Vernichtungskrieg) on the eastern front. For returnees proclaiming their innocence, the delayed release seemed to imply that they were particularly guilty. Indeed, many returnees had experienced long imprisonment due to arbitrary factors, including having been healthy enough to provide labor longer than their comrades or otherwise having poor luck during selections for prisoner releases. Other late returnees, however, had been imprisoned for wartime crimes, such as the prisoners excluded from the general amnesty. Among these non-amnestied prisoners were notorious figures: extermination camp guards, an Auschwitz doctor who performed medical experiments, and personal adjutants to

739 “Der Bundespräsident begrüßte die Heimkehrer,” Göttinger Tageblatt, 19 October 1955.

Himmler and Hitler. Debates at Friedland also revolved around what constituted a proper reception for the returnees, including the atmosphere of the receptions and whether the camp’s facilities and supplies were sufficient for task.

Although Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s diplomatic visit to Moscow and the returnee arrivals during the fall of 1955 dominate narratives about POW homecomings, releases had depended on changes in Soviet policies. Frank Biess has indentified three major factors leading to the release of the last Soviet-held prisoners, all of which had to do with domestic and foreign policy shifts in response to changes in international relations. First, following Stalin’s death, Lavrenti Beria began to scale back the massive Gulag system in the Soviet Union, and he included German prisoners in the large-scale amnesty program. Second, the East German uprising in June 1953 motivated the Soviets to release some remaining 10,000 POWs and 2,000 civilian internees in order to “bolster the SED’s questionable legitimacy.” Third, the Soviet leadership had shifted from the desire to reunify Germany and remove it from the Western orbit to formalizing the division of Germany as part of maintaining the status quo in Europe.

According to Biess, Soviet officials “informed SED leaders Walter Ulbricht and Otto Grotewohl of its intention to release the last POWs in exchange for the achievement of this diplomatic goal” months before Adenauer’s visit to Moscow. Thus, the releases resulting from Adenauer’s visit “yielded the desire quid pro quo.”

Of course, Friedland processed returnees from the Soviet Union for years before and after the height of attention in 1955/56. Homecomings to the Federal Republic reached a temporary nadir in 1952, when the camp processed only 772 westward-bound returnees. That year was also the last year during which the camp processed returnees from the west to the GDR, a total of 12

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741 Biess, Homecomings, 203-204.
persons. In 1954 and 1955, respectively, the camp processed 5,954 and 4,262 returnees from the Soviet Union and other communist states (e.g. a few hundred each from Yugoslavia and Poland). True, the year 1955 was the highpoint of returns with 8,771 POWs and civilian internees passing through the camp, but a further 3,849 returnees arrived at Friedland in 1956. Despite the waning attention paid by contemporaries and historians, the camp continued to process a little over 1,100 returnees per year through the end of the 1950s. The camp recorded hundreds of homecomings each year from 1960 through 1965, again with most of the individuals coming from the Soviet Union followed by a handful of returnees from Yugoslavia and Poland. Particularly for these later cases, it is not clear if the individuals had been imprisoned for the full 15 to 20 years after the war or if they had been released earlier but won returnee status through recognition of a “no-fault delay” in their departure for the Federal Republic.\footnote{Statistical breakdown in \textit{20 Jahre Lager Friedland}, Anlage 3 and Anlage 4.}

Adenauer’s efforts to secure the prisoners’ release as well as their arrivals at Friedland were loaded with symbolic meaning for the resurgent West German state. In September 1955, Adenauer had traveled to Moscow on a diplomatic mission with the goal of formalizing relations between the Federal Republic and Soviet Union ostensibly so that the Soviets might eventually acquiesce to German reunification. The return of POWs and civilian internees still in Soviet prisons was a key point of negotiation. According to Robert Moeller, press reports depicted Adenauer “not only as a geopolitical strategist but also as a compassionate, if forceful, father insisting on the release of the nation’s sons.”\footnote{Moeller, \textit{War Stories}, 91.}

Meetings between Adenauer and the Soviet leadership proved contentious, particularly with respect to German crimes during the war. As such, the first two days of negotiations
produced no progress. In response, Adenauer phoned his delegation’s plane to order preparations for departure, expecting the Soviets to have tapped his telephone line. Negotiations proceeded smoothly after Adenauer’s ploy, and he secured the prisoners’ release by the end of the day. Although the Soviet leadership expected to concede prisoner releases as part of negotiations, Adenauer’s resolute insistence on POW returns and gamesmanship provided the Federal Republic with a putative victory. This symbolic success was all the more meaningful because it demonstrated West Germany’s return to being an important, independent actor on the international stage in tandem with the country’s entry into NATO, rearmament, and the end of the occupation statute.744

As Robert Moeller has convincingly argued, the returnees functioned as a victim group along with expellees and other “war-damaged” allowing for a selective memory of the war. During his mission to Moscow, Adenauer had “insisted that he and Bulganin should avoid playing the role of ‘heralds of antiquity, who shout mutual recriminations at one another,’” but he also obliquely referenced Red Army atrocities on the other side of the moral ledger by noting, “in Germany as well, many bad things happened during the war.”745 The public discourse about the returnees, however, was much more explicit in emphasizing German victimhood while eliding crimes. In their own narratives and press accounts, returnees were “soldiers and prisoners of war, not war criminals,” so that “the presumed innocence of all but a few POWs was the presumed innocence of all but a few Germans.”746 Narratives about the Soviet victimization of POWs not only functioned as a counterbalance to accusations of German war crimes, but also as

744 Ibid., 90, 102-103.
745 Ibid., 99-100.
746 Ibid., 112-113.
a warning about the threat posed by communism. According to Moeller, “[the returnees] had fought on for ten more years, and this time they were victors in the struggle against ‘Soviet inhumanity and Bolshevik propaganda,’ reminders that constant vigilance against the Communist threat was essential.”

The prisoners’ returns also offered a symbolic solution to gendered perceptions of social ills in West Germany. World War II had left Germany with a demographic imbalance that politicians, policymakers, and sociologists variously referred to as the problems of the “surplus of women,” “scarcity of men,” and “women on their own” (*alleinstehende Frauen*). The return of male POWs offered a solution for women looking for a husband; indeed, single women wrote to the Friedland camp administration to ask about potential husbands among the returnees. Despite the returnees’ poor physical condition and the servility that could be associated with imprisonment, the representations of returnees “presented examples of masculine assertion.”

For critics of American cultural influence, the returnees’ absence from developments in West Germany likewise became a feature rather then problem to overcome. Men who had survived the hardships of prison camps could supposedly correct German society from its drift toward American consumerism and “material excesses.” Thus, Friedland became the setting for debates over wartime memory as well as Cold War and gender politics because of the meanings imbued upon the returnees passing through the camp.

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747 Ibid., 113.


749 Biess, *Homecomings*, 206. Moeller argues that images of returning POWs immediately after the war were of “infantilized, moralized, disabled veterans,” while late returnees enjoyed a public perception as being more defiant and assertive; see Moeller, *War Stories*, 113.

The returnees who arrived during the homecomings in 1955 and 1956, like their compatriots before, consisted of soldiers and civilian internees. The first transports from the Soviet Union began in the fall of 1955, and over the course of the following year, the transports brought 7,326 former POWs, 2,622 internees, and 5,588 Germans who had been forcibly relocated (verschleppt). The POWs had served in regular Wehrmacht and SS formations, though it seems that the camp did not compile statistics on the soldiers’ postings. Of the 300 registration cards selected in an interval sample from the returnee card catalog at Friedland, 15 entries were for individuals processed in 1955 or 1956. Members of the regular Wehrmacht accounted for seven of those 15 returnees. There were two members of the Waffen-SS. Oddly, the first case was a German from Wolfenbüttel who served in the 23rd SS Volunteer Panzer Grenadier Division Niederlande for Dutch volunteers, while the other case was a Dutchman from Eger, Zeeland, who instead served in the 18th SS Panzer Grenadier Division. Civil internees accounted for a further three cases: a reporter taken from Berlin in 1949, a mechanic taken from Klingenthal along the Saxon-Czechoslovak border in 1951, and an unskilled worker taken from Höflein near Vienna. The final three cards either did not include a final field post number or other information on the place and date of capture. Other scholarship on late returnees has revealed that of 1,011 higher-ranking returnees in 1953, former SS and police officers accounted for 537 individuals, including members of the Totenkopf Division and Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler.

Although there were no women from 1955/56 represented in the sample group, female late-returnees consisted of both POWs and civilian prisoners. Because as the camp did not keep

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751 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, 60.
752 Biess, Homecomings, 214.
statistical records distinguishing between reasons for internment, it did not maintain records
distinguishing between types of women among the returnees. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable
to believe that women from military formations were less common than female civil internees. In
June 1953, for example, the camp received a closed transport of 29 returnees from Poland. All of
the returnees had belonged to Waffen-SS formations, and the American and British occupation
troops had handed them over to Poland after the war. Of the 29 returnees, only one was a
woman: a 27 year-old SS signals auxiliary (SS-Nachrichtenhelferin). In addition to
stereotypical cases of Red Cross nurses, civilian women imprisoned and then released as late-
returnees included Germans and ethnic Germans who had been forcibly relocated during or after
the war.

