

1 In The Wake of War: Expulsions, Violence and Borderland Life

The years 1945 and 1946 will remain forever written in the history of our nation as a great turning point in its development. In the maelstrom of historic events, many of the constructive efforts that our nation is selflessly and heroically developing in these years – stimulated by our national and democratic revolution – will gradually fade. But the reality that after this revolution our republic once and for all time truly became a national state of Czechs and Slovaks, without minorities, will remain the unforgettable fruit of our revolution.¹

Miroslav Kreysa, Chairman of the Settlement Office

From War to “The Wild Transfer”

While seventy years might not be long enough to call Miroslav Kreysa’s statement prophetic, of all the changes emanating from the war years in the Bohemian lands the removal of the Sudeten Germans has seemingly been the most enduring. Communist rule ended, as did the accompanying Cold War. Even the Czechoslovak state is gone, replaced with two separate national states thanks, in part, to the postwar cleansing of minorities. Kreysa, as a Communist Party leader, was trying to claim responsibility and praise for the expulsions, and, as the leader of the borderlands’ resettlement program, he had an audience of settlers with a vested interest in getting rid of Germans. His attitude toward the expulsions and the party’s efforts to gain political capital from them was common across the political leadership of postwar Czechoslovakia. Slovak leaders, it should be noted, were simultaneously attempting to expel Hungarians. In fact, these were popular programs in many parts of Central and Eastern Europe after the war. The Nazis’ annihilation of the Jews and their attempts to redraw the ethnic landscape set off a series of similar policies throughout the region. In addition, the brutality of the war, particularly in the east, meant that Soviet reprisals were devastating as well. Together,

¹ Miroslav Kreysa, “Osídlovací politika lidově demokratického státu,” *Osídlování* May 5, 1946.

these factors helped facilitate the expulsion of Germans after the war. In this sense, the ethnic cleansing that swept through borderland regions of Czechoslovakia was part of a much broader revolutionary pattern than Kreysa was willing to admit.

The war did not wreak the kind of death and destruction in Czechoslovakia that it did further east. The Nazi destruction of the town of Lidice and the murdering of its male inhabitants in June 1942 represented the most noteworthy act of aggression in the country during the war. This was in retaliation for the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, the Nazi leader of the Protectorate. There were, to be sure, other acts of terror and arrests. Czech resentment toward Germanization policies and other restrictions grew throughout the war. This sentiment was most evident among the underground resistance itself, known as the Central Leadership of the Domestic Resistance (*Ústřední vedení odboje domácího*, ÚVOD). They had lost the most, and had the most to lose, and thus voiced a particularly sharp desire for revenge. In 1944, for instance, one report from ÚVOD noted that “Anti-German feeling has changed into hatred . . . The overwhelming opinion, as among political leaders, is that Germans must be removed and the Republic will become a nation-state without Germans.”² The resistance movement certainly emphasized widespread feelings of hatred among the general populace, which served to support its calls for a total expulsion of the German population. For other Czechs, gauging the level of animosity is more difficult. It would seem appropriate to argue that, as with judging people’s levels of collaboration and resistance during the occupation, we assume that a range of emotions and attitudes characterized the Czech populace after the war.

This has not been the favored interpretation of most historians, however. The majority of scholars continue to argue that Czechs, as a whole, felt a deep-seated hatred toward Germans as the war came to an end.³ The term “wild transfer” (*divoký odsun*) has been used to characterize the

² Doc.137. Report from August 17, 1944. Jitka Vondorová, ed., *Češi a sudetoněmecká otázka, 1939–1945* (Prague, 1994), 281.

³ Tomáš Staněk, *Perzekuce 1945* (Prague, 1996), 49. Tomáš Staněk, *Odsun Němců z Československu, 1945–1948* (Prague, 1991), 56–60; Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), 114–22; Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution Against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge, 2005), 38–45; Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Harvard, 2007), 219–25; Jürgen Tämpke, *Czech-German Relations and the Politics of Central Europe: From Bohemia to the EU* (New York, 2003), 65–70; Eagle Glassheim, “National Mythologies and Ethnic Cleansing: The Expulsion of Czechoslovak Germans in 1945,” *Central European History* 33, no.4 (2000): 463–86; Eagle Glassheim, “Mechanics of Ethnic Cleansing: The Expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia, 1945–1947,” in *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948*, eds. Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak (Lanham, 2001), 205–8.

