



Internal and external factors leading to the compulsory transfer of ethnic Germans out of Slovakia

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Incorporation of ethnic Germans in Czechoslovak republic to Nazi organizations and their part in splitting Czechoslovakia brought leading political representatives of Czechoslovak government in exile to beliefs that in renewed republic it will be inevitable to reduce number of Germans to minimum. Planned transfer of German inhabitants from Czechoslovak republic after defeating Nazi Germany was justified on the principle of so called collective guilt. Author and primary proponent of this postulate was President E. Beneš. Development of international and internal political situation in Czechoslovak enabled acceptance of transfer of Germans out of Czechoslovakia (also out of Poland and Hungary) from the point of view of winning powers in 1945 and also realization of this intention in years 1946 - 1953.

Transfer of ethnic Germans. Slovakia. President E. Benes.

The German minority was for more than seven centuries an integral part of a complex ethnic structure of Slovakia. The German immigrants, who came to Slovak territory in different time periods, for various reasons, and settled in disparate localities, contributed significantly to the development of the economy, industry and culture of Slovakia. The continuity of German settlement in Slovakia was, however, in a decisive measure drastically terminated, primarily by external causes which affected Europe during the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century. The Nazi take-over of Germany incited a number of political developments which had an impact upon the German community in Slovakia. The pressures to transform all German enclaves in Europe into disciplined executors of Hitler's orders succeeded also in Slovakia. During the existence of the so-called Slovak State, which after the destruction of Czechoslovakia became a satellite of Nazi Germany, the nazification of the German minority went without hindrance.

In spite of the exploitation of ethnic Germans for the goals of Nazi Germany, the situation of Germans in Slovakia was dramatically different from the position of members of the German minority in the Protectorate. The sheer size of the German community in the Czech part of former Czechoslovakia, as well as its compact settlement and cultural homogeneity, placed this ethnic group a prominent status in Czechland. The Germans living in Slovakia never held a position comparable in significance to that held by the more than three million Sudeten Germans. According to the 1930 census, 143 000 (4,7%)¹ inhabitants of Slovakia reported German nationality. This relatively small ethnic community was further fragmented by political, religious and cultural differences, over which the process of nazification laid only a thin veneer. Unlike the situation in the Czech part of the CSR, the German minority was never considered by Slovaks to be a threat to the territorial integrity of Slovakia. This menacing position was "reserved" for the much larger and compact Hungarian community. In spite of deep differences between the Sudeten Germans living in the western part of Czechland and the German minority in Slovakia, the final outcome of solutions to "the German question" was the same. The main reason for refusal to acknowledge the differences between these ethnic groups and thus for different approach was

acceptance of "collective guilt" as the basis for dealing with Germans in Czechoslovakia. The author and principal proponent of this idea was the Czechoslovakian president Edward Beneš, who, together with representatives of the Communist party, became the most influential in setting the agenda and policy of Czechoslovakian government in exile.

Attitudes toward ethnic Germans and opinions about how to resolve the status of the German minority in Czechoslovakia on the part of E. Beneš as well as the communists changed over time as a result of developments in the international situation. According to E. Beneš' initial plan, a "State Council" should have been established, including also some representatives of the German minority in exile.² In the fall of 1941, E. Beneš altered his position regarding the participation of the German exile representatives in Czechoslovakian government constituted in Great Britain and reneged on his promises. Unquestionably, the positive steps taken by the Allies toward the Czechoslovakian government in exile had an impact upon this change. Great Britain and the Soviet Union at that time recognized E. Beneš as the head of the legitimate Czechoslovakian government and there was no need to compromise and include representatives of ethnic minorities in it. E. Beneš justified his decision in terms of the growth of negative sentiments toward the Germans in the Protectorate as a result of Nazi atrocities.³ The Sudeten exile in Great Britain was represented primarily by the social democrats led by W. Jaksch. At the beginning of 1942, E. Beneš invited W. Jaksch and other representatives of the Sudeten exile⁴ to negotiate the future arrangements of the political situation in Czechoslovakia. During the talks E. Beneš expressed the necessity to expel a majority of the ethnic Germans from the CSR, on the grounds of increase of hatred on the large part of the Czech population toward Germans. E. Beneš argued that the Nazi terror aroused a wave of nationalism and a desire for revenge, which would result, as he said, in "a definitive split with Germans, their transfer to the Reich, simply - an end."⁵ The Czechoslovakian president expressed the intention to rid the CSR of "...the whole German bourgeoisie, Pan-German intelligentsia and pro-fascist labor class."⁶ W. Jaksch refused to accept such a broad and vague targeting of persons destined for transfer, and consequently the negotiations between these two politicians were terminated.