Two issues of femininity in particular stand out from the cases of female returnees in the
mid-1950s. The first issue was the belief that after years of imprisonment and hard labor, the
returning women needed to be refeminized through participation in consumer society. This
message stood in stark contrast to the male returnees whose fundamental masculinity never came
into question, despite their ruinous physical condition, and whose masculine virtue was supposed
to save German culture from Americanization. Press reports about women’s return via Friedland
suggested that their reintegration depended on beautification and consumption. One widely
circulated account first published in the Göttinger Tageblatt noted that a fashionable leather
purse purchased in the camp cantina was the “most important female attribute.” Thereafter, the
woman featured in the article was left to the “treatment” of a salon, so that the within a few hours
a perm, eye-liner, and a manicure made her into the article’s titular “new person.”

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753 Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebene, 17 June 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr.
527, NHStA.

The second issue of feminine norms raised by homecomings in the 1950s was that of West Germans waiting or, more scandalously, failing to wait for their spouses’ returns from imprisonment. As documented by Robert Moeller, the normative expectation was that West Germany was a nation of Penelopes waiting for their husbands and spurning all other suitors. Women who seemingly abandoned their suffering husbands provided much grist for the tabloid mill focusing on “tragedies […] that are part of the norm in Friedland, the encounter of the returning soldier and his wife, who has a small child in her arms.” Of course, information about the status of missing persons could be fragmentary or incorrect despite postcards sent as signs of life and the best efforts of the German Red Cross Search Service to determine the whereabouts of prisoners. Accounts of infidelity in the press were certainly exceptional cases. Reporters seized upon sensational stories that played on fears stemming from limited information from POW camps and insecurities about reintegrating returnees into the family after years of separation.

The press also reported on instances of men who married in prison camps. Again, these sorts of marriages seem to have received press attention because their rarity made for interesting reading. For example, in 1951 the men’s magazine published by the Protestant Church, *Kirche und Mann*, reported on men who returned from imprisonment with new wives and, sometimes, new children. One such returnee purportedly asked, “What should I do? If I do not go to my wife, then I am a scoundrel [Lump]; but if I leave this woman whom I am bringing with me and who saved me, then I am also a scoundrel!” In a happier surprise reported by the *Westfälische Allgemeine*, a man who went to meet his son at Friedland in 1956, having lost all contact while...

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756 “Das ist Friedland 1951,” *Kirche und Mann*, September 1951; clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 86, NHStA.
the son fought on the Lithuanian border in 1944. In addition to the son, he found three grandsons and a “beaming daughter-in-law” whom the son first met while both worked on construction of a factory at a prison camp along the Mongolian border.\footnote{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft Statt eines Heimkehrers kam eine ganze familie,	extquoteright\textquoteright Westfälische Allgemeine, 2 February 1956; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.}

Sometimes men living in West Germany did not wait for their wives either. The \textit{Kirche und Mann} article also included a woman who discovered that her husband’s pending remarriage: “Where should I go? I have become old and sick, he will have found a young one; I would like for him to stay with her, she will have cared for him.”\footnote{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft Das ist Friedland 1951,	extquoteright\textquoteright Kirche und Mann.} The expellee ministry in Bonn likewise received a letter from Käthe H., who had been the assistant to dentist who treated Hitler and “other people of the former government.” According to Käthe, the Soviets had held her in a Moscow prison for six-and-a-half years and another camp for an additional three years. During that time she lost contact with her husband who had her declared dead before remarrying and fathering two children. Käthe first discovered those developments when she reached her sister in Hannover via Friedland. In asking for assistance, she complained that state support barely paid for food while she waited for a decision on restitution from the government, and her former husband denied all financial responsibility for her.\footnote{Käthe H. to Bundesminister für Vertriebene, 12 July 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 374, NHStA.} Despite their sympathy, federal officials stated that they could not intervene with respect to the marriage and finances other than to refer Käthe to a ministry advisor (\textit{Referentin}) in Hannover and to suggest that she try to “move” (\textit{bewegen}) her husband to support her on a temporary basis.\footnote{Dr. Vogl, BMfV, to Käthe H., 22 August 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 374, NHStA.}
German scientists returning from the Soviet Union comprised a second group of civilians processed at Friedland, though it is unclear how many individuals were in question. After the war, Americans and Soviets scrambled to obtain technology and technical expertise in atomic sciences, rocketry, optics, and other military-related fields. In addition to bolstering their own research and weapons production, the rivals hoped to deny each other potentially useful resources. According to Norman Naimark, Soviet authorities had been successful in recruiting nuclear scientists to live and work in the Soviet Union with promises of good living and working conditions. They attracted around one hundred scientists in the first six weeks of occupation. The Soviets were initially less hurried in removing non-nuclear scientists and production materials from their occupation zone, but on the night of October 21-22, 1946 the NKVD and Red Army conducted a sweep of scientists, engineers, and technicians for deportation to the Soviet Union along with laboratory and factory materials. Soviet agents also rounded up families to send with the scientists. Naimark notes, “The Soviets were not particular about which women went with which men; as a result, NKVD officers sometimes seized maids thinking they were wives or packed up protesting girlfriends or sisters.”761

Despite relatively good treatment with respect to housing and materials, the scientists sometimes worked under duress. For example, although the nuclear scientists “lacked nothing in the way of food and comforts,” they did fear for their wellbeing and “had to endure severe scrutiny and implied threats of punishment.”762 The wife of a scientist working in Sokhumi, Abkhazia, reported, “We lived in our own homes. It went better for us than the Russians.” Yet,


762 Ibid., 213-214.
as she explained, the scientists and their families suffered from isolation and a “mad longing for Germany.” Soviet authorities did not release all of the German scientists in 1955/56 either. For instance, some of the Germans in Sokhumi were not released until February 1958. Presumably, officials waited to release some scientists out of a fear that they might reveal security-sensitive information. Soviet officials also held them until they were certain the scientists had nothing left to offer, though the scientists claimed, “what we knew has long since been overtaken.” In any event and despite the relatively good conditions experienced by the scientists, West German authorities considered the long-term confinement sufficient cause for recognition as returnees. The only real obstacle to recognition was that an unknown number of scientists had resided in the Soviet zone for more than two months before their deportation, which potentially constituted a disqualifying delay in return to West Germany.

“Non-amnestied” returnees comprised the final group at Friedland that attracted particular media attention and raised legal questions for German authorities in 1955/56. Although the Soviet government had granted amnesty to most of the prisoners it released, 746 individuals were excluded. West Germany received 471 of these returnees, while 275 of them returned to East Germany. Roughly 20 percent of them had served in SS or policing units. As part of the release without amnesty, Soviet authorities expected both German governments to further prosecute these returnees based on documentation sent subsequently to their releases.

764 Franz Freßen, “Friedland—Tor zur Freiheit,” a Festschrift written for the Verband der Heimkehrer, Kriegsgefangenen und Vermißtenangehörigen Deutschlands, 22 August 1960, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 70, NHStA.
765 Hönig, “Großer Bahnhof für Suchumi-Deutsche.”
766 Letter to Bundesministerium für Vertriebene on “Zwangsarbeitsverpflichtete Deutsche in der UdSSR,” 4 February 1954, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 3, NHStA.
767 Biess, Homecomings, 215.
The Soviet demands for arrest and prosecution caused concern for Lower Saxon officials overseeing Friedland. According to a confidential memorandum among chancellery officials, the camp was to receive 24 and 36 non-amnestied generals on October 6 and 7, respectively. Representatives from Lower Saxony had been in contact with the various state justice departments, which agreed not to carry out any arrests in the camp. Instead, the camp would process and send the returnees to their hometowns where criminal proceedings could begin.⁷⁶⁸

The strength of that agreement must have come into doubt, because a later memorandum suggested that Lower Saxon Refugee Minister Erich Schellhaus asked the Federal Minister of Justice to recommend the various states set aside arrest warrants for as long as the returnees were in the camp.⁷⁶⁹ A memorandum about Schellhaus’s travel plans further indicates the wish to avoid too direct of association between non-amnestied returnees and the refugee ministry. Schellhaus did not agree to greet returnees at Friedland on October 7 until it became clear that the transport also included amnestied returnees, at which point he immediately left Hannover for the camp.⁷⁷⁰

When another transport of non-amnestied returnees arrived in January 1956, Schellhaus directed that their reception take place entirely outside Friedland. According to him, he “was warned by the Federal Foreign Ministry that the reception of the non-amnestied at Friedland could endanger further transports.”⁷⁷¹ Presumably, they feared that East German and Soviet

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⁷⁶⁸ “Vermerk betr. Lager Friedland,” Staatskanzlei, 6 October 1955, Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Ns. 1429, NHStA.

⁷⁶⁹ “Empfang der Heimkehrer in Friedland,” Staatskanzlei, 10 October 1955, Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Ns. 1429, NHStA.

⁷⁷⁰ Vermerk, Staatskanzlei, 7 October 1955, Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Ns. 1429, NHStA.

