

# ITS



1945-1947



1947-1951



1951-1955



1955-1975

**30 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY**

**THEREOF 20 YEARS UNDER THE DIRECTION  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE RED CROSS IN GENEVA**

THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE  
its Origin, Tasks and Activities

ITS  
International Tracing Service  
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Exposé for the  
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## THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

### its Origin, Tasks and Activities

Nearly everybody is conscious of the tragedy of the concentration camp system, which has shaken our epoch in a terrifying manner. But only few persons know the International Tracing Service, an institution unique of its kind, which since 30 years has quietly been carrying out a humanitarian activity, the value of which hardly ever will be fully appreciated.

However before speaking about the International Tracing Service, it seems suitable to return to the beginning of the 20th century, a time in which the world did not yet bear the mark of disintegration.

#### Brief historical survey

At the beginning of the century, the law of war was founded upon the principle that military operations should be limited to armed forces, and that the civilian population should enjoy general immunity. This notion was so widely accepted that The Hague Conference of 1907 did not deem it necessary to introduce a provision in the REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF WAR ON LAND which would have stipulated expressly "that civilians of enemy nationality residing in the territory of the belligerent are not to be interned". One meant at that time that this principle was out of discussion.

However the war of 1914 profoundly modified this traditional conception. Indeed with the beginning of hostilities most countries closed their frontiers, retained all foreigners on their territory and interned civilians of enemy nationality. As a result, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva received a flood of requests for information and for intervention on behalf of civilians. The International Committee suddenly saw itself confronted with an unforeseen and difficult task. While the Central Agency for Prisoners of War regularly received lists of prisoners of war, no such list of interned civilians was ever established. It was only after repeated proceedings of the International Committee of the Red Cross, that finally several governments declared themselves willing, to enter the civilian internees on the prisoners lists. Other governments declined and did not even answer the



inquiries concerning civilian internees, so that families remained in the most painful anxiety.

The International Committee organized the visiting of civilian internee camps, but it had no legal basis for all its proceedings and interventions. Nevertheless, some particular ad hoc conventions were concluded during the war. One of the first conventions was established in Geneva in 1917 under the auspices of the ICRC by the delegates of the Bulgarian and Serbian Red Cross. Unfortunately these conventions, made for the duration of the hostilities, became null and void after the conclusion of the armistice in 1918.

Immediately after the war the ICRC sought ways and means in order to avoid a repetition of this deplorable dilemma in the future. For this purpose it presented the text of a Convention for the protection of civilians of enemy states and of the population in the occupied territories, to the Xth International Conference of the Red Cross meeting in Geneva in 1921. These International Conferences are always composed of representatives of all National Red Cross Societies, of the ICRC, of the League of Red Cross Societies, as well as of Governments, and they are the highest deliberative authority of the Red Cross. The report which the ICRC presented in this sense was to become the basis of a "CODE FOR PRISONERS OF WAR, DEPORTEES AND REFUGEES". Besides the regulation concerning the prisoner of war status, it was to include articles concerning the civilian population in the territories occupied by the enemy. These articles limited the right of the occupying power especially in respect of deportations, evacuations and the taking of hostages.

Meanwhile it was urged at the ICRC that the time was unfavourable to propose an elaboration of a convention for civilians in war-time to the governments. It was even asserted that such an initiative at that time could be considered as detrimental to the cause of peace, which was supported by the LEAGUE OF NATIONS. For this reason, and contrary to the wish of the ICRC, the diplomatic conference which gathered in Geneva in 1929 - a board of state representatives which is authorized with deciding, or revising international conventions - occupied itself only with the fate of

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national Conference of the Red Cross meeting in Geneva in 1925. These international Conferences are always composed of representatives of all National Red Cross Societies, of the ICRC, of the League of Red Cross Societies, as well as of Governments, and they are the highest deliberative authority of the Red Cross. The report which the ICRC presented in this sense was