The realization of transfer of Germans out of Czechoslovakia depended on the consent of the Allies. With the aim explore and possibly influence soviet position, E. Beneš held talks with the ambassador of the Soviet Union in London, A. J. Bogomolov, during the spring months of 1943. At that time the soviet political leadership evidently lacked a clear idea what position to take on this issue. In the note which A. J. Bogomolov submitted on 23 May 1943 to president Beneš, Soviet Union did not oppose to transfer, but no explicit agreement or support of this requirement were given. The Soviet position, however, changed surprisingly quickly. On June 5 1943, ambassador Bogomolov informed Dr. Ripka, who held a high position in the foreign ministry of the Czechoslovakian exile government, that the Soviet leadership will support the Czechoslovakian intention to transfer Germans out of the country.⁷ In May and June 1943 president Beneš visited the USA. In his memoirs E. Beneš interpreted the journey as a "turning point" in the policy of the Czechoslovakian exile government. According to E. Beneš' own account, he discussed the issue of transfer with president F. D. Roosevelt in all its aspects and reasons, with American president expressing agreement with the transfer of ethnic Germans out of Czechoslovakia in maximal possible scale.⁸ The most conservative attitude to the idea of transfer was held at that time by the representatives of Great Britain. Even though the plan of transfer was not uniformly refused, there were a number of critical reactions, doubting the humanity of such an approach.⁹

Unlike president E. Beneš, the leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) in exile abstained from a clearly defined position on the issue of transfer. The CPC operated from two exile centers - Moscow and London. The Moscow leadership played a formative role in determining the whole policy of the CPC, as the decision of Soviet leaders in the sphere of international politics were automatically binding also for the CPC as a whole. The secondary role of the London group caused vacillations and reluctance to take a clear position on the issue of the status of the German minority in post-war Czechoslovakia. This approach was expressed also in the report from the meetings between the London wing of the CPC and E. Beneš in July of 1943. In the report, forwarded to CPC headquarters in Moscow, the leaders of the London section informed that they would follow instructions from Moscow and in talks with E. Beneš bypassed the issue of the status of the Sudeten Germans.¹⁰ During December of 1943, E. Beneš visited the Soviet Union. There, the President held a number of meetings with Soviet representatives, submitting four memoranda devoted to various aspects of Czechoslovakian-Soviet relations. One of these proposals was focused upon the of status of Germans in the CSR. The memorandum in question contained a request for a free hand in deciding to award (or refuse) citizenship to members of the German minority. In cases when citizenship would be denied, the CSR would have right to transfer these persons to Germany. The property of transferred Germans should remain in Czechoslovakia and departed persons would be compensated from funds allocated for reparations paid by defeated Germany. The memorandum also contained a description of the categories of persons who

would be subject to compulsory transfer out of the CSR. As E. Beneš reported on 22. December 1943 to J. Masaryk, who held the position of secretary of state in the Czechoslovakian exile government, J. V. Stalin expressed "a fundamental agreement" with proposed memorandum.¹¹