⁷⁷¹ In January 1955, the camp listed the garrison barracks as a possibility for housing up to 300 persons on an emergency basis, and in September 1955 the camp reached an agreement for using the garrison by covering a daily cost of 1.95 DM per returnee. See the camp’s memoranda on “Belegungsmöglichkeiten” from 1 January and 22 September 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Ns. 527 and Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Ns. 20/2, NHStA.
authorities would be angry if the facility at the center of celebratory receptions also welcomed persons facing charges for crimes during the war. The border guard garrison in nearby Hannoversch Münden offered a solution for keeping these returnees out of the camp. Administrators essentially set up a field office at the garrison, so that the “entire transport was processed without the usual ceremonies and large number of visitors.” In addition to the typical procedures (registration, examination, and so on), attorneys from Office of Legal Protection (Rechtsschutzstelle) associated with the German Red Cross Search Service questioned the returnees about their convictions and sentencing. After staffers had finished processing the transport, they sent lists of returnees to the responsible state ministries, such as the Returnee Office of the Lower Saxon Social Ministry. It is not clear how many of the non-amnestied returnees faced prosecution rather than return to normal life, but Frank Biess has suggested that courts were largely uninterested in prosecuting “administrators of genocide,” and because of expiring statues of limitations, “many highly compromised returnees never faced charges in West Germany.”

Notorious Holocaust perpetrators among the non-amnestied processed at Friedland and Hannoversch Münden attracted much press attention. One notable case was Carl Clauberg, who had conducted sterilization experiments on women in his capacity an Auschwitz doctor and returned from imprisonment via Friedland in October 1955. A report from the Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung characterized him as unrepentant: “with a scientist’s pride he told how he worked out a new method with a simple injection.” Clauberg explained that he had used the

772 “Niederschrift über die 3. Sitzung des Ausschusses für Angelegenheiten der Vertriebenen, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigten,” Niedersächsischer Landtag, 14 October 1959, Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Nr. 1433, NHStA.

773 Lagerleiter Freßen to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 12 January 1959, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 9, NHStA.

774 Biess, Homecomings, 217.
injection on only 150 women. He noted, “Himmler allotted me 400 women, I saved the other 250,” to which the author commented, “with that, he reckoned, he had put everything right [alles gutgemacht].” Indeed, the media focus on Clauberg, along with his provocative statements, likely contributed to the decision to distance the camp, figuratively and physically, from non-amnestied returnees in January 1956. Two SS guards at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Wilhelm Schubert and Gustav Sorge, were among the returnees received at the camp’s temporary field office in Hannoversch Münden that month. Although there were other concentration camp guards in that transport, these two attracted particular attention for their infamous brutality, reflected in their monikers Pistol-Schubert and Iron Gustav. Both men were rearrested and tried for crimes, including the murder of Soviet POWs at Sachsenhausen.

Yet, the press and camp officials mostly downplayed questions of collective guilt and focused on the most notorious cases. An opinion piece in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) called for distancing most of the non-amnestied returnees from the worst offenders and suggested that as little as 2 percent of them were guilty. The article in the Westdeutsche Allgemeine quoted the camp’s protestant pastor, “naturally the percentage of SS people and SS leaders is particularly high among these last returnees.” Of course, longer sentences for SS members account for that high percentage, but the report also suggested that Lippert believed “at

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776 See for example, a letter to the editor of the Göttinger Presse, 25 January 1956; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.

777 A report on their trial in January 1959 linked the men to Friedland and erroneously suggested that attorneys working for the camp had advised Schubert on his defense (the attorneys worked for the Office of Legal Protection, not the camp). “Nazi-Untergrundsorganisation?,” Frankfurter Rundschau, 11 January 1959; press clipping in Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 9.

most 10 percent” of the non-amnestied returnees “had really committed crimes.” In testimony before the Lower Saxon Parliament in 1959, camp director Freßen echoed that belief: “the single largest portion of these ‘non-amnestied and criminals,’ whose trial documents still have not arrived up to today, consisted of only the small fry [kleines Würstchen].” Although critical commentary about the POWs came from the West German left and victim states, Friedland was largely left out of the focus of such critiques.

The arrivals of POW transports were also moments of debate over the past in which present-day politics and East Germany played a significant role. For instance, the oath claiming that the returnees had not murdered, raped, or plundered provoked reactions in West and East Germany. It did not help that the man who led the oath was Ernst Günter Schenk, “a high-level doctor in the Wehrmacht and SS.” In response, however, the FAZ asked if returnees should be denied the right to state their innocence, even if it allowed that the oath was regrettable and warned against forgetting the past. The editors for Kirche und Mann noted that their article on the oath had generated hundreds of letters. One writer was Bishop Heckel, who was present at the time and who tried to distance himself and the camp from the oath by emphasizing that it was “surprising” and an act done “entirely alone by the group of men.” For its part, the East German press seized upon the oath as an example of fascism in West Germany. An article in the Leipziger Zeitung referred to the oath as the “murderers’ perjury” and claimed that Friedland was

779 “Für uns sind alle Heimkehrer gleich,” Neue Ruhr-Zeitung, 13 December 1956; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.

780 “Niederschrift über die 3. Sitzung…”

781 On criticism of West German courts reluctance to prosecute the non-amnestied, see Biess, Homecomings, 216.


783 “Noch einmal: Der Schwur von Friedland,” Kirche und Mann.
the location where “criminals of the fascist era are made into heroes of the Second World War.”

The author was also sure to note the members of the “Adenauer-clique” present for the oath, including Federal Expellee Minister Theodor Oberländer, a former Nazi, and the Archbishop of Paderborn, who “gave his blessing to it [the oath].”

Another point of public controversy stemmed from allegations that the camp administration tolerated or even supported a network of former SS-men recruiting comrades at Friedland. In October 1955, the Socialist Student Federation protested to Bundestag President Gerstenmaier during his visit to the camp. At issue was the distribution of the “SS-periodical” Wiking-Ruf among returnees, which an embarrassed Gerstenmaier assured was not known to the camp administration and would be prevented in the future. One newspaper decried the “hero factory,” where “as greeting one presses a copy of Wiking-Ruf and a free HIAG application into the hands of returning SS-men.” HIAG, of course, was a postwar SS mutual aid organization.

Indeed, it is clear that SS veterans used the homecomings as an opportunity to contact and recruit returnees to sympathetic organizations. The December 1955 issue of Wiking-Ruf included a letter from an SS returnee praising the camp and HIAG. Complaining of the Americanization of Germany, the letter-writer told of first feeling at home when the camp administration “took us by the hand” and first feeling comradeship in conversation with a HIAG member from Göttingen. The returnee also declared, “If the homeland once again falls into danger from the subhumanity from the East, this community will fight and again pay a blood-toll

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784 “Meineid der Mörder,” Leipziger Zeitung.

785 “Gerstenmaier in Friedland,” Göttinger Presse, 24 October 1955; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 87, NHStA.

786 “Heldenfabrik Friedland und Märtyr-Rummel,” n.d. The press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89 omitted the newspaper’s name and the handwritten name had faded, but it most likely seems to be the Leipziger Zeitung.
[Blutzoll], despite all defamations and just as resolutely defend the homeland as before.”

These issues resurfaced during the trials of Sorge and Schubert in 1959, when the Frankfurter Rundschau alleged that members of the camp staff were involved in a ring of SS veterans helping SS returnees. Freßen denied the charges and asked ministerial officials for permission to issue a statement. Yet, fallout from the trial revealed that the director of the Search Service at Friedland, Hugo Richard Gawinski, was a SS veteran who had lived and worked under the assumed name Baron Hugo von Rosen between 1949 and 1959.

East German press reactions to events at Friedland may have been predictable, but the GDR’s disposition toward the West and returnees mattered greatly to refugee officials and some families waiting for loved-ones to return. Because the Soviet transports first stopped in the GDR, it loomed as a possible hindrance to returnees’ arrival at Friedland if East German officials decided to delay or entirely halt them. There were worries that boisterous receptions at Friedland would exacerbate strained relations between the German states, in part because perceptions that East German authorities hoped soldiers would choose to stay there, though such concerns were naïve given that East German authorities were more likely to punish offenders.

The delayed arrival of the second transport in October 1955 thus led to speculation that the East Germans had forced it to travel during the night so that it would arrive in the early morning hours, thereby

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787 “Ein Heimkehrer schreibt,” Wiking-Ruf, December 1955; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 89, NHStA.

788 “Nazi-Untergrundorganisation?,” Frankfurter Rundschau, 11 January 1959.

789 Lagerleiter Freßen to Regierungspräsidenten Hildesheim, 12 January 1959, Nds. 120 Hildesheim Acc. 111/77 Nr. 9, NHStA.