early postwar months when Czechs carried out expulsions, and connotes the notion of widespread violence. This image emerged with the expellees' postwar accounts of the expulsions and continues to influence historical scholarship. Chad Bryant, for instance, argues: “Hating the Germans became the only clear, unambiguous aspect of Czech national identity that survived the war.” Drawing from Roger Peterson's work, he continues, “emotions . . . readied Czechs to beat, kill, and humiliate their neighbors.”⁴ No doubt this was the case for a certain part of the population, and Czech leaders called for violent reprisals against Germans. Some responded, and violence ensued. Yet, this picture is at once both vague and conclusive. For instance, one recent study noted that “the first wave of expulsions from the Sudetenland took place in a maelstrom of fury, vengeance, nationalism and popular rage.”⁵ Another account states: “As the German armies retreated, Czechs went on a violent rampage against the German population in a number of localities. This violence was brutal, indiscriminate, and aimed to humiliate.”⁶ Such an image suggests that all Czechs were willing participants in terrorizing Germans because they hated them.

The notion of the “wild transfer” misrepresents the character of the expulsions and the violence against Germans for several reasons. First, a commission of Czech and German historians places the number of deaths resulting from the expulsions at 30,000. Of these, they argue that the number killed directly at the hands of Czechs was less than 7,000.⁷ While not all scholars agree with these findings, they suggest that widespread popular violence does not accurately characterize Czech actions against Germans. Of course, killings were not the only form of violence, and physical assaults were widespread. Still, violence was usually located in specific contexts, such as internment camps, and during moments of expulsion, when compulsion was used to get people to move and to instill fear in others. In this sense, the violence was not “wild” at all, but rather served specific ends. In addition, the two main examples that scholars use to support this idea of wild and hate-driven expulsions turn out to be some of the more exceptional cases of violence in postwar Czechoslovakia. The first one occurred in Brno at the end of May 1945 and the other one

⁴ Bryant, *Prague in Black*, 220–21. See also Roger Peterson, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, 2002).

⁵ Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain, 1944–1956: The Crushing of Eastern Europe* (New York, 2012), 120.

⁶ Beth Wilner, “Czechoslovakia, 1848–1998,” in Peterson, *Understanding Ethnic Violence*, 200.

⁷ *Konfliktní společenství, katastrofa, uvolnění: Náčrt výkladu německo-českých dějin od 19. století* (Prague, 1996). The other estimated deaths occurred as a result of crowded camp conditions, disease and malnourishment.

happened in Ústí nad Labem at the end of July. Each case was very different, but neither one of them was a good representation of what happened during the ethnic cleansing of the borderlands.

The following account of the 1945 summer expulsions attempts to place the violence in its local context and to examine more closely the actors and conditions involved. By doing so, the picture of wholesale mob violence recedes while more specific perpetrators, mostly associated with the Czech military and partisan units, move to the fore. Recent research has clarified that the Czechoslovak military conducted the majority of expulsions, which the central government had ordered it to implement.⁸ The first Czechs to enter the borderlands were military units and paramilitary groups that treated the area as a land to be conquered. They regarded everyone as suspect, including the Czech speakers living there. After they solidified their presence in the region they began to organize and carry out expulsions. What emerges, then, is not a picture of widespread nationally motivated mob violence, but a military campaign to force Germans from the country with groups of young men, and occasionally women, who engaged in particularly brutal or sadistic acts of violence when given the opportunity.

By late March 1945, the Red Army had entered the Bohemian lands in Silesia and began the drive against German forces in Moravia. In May, additional Soviet forces moved south from Saxony and began to drive toward Prague, which they liberated on May 9. As they occupied the borderlands they instituted a reign of terror on local German populations. While they arrived as ostensible liberators for Czechs, they came as conquerors to the borderlands and treated Sudeten Germans no differently than Germans in the Old Reich.⁹ Soviet soldiers raped, pillaged and tormented local German communities as they moved through the borderlands. German testimonies are filled with such reports: “The first Russians came riding in, followed by stronger units and the night from 8 to 9 May was the beginning of the ensuing time of terror. Robbing and plundering were of the daily order, the violation of women and girls were the horrific side effects.”¹⁰ Another German described the arrival of