President Beneš utilized the Moscow visit also for talks with representatives of the CPC, led by K. Gottwald.¹² K. Gottwald informed the London wing of the CPC that communist leadership preferred the more "tactical" approach to the "German issue". The communists proposed to punish (by conscription of property and deportation out of Czechoslovakia) ethnic Germans who were active fascist and persons who committed high treason. The rest of the German minority would have an opportunity to opt either for Germany or Czechoslovakia with each individual case to be decided by the Czechoslovakian authorities. The communists proposed that active participants in the anti-fascist resistance from the ranks of ethnic Germans should automatically be granted the Czechoslovakian citizenship and should have an active role in the whole process of measures taken against fascists perpetrators after the war. According to the cited report, E. Beneš agreed with communist proposals, while maintaining the need to reconstitute the CSR as a "Slavic state".¹³ The visits of E. Beneš to the USA and Soviet Union reinforced the international position of the Czechoslovak exile government and enabled him to more authoritatively and openly present his goals in regard to resolving the "German question". In a speech made to the State Council on 3 February 1944, he spoke of the necessity to wage a "great people's war" which would mean a "bloody and ruthless end to fascist thugs and Germans".¹⁴ The position of E. Beneš was fortified also by the growing isolation of the Treuegemeinschaft led by W. Jaksch in Great Britain and the continuing loyalty of the Sudeten Germans to the fascist regime in Protectorate. In course of 1944 E. Beneš repeatedly demonstrated his determination to build Czechoslovakia as a state without "non-Slavic" minorities.¹⁵

During the second half of 1944 a process of radicalization took place among the leaders of the Moscow wing of the CPC. The communists came to the conclusion that the most suitable approach to rebuilding of post-war Czechoslovakia would be a state composed only of Czechs, Slovaks and members of the Ukrainian minority.¹⁶ In August of 1944¹⁷, the Czechoslovakian exile government in London published a memorandum in which the basic tenets of program of transfer of ethnic Germans out of the CSR were formulated. The authors of the memorandum proposed the transfer of approximately 1,6 million members of the German minority to Germany. In the span of a few months, the Czechoslovakian exile representation considerably increased the number of Germans which should be transferred to Germany. According to a second memorandum, published in November 1944, the maximal number of Germans who would be allowed to remain in Czechoslovakia was estimated at eight hundred thousand. Furthermore, the authors of the memorandum expressed their intention to terminate the pre-war minority rights, with exception of schools with German as the language of instruction in localities with purely German settlement. E. Beneš explored the British and American reaction to November memorandum on behalf of the Czechoslovak government, but Great Britain abstained from a clearly formulated answer. Similarly, an official note from the US State department accentuated the need to first consult this issue with all relevant parties and then to conclude an international agreement.¹⁸

Neither E. Beneš nor exponents of the CPC devoted any attention to the status of the German minority in Slovakia. In developing of approaches to resolving the position of ethnic Germans in Czechoslovakia, Slovak Germans were not figured separately, in spite of the number of differences between the Protectorate and Slovakia. Unlike Sudeten Germans, there was no exile political organization representing Slovak Germans. In Slovakia, incipient anti-fascist activities, led almost exclusively by social democrats and communists from ranks of ethnic Germans, were concentrated in the region of Central Slovakia. During the years 1940-1941, the regional leadership of Communist Party of Slovakia published a periodical *Kladivo*. A German mutation *Der Hammer* was published at that time for members of the Communist party from the ranks of the ethnic Germans. In the Spiš region, an illegal periodic *Volksstimme* was published, focusing upon the propagation of anti-fascist ideas among German miners.¹⁹ However, these activities were confined to a small number of members of the German minority and fell victim to heavy repressive measures. On the other side, exponents of *Deutsche Partei* presented the German minority in Slovakia as a homogenous, staunchly pro-Nazi community. In reality, the nazification of Slovak Germans during the period of 1938-1945 resulted in nationalistic fervor, which was "very fresh, young, easily manipulated and prone to messianic euphoria"²⁰, but this attitude had no deep roots and was more the work of external influences than an internal development.