790 Gawinski denied having used his position to provide advice to Schubert or any other SS returnee (Schubert had spoken with an attorney from the Rechtsschutz des DRK-Suchdienstes, in Hann.-Münden in any event). There was, however, legitimate reason for concern that an SS veteran in hiding oversaw a service partly responsible for cross-checking returnees’ statements about postings. “10 Jahre unter falschem Namen,” Neue Presse Offenbach, 7 January 1960; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 91, NHStA.

preventing further celebration.\footnote{"Delayed Prisoners from Russia," \textit{Times} (London), 14 October 1955.} The camp administration also received letters from concerned families, who suggested that West Germans were at fault for delays because of what had been said about the Soviets at previous receptions. A woman in Cologne waiting for her husband’s return complained about a particularly angry speaker and asked for greater care and thought in the future about those still left behind.\footnote{See, for example, letters from Adolf K., Erika L., and Frau H. to Lager Friedland, 27 and 28 October 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA. It is surprising how much blame the complainants put on the returnees for overly celebratory or otherwise provocative speeches. Erika L. suggested that earlier returnees had silenced themselves in favor of those left behind.} Based on the experiences in October, the Foreign Office communicated to the Lower Saxon legation in Bonn that it was “proper to suggest that in the future at transports’ arrival […] the reception festivities be scaled back in comparison to earlier practice.”\footnote{Auswäriges Amt to Vertretung des Landes Niedersachsen beim Bund, 16 December 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA. Later in the 1950s, this line of thinking at the local level led officials to reject a memorial paid for by Adenauer (among others) because they feared the large Christ statue would be provocative as well as a waste of money. Monuments were fine in principle, but there was a feeling that residents along the border were the ones who would pay for provoking East Germans. See newspaper reports and meeting minutes for the county government in AK Gö 268, KAG.}

Debates also concerned what kind of atmosphere and reception was appropriate or worthy of the returnees. Already in 1953, the camp dealt with complaints about unscrupulous people profiting from returnees. For instance, a doctor who had assisted with care for members of an October 1953 transport decried what he felt was the exploitation of returnees. In addition to watches sold at inflated prices, he had been concerned about the “Veronikas” trying to take advantage of the men and who posed a particular health hazard. He had proposed that returnees be allotted 50 DM, with the remainder of their 300 DM allowance to be paid upon arrival home, in part because their waiting families might be counting on those funds.\footnote{Dr. Staube to Regierungspräsidenten Hannover, 17 October 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.} An official for the
Hildesheim governing district responded to the complaint by explaining that the camp administration was working to resolve the merchant problem. He further characterized the doctor’s account as “exaggerated.” As for the notion of withholding part of the release allowance, the official found the suggestion of restrictions for “mature returnees to be objectionable,” and he feared that returnees would consider it a form of “paternalism” (Bevormundung).^{796}

Complaints in surrounding commercialization of homecomings in 1955 mirrored those from two years earlier. Members of the press and public criticized the spectacle awaiting each transport, which cheapened the solemnity of reunions with returnees and made it expensive for everyone involved. A report from the Neue Illustrierte typified many of these complaints. One interviewee commented that ministers were already copying speeches, suggesting that the proceedings were a hollow routine. Outside the camp, the reporter found crass commercialization of the homecoming. A merchant offered “a colorful Friedland poster” for 30 Pfennig and boasted of having sold half of the 3,000 copies he had ordered. Photographers “hunted the clueless,” and one photographer explained his business model: “Scenes of embrace are very in demand […] The first picture is free, the supplemental orders are my business.” A painter nearby sold “search posters” for between five and ten marks. The reporter concluded, “I eat an expensive little sausage at a booth and drive to my expensive village inn.”^{797} The press service Deutsche Presse Agentur likewise reported that “unauthorized merchants” took “shameless advantage of the

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^{796} Regierungspräsident Hildesheim to Niedersächsischen Minister des Innern, 7 December 1953, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.

^{797} Lothar Reinbacher, “Friedland—anders…,” Neue Illustrierte, 5 November 1955; press clipping in Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr 85, NHStA. A memorandum from the chairman of the returnee committee in the Bundestag also claimed that returnees and their families complained about these vendors. “Vorgänge und Zustände im Heimkehrerlager Friedland,” 23 November 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 529, NHStA.
inexperienced returnees” by selling them cheap wares at too high prices, and it called on the criminal police to intervene to protect the returnees.\textsuperscript{798}

In responding to the complaints in 1955, the camp administration followed a similar tack to that taken by the Hildesheim officials in 1953. The administration rejected some complaints and promised to address others. Freßen explained to Minister Schellhaus that the camp had specifically requested the erection of a “sausage and beer tent” for the benefit of families and spectators, and inspectors regularly checked the prices of these and other goods and services. Little more could be done other than to fine or arrest violators.\textsuperscript{799}

The final set of public criticisms in the fall of 1955 revolved around the notion that the camp had been inadequate in its reception of the returnees. Most seriously, the Bundestag Committee on War-Victims and Returnee Matters began an investigation over conditions in the camp. The chairman of the committee identified eight failings in a notice to Lower Saxon Minister President Heinrich Hellwege: insufficient clothing for returnees, lack of storage for donations, poor price controls for accommodation, the “flying [\textit{fliegende}] merchants,” insufficient supply of forms, delayed structural improvements, inadequate and administration of medical services, and the treatment of Bundestag representatives.\textsuperscript{800} Newspapers seized upon small problems to paint a picture of a facility unable to deliver the treatment that refugees deserved. Some of the issues were trivial. Articles complained of rattling busses used to transport the returnees from the border and tea that was “hot, weak, and thin.” The \textit{Abendzeitung} in Munich declared, “the state of the camp is a scandal,” while other papers complained of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{798} DPA, “Kripo muß Heimkehrer schützen,” \textit{Westfälische Rundschau}, 22 October 1955; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 87, NHStA.
\item \textsuperscript{799} Lagerleiter Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebene, 19 November 1955, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 98, NHStA.
\item \textsuperscript{800} “Vorgänge und Zustände…,” 23 November 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 529, NHStA.
\end{itemize}
“shortcomings in Friedland” or “a clear failure.” More than anything, the outsized complaints about minor issues speak to the vastly improved material situation in camp since the first transports a decade earlier. They also indicate extraordinarily high expectations for the treatment of men and women who had ostensibly paid on behalf of Germany for misdeeds during the war.

At the time, however, officials in Friedland and Hannover felt the need to defend the camp’s public image rather than let the accusations pass. The response was multifold. First, camp administrators and ministry officials defended themselves through official channels, firmly rejecting the Bundestag committee’s list of criticisms, claiming that “complaints did not emerge” in the camp. In the case of medical personnel, the administration argued, “nothing definitive can be said, as long as precise complaints are not presented.” As for the tea: “It was strong if not too strong with respect with the average condition of the returnees. Every returnee received, upon request, rum mixed into it.” Second, the camp administration and directors of the camp charities wrote directly to the press to address the concerns. Third, through the backchannel of the Returnee Aid (Heimkehrerhilfe) organization, the directors of Caritas, Evangelisches Hilfswerk, the German Red Cross, and Arbeiterwohlfahrt at Friedland implored returnees to write to the Bundestag committee and give their “impressions of the work at Friedland.” The charity directors appealed to the returnees’ care for “comrades unfortunately left behind and their

801 Quotes listed in a mailer from the Heimkehrerhilfe im Lager Friedland, 11 November 1955, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 80, NHStA.

802 See Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsischen Minister für Vertriebene, 19 November 1955, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 98, NHStA. Officials with the Lower Saxon State Chancellery used Freßen’s point-by-point discussion in their response to the committee.

803 See for example, Freßen’s letter to the photojournalist Lothar Reinbacher, 9 November 1955, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 527, NHStA.
relatives in the homeland,” because the camp needed the public to restore trust and the “Soviet-zone press eagerly took up these reports” to criticize the Federal Republic.  

A trickle of POWs and civil internees continued to arrive at Friedland throughout the rest of the decade, but they never received the attention given to the homecomings in 1955/56. The so-called Great Homecoming had nevertheless established Friedland’s place in West German national consciousness. The camp’s reputation did periodically need defending, a task that the camp administration and charities energetically undertook. Memory-makers at the homecomings, such as politicians, dignitaries, soldiers, and camp officials were ultimately successful in creating a consensus memory of joyous homecomings through ceremonies and cultivation of a positive image in the press. Still, that memory was contingent; hence, the hard work defending the reputations of the camp and its receptions. That memory also elided competing understandings of and attitudes toward the homecomings, such as sadness of those whose loved-ones would not return and anxiety for those still awaiting a loved-one’s return. The predominantly masculine image of returnees certainly stemmed from the fact that men accounted overwhelming majority of returnees. Yet, women also participated as returnees rather than having been limited to the roles of mothers, wives, and children. Finally, the homecomings functioned as a site for arguments over points political and social anxiety, including: collective guilt for atrocities during World War II, how the last returnees should be viewed and treated, and East German involvement in domestic West German affairs. Criticisms about arriving war criminals were certainly justified, though over-concern with ensuring the absolute best for returnees led to specious criticisms of the well-functioning camp.