⁸ Tomáš Staněk and Adrian von Arburg “Organizované divoké odsuny? Úloha z ústředních státních orgánů při provádění ‘evakuace’ německého obyvatelstva (květen až září 1945),” 1 část. “Předpoklady a vývoj do konce května 1945,” *Soudobé dějiny* 12, no. 3–4 (2005), 465–533; 2 část. “Československá armáda vytváří ‘hotové skutečnosti’, vláda je před cizinou legitimizuje,” *Soudobé dějiny* 13, no. 1–2 (2006), 13–49; 3 část. “Snaha vlády a civilních úřadů o řízení ‘divokého odsunu’,” *Soudobé dějiny* 13, no. 3–4 (2006) 321–76.

⁹ Norman Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Occupation Zone, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, 1995).

¹⁰ Erlebnisbericht, Josef Eckert, March 19, 1951. Lastenausgleich Archiv, Bayreuth, Germany (LAA). Ost-Dokumentation (Ost-Dok) 2, Brück 246, 2.

Russians in this way: “Not only shots were heard, but the screams of women and girls of all ages raped by the Russians.”¹¹ The editor of the Sudeten German testimonies suggests that Czechs frequently aided and abetted Russian soldiers who sought to rape Germans.¹²

Red Army soldiers not only terrorized Germans, but also became a thorn in the side of Czech authorities. Reports of soldiers taking livestock, food, clothing and other necessities abounded. One borderland town reported that they had been working on several cases where Red Army soldiers stole things “not only in apartments evacuated by Germans but also in various storage facilities and the like.”¹³ Soviet soldiers sometimes even helped Germans at the expense of Czechs. Several reports indicate that Soviet soldiers aided Germans’ flight, often including the shipment of their belongings. Sometimes the soldiers even returned for the Germans’ property after they had already reached Germany. For instance, on July 10, 1945, Czech officials reported that Soviet soldiers crossed the Czech–Saxon border with two trucks and transported the family of the photographer Max Nowak back to Germany with all of their belongings, including furniture.¹⁴ Soviet forces continued to harass officials and undermined the restoration of order in the borderlands until their withdrawal in December 1945. As noteworthy, however, was the fact that regardless of how poorly Soviet soldiers treated Germans, the German testimonies, almost without exception, state that when the Czechs arrived the situation became much worse. That is because whatever the transgressions of the Russians, the Czechs came to expel the Germans from their homes.

The situation in the borderlands differed greatly from that of interior towns and cities where Germans lived. Here, Germans were often more at the mercy of Czechs, who greatly outnumbered them. In Prague, for instance, Czechs forced Germans to do menial work and terrorized them in various ways. In Brno, local Czechs took matters into their own hands to expel Germans from the city. What became known as “The Brno Death March” claimed the lives of hundreds, many in its aftermath.¹⁵

¹¹ Erlebnisbericht, Erwin Brendel, n.d. LAA, Ost-Dok 2, Freiwalddau 252, 24.

¹² Theodor Schieder, ed., *Documents on the Expulsion of the Germans from Eastern-Central Europe*, vol. 4: *The Expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia*, trans. G.H. de Sausmarez (Bonn, 1960), 29.

¹³ Report from police commissioner, October 9, 1945. Státní Okresní Archiv (SOkA) Jablonec nad Nisou (Jablonec n. N) fond (f.) ONV Jablonec n. N., karton (k.) 18 inventární číslo (inv. č.), 39.

¹⁴ Information report to Minister of National Defense. Archiv Města (AM) Ústí nad Labem (Ústí n. L.), f. ONV Ústí n. L., k. 111 inv. č. 749.

¹⁵ Staněk and von Arburg, “Organizované divoké odsuny?” 1 část; Hans Hertl et al., *Němci ven! Brněnský pochod smrti 1945*, trans. Jana Šlajchrtová (Prague, 2001); Vojtěch Žampach, “The Expulsion of the Germans from Brno and the Immediate

