

resulted from the wilful murder of six million Jews, morality and equity demanded that the proceeds of the liquidation of these assets be used to rehabilitate and resettle surviving victims. While the neutral Powers have indicated that they will take a sympathetic attitude on this problem, the successful liquidation of these assets, estimated to amount to millions of dollars, can succeed only if the neutral governments take all necessary steps, including special legislation, to overcome the legal, administrative and fiscal problems which stand in the way of identifying, collecting and liquidating the assets. The Executive Secretary continued to pursue this question informally with governments and voluntary societies in order to arrive at a solution in accordance with Article 8 of Part I of the Final Act of the Paris Conference.

## SECTION XI

### Review Board

The Constitution of the IRO provides that, to ensure the impartial and equitable application of IRO principles, some special system of semi-judicial machinery should be created, with appropriate constitution, procedure and terms of reference.

Eligibility is determined administratively by eligibility officers in the field under directives prepared by the Department of Health, Care and Maintenance in consultation with the Office of the Legal Adviser.

Against these determinations there is an appeal, and it is the Review Board, the judicial part of the machinery, which decides on these appeals. In addition to its judicial function, the Board was authorized to act in an advisory capacity, whenever called upon to do so by the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission.

The Board was instituted in November 1947. The original plan provided for five members, but, to reduce the expense, an attempt was made during the first months to function with three members only; but the number of appeals submitted made it necessary to revert to the original plan.

Most of the work has been carried on in the field : members of the Board travelled on circuit in each area of operation. In order to ensure the expeditious hearing of appeals, they took decisions after consultation with the local legal and eligibility officers. The petitioner, in most cases, was given an opportunity to state his case in person. When the

issue was doubtful or controversial, or when an important question of policy was involved, the decision was postponed until the member returned to Geneva, where the case was submitted to the whole Board for discussion and decision. In this way, the members alternatively sat for periods of time separately in the field and together at Headquarters.

The Chairman of the Board, a former President of a supreme court of appeal and an experienced judge, had the task of seeing that the Board fulfilled its functions in the fair and impartial manner in which judicial proceedings are conducted in courts of justice. A Recorder was charged with keeping the registers and archives and conducting the administrative work connected with the Board.

The number of cases submitted to the Board was very large : at the end of June, roughly 3,000 appeals had been received at the Headquarters of the Board, half of which had been dealt with, and 3,000 more had been made in the field and were in process of being submitted.

## SECTION XII

### **International Tracing Service**

As successor to the IGCR and UNRRA, the IRO assumed responsibility for the work of tracing the millions of civilians who disappeared during the war. In the course of its meeting in October 1947, the Preparatory Commission decided to create an International Tracing Service to replace the Central Tracing Bureau of UNRRA. This new division of the Organization came into being on 1 January 1948.

The International Tracing Service has its central headquarters at Arolsen in the United States Zone of Germany. It directs the activities of a French office in Berlin and zonal divisions at Esslingen in the British Zone of Germany and at Gottingen in the United States Zone of occupation, and maintains close relations with a French Zonal Tracing Bureau at Rastadt. These offices are staffed by a total of 639 persons, of whom 405 have been recruited from among refugees and Germans. Employment of German nationals is essential to maintain continuity of operations, because many refugee employees are lost through repatriation or resettlement.

It is the task of the ITS to seek to determine the fate of all persons who disappeared between September 1939 and May 1945, and to assemble at its central headquarters all documents concerning such persons.