Hungarian Refugees

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804 Mailer from Heimkehrerhilfe im Lager Friedland, 11 November 1955, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 80, NHStA.
Early in the morning on November 26, 1956, a transport of Hungarian refugees arrived at the Friedland under the watchful eyes of camp personnel and reporters. In contrast to the first transport three days earlier, many of these Hungarians spoke German and even claimed to be ethnic Germans. Aside from speaking a common tongue, the stories they told suggested experiences familiar to many German refugees who arrived at Friedland over the previous 11 years. One young man, still wearing the cap from his Gymnasium, explained that he had fled from Budapest without telling his parents, because “they would not have let me go.” He hoped to track down relatives who had supposedly lived in Munich since 1943. Another refugee, a technician by trade, told a reporter, “I am a Hungarian, but not a Communist. I needed to go, because I took part in the uprising. For me, there is no more opportunity to study and work.” A Hungarian miner turned to a police officer in the camp and asked if he knew about work in German mines. At the end of the article, one difference in particular stood out. A Hungarian asked the gathered reporters about the history of the camp. Having heard that history, he then asked why the bell at the camp had rung for their arrival: “For us, this is no homecoming.”

The reason for the Hungarian refugees’ flight was, of course, the abortive revolution in October and November 1956. The uprising in Hungary stemmed from longer-term dissatisfaction with Communist rule that boiled over during a succession crisis following Matyas Rakosi’s resignation as first secretary in July of that year. The selection of Erno Gero satisfied neither reformists nor hard-liners, while Władysław Gomułka’s return to power in Poland emboldened student protestors. A particularly large student demonstration in Budapest on October 24 led to Soviet intervention after Gero’s request for support. Solidarity between students and workers led the Soviets to halt the intervention by October 28 and install Imre Nagy as premier. Nagy proved

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805 “Friedland, 26.11.1956, 6.45 Uhr,” Göttinger Presse, 27 November 1956; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 90, NHStA.
more radical than expected, “repudiating Gero’s request for military intervention, reconstituting the multiparty government coalition of 1945, withdrawing Hungary from the Warsaw Pact, and proclaiming its international neutrality.” The Soviet leadership reacted by using troops to quash the revolution on November 4, with the last of fighting concluding on November 11.806

As a result of the revolution, Austria was soon flooded with Hungarian refugees. During the initial clashes in October, roughly 3,000 to 4,000 refugees entered Austria. According to Andreas Gemes, Austrian authorities expected the revolutionaries to prevail and therefore did not anticipate that the situation would worsen. The confident Austrian Minister of the Interior declared on October 26 that the country was prepared to grant asylum to all Hungarian refugees. The refugee crisis along the border began in earnest on November 4, as between 3,000 and 5,000 refugees poured into Austria every day. Initially, women and children accounted for most of those fleeing Hungary for safety, but after the fighting had ceased, more young men fled as well. All told, Austria suddenly became host to some 4 percent of the Hungarian population. As a result of students’ role in the revolution, half of the refugees were under 25 years old and two-thirds of them were male. The Austrian press labeled the situation “catastrophic.”807

In order to relieve the pressure on Austria, the West German government offered to accept asylum seekers in November. As such, a commission from the Federal Ministry of the Interior traveled to the Austrian refugee camps to begin registering up to 3,000 Hungarians who wished to take up residence in Germany.808 Concerns about the “catastrophic development of the


refugee situation (epidemic danger),” meant that the refugee ministry in Bonn agreed to exceed its initial commitment before some of the German press even had an opportunity to report on the agreement. After refugees registered in Austria, German officials brought them to the transit camps at Piding, Bavaria, and Friedland. Because Friedland distributed refugees to all of the federal states, it seems most likely that practical concerns such as available space in the camps and transports determined the assignment to Friedland or Piding.

The processing of Hungarian refugees at Friedland mostly followed procedures used for other camp populations. As the transport arrived, loudspeakers at the camp greeted the refugees in Hungarian and informed them that Friedland was a transit camp with single-day stays, so particular wishes for work would be addressed subsequently in the next camp. The director of accommodation at the camp then assigned the refugees to their quarters, after which they underwent the registration process. Registration consisted of filling out forms, receiving certifications, and assignment to state camps labor office representatives. Staffers also confirmed possibilities for family reunification, which was a priority for assignments. After registration, the refugees received an allowance of 10 DM for those over 14 years old and 5 DM for younger persons. The remainder of their stay at Friedland consisted of x-ray checks for tuberculosis, clothing handouts from camp charities, and waiting for departure.

The mixture of ethnic Germans and Magyars among the Hungarian refugees created a further complication for the registration process. As of mid-November, German authorities

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809 Telegraph from Bundesminister Oberländer to Ministerium des Innern Hannover, 23 November 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

810 See, for example, distribution reports sent by the camp to the refugee ministry in Hannover from November and December 1956 in Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

811 Franz Freßen, “Richtlinien für die Abwicklung von Ungarn-Transporten,” 1 December 1956, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 14, NHStA.
estimated that one-third of the refugees asking for acceptance in Germany were ethnic Germans and two-thirds were Magyars.\textsuperscript{812} This relatively high percentage of ethnic Germans suggests that they and Hungarians able to switch between ethnic identities may have used the crisis as a means to leave for the more prosperous west. In terms of the registration process, the issues were the legal categories to which the refugees belonged and where to book the expenses they incurred. Members of the Federal Cabinet thus decided to treat the ethnic Germans as “late resettlers” \textit{(Spätaussiedler)} while the Magyars would be recognized as asylum-seekers with costs partially paid by the federal government under “Aid for the Consequences of War” \textit{(Kriegsfolgenhilfe)}.\textsuperscript{813} A communication from the Lower Saxon Ministry for Expellees suggested that the ethnic groups were to be redistributed according to different guidelines. Officials were to recognize the Magyars as “foreign refugees,” meaning that they would be distributed according to asylum quotas rather than resettler quotas and receive travel documents from the police offices responsible for foreigners. Despite the different categorization, the refugee ministry emphasized that the Magyars should be “assigned work as soon as possible and appropriately \textit{angemessen} housed.” A camp run by the Innere Mission in Ahlem near Hannover housed nearly all of the Magyar refugees in Lower Saxony, though single women were sent to a home run by a Swedish charity in Hannover.\textsuperscript{814}

Statistical information collected by Lower Saxon authorities offers further insight into the demographics of the refugees processed at Friedland. All told, the camp processed 3,555 of the

\textsuperscript{812} Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, Presseinformation Nr. 42/56, 16 November 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 385, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{813} States, it seems, were responsible for the costs of their resettlers. See “Kurzprotokoll der 34. Sitzung des [Bundestag] Ausschusses für Heimatvertriebene,” 14 November 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{814} Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, “Betreuung der Flüchtlinge aus Ungarn,” 11 December 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 385, NHStA.
10,986 refugees who arrived in West Germany in 1956.\textsuperscript{815} During the period lasting from November 23 to December 6, 404 individuals transported to Friedland remained in Lower Saxony. The vast majority of the refugees (77 percent) were then housed at the Ahlem camp, while the remainder found accommodation with family or at the Swedish home, youth homes, and various institutions of higher education.\textsuperscript{816} By January 15, 1957, Lower Saxony was responsible for housing 598 of the Hungarian refugees (exclusive of ethnic Germans). A total of 455 were sent to the Ahlem camp, which reported the following distributions: 62 persons returned to Austria for the purposes of emigration to America or Canada (it is unclear how many later emigrated from Germany with the same purpose); 14 persons to North Rhine-Westphalia for work in mines; 17 students for Lower Saxon universities; 305 persons sent to jobs in Lower Saxony; and 57 persons belonging to families still at Ahlem. Most of the workers were men in the field of metal work, while the 21 women entered domestic services or miscellaneous economic sectors.\textsuperscript{817}

Owing to prevailing anti-Communism, government officials acted sympathetically toward the Hungarian refugees because they seemed to be victims of Soviet repression. A memorandum in the state refugee ministry summed up the reasons for this goodwill. Having met with refugees, the official noted that the youths “behaved with discipline, showed themselves as ready to help, were willing to work, and were thankful for the aid.” Nevertheless, some problems in the workplace did develop with respect to language and the refugees’ “confidence” reaching

\textsuperscript{815} Vermerk for Referat I/2, Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 11 January 1957, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{816} Lagerleitung Friedland to Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, 10 December 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

\textsuperscript{817} Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, Presseinformation Nr. 2/57, 15 January 1957, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.
the point of being demanding. The officials suggested that they should be treated similarly to youths from the GDR and that part of the solution would be the creation of supervisory organization and instruction in the German language. Politically, the youths were also relatively reliable: they were “anti-Bolsheviks” who would land on their feet in democratic Germany.  

Thus, the refugees’ apparent orderliness and eagerness to find employment or continue their studies made them easy to like. In the context of the Cold War, their courageous opposition to the communist government in Hungary established their political bona fides as well.

Caring for the refugees also allowed politicians to demonstrate West German generosity to victims of communist oppression. To be certain, private citizens reacted with generosity in donations, and the government was making significant commitments to the refugees. Yet, the emphasis on generosity in public statements suggests a certain performative element. For example, in statements to Norddeutscher Rundfunk (Northern German Radio), Minister Schellhaus noted, “The free world started unanimously and spontaneously a generous [großzügige] aid action to alleviate the refugees’ distress and relieve Austria.” He continued, “I may conclude with satisfaction that Lower Saxony, despite the heavy strain [Belastung] to which its own expellee and refugee problems contribute, immediately declared itself prepared to accommodate Hungarian refugees.”  