The reasons for the expulsion from Brno involved a combination of popular anger, desire for German property, especially housing, and the radicalized political atmosphere in the country. President Beneš had delivered an invective against Germans in the city two weeks before the expulsion.¹⁶ Tomáš Staněk argues that “[p]ressure for the expulsions combined with the incomparable conditions in the city, which led to increasing radical demands and exacerbated national passions.”¹⁷ The lack of housing was part of these difficult conditions and likely hastened calls for expulsion.¹⁸ Property demands and local resentments, combined with leaders’ calls to expel Germans, pressured local officials to authorize the action. On May 30, armed factory workers and various security units forced more than 20,000 Germans to march south from the city toward Austria. Along the way, security officials added as many as 10,000 other Sudeten Germans to the moving columns of humanity from nearby towns and villages. Those in charge, however, had not secured permission from officials in Austria to accept these Germans or made provisions for them once they were refused entry. While difficult to assess, in addition to dozens of Germans who appear to have perished en route, hundreds more died in the makeshift camps in Pohorelice and once across the border in Austria.¹⁹

Popular pressure and the wider involvement of Czechs in this expulsion appear more pertinent in this case than in any other during that summer. That local factory workers played a large role in gathering and expelling Germans, for example, was exceptional compared to the general course of the expulsions. Another reason that popular demands for revenge surfaced to the degree that they did in Brno is due to the fact that Germans were a minority in the city. Popular anger had a much better chance of surfacing there than in the borderlands, where Sudeten Germans comprised the majority of inhabitants well into 1946. Other historians note an important distinction between events in the borderlands and those in the interior. One pair of Czech historians considers the borderlands and the former Protectorate as “two separate worlds” at this time.²⁰ The domestic resistance’s actions against Nazi units in Prague in early May, along with the severe treatment of Germans in the city, leads Staněk to argue that

Consequences, 30 May to 7 July 1945,” *The Prague Yearbook of Contemporary History* (Prague, 1999), 85–156; Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 87–90; Glassheim, “National Mythologies,” 481–86.

¹⁶ Glassheim, “National Mythologies,” 481–82. ¹⁷ Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 87.

¹⁸ Glassheim, “National Mythologies,” 482, 485; Staněk and Arburg, “Organizované divoké odsuny? Úloha z ústředních státních orgánů,” 524.

¹⁹ Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 89–90; Staněk and Arburg, “Organizované divoké odsuny? Úloha z ústředních státních orgánů,” 525–33.

²⁰ S. Biman, and R. Čilek. *Poslední mrtví, první živi: České pohraničí květen až srpen 1945* (Ústí nad Labem, 1989), 14.

Prague “had an undoubtedly exceptional position in comparison with the situation of Germans” elsewhere in May 1945.²¹ Inland cities and towns were more likely to be dangerous places for Germans than the borderlands immediately after the war.

Popular uprisings like the one in Brno were in fact extremely rare in the borderlands, and it took time before expulsions there got underway. Standing military orders were issued in mid-May to “deport all Germans from the historic borders.”²² Despite these instructions, however, few expulsions occurred. In some places disagreements among Czechs slowed progress toward getting rid of the Germans. In Liberec, for example, a series of different security organs came through the town and complicated the expulsions by looting and terrorizing both Czechs and Germans.²³ In late May, a frustrated military commander in the borderlands characterized the situation as follows:

No cleansing (*čistka*) or expulsion to the Reich is being carried out. Germans everywhere remain in their places, and they even continue with their former pride, working publicly and threatening Czech people . . . Relevant sector commanders, when they are notified about the weakness towards Germans, blame it on national committees in the borderlands, which hinder the activities of units in the borderlands and directly prohibit severe policy towards Germans, with the claim, that only they are the responsible authority in this region.²⁴

In May 1945, national committees and military organs had not yet established clear lines of authority. They would continue to battle over control of German inhabitants throughout the summer. Despite the commander’s view that national committees were preventing ethnic cleansing, national committees were often willing to expel Germans, but did not have the means to engineer many large operations or force them across the border.²⁵ At the same time, national committees proved reluctant to allow military forces to control expulsions from their towns because they wanted to be in charge. As the expulsions continued, military authorities stepped up their pressure and stepped over national committees’ authority to conduct expulsions.

Orders to deport Germans in the middle of May meant little given the few preparations for such expulsions. Many of the military’s early instructions

²¹ Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 66–73.

²² Dodatek to č. 45/45 from Velitelství gen. Alex, May 15, 1945. Vojenský historický archiv (VHA) Prague, f. Velitelství první oblasti (VO1), k. 1 inv. č. 6; Biman and Čilek, *Poslední mrtví, první živi*, 31; Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 23.

²³ Staněk, *Perzekuce*, 90–93.