There was a direct impact upon the formation of attitudes of a sizeable portion of the German population in Slovakia on external developments. After the initial successes of the Nazi war-machinery were replaced by defeats, especially on the Eastern front, the pressure to exploit the human and economic reserves of the Slovak Germans increased. According to the report of one of the resistance activists, V. Radakovič, there was a noticeable reluctance on a growing part of young German males to join the SS as

volunteers.²¹ The change of attitude was observed also the Slovak authorities. Police chief in Kežmarok reported, that "A decisive majority of Slovak inhabitants and many Germans themselves are considering the German defeat inevitable and many Nazi exponents - initially extremely vocal - now are looking for ways to hide from public life, or have simply switched sides."²² With the aim to increase the number of ethnic Germans in military service, the German authorities concluded in spring 1944 an agreement with the representatives of the Slovak State, which made for the ethnic Germans service in the SS formations compulsory.²³ For the Slovak anti-fascist movement, either composed of civic resistance groups, or of communists, the issue of the status of the German minority in Slovakia played only a secondary role. The Slovak resistance movement was primarily preoccupied with coordination of all individual groups, as well as with the definition of the competencies which representatives of the Slovak resistance should have in relation to the Czechoslovakian exile government and to the leadership of the CPC in Moscow. This aim was realized at the end of 1945, when exponents of the Slovak resistance (communists and civic groups) concluded the so-called "Christmas Agreement" and established a central resistance organization - the Slovak National Council (SNC). The Christmas Agreement, which consisted of seven clauses, does not specifically address issues affecting the position of ethnic minorities. The allusion to the future approach to minorities is found in the fourth clause of second part of the agreement, where signatories vow to "uproot all fascist, racist and totalitarian tendencies".²⁴

In regard to the situation in Slovakia, members of the Czechoslovakian exile government and especially E. Beneš were primarily concerned with the liquidation of all vestiges of Slovak independence and transfer of all power structures into the system of the renewed CSR. E. Beneš insisted that all changes should be realized under the authority of the central government.²⁵ The Slovak National Uprising (SNU) brought a new dramatic dimension into the Slovak - German relations. SNU was aimed at overthrow of the apparatus of the Slovak State and by its character and goals it was anti-fascists. Especially the Soviet partisans, who composed a sizeable portion of military forces active in the Uprising, were not hesitant to participate on drastic anti-German measures. The German population, scattered throughout the Slovak territory and concentrated in three principal enclaves, was affected by the SNU to a various degree. In the regions controlled by the insurgents (territory of the Middle Slovakia where Germans lived in so-called Hauerland region and partly in the Spiš) the German population was directly exposed to military actions and violence. There were occasions of killings of the German civilians and acts of a gruesome revenge. A small number, mostly German communists from the Central Slovakia, joined the SNU and fought together with the partisans. However, a majority of the ethnic Germans remain loyal to the Nazi Germany. In the Spiš, Deutsche Partei formed militia squads, who helped the German regular army to hunt the partisan formations, utilizing their knowledge of the countryside.

The members of the German minority were affected by the SNU also in a different way. Slovak National Council (SNC), which was a highest authority on territories occupied by insurgents, issued during its existence a number of measures impacting the status of the ethnic Germans. Provisions no. 4, no. 5, and no. 11 regulated the position of the German minority in political, economic, educational and religious sphere. Provision no. 4 abolished all the political parties and organizations of the Slovak State, including the political parties and organizations of ethnic minorities.²⁶ Similarly, on the base of provision no. 5 from 6 September 1944, all minority schools (Hungarian and German) were abolished, with exception of elementary schools established before 6 of October 1938. The provision also prohibited the execution of religious rites in German and Hungarian language in confessional organizations established after the 6 September 1938.²⁷ All economic enterprises owned by persons of the German nationality came under the authority of SNC in accordance with the provision no. 11, issues on 8 of September 1944.²⁸ The status of the ethnic Germans in the economic sphere restricted regulation adopted by SNC at 18 of September 1944, which prohibited employment of Germans, who were "the proven members of Deutsche Partei" in the state organs. The ethnic Germans who never were members of this organization, could remain in the state service after individual screening.²⁹ However, the SNC did not formed a complex program dealing with the future status of the German community in the Slovakia and refrained from formulating an intention to realize any form of compulsory transfer of this ethnic group out of the Slovak territory.