819 In a press release, refugee officials also praised the “exemplary willingness to make donations [Spendenfreudigkeit] of the Lower Saxon population.”  

At the federal level, the expectation was to “proceed generously with the

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818 Vermerk on Ungarnflüchtlinge, 7 December 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 385, NHStA.

819 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, Presseinformation Nr. 1/57, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 385, NHStA.

820 Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Vertriebene, Presseinformation Nr. 45/56, 10 December 1956, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 385, NHStA.
accommodation of Hungarian refugees in both financial and juridical respects.”

This giving mindset and the public emphasis on it suggest an attempt to associate West Germany with the prosperous and openhanded free world—necessarily in contrast to the repressive east—thereby improving its reputation internationally. Interpreting the Hungarians as “freedom fighters” rather than nationalists made Friedland along with other camps function as the gateway to western freedom, generosity, and well-being for the foreign refugees.

In contrast to the acrimonious period during which the Friedland camp housed infiltrees and former DPs, the processing of Hungarians went smoothly and seemed to produce positive feelings all around. Several key differences account for the different experiences. First, the Hungarian refugees, as victims of communism, seemed more sympathetic than the earlier foreign populations associated with DP criminality, prisons, and illegal border-crossers. Second, the Hungarian refugees were more orderly and seemed more thankful than the infiltrees and former DPs. To the extent that the Hungarians were associated with security concerns, the worry was that communist agents from Hungary infiltrated Austrian refugee camps in order to spy on them and/or the West. Finally and crucially, the increased availability of housing and officials’ commitment to settling the Hungarians kept their time in camps to a relative minimum. Long-term accommodation at Friedland or any other refugee camp ultimately produced discomfort, boredom, and frustration, all of which led to conflict and mutual resentments between residents and administrators. Such had also been the case with the border region refugees in 1952/53 and

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821 “Kurzprotokoll der 34. Sitzung des [Bundestag] Ausschusses für Heimatvertriebene…”

822 In particular, the press expressed concerns that informants would cause difficulty for families left behind in Hungary. See for example, “Agenten im Flüchtlingslager,” Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 31 December 1956; press clipping in Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 90, NHStA.
with Hungarians whose protest at a Hessian refugee camp required police intervention in 1956.  

Conclusions

The arrivals of two different populations kept the Friedland busy through the end of the 1950s. Both groups also contributed to the image of Friedland as the location where victims of communism took their first steps into Western freedom. First, resettlers from Poland accounted for much of the traffic. Masses of Germans—mostly from the former German provinces of Silesia, East Prussia, and East Pomerania—took advantage of the relaxation of emigration restrictions in 1956 to start new lives in West Germany. Indeed, the roughly 250,000 resettlers between 1956 and 1960 accounted for the highest inflow to Friedland between the late 1940s and the late 1980s, when travel restrictions were once again relaxed throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Second, adolescent male refugees from East Germany composed the other significant population, which also recalled the camp’s earlier operations. Between 1960 and 1963, Friedland was home to 22,436 of these refugees, though that program was an extension of responsibilities from the Uelzen refugee camp unlike the youth camp taken of the Friedland administration’s initiative in the late 1940s.

The beginning of the 1960s marked the end of era for the camp’s administration. Running the refugee camp had become increasingly mechanical in that there was less decision-making

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823 “Ungarn-Flüchtlinge protestierten gegen den Aufenthalt im Lager,” Kasseler Stadtausgabe, 10 February 1952; press clipping in Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 473, NHStA.

824 Taking 1957 as an example, Friedland processed 49,912 resettlers from Silesia, 18,175 from former East Pomerania, and 16,954 from former East Prussia. No other region of Poland accounted for more than 2,500 resettlers. Lagerleitung Friedland, “Zusammenstellung der im Jahre 1957 registrierten Personen,” 4 January 1958, Nds. 380 Acc. 62a/65 Nr. 514, NHStA.

825 Statistics from 20 Jahre Lager Friedland, Anlage 3.

826 Ibid., 45.
done by the camp administration. Routines were already in place, and as German government had become more robust over the preceding decade and a half, the level of oversight increased as well. Evidence for this shift in administration styles can be seen in the decreased number and scope of camp directives over the course of the 1950s and particularly in the 1960s. For instance, the last general camp directive, Number 156, was issued on March 13, 1953. After that point, instructions from the camp administration were task-specific (e.g. instructions for a particular type of transport, as opposed to the need to include those instructions with other general directives and points of information). To some extent, that may also speak to differing administrative styles between the two pairs of camp directors and assistant camp directors Krause/Thederan and Freßen/Gottschalk. Yet, even when the number of resttlers from Poland spiked in the late 1950s, it was clear that the period of improvisation was past. The final markers of the changed camp administration were the retirements of Freßen and Gottschalk in 1959 and 1963, respectively.

The extraordinary flexibility of the camp in processing different populations also helped the development of its reputation as the “Gateway to Freedom.” The term had many connotations, depending on the population in question. Initially the camp was strongly associated with victims of flight and expulsion. Later, refugees escaping repression in East Germany and military and civilian returnees arriving after release from prison camps burnished the reputation as a sanctuary from communist repression. In the context of the Cold War, the camp also functioned as a conduit for foreign “freedom fighters” seeking asylum after the Soviets crushed the revolution in Hungary.

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827 Lageranordnung Nr 153, 13 March 1953, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
Population displacements and immigration created the ongoing need for a border transit camp in the 1950s, but the fame as a “Gateway to Freedom” also helped to keep the camp open. In October 1959, the Committee for Expellees, Refugees, and the War-Damaged Affairs from the Lower Saxon State Parliament met in Göttingen and Friedland to discuss the camp and its future. During the Göttingen meeting before visiting the camp, Minister Schellhaus spoke of how world events had caused Friedland to become a special term. He noted that when there was a pause in the arrival of returnees early in the decade, questions emerged about whether it was necessary to keep the camp or if it might be used for some other purpose. Schellhaus declared that he “was always dismissive of these suggestions, because it seemed inopportune to him to close such a camp—one of the few gateways from the East to freedom—as long as tens of thousands of Germans [deutscher Menschen] worked towards their emigration from eastern countries.” He added that he considered it proper to maintain the exemplary “care facility” (Betreuungsapparat) because further transports always arrived. Later, in discussions with the Red Cross Search Services at the camp, it became clear that more transports would arrive. Based on applications for resettlement through the Red Cross, the organization estimated that between 700,000 and 800,000 Germans still lived in the “Polish administered eastern territories,” and another 250,000 lived in the Soviet Union.828

828 “Niederschrift über die 3. Sitzung des Ausschusses…,” Nds. 50 Acc. 96/88 Nr. 1433, NHStA.
CONCLUSION

During the late summer of 1945, Germany was inundated with people displaced by the war. Millions of victims of the Nazi regime—forced laborers, POWs, and concentration camp survivors—moved about in search of family, a way home, or the chance to make a new life. Millions more Germans had been uprooted as well. Evacuees from bombed out cities tried to return to what remained of their homes or find family who could house them. Joining them were millions of Germans fleeing or expelled from Poland and Czechoslovakia, including former German territories ceded to those states and the Soviet Union. De-mobilized soldiers and prisoners of war released by the occupying powers likewise needed to make their ways home or find some other accommodation. Of course, obtaining shelter was no easy task with so much of the country’s housing stock destroyed through bombing campaigns and urban combat.

Using the transit camp at Friedland as a case study, this dissertation has examined the efforts by occupational and German civil authorities to resolve that mass displacement. Friedland functioned as the lynchpin for a system designed to collect, aid, register, and resettle displaced populations as quickly as possible. This study therefore has described the response to unsettlement exemplified by the Friedland camp as a regulating form of humanitarianism. Under that framework, the camp turned unmanageable masses into settled individuals belonging to special categories for state assistance. The success in ameliorating suffering and restoring social order through Friedland therefore depended on the efforts of German ministries, the British military government, and German, British, and international charities.
Following the war, the occupying powers and German civil authorities viewed the unsettled masses with wary concern. Military officials still finding their footing in occupation governance worried that the free movement of these masses posed a security risk. As concerns about resistance to the military government faded, other worries persisted. Military and civil German officials alike considered refugees an epidemiological threat. During their treks, refugees slept in fields or barns, had limited access to sanitary facilities, and faced overcrowding when they could find better accommodation. These factors combined to create the fear that in addition to carrying their worldly possessions, refugees brought with them tuberculosis, lice, and deadly lice-borne diseases, such as typhus and spotted fever. In response, the military government tried to prohibit refugees from entering large urban areas, such as Berlin or Hamburg. At the community level, local civil officials and townspeople tended toward a defensive insularity and closed off their resources and housing. The effect of that was to extend the displacement as refugees went from place to place, exacerbating the hardships and the problems associated with them. Unsettlement created a new form of social polarization in which dividing lines depended less on class or religion.

