

D. The Central Tracing Bureau.

As defined in the basic agreements under which it operates (see above IV, C, 3) the Central Tracing Bureau functions as a central clearing house between the zonal and national bureaux and not as an executive body (CORC/P(45)54, Para. 4,6.). In general, it performs two functions. First, it is the channel through which the zonal bureaux make available to the national bureaux all documents and other information uncovered in the zones (Ibid., Para. 7(a)), and through which the various national bureaux make available to each other such records as may be of interest to them (Ibid., 7(b)). The Central Bureau retains in its Central Records Office only those records which, owing to their nature, cannot be decentralized, breaking down and processing those of a mixed nature for despatch to the national tracing bureaux concerned (Ibid., Para. 7 (d)). Second, the Central Tracing Bureau acts as the agency through which enquiries for tracing individuals are transmitted to the zonal bureaux for search in the field. If the national bureau is unable to answer the enquiry as a result of its investigation, the national agency forwards it to the Central Bureau, from where, if search still fails, it is transmitted to the appropriate zonal bureau, (Ibid., Para 6.). Likewise, the Central Tracing Bureau is the official channel through which displaced persons in Germany may inaugurate searches for their relatives and to which enquiries for those of doubtful or indeterminate nationality should be addressed (Ibid., Para 6 (b)).

In addition to the Executive and Administrative Staffs, the Central Bureau is organized into two divisions corresponding to its dual function.

1. The Records Division is organized to perform the first function of the Tracing Bureau. Its duties fall under three headings :-

(a) The Records Processing Section prepares material analyzed by the Registration Unit, for the use of the national

- (1) The location of documents and maintenance of a catalogue of all documentary evidence regarding missing persons.
- (2) The despatch of records received at the Central Tracing Bureau to appropriate agencies.
- (3) The preservation of records concerning stateless persons and those of undetermined nationality.

The functions of the Records Division are of two types: the accumulation and analysis of data which result in publishable studies to be used as a source of information; and the mechanical processing, by sorting, breakdown, and reproduction, of documents clearing through or retained by the division so that the information contained therein may be disseminated. Although some overlapping is unavoidable, in general the first function is performed by the Documents Intelligence Section, and the second is the responsibility of the Processing Section.

- (a) The Documents Intelligence Section collects documents and information concerning them, maintains a catalogue of available documents wherever deposited, and distributes information to interested bodies. Its primary purpose is to provide a central clearing house for information and research preliminary to the actual procurement of documentary information. It maintains an index of documents for which a search is underway and of those known to have been destroyed, and integrates available knowledge regarding concentration camps, transports, and death marches. It likewise collates for circulation information regarding documentary material in the possession of the national bureaux and studies the resources of such document collections as the Ministerial Collecting Center and the U.S. Documents Center in Berlin.
- (b) The Records Processing Section prepares material analyzed by the Registration Unit, for the use of the national

tracing bureaux, and the Tracing Division of the Central Tracing Bureau. Three functions are involved:

- (1) Sending original material to national bureaux concerned.
- (2) Breaking down and/or reproducing mixed lists to facilitate distribution.
- (3) Preparing for the index of the Tracing Division records to be retained by the Central Tracing Bureau.

2. The Tracing Division. This division performs the second function of the Central Tracing Bureau, i.e., the actual tracing of individuals in response to enquiries. Four types of investigation are conducted:

- (1) Individual tracing of cases where sufficient information is available to make possible a field investigation.
 - (2) Direct enquiries through postal facilities of
 - (a) individuals for whom a specific last known address is provided, and
 - (b) requests which by their nature can be most expeditiously handled through direct contact with burgermeisters and other local German officials.
 - (3) Mass tracing where so few facts are available as to preclude individual search, or where such individual investigation has failed, and
 - (4) The tracing of missing unaccompanied children and their parents or relatives.
- (a) The Processing Section processes all individual searches for despatch by the Correspondence Section. This processing involves clerical work such as transcription of illegible enquiries, registration, map location, and

of the latter makes an examination of the German tracing services imperative (see above II. B.).

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filing. In addition all incoming enquiries are checked against the Central Tracing Bureau index. This index is not a list of known locations of all missing persons in Europe, but contains three types of information only:

- (1) A record of all cases accepted for action at the Central Tracing Bureau and sent by it to the zonal or national bureaux for search.
- (ii) known locations discovered as a result of such search, and
- (iii) known locations and death records for stateless persons and for persons of undetermined nationality.

(b) The Correspondence Section, handles the actual tracing of individuals through correspondence, which involves not only despatch of inquiries and replies but decisions as to the type of communication to be sent, selection of other means of investigation, or forwarding replies in the most expeditious manner. This action is the responsible agent through which the search to the zones is directed.

(c) Besides the Processing and Correspondence Sections, the Tracing Division contains the Mass Tracing Section, which arranges for broadcast and publication of names and distributes camp-rosters; the Special Section which deals with enquiries for prominent people, missing secret agents, etc., and the Child Tracing Section which deals with ^{all} enquiries for missing unaccompanied children or for their relatives.

E. Organization for the Tracing of German Nationals

Although the tracing of missing German nationals does not fall within the province of the Central Tracing Service, the interdependence of the two problems and the vast importance of the latter makes an examination of the German tracing services imperative (see above II, B.).