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government. It was even asserted that such an initiative at that time could be considered as detrimental to the cause of peace, which was supported by the LEAGUE OF NATIONS. For this reason, and contrary to the wish of the ICRC, the diplomatic conference which gathered in Geneva in 1925 - a board of state representatives which is authorized with deciding or revising international conventions - occupied itself only with the fate of

prisoners of war. For the benefit of prisoners of war, a convention concerning their treatment was adopted on the basis of the project of the ICRC. In the final record, on proposition of the ICRC, the following declaration of legal intent was taken down:

"The Conference, endorsing the Resolution passed unanimously by its two Committees, recommends that comprehensive study be undertaken for the conclusion of an International Convention governing the position and the protection of civilians of enemy nationality who happen to be on the territory of a belligerent or on territory occupied by him."

The XIVth International Red Cross Conference which met in Brussels in 1930 confirmed to the ICRC the mandate to continue the task which it had begun for the protection of civilians of enemy nations. A commission set up by the ICRC elaborated the draft, based on the principles outlined by the previous conferences, which was presented to the XVth International Red Cross Conference assembled in Tokio in 1934 and which is known under the name "TOKIO-DRAFT". This draft for a convention confirmed and developed the principles which the ICRC had represented continually, from 1920 to 1925, namely the proscription of mass evacuations as well as the deportation of individuals if they were not justified, and above all the application to the civilians, who would be interned, of a treatment at least as favourable as that of the prisoners of war, the GENEVA CONVENTIONS being, by analogy, applicable to them in the measure where it is applicable to the civilians. This "TOKIO-DRAFT" foresaw the same control measures with regard to the application of the future Convention for the prisoners of war as did the Convention of 1929.

The draft of the ICRC was at first adopted by the XVth Conference (in Tokio in 1934) at the same time as basis for diplomatic negotiations, and the ICRC received the mandate to contact at the earliest possible moment, the Swiss government in order to convoke as soon as possible a similar diplomatic conference as that in 1929 which in its time set up the Convention for the treatment of prisoners of war. At that time one

prisoners of war. For the benefit of prisoners of war, a convention concerning their treatment was adopted on the basis of the project of the ICRC. In the final report, on proposition of the ICRC, the following text was adopted:

"The Committee, regarding the resolution passed unanimously by the two Commissions, recommends that comprehensive steps be undertaken for the protection of an international Convention covering the position and the protection of civilians of enemy nationality who happen to be on the territory of a belligerent on an territory occupied by the other."

The XVth International Red Cross Conference which met in Brussels in 1904 confirmed to the ICRC the mandate to continue the task which it had begun for the protection of civilians of enemy nations. A commission was set up by the ICRC elaborated the draft, based on the principles outlined by the previous conference, which was presented to the XVth International Red Cross Conference assembled in Tokyo in 1904 and which is known under the name "TOKYO-DRAFT". This draft for a convention continued and developed the principles which the ICRC had represented essentially, from 1864 to 1904.

Among the prescriptions of many conventions as well as the deposition of individuals if they were not justified, and above all the application to the citizens who would be interned, of a treatment at least as favourable as that of the prisoners of war, the GENÈVA CONVENTION being, by analogy, applicable to them in the measure where it is applicable to the civilians. This "TOKYO-DRAFT" likewise the same central measures with regard to the application of the Geneva Convention for the prisoners of war as did the Convention of 1864.

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did not envisage the possibility of an imminent conflict, so that the urgent character of such a conference was not recognized. Accordingly, the replies were slow on arriving and it was only in the course of 1939 that the nations, which had been invited, allowed to fix the date for the conference in Geneva at the beginning of 1940. Unfortunately the outbreak of hostilities put an end to the carrying out of this project.

With regard to the action of the ICRC on behalf of civilians of enemy countries during the Second World War, four phases can be discerned.

The first phase (from September 1939 to spring 1940) is characterized by general proceedings taken by the ICRC who aimed at persuading the belligerent powers to adopt the "TOKIO-DRAFT" temporarily, or in case of defiance, the application of the dispositions of the Geneva Convention of 1929 relating to prisoners of war and to all civilian internees, without distinction to race, religion or political opinions.