The first major contribution of this study has been to demonstrate that the resolution to the displacement problematic depended on a comprehensive system of regulation in which the transit camp at Friedland played a crucial role. Founded in September 1945, the camp began as an improvisational step for addressing the movement of displaced individuals along the zonal boundaries near Göttingen. The fact that refugees initially slept under the stars or in converted livestock stalls at the Göttingen University’s experimental farm testifies to that improvisation. Despite the primitive conditions, the camp had much to offer civil and military authorities in taming the unruliness of mass population movements. Collecting refugees in the camp made it
possible to determine who they were, their intended destinations, and to reroute them away from areas incapable of accommodating them. Registration of refugees also had the administrative benefit of reintegrating them into the prevailing ration regime and establishing documentation that would prove necessary for providing welfare benefits in the future. Regulating humanitarianism was predicated on the welfare state, and because food, housing, and other goods were rationed, the act of classification at Friedland was crucial. The camp further made possible an efficient use of quotas in order to ensure a rational distribution of refugees and overcome the potential free-rider problem of communities refusing to accommodate refugees thereby shifting the burden more heavily upon others. Medical services at Friedland enabled public health authorities to screen the refugees for contagious diseases and remove infected persons for treatment, while the delousing facilities helped to remove a vector for transmitting disease. Finally, once the camp was running as an administrative and transit hub, it made possible the planning of large transfers with dedicated transports. These transfers were beneficial in that the programs allowed for better planning for receiving communities, and the camp could operate more efficiently in an economy of scale.

Of course, the camp at Friedland operated with a humanitarian purpose. The involvement of so many volunteers and charities, ranging from the British Salvation Army and the International Voluntary Service for Peace to the camp’s religious charities and the German Red Cross, testifies to that fact. Camp administrators and refugee officials were also concerned with the amelioration of suffering as well, which is apparent from communications that referenced humanitarian (menschlich) concerns. The meaning of humanitarianism at Friedland was contextual, but most often it meant providing basic forms of aid, such as feeding refugees, housing them, and reuniting them with family. Medical examinations and delousing were
invasive procedures undertaken with public health in mind, but it is also important not to overlook their benefits to individual refugees as well. Humanitarian effects were interlinked with registration and resettlement regulations. Reuniting refugees with their families was compassionate priority that also served the state’s interests in placing refugees within support networks. Although arbitrariness played a role in resettlement assignments and led to refugees’ frustration, the quotas were also meant to protect the interests of refugees and communities, because both would suffer in the event that no accommodation or supplies were available for refugees. Given the masses needing processing, the delivery of humanitarian aid at Friedland was dependent on coercion and a disciplining environment necessary for smooth operation of a transit facility. As a result, the camp environment could also become quite unpleasant at times. The complaints from and conflicts with former Displaced Persons, “infiltrees,” and East German refugees in long-term housing testified to that fact.

The second major argument of this dissertation is that scholars need to think about postwar displacement broadly and as relatively long-lasting phenomenon. Because of Friedland’s role as a border transit camp and its flexibility in handling different populations, the camp offers insight into the wide-ranging nature of displacement after World War II. Camp administrators and officials overseeing the facility proved innovative in identifying and meeting the needs of new streams of refugees, which kept the camp in operation. In addition to the groups that have received the most scholarly attention, such as expellees and DPs, this study examined numerous other groups subject to wartime and postwar unsettlement. For example, the exchange of wartime evacuees between the British and Soviet zones under Operation Honeybee was a major point of concern for British officials and a source of tension between the two powers in the winter and spring of 1946.
Released prisoners of war should likewise be considered as a part of the postwar displacement, given the need to return them to homes and families as well as to reintegrate them into society. The so-called “returnees without a homeland” particularly warrant consideration as a new type of refugee. Their homecomings were to regions where they had never previously lived, and the camp consequently distributed them according to refugee quotas. The fact that prisoner returns lasted well over a decade after war’s end (though most had been completed by 1949) speaks to the long duration of the postwar displacements. Taken together, the military and civil returnees along with Honeybee participants also provide an important historical counter-narrative to the emphasis on flight into western zones and the Federal Republic. Although a majority of the returnees and evacuees indeed moved westward, nearly 400,000 persons returned through the camp to homes in East Germany.

Discussion of German resettlers from Poland further demonstrates weaknesses of focusing exclusively on the displacement of Germans through expulsion. One problem with such a focus is that it gives the false impression of Polish authorities having conducted a clean sweep of the German population between 1945 and 1949. In fact, there were sizable remnant populations of Germans and “amphibians,” to borrow a term from Chad Bryant’s study of Prague, in the formerly German provinces of Silesia, Pomerania, and East Prussia. Examination of the demographics and common vocations among German resettlers suggests that the remaining populations were largely composed of individuals whom authorities had viewed as economically valuable (miners, technicians, engineers and so on). Indeed, the history of resettlers from Poland indicates that after the first waves of expulsion to create clear Polish majorities in some regions, authorities had not only been reluctant to expel all Germans during the period lasting until 1949, but they also made it difficult for Germans to emigrate during the early to
mid-1950s. Instead, the ages and health of resettlers during the early 1950s suggested that aside from cases of bureaucratic arbitrariness, the Germans arriving from Poland were mostly unsuitable for physical labor. The determination of camp and refugee officials to accept these populations further underlines the humanitarian aspects of reception at Friedland.

The history of the Friedland Youth Reception Camp for teenaged male youths also demonstrates the profound disruptions that war and displacement had on society and which lasted for years. Records on individual residents indicate that the war had badly strained family bonds. Fathers were often in captivity, missing, or dead, while mothers navigated the dual roles of caretaker and breadwinner. In other instances, the chaos of flight and expulsions had torn apart families. Those factors along with other disruptions to traditional authorities, such as school and the church, meant that children experienced unprecedented freedom during the years 1944 to 1947. As a result, the camp administration tried to capture vagrant or otherwise unsupervised youths in the effort to reunite them with family or otherwise return them to an orderly way of life. Administrators’ stern treatment of the youths exemplifies how coercion and humanitarian goals went hand-in-hand at Friedland. Furthermore, the overrepresentation of youths with displacement backgrounds at the youth camp between 1947 and 1951 is suggestive of the enduring effects of flight and expulsion on youths coming to West Germany from the east.

Between 1949 and 1952, Friedland was also tasked with housing foreign individuals who had been uprooted during and after the war. During the first year of operation, the camp processed several thousand non-Germans, mostly classified as Jews and “stateless persons,” when they tried to cross the zonal boundaries. These refugees lay beyond the camp’s responsibilities, and administrators had orders to transfer them quickly to DP camps. Indeed, the greatest impact of foreign populations on the early camp came from Ukrainian DPs housed in
Göttingen who provided labor for improvement projects in 1946. The 1949 assignment for Friedland to accommodate ex-DPs (persons who lost DP status through commission of a crime or the end of a foreign work contract) and infiltrees (foreigners who crossed into West Germany illegally) ultimately demonstrated the limits of German and British humanitarianism. When housing and caring for these populations proved difficult, both sets of camp authorities along with the charity directors worked assiduously to have them removed, finally succeeding in 1952. By contrast, camp authorities and the German press were sympathetic to the several thousand Hungarian refugees processed in late 1956, a response clearly influenced by the Cold War. Seen as brave freedom fighters, these Hungarians were received with open arms, partly because of goodwill toward them and partly because of an eagerness to demonstrate West German generosity to victims of communism.

The third major contribution of this study is the examination of the interplay of regulation, camp populations, and public perception, which is important for deconstructing the mythology of the camp as the “Gateway to Freedom.” Aspects of that reputation were certainly credible. Returning prisoners of war, particularly those involved in the much-celebrated 1955/56 homecomings, were most associated with development of that reputation. Other camp populations that fed into the freedom narrative included young refugees from East Germany, resettlers from Poland and other eastern European countries, and the Hungarian refugees. For those groups, acceptance and resettlement from Friedland were steps toward lives free of repression under communist government.

Yet, one must also recognize that the mythology was instrumental for more than anti-communist rhetoric. The camp administration carefully guarded the reputation of Friedland in order to protect the continued operation of the facility and increase social acceptance of the
refugees processed there. The labeling of Friedland as the “Gateway to Freedom” also obscured the facts that the camp returned hundreds of thousands of people who chose to return to homes in East Germany and administrators expelled troublesome youths back across the border. Moreover, administrators tried to close the gateway to ex-DPs and infiltrrees, whom the camp authorities did not want to house and German communities were likewise unwilling to accommodate. The Gateway to Freedom mythology, based on some realistic elements, won out in the end, but it is important to point out the complications in the camp’s actual history.