The idea of transfer of Germans from Slovakia is absent also in political programs of constituent political forces of the anti-fascist movement - Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS) and the civic resistance groups. Even though Slovak communists did not came-up with their own solution of the "German question" they supported a policy formed by the CPC. One of the leaders of the CPS, J. Šverma, after his return from Moscow, proclaimed: "In regard to the status of Germans and Hungarians in the renewed Republic, there is a need to radically decrease the number of the German inhabitants in the CSR. We proclaim, that we will abstain from any objections to a radical solution of these issues".³⁰ The basic postulates, which determined the approach of Czechoslovakian authorities toward the German minority, were formulated during the meeting of representatives of the Czechoslovak exile government and leadership of the CPC,

which took place in Moscow from 22 to 24 March 1945. The basis for the negotiations was created by the proposal of the KPC.³¹ The status of the German minority was elaborated in the part VIII of the proposal. In line with communist suggestions, the participants of meeting agreed upon following measures: the German and Hungarian anti-fascists will have their Czechoslovakian citizenship confirmed. The other members of these minorities will forfeit their citizenship, but they could request for renewal of their revoked citizenship. Czechoslovakian government assume the right to reconsider each request on the individual basis. The Czechoslovakian citizens of German or Hungarian origin, who were found guilty of crimes against CSR, will be expelled with exception of persons sentenced to death. The Germans and Hungarians who settled no Czechoslovakian territory after 1938, will be deported from Czechoslovakia immediately.

The first broadly conceived system of political, economic and social measures regulating the status of the German minority in Czechoslovakia was the Programme of Czechoslovakian government adopted on 5 April 1945 in Košice, which after place of its birth was named The Košice Government Program (KGP)³². In dependence on advancement of the Soviet Army, the Chairmanship of SNC adopted several measures³³ aimed at restriction of the German and Hungarian minority in the economic and social sphere. However, these steps were partial and were adopted in ad hoc fashion. Contrary these preliminary precautions, the KGP prepared basis for a systemic approach to the German minority which created a basis for transfer of this ethnic group from Czechoslovakia.³⁴ In line with the KGP, Slovak National Council adopted a number of measures which specified the status of the German minority. The Provision of SNC No. 33, from 15 May 1945, detailed a system of legal measures against persons who were deemed guilty of a broad range of acts against CSR.³⁵ The employment of ethnic Germans regulated Provision No. 69/1946 from 3 July 1945³⁶ and Provision No. 99 from 23 August 1945.³⁷ The main goal of legal restrictions which government authorities adopted against ethnic Germans was to prepare conditions for transfer³⁸ of members of this ethnic group out of Czechoslovakia. However, the success of internal policies of Czechoslovak government aimed at transfer of Germans from CSR, depended, to the large degree, on consent of Soviet Union, USA and Great Britain. In that sense the event of the utmost importance was a conference of these countries in German city of Potsdam from 17 July to 2 August 1945. The representatives of USA, Soviet Union and GB agreed with the request of Poland and Czechoslovakia to transfer a large part of German minority members out of their territories. The exact wording of the agreement was formulated in the XII chapter of the Protocol and in the XII clause of Final Report from the Potsdam conference.³⁹ Allies, in reason to secure orderly course of transfer, requested representatives of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to cease ongoing expulsions of Germans.⁴⁰

The conclusions of Potsdam conference were evaluated by Czechoslovakian government and results of this evaluation summarized in government decree from third August 1945. The consent of victorious powers with the transfer of Germans was classified as a permission to total expulsion of German population out of Czechoslovakian territory. The decree accentuated also a necessity of elaboration of a plan of transfer of Germans in the shortest time possible.⁴¹ A significant and quick reaction to the Potsdam conference was the Decree No. 33 issued by president E. Beneš on 2 August 1945. According to Decree No. 33, all ethnic Germans, with the exception of persons who actively fought for liberation of Czechoslovakia from Nazi yoke or suffered under Nazi repression, lost their Czechoslovakian citizenship. Persons, who forfeited their citizenship were entitled to request its renewal. The Ministry of interior (in Slovakia the Slovak national Council) could award requested citizenship after an individual evaluation.⁴² The Decree No. 33 prepared a legislative base for execution of mass transfer of German population out of Czechoslovakia. The following measures, enacted by various government organs, regulated all aspects of transfer in dependence on changing situation.