The second phase (from 1940 to 1943) corresponds to the occupation of the major part of Europe by the troops of the Third Reich. Millions of civilians fall under the dependence of one group of belligerents. Thus the balance of power of the combatants being upset, civilians were more and more at the mercy of the arbitrary action of the occupying authorities, the reciprocity using no more its moderating influence.

In the third phase (from 1943 to 1945) in which the general and official interventions for the benefit of detained civilians finally are irrevocably condemned to failure, the ICRC attempts to alleviate their fate by intensified practical and locally restricted help actions. In the course of the development of the political and military situation in 1944, the authorities of the Third Reich, in view of the occupation of a small part of German territory by the Allied Forces, finally permit some facilities, especially in allowing the sending of individual, later, collective parcels, to the concentration camps (6.836 tons of goods, representing a total of 1.631.000 parcels, could be sent to the concentration camps).

The fourth phase (1945) is marked by the capital concessions which the German government is prepared to make during the last three months

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The fourth phase (1945) is marked by the capital concentration camps. The German Government is prepared to make during the last three months

of the war and especially by the agreements made in Germany between the President of the ICRC and the SS-General (SS-Obergruppenführer) Kaltenbrunner, by which the gates of the concentration camps were to be opened for the first time to the delegates of the ICRC. However, in spite of these agreements, the discussions with the Camp Commandants remained difficult, as the Reichsführer-SS Himmler had ordered the evacuation of all concentration camps; this started in fact with the known consequences: the death marches.

During the entire war the ICRC had never ceased to siege the most dreadful bastille of all times erected in the defiance of humanity, and to harass the authorities of the Reich for the benefit of the civilian internees. It is only due to this constant pressure that it was possible to obtain the mentioned results.

After the war the ICRC was reproached for not having "protested" against the existence of concentration camps and not having denounced the atrocities which had been committed there. Protest? The ICRC had never ceased to do so to the responsible authorities. A great part of its efforts is a long succession of protests. Many ameliorations are owed to these protests.

But to protest publicly? The ICRC voluntarily did not do so. A protest of this kind would have been in vain and would have, without doubt irremediably endangered the work which the ICRC accomplished in favour of 2 million prisoners of war and some civilian internees. In fact, the authorities of the Reich had even threatened, faced with the insistent pleas of the ICRC, to suspend the application of the Geneva Convention of 1929, relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, which was, in general, respected.

A public protest is sometimes the easiest way to ease one's conscience by the illusion that one has done one's duty.

As nothing in international rights gave the political prisoners an effective protection, the ICRC could not formulate any categorical demands in their favour. The ICRC displayed all their efforts, on the basis of their right to take humanitarian initiatives, and they could only argue with patient persuasion.

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perseverance.

Creation and Development  
of the International Tracing Service

In order to get a better idea of the special nature of the International Tracing Service, it is good to recall how this institution originated and what activities it was destined to perform.

In the middle of the war, more precisely in 1943, the COMMITTEE ON DISPLACED POPULATIONS OF THE ALLIED POST-WAR REQUIREMENT BUREAU in London was concerned with the extensive displacement of populations caused by the war, and especially with the consequences of the persecution. It was decided to establish after the liberation, National Tracing Bureaux in different countries of Europe, with the aim of locating deported and missing persons. One year later the allied military authorities were confronted with the problem of registering the civilians living within the territories they had liberated. Accordingly the SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces) gave orders to register all displaced persons (DP's). For each one of these displaced persons, an index card was filed, which has since become known under the designation "DP-2". These were later to serve the purpose of answering eventual tracing inquiries. In March 1945 the SHAEF established a tracing bureau whose task was to collect and preserve all data of persons incarcerated in concentration camps. The UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) which participated in this action supplied the personnel required. One month later, this organization, together with the SHAEF, was relocated from Versailles to Frankfurt on Main. One of the duties of the UNRRA was to care for displaced persons of the countries which were members of the UNITED NATIONS and to facilitate their return to their native countries, which they had been forced to leave during the war. Furthermore, the UNRRA was to assist displaced persons to find their families from whom they had become separated by the war.