Although study of Friedland in this dissertation was limited to the years 1945 to 1960, the camp continued to operate long past that period. New instances of displacement created an ongoing need for the facility that had proven itself flexible and effective in receiving different types of refugees. In 1960 and 1961, the camp processed roughly 25,000 refugees from East Germany, primarily young men housed in a youth camp operated as an extension of the Uelzen refugee camp. The construction of the Berlin Wall and tighter sealing of the inner-German border meant that the camp processed a mere 731 East German refugees in 1962. For the most part during the 1960s, the Friedland camp was responsible for the registration and distribution of resettlers from Eastern Europe. Between 10,000 and 20,000 of the resettlers arrived at Friedland every year throughout that decade. During the 1970s, the inflow of resettlers increased. Whereas the camp processed 135,036 resettlers from 1960 to 1969, it processed 270,198 resettlers from 1970 to 1979.\textsuperscript{829} A major reason for the increased flow of traffic during the 1970s was the signing of treaties with Soviet Union and Poland under Willy Brandt’s program of \textit{Ostpolitik},

\textsuperscript{829} Statistics from Niedersächsisches Ministerium für Inneres und Sport, “Grenz­durch­gang­slager Friedland, 1945-2005,” Anhang.
which in the Polish case specifically provided for an easing of emigration restrictions on ethnic Germans.  

Friedland expanded its reach to become the reception station for refugees from all over the globe during the 1970s. Beginning in 1973, Friedland began accepting asylum-seekers fleeing from the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile. In 1978, Friedland processed Vietnamese refugees, so-called “boat-people,” whom the West German government had committed to helping. These refugees had been taken from the *Hai Hong*, a rusting boat carrying nearly 3,000 refugees with insufficient drinking water, food, and other supplies and which came to international attention as Southeast Asian countries refused to allow it to dock and disembark the refugees. Germany agreed to accept 657 people from the *Hai Hong* and an additional 363 Vietnamese refugees from Thailand, all of whom were flown to Hannover and brought to Friedland for processing and distribution to the various German states.

The crumbling of communist rule in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union led to further ethnic German emigration in the 1980s and 1990s. The first wave of resettlers peaked at 50,267 people in 1981 and receded to a low point of 17,997 in 1984, when the camp also processed Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka. Beginning in 1987, East German refugees added to the inflow at Friedland. According to Jürgen Gückel’s history of the camp, “from March 1988 many Poles came, most of them with false papers.”

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831 Ibid.


people in 1989 proved too much for the camp to handle, and authorities were forced to construct
an annex in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony as well as to begin sending refugee directly to the
German states. The inflow of “late-resettlers” after 1989 remained high until the German
government tightened the standards for qualifying as a resettler. During the early part of the
2000s, some 4,220 Jewish emigrants from the former Soviet Union also found reception at
Friedland before being dispersed across Germany. In December 2004, the camp noted that it
have processed 4 million people since its founding in 1945. Indeed, Friedland might have
processed more people during its existence than any other refugee camp in the world.

During visits to the camp in 2011 and 2012, it was clear that the present rhymed with the
past at Friedland. The Nissen huts were gone, save for one maintained as an exhibition of the
camp’s early history. The camp still housed individuals with German roots resettling in Germany
from the former Soviet Union, though the connection to German heritage was so far in the past
that Friedland had to implement cultural integration courses for the resettlers, including lessons
in the German language. Indeed, signs all around the camp offered messages in German and
Russian. The camp likewise housed refugees from civil conflict and repressive regimes, though
in recent years they have come from Iraq, Libya, and Syria. In a parallel to past practice,
however, intelligence services, including those from the United States, still questioned the
refugees about conditions in the areas from which they fled. During the Cold War, intelligence
agents had hoped to determine troop strengths and deployments, industrial capacity, and nuclear
sites. Information gathered from recently arriving refugees fed into a “target-acquisition
system” (Zielerfassungssystem) in which statements help to “confirm a target, and possibly

835 Gückel, 60 Jahre Lager Friedland, 66; and “Grenzdurchgangslager Friedland, 1945-2005,” Anhang.

836 Paul Maddrell, Spying on Science: Western Intelligence in Divided Germany, 1945-1961 (New York: Oxford
University Press, 2006), Chapter 4.
trigger an order to kill,” typically with a drone strike.837 Enemies and technology have changed, but the weapons, methods, and effects of war on refugees remain much the same.

Finally, study of the Friedland camp as a form of regulating humanitarianism raises a series of questions about the concept and what lessons can be learned from the camp. First are the related questions of whether the camp became more humanitarian over time and if one could not reverse the concept to that of humanitarian regulation. To some extent, it does seem that the operation of the camp became more humanitarian over time. For the period lasting from 1945 to 1960, improvements in material conditions in the camp and society more broadly made it less necessary to focus on strict regulation. Moreover, the gradual decrease in the number of people arriving at Friedland likewise made it possible to better care for them in a less coercive manner. For example, mandatory delousing with DDT seems to have fallen out of camp directives and possibly out of use after 1949.838 To be sure, there were sometimes different understandings of what was most humane and effective in helping refugees, such as the Anglo-German dispute over acceptance of resettlers or the treatment of recalcitrant youths. Yet, the camp was ultimately meant to ameliorate suffering, and regulation was not an end in itself. Aside from all of the problems in the camp’s administration, it does seem that Krause had clearly expressed the overall approach at Friedland: “The refugees are not there for us, but rather we are there for them.”839


838 Camp directives 123 and 126 from 1949 mentioned mandatory delousing of illegal border-crossers and living quarters; see Nds 386 Acc 16/83 Nr. 84. On the other hand, medical reports from the 1950s suggest that eventually the camp only used delousing procedures on individuals with actual infestations; see, for example, “Beaufsichtigung der Hygiene,” 5 April 1957, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 16, NHStA.

839 Lagerordnung Nr. 1, 18 April 1946, Nds. 386 Acc. 16/83 Nr. 84, NHStA.
Whenever a mass displacement comes to the world’s attention, refugee camps stand at the center. In such cases, a natural question to ask is what the Friedland example teaches about resolving present-day crises. It is most instructive to think in terms of what worked well at Friedland and in the broader system of resettlement associated with the camp. The facility was extraordinarily effective in registering and redistributing individuals as quickly as possible. Registration was necessary for reestablishing identities and documenting claims for social aid, and the crucial element of redistribution was to settle individuals outside of refugee camps. Of course, that was not always possible; many refugees ended up in residential camps or other institutions when they could not be sent to families in private housing. Rapid resettlement in communities also depended on the fact that there was never any real question of needing to accept the refugees and integrate them into society, despite all of the complications of specific categorizations. In that respect, Friedland and the refugee system in West Germany differed from many other crises in which refugees, the host state, or both have no desire for integration but instead wish to return them to their former homes. Thus, the relative successes of the Friedland system were dependent upon special circumstances in which the camp did not need to confine refugees.

In fact, a key lesson to learn from Friedland is that long-term accommodation in refugee camps is socially corrosive and the need to confine refugees in them leads to problems. Instead of integrating into local society, the refugees remain a sort of foreign element (the proverbial “other”) as long as they are kept in camps, exacerbating the difficulties of being accepted. The problems that consistently emerged in Friedland’s residential camp are suggestive of the harmfulness of extended camp life. Residents of the youth camp, the ex-DPs and infiltrees, and East German refugees all experienced problems with frustrations and mutual recriminations.
among themselves and with camp personnel, making the camp an environment prone to conflict. Indeed, their experiences matched those in other camps, such as the problems experienced with Hungarian refugees in Hessen or the problems well documented for DP camps. Penning displaced individuals in refugee camps only prolonged and worsened problems because they had no real investment in the camp serving as their temporary-yet-indefinite accommodation nor in the society that was either unable or unwilling to accommodate them. For the successful resolution to displacement crises, much depends on the willingness of both parties (the refugees and the host society) to accept each other and work toward integration.
# APPENDIX A

## Overview of Persons Registered Between 1945 and 1960\(^{840}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Refugees, Expellees, and Evacuees (East to West)*</th>
<th>Returnees to West Germany</th>
<th>Returnees to East Germany</th>
<th>Returnees Registered in Berlin</th>
<th>Child Transports</th>
<th>Foreign nationals (Hungarians in 1956)</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>344,493</td>
<td>8,104</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,024</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>553,095</td>
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<tr>
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<td>493,090</td>
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<td>4,259</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,186</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>583,099</td>
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<tr>
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<td>58,555</td>
<td>65,245</td>
<td>64,664</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>22,248</td>
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<td>50,019</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>11,027</td>
<td>149,688</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,365</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>20,966</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,416</td>
<td>19,010</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>1,186</td>
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<td>3,981</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1,646</td>
<td>10,024</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,778</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1,583</td>
<td>4,626</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>675</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>1,581</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1,279</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>17,107</td>
<td>3,849</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3,555</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>25,615</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>100,076</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,612</td>
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<td>1958</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>24,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>10,739</td>
<td>11,667</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>23,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>956,527</strong></td>
<td><strong>265,506</strong></td>
<td><strong>335,242</strong></td>
<td><strong>119,560</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,439</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,119</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,678</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,149,808</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{840}\) Reproduced from *20 Jahre Lager Friedland* (Heidelberg: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge, und Kriegsgeschädigte, 1965), Anlage 3.
Major Population Types, 1945-1960

- Refugees, Expellees, and Evacuees (East to West)
- Refugees, Expellees, and Evacuees (West to East)
- Returnees to West Germany
- Returnees to East Germany
- Resettlers

Number of Individuals

Year
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