The status of the ethnic Germans in Slovakia was affected in a direct dependence on political developments and decisions adopted by central government authorities in Prague. Slovak National Council did not aspired to formulate an independent, or differing policy toward the German population in Slovakia. The difference in the status of ethnic Germans in Slovakia as compared to Germans in Czechland, played itself mainly in the attitudes of a majority population, which had an impact upon the organization and course of transfer in Slovakia. In spite of declarations of government agencies in Slovakia, the majority of Slovaks (including organs responsible for realization of transfer) paid only a scant attention to expulsion of Germans. A small German minority could not be, and never was considered a threat to territorial integrity of Slovakia. Even in a period of Nazi domination, Nazi Germany endeavored to maintained the Slovak State, as a quasi independent country, which had an impact upon the status of the German minority in Slovakia. The leader of the ethnic Germans in Slovakia - Deutsche Partei, had a limited influence upon the political developments of Slovak State and never played a dominant role in the Slovak politics. Slovaks were also largely spared of the suffering and humiliation to which were exposed Czechs living in Protectorate under direct occupation of Nazi

Germany. Consequently, external and internal political developments, leading to transfer of Germans, attracted only a limited amount of attention among the members of Slovak majority. Slovak authorities on numerous occasions expressed dissatisfaction with the tepid attitude of many Slovaks to "need to clean Slovakia of non-Slavic minorities". For example, report prepared by County Office in city of Kremnica is informing, that "many of our citizens were infected by enormous German propaganda and their political attitudes are still lacking decisive anti-German stand."⁴³

The fact that ethnic Germans and other "perpetrators of Nazi regime" were receiving in some cases a public support is reflected also in a circular issued by the General Headquarters of "National Security"⁴⁴, in which is stated, that "it was detected, that still too many criminal elements are hiding on various localities in Slovakia. Fact, that these individuals were not incarcerated was caused by support which they receiving in form of shelter and food. The Slovak public of anti-fascist conviction is requested to denounce criminal elements and anybody who is suspicious of offering any help to such individuals."⁴⁵ A benevolent attitude to members of German minority and in some cases open sympathy to them, indicated the practice of issuance of so called "Certificate of national reliability" by "The Local National Committees" (LCF).⁴⁶ "The District National Committee" (DNC) in city of Kežmarok issued in September 1945 a circular, in which instructed all subordinated LCFs to review issued certificates of national reliability, because these "are issued also to members of Hungarian and German minority, in spite the fact that these persons are nationally and politically unreliable".⁴⁷

Similarly, surprisingly low attention to status of German minority in Slovakia devoted also Slovak press. For example the daily "Národná obroda" dealt explicitly with the issues concerning the German minority during the year 1945 only in two articles.⁴⁸ On the basis of existing evidence, it is possible to conclude, that the transfer of decisive majority ethnic Germans out of Slovakia was realized as a consequence of decision to get rid of non-Slavic minorities made on top political level. The initiative of central government agencies had a decisive impact upon the whole process. Slovak public, unlike majority of Czechs, accepted the transfer with a mixed feelings a without deeper emotions.

Notes

¹ Československá statistika. Sčítání lidu, zv. 98. Praha 1934.

² Beneš, E.: Odsun Němců z Československa. Výbor z Paměti a dokumentů 1940-1947, Ed. Novotný, K., Praha, p. 22.

³ Ibid., p. 23.

