

FOREWORD

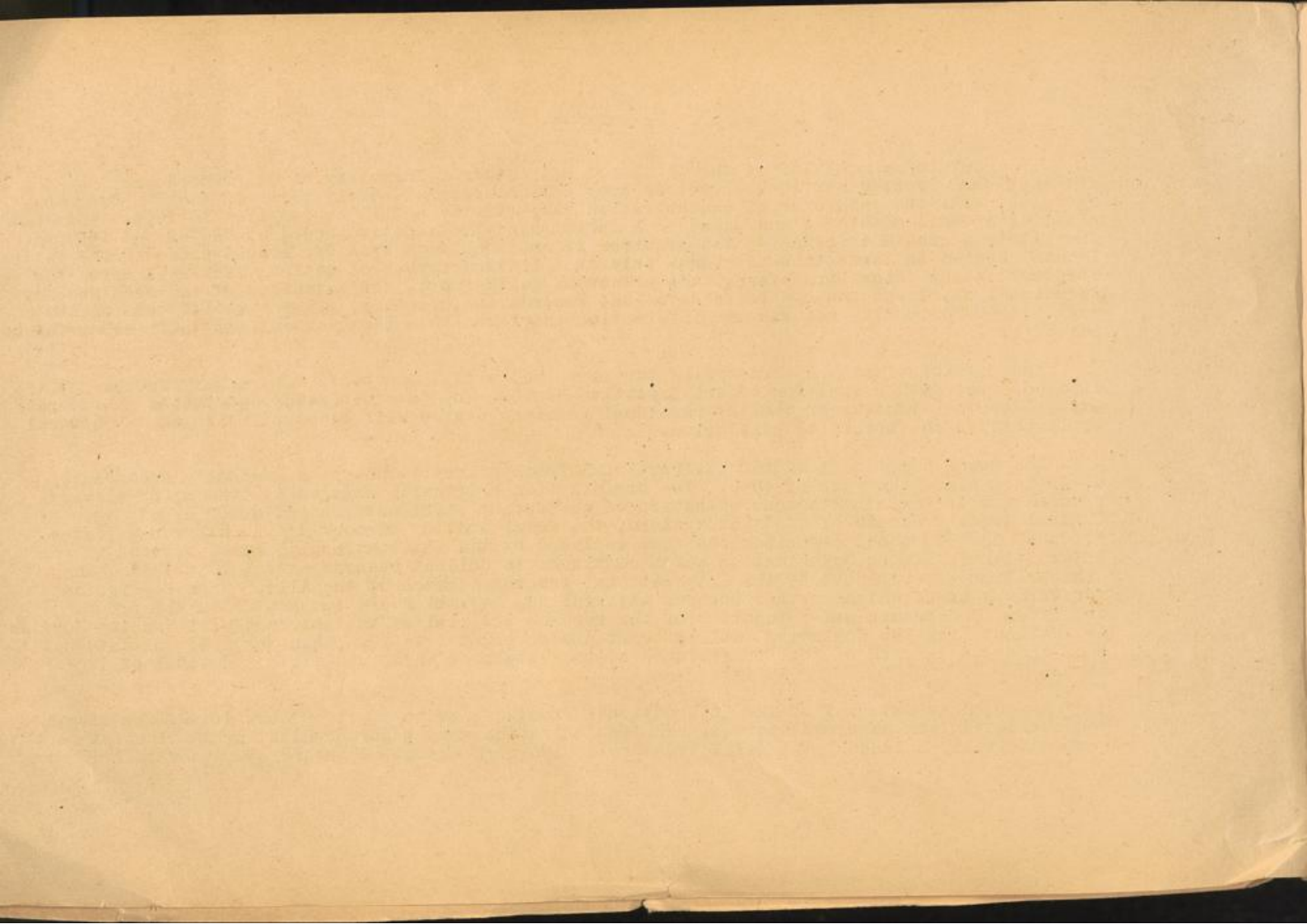
This catalogue constitutes the first and only General Inventory of all records held by the International Tracing Service. Previous compilations covered merely parts of the ITS records material, e.g. the catalogue of concentration camp records of ITS as compiled in 1951. The compilation of this catalogue was based on a decision of the Executive Board at the end of 1952 to facilitate a smooth transfer of the archives if and when such transfer should occur in the future. It was decided to issue this catalogue only in a limited number of copies which will serve the parties involved in any future transfer of the archives, furthermore, the custodian of the archives for occasional checks on the completeness of the records and, finally, all interested governments and agencies using ITS records and information therefrom to a large extent, for their own reference purposes.

The catalogue was compiled during the year 1953 with the cut-off date as of December 31, 1953 in accordance with a decision of the Executive Board. Any possible future additions of records material to the archives of the International Tracing Service will be compiled, in one or several supplements, as the necessity will arise.

The records material of the International Tracing Service has been gradually accumulated at Arolsen since the year of 1946. The organization originally engaged in tracing of missing persons and in the simultaneous operation of collecting pertinent records material was the Central Tracing Bureau of URRA at Arolsen, the zonal tracing bureaux and a children's search bureau. In 1948 these organizations were replaced by the International Tracing Service of the International Refugee Organization which continued to collect records material. In 1951 such organization was replaced by the International Tracing Service of the Allied High Commission for Germany under which further records material was assembled and integrated in the ITS archives. The nature and categories of the records material of the International Tracing Service are evident from the following table of contents on pages I to IV. Such table of contents has been inserted in each of the four volumes of the catalogue which comprises the total of 1464 pages.

The records material of the International Tracing Service, as it appears in this catalogue, was collected from numerous sources. The "Concentration Camp Records" which for the largest part were originally seized by the Allied western armies were assembled in Arolsen after their perusal

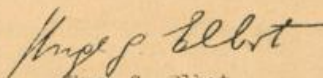
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by the International Military Tribunal and the Allied War Crimes Commission had been completed. Other parts of such records were obtained, mostly in photostats, from national tracing bureaux of western countries and from individuals. The above sources also apply to the "Miscellaneous Records of General or Historical Nature." The records on "Unaccompanied displaced children" were obtained mostly from German government sources as well as from UNRRA and IRO sources. The "War-time Records" were assembled pursuant to directives of the three western military governors in 1946 from German civil administration authorities and from all other semi-governmental German agencies which, in World War II, had charge of non-German slave labor and voluntary labor. "Post-war Records" were assembled from UNRRA, PCIRO and IRO sources, ICEM sources, as well as from voluntary agencies. The source of the ITS "Produced Records" is self-evident.

The catalogue is compiled in the English and German languages in accordance with the standing correspondence procedures of the International Tracing Service. For better understanding the foreword is published in the English, French and German languages.

January 1954



Hugh G. Elbot
Chairman
Executive Board