²⁴ Situační hlášení oper. skupiny [sic] za den May 26, 1945, Velitelství 3 Čs. divise. VHA, f. VO1, k. 1 inv. č. 6.

²⁵ See, for example, Report from Fryvoldov, June 6, 1945. NA, f. Ministerstvo vnitra – Nosek (MV-N), k. 227 inv. č. 146.

did not directly call for a general expulsion, but spoke of securing the borders and beginning operations against remaining Nazi formations and suspected German guerrilla groups, known as “Werewolves.” In addition to members of the reconstituted Czechoslovak Army, special armed detachments of partisans and others moved into the borderlands. Their assignment included securing the transportation network around the Most coal basin.²⁶ Once accomplished, these basic security measures allowed military officials to turn to the process of ethnic cleansing. On June 7, 1945, the commander of the Northern Bohemia region issued some of the first concrete instructions regarding the expulsion procedures. The “transfer,” as he called it, would be carried out by Czechoslovak units in agreement with national committees, and after reaching the border Red Army units would assume control. Transfers would start in the interior parts of the country, from areas where Germans comprised less than 60 percent of the inhabitants.²⁷ These and other plans prepared the way for military authorities to take greater control of the expulsions, which the government authorized on June 15, 1945.²⁸

The military’s first expulsions were often directed against Nazi Party members and citizens of Nazi Germany who had moved to the Sudetenland or the Protectorate after the Munich Agreement. More extensive expulsions only began to take shape in June. Near the town of Děčín, 1,328 German inhabitants were expelled as a “test case” (*zkušební případ*) on June 4, 1945.²⁹ Reports from other places show how expulsions quickly assumed routine forms. One report noted, for example: “In Teplice-Šanov Germans are being moved out systematically home by home and they are transported by trucks to Cinvald, where they undergo a thorough search by the border guards. After the search they are sent on foot across the border.”³⁰ These actions, which took place just prior to

²⁶ Postup při obsazení Sudet, Generál Novák, May 20, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 1 inv. č. 6; Situační hlášení, Vol. 3 Čs. divise, May 27, 1945, *ibid.*; Biman and Čílek, *Poslední mrtví, první živí*, 25–51.

²⁷ 0536/taj.1.odd.1945, VO1, June 7, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 49 inv.č. 267; see also Staněk and von Arburg “Organizované divoké odsuny?” 2. část: “Československá armáda vytváří,” 13–49.

²⁸ Meeting of the government, June 15, 1945. Karel Jech and Karel Kaplan, eds., *Dekrety prezidenta republiky 1940–1945: Dokumenty* 2 vols. (Brno, 1995), 1: 372–73. For other plans see: Instructions from Ministry of National Defense, June 12, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 2 inv.č. 21; Biman and Čílek, *Poslední mrtví, první živí*, 31; Staněk, *Odsun Němců*, 64–65. This helps explain why the Provincial National Committee in Prague ordered national committees to stop further expulsions on their own as of June 14, 1945. See Glassheim, “National Mythologies,” 478.

²⁹ Situace 9 June 1945 v prostoru Děčín-Podmokly-Teplice-Šanov, from VO1, June 13, 1945, VÚA, f. VO1, k. 48 inv. č. 263; Report from VO1, July 25, 1945. VHA, f. Vojenská kancelář prezidenta republiky (VKPR), č.j. 1070.

³⁰ Situace 9 June 1945 v prostoru Děčín-Podmokly-Teplice-Šanov, from VO1, June 13, 1945, VHA, f. VO1, k. 48 inv.č. 263.

June 15, presaged the move toward a general cleansing of Sudeten Germans. On June 19, the Headquarters of the First Army Corps issued a general “transfer” order to military units operating in the borderlands. First, non-productive Germans, business owners and others, such as teachers, lawyers and office personnel, were to be concentrated according to local conditions and made available for transfer. Important workers and farmers were to be kept until the Czechs could replace them.³¹