⁴ Besides social democrats (Treuegemeinschaft sudetendeutscher Sozialdemokraten), the anti-fascist Sudeten exile was composed also of socialists (Auslandsgruppe der DSAP aus der Tschechoslowakischen Republik) led by J. Zinner, democrats led by A. Peres and communists led by G. Bauer.

⁵ Beneš, E.: Odsun..., p. 23. All translations from original documents are made by the author.

⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷ Ibid., p. 51.

⁸ Ibid., p. 43.

⁹ Staněk, T.: Odsun Němců z Československa 1945-1947. Praha 1991, p. 33.

¹⁰ Cesta ke Květnu. Vznik lidové demokracie v Československu. I., 1. Praha 1965, p. 36.

¹¹ Československo-sovětské vztahy v období Velké vlastenecké války 1941-1945. Dokumenty a materiály. Praha 1960, p. 132.

¹² Before the commencement of negotiations, representatives of the CPC submitted to E. Beneš a written proposal which included the following proclamation: "The Czechoslovakian government does not intend to punish all Germans for crimes committed by Henlein and Frank, only the direct offenders and, consequently, there is a need for each German, in the right time, to stand against the occupants and their Heinlein supporters and to distance themselves from them." Cesta ke Květnu... I., 1, p. 37.

¹³ Dokumenty moderní doby. Praha 1978, p. 408.

¹⁴ Beneš, E.: Šest let exilu a druhé světové války. Praha 1946, p. 394.

¹⁵ In a radio speech broadcast on 8 September 1944, he vowed to "carry out revenge to the merciless end". He repeated his determination to expel Germans during a radio programme broadcast 27. October 1944 when he said: "I cannot skip the question of the need to repay all our Germans who stabbed our state in the back in the year 1938. All those who did it, must go away." (Italics by E. Beneš). Ibid.

¹⁶ Cesta ke Květnu... I., 1, p. 185.

¹⁷ The memorandum, published on 24. August 1944, was intended for the European Advisory commission.

¹⁸ Staněk, T.: Odsun...pp. 44-46.

¹⁹ Dejiny Slovenského národného povstania 1944. Protifašistický odboj a príprava SNP. Bratislava 1984, pp. 128-129.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 188-189.

²¹ Ibid., Dokumenty, pp. 164-165. Radakovič half-ironically reported that after the defeats of the German armies "The Germans in Slovakia learned to speak Slovak and some of them requested the Statistical Office to change their nationality from German to Slovak." He mentioned also a growing number of desertions from transports of troops to the Eastern front.

²² Ibid., p. 307.

²³ Lipták, L.: Nemecká a maďarská menšina v slovenskej politike a odbojovom hnutí. In: Brandes, D. - Ivaničková, E. - Pešek, J. (eds.): Vynútený rozchod. Vyhnanie a vysídlenie z Československa 1938-1947 v porovnaní s Poľskom, Maďarskom a Juhosláviou. Bratislava 1999.

²⁴ Cesta ke Květnu... I., 1, p. 74.

²⁵ Klimek, A.: Náznaky Edvarda Beneše na soužití Čechů a Slováků v obnovené ČSR (v době před povstáním na Slovensku roku 1944). In: Bystrický, V. - Fano, Š. (eds.): Slovensko na konci druhej svetovej vojny (stav, východiská a perspektívy). Bratislava 1994, p. 61.

²⁶ The provision of SNC dated 1. September 1944 in regard to abolishment of political parties and organizations. Zbierka nariadení SNR, ročník 1944, čiastka 1.

²⁷ Ibid., čiastka 2.

²⁸ Ibid., čiastka 3.

²⁹ Slovenské národné orgány v dokumentoch. I. Bratislava 1977, p. 97.

³⁰ Dejiny Slovenského národného povstania 1944. Dokumenty. Bratislava 1984, p. 441.

³¹ Laštovička, B.: V Londýne za války, zápasy o novou ČSR 1939-1945. Praha 1978, p. 646.

³² Košický vládný program. In: Dokumenty moderní doby. Praha 1978.