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within the territories they had liberated. Accordingly the SHARP (Supernumerary Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces) gave orders to register displaced persons (D.P.s). For each one of these displaced persons, an identity card was filed, which has since become known under the designation "D.P. 1". Plans were later to solve the problem of answering eventual

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Central Tracing Bureau which, based on an agreement with the ALLIED CONTROL COUNCIL FOR GERMANY, signed on 17th September 1945, were placed under the direction of the UNRRA. This agreement constituted the first official step to trace missing persons. It can be rightly considered the fundamental guiding principle for the work of the Central Tracing Bureau of the UNRRA. Its main aim was to trace citizens of countries which were members of the UNITED NATIONS, soldiers or civilians missing during the war, and to collect and preserve all documents concerning refugees and displaced persons in Germany, as well as to assist in bringing together families that had been separated.

At the beginning of January 1946 the Central Tracing Bureau was relocated to Arolsen. At first it may seem surprising that a relatively small, remote town in the district of Waldeck with a population at that time of 4.500 was chosen. But with respect to the zones of occupation, Arolsen was located centrally. The next largest town was Cassel which, however, had been destroyed up to 80% by air-raids. For different practical reasons Arolsen was preferred, as it had been spared from the war events and as, besides large barracks, the "New Castle" and various administration buildings were available. The UNRRA which had also been relocated to Arolsen moved into the "New Castle".

On 1st July the Central Tracing Bureau was taken over by the PCIRO (Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization) which came to the decision three months later to change the name of the Central Tracing Bureau into INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE - ITS - effective from 1st January 1948.

The International Refugee Organization (IRO) took over the direction of the ITS until the end of March 1951. Thereafter the ITS was taken over by the Allied High Commission for Germany (HICOG).

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today houses the ITS.

On 5th May 1955, the period of occupation of the Federal Republic of Germany came to an end, and the Allied High Commission was dissolved. Based on the Convention of the Settlement of Matters Arising out of the War and the Occupation (as amended by Schedule IV to the Protocol on the Termination of the Occupational Regime in the Federal Republic of Germany signed at Paris on 23rd October 1954), the continuance of the activities of the International Tracing Service could be assured. The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva was then entrusted with the direction and administration of the International Tracing Service. At the same time an agreement was signed constituting an International Commission for the International Tracing Service.

At the beginning of its activities the International Tracing Service dealt only with the reuniting of families. Only later was it called upon to establish Certificates of Incarceration. Moreover it was assigned the task to furnish proof of deaths that occurred in concentration camps. The first Certificate of Incarceration was issued in 1948. After the German indemnification law came into force in 1953, the number of applications for certificates increased continually and has remained more or less constant since 1954.

The majority of the death cases in the concentration camps were not officially registered during the war. As an exception, in some camps death-registers were kept; however, a large number of these death-registers were destroyed towards the end of the war. Since 1948 the urgent question concerning the certification of these death cases arose. This problem was solved on 1st September 1949 when the Special Registry Office ("Sonderstandesamt") was established at Arolsen. This Special Registry Office certifies the death cases appearing in the documentary material of the concentration camps. Until now - i. e. 31st December 1974 - 351.760 death cases concerning concentration camp prisoners have been registered by the Special Registry Office.

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Tasks

of the International Tracing Service

The International Tracing Service was established for the purpose of tracing missing persons and for collecting, classifying, preserving and rendering accessible to governments, as well as to interested individuals, the documents relating to Germans and non-Germans who had been prisoners in National Socialist concentration or labour camps, or to non-Germans who had been displaced due to the events of World War II.

The main tasks of the International Tracing Service consist in making available for humanitarian purposes, the information contained in its archives and documents, which could be of assistance to the persons directly concerned, that means: imparting replies upon individual inquiries, establishing certificates of incarceration and reports on incarceration, excerpts from documents concerning the detention in former concentration or labour camps, certificates of residence and reports about the stay after the war, combined certificates of incarceration and residence, issuing death certificates established by the Special Registry Office, providing medical records and medical reports, photocopies of documents, attestations of labour and documentary evidence of employment in pension matters, giving information for Memorial Books in remembrance of the victims of deportation, for archives and for publications, as well as for public prosecutors and replies to inquiries of historical and statistical nature.