Even though the military leadership worked to better organize the expulsion process, this should not mask the violence that ethnic cleansing entailed. Local commanders could shape the nature of expulsions in particularly brutal ways. In Chomutov, for example, on June 9 the local Czech military authorities forced all the men in the city, some 5,000–6,000 of them, to assemble at the local sports stadium. Somewhere around 10–20 members of the SS were identified, tortured and killed. Following this, Staff Captain Karel Prašil ordered the forced march of the men to the Saxony border, some 20 kilometers away. Along the way, the Germans were beaten with whips and several were shot. One Czech participant counted 27 killed, many of whom were shot in the back. A German source listed many more dead. When they reached the border the Soviet commander refused to allow the transport to cross. Prašil, it appears, attempted to carry out this expulsion without prior preparation or approval. After a few days at the border they marched the Germans to an internment camp in nearby Most to work at the synthetic fuel plant there.³²

Partisan units that roamed throughout the borderlands in May and June also added to the arbitrary nature of violence and ethnic cleansing for some Germans. Many partisan groups, often referred to as Revolutionary Guards, came to the borderlands from Prague, where they had already been engaged in fighting against Germans. Some units formed only as the war ended, and with the express purpose to go to the borderlands to pacify the region. Rather than restoring order, however, these groups often created chaos. Czech officials, both local and central, continually complained

³¹ Čj.75 Taj.1.odděl.1945, Odsun německého za hranice, from Velitelství I. sboru (VS1), June 19, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 48 inv. č. 263; Entry for June 19, 1945. VHA, f. Kronika velitelství 13 divise, k. 1, kronika.

³² For details surrounding the Chomutov March, see Report no. 55. Theodor Schieder, ed., *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa*, vol. 4/2, *Die Vertreibung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus der Tschechoslowakei* (Bonn, 1957), 292–94; Report no. 90. Schieder, ed., *The Expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia*, 4: 469–72; Record of the Ministry of Interior on events in Chomutov in June 1945 and of the brutal offenses at the internment camp there. November 28, 1947; Doc. 91, Arburg and Staněk, eds., *Vysídlení Němců*, II.3: 267.

about the actions of partisan groups. An officer from the Third Division reported: "Aside from military units operating in this sector several detachments of partisans . . . behave undisciplined, do not heed orders from the regional headquarters, plunder, and simply do as they please."³³ Germans mostly bore the brunt of partisan independence. "On Sunday, 13 May 1945 Czech Partisans came into our apartment, rummaged through boxes and closets, and held my husband and I under the threat of pistols aimed at the back of our necks. They did this with sadistic joy and lust and were seemingly prepared for a long extension of their visit," wrote one Sudeten German.³⁴ While most partisans were out for material gain, the space between war and ethnic cleansing provided opportunities to those who wished to threaten and attack Germans. Already in June the military began making efforts to contain and control partisan units and, aside from a few hold outs, by July 1945 most partisan units had been disbanded and the men and women who comprised them assumed other responsibilities, often as camp guards or as members of local police forces. Despite their actions and the different ways that they shaped early postwar borderland life, partisans had little power to carry out expulsions across the border and played a mostly auxiliary role to the regular army.

The military's involvement and the clearer delineation of responsibility helped to accelerate expulsions in mid-June; they became increasingly intense in July. For instance, the Twelfth Division, operating in Northern Bohemia, oversaw the expulsion of 70,727 Sudeten Germans before July, but in that month alone they forced more than twice that number of Germans across the border.³⁵ The troop's presence along the German and Polish frontier determined the options for Czechoslovakia's military seeking to expel Germans. For example, on June 8, 1945, Polish forces closed the border between Czechoslovakia and newly demarcated Polish territory. They prevented Sudeten Germans from being driven into territory the Poles had just occupied because they too were forcibly moving Germans westward.³⁶ Their forces cut off a direct northward route from borderland districts in eastern Bohemia and northern Moravia and Silesia. American forces likewise did what they could to prohibit expulsions from western Bohemia, much of which they occupied until the end of the year. In 1945, the majority of expellees were sent to

³³ Výpis ze situačního hlášení vel. divisi. May 27, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 1 inv. č. 6.

³⁴ Erlebnisbericht Margarete Kaulfersch, June 16, 1950. LAA, Ost-Dok 2, Gablonz 255, 11.

³⁵ Postup vysídlování obyvatelstva německé národnosti, 12 divise, from First Divisional Headquarters, August 9, 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 49 inv. č. 271.

³⁶ Report on the difficulties of the evacuations of Germans from late July 1945. VHA, f. VO1, k. 49 inv. č. 267; Biman and Cílek, *Poslední mrtví, první živi*, 95.