³³ For example the Measure No. 4 from 27 February 1945 "In regard to confiscation and accelerated distribution of agricultural property of Germans, Hungarians, traitors and enemies of Slovak nation." A Public Notice No. 24 from 10 March 1945 issued by Department for Agriculture and Land Reform of SNC, which charged the National Committees to prepare lists of persons whose property will be confiscated, the "Principles for resettlement of villages inhabited by Germans and Hungarians" adopted by county representatives during the meeting on 17 March 1945 and some other partial measures.

³⁴ The chapters VII., IX., X., XI. and XV. dealt with the status of the German minority in CSR. In the area of the civic rights, the citizenship of the ethnic Germans was abolished, except persons who were active anti-fascists or fell victims to Nazi reprisals. Persons stripped of their citizenship could request its restitution. The restitution of revoked citizenship was in the competence of the government authorities. With the aim to punish collaboration with the Nazis and other activities deemed criminal, CSR government decided to create a network of the "peoples courts". Ethnic Germans who were members of Nazi organizations or were in any form connected to them, were subjects to imprisonment in concentration camps established for this reason. In the economic sphere the property of Germans who lost their citizenship was about to be confiscated. The confiscation of this property and imposition of so-called "National keep" was in the competence of the National Committees, in especially relevant cases in competence of the Slovak National Council. Dramatic changes were intended in the area of ideology and schools. According to the KGP, the closure of all the German schools and educational institutions was planned. The reactionary nature of German culture should have been emphasized and orientation on Slavic cultural tradition, namely Russian and Soviet culture, activated.

³⁵ Measure of SNC No. 33. Digest of Measures of SNC, year 1946, part. 11. The punishments which could be meted according to this provision ranged from public reproach up to death penalty.

³⁶ Digest of Measures of SNC, year 1945, part 13. According to this measure, employers could "without regard to other legal or contracted provisions immediately terminated employment with the state untrustworthy person."

³⁷ Digest of Measures of SNC, year 1945, part 17. The Measure No. 99 prohibited employment of members of the German minority in the government institutions.

³⁸ There are various, frequently conflicting interpretation of process of involuntary transfer of German population out of Czechoslovakia. Czech and Slovak historians almost without exception are using word "odsun" (displacement, or word "transfer"). These terms are used also in official documents issued by various government organizations. Contrary to this, in West-German historiography is the term "transfer" (Abschub) used only rarely. Instead commonly are used words emphasize involuntary, violent aspects of transfer such expulsion (Austreibung), banishment (Vertreibung) etc. In this paper the term "transfer" is used, mainly for reason continuity with the contemporary documents.

³⁹ In the initial part of XII clause of Final Report from the Potsdam Conference is written, that "Three governments researched this issue in all its aspects and recognized, that is necessary to transfer German population, or its segments which remains in Poland, Czechoslovakia or Hungary. The participants of conference are united in the opinion, that any transfer must be realized in ordinary fashion and humanly".

⁴⁰ Dokumenty ke studiu mezinárodního práva a politiky. Díl I. Praha 1963, p. 115.

⁴¹ Stanek, T.: op. c., p. 93.

⁴² Úřední vestník, year 1945, No. 2, p. 657.

⁴³ Slovak National Archive (SNA) Bratislava, Deposit (d.) Povereníctvo vnútra (PV), Bezpečnostný odbor, box 1.

⁴⁴ A contemporary name for Slovak police force.

⁴⁵ State County Archive Poprad (SCA), d. County Office (CO) Slovenska Ves, box 4.

⁴⁶ The lowest level in the system of public authorities in Slovakia at that time was constituted by the "local national committees" (miestne národné výbory) which were subordinated by "district national committees" (okresné národné výbory).

⁴⁷ SCA Poprad, d. DNC Kežmarok, box 3.

⁴⁸ The articles were "Spiš bez Nemcov" (Zips without Germans), published on 4 February 1945 and article "Velká presídľovacia akcia" (A great resettlement action), published on 23 March 1945.