Mention must be made that it does not lie within the tasks of the International Tracing Service to trace every missing person without distinction.

All information is disclosed upon request without charge. The information is also transmitted to governmental or non-governmental organizations who make inquiries for persons concerned or for their authorized representatives.

There are 50 employees working in this section.

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The International Tracing Service was established for the purpose of locating missing persons and for collecting, classifying, preserving and making available to governments, as well as to interested individuals, documents relating to Germans and non-Germans who had been prisoners in National Socialist concentration or labour camps, or to non-Germans who had been displaced due to the events of World War II.

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ARTICLE

### The Archives of the International Tracing Service

It is due above all to its numerous archives that the International Tracing Service has gained such an importance. Its significance is ever increasing through the continual acquisition of new documents.

Thirty years ago, the tracing service of the UNRRA had no documents at its disposal upon which investigations could have been based. Only in 1947 did the International Tracing Service first come into possession of a part of the documents which the Allied Forces had secured on liberation of various concentration camps and which had until then been at the disposal of the International Tribunal in Nuremberg for the judging of war criminals. These documents were supplemented - between 1946 and 1950 - by those of the war-time. Only later the International Tracing Service obtained documents of the post-war-time, namely records concerning the registration of DP's, established by the UNRRA and IRO.

These archives became, even for the German authorities, one of the most reliable sources of information; they produce credibility where the certification of information given by former prisoners and other persecutees in their applications for indemnification is concerned.

The archives of the International Tracing Service are divided into five sections.

#### Concentration Camp Document Section

This section is not only the most important due to the nature and number of its documents, but also because it is the most spacious at the International Tracing Service. It contains records which have been preserved and which concern prisoners of concentration camps as well as a smaller number of prisoners of various other places of detention which were also subordinate to the SS-Reichsführer Himmler.

The principal activity of this section is the establishing of certificates of incarceration.

There are 50 employees working in this section.

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Thirty years ago, the tracing service of the UNRRA had no documents at its disposal upon which investigations could have been based. Only in 1947 did the International Tracing Service first come into possession of a part of the documents which the Allied Forces had secured on liberation of various concentration camps and which had until then been at the disposal of the International Tracing Service in Nuremberg for the judging of war criminals. These documents were accumulated - between 1945 and 1950 - by those of the war who had been in the International Tracing Service obtained documents of the International Tracing Service, largely records concerning the registration of displaced persons in UNRRA and IRO.

As an archival institution, even for the German authorities, one of the greatest sources of information; they produce credibly where the case is concerned. Information given by former prisoners and other persons in connection with investigations for identification is concerned. The archives of the International Tracing Service are divided into five

1. The Tracing Camp Document Section

This section is not only the most important due to the nature and number of its documents, but also because it is the most spacious of the International Tracing Service. It contains records which have been preserved and which concern prisoners of concentration camps as well as a smaller number of prisoners of various other places of detention which were also subordinate to the SS-Verwaltungsbereich.

The principal activity of this section is the establishing of certificates of identification.

There are 50 employees working in this section.

### War-Time Documents Section

The documents kept in this section provide a source of information on foreigners, who, for some reason, were mainly on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany between 1939 and 1945, assigned as voluntary or forced labourers in all branches of economy, in civil services and in agriculture.

The essential activity consists in establishing documentary evidence of employment and transmitting proof of illnesses suffered, required in pension matters. The number of documents to be examined is increasing constantly.

Fifteen employees are concerned with this activity.

### Post-War-Time Documents Section

Available in this section are mainly documents concerning displaced persons who were, after the war, taken care of by relief organizations on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and England.

This section establishes certificates of residence which are required by indemnification authorities. Questionnaires are also at its disposal containing various data on the places of residence of displaced persons during the war. This kind of information can prove to be of much use to the inquirers. The X-ray photographs and medical records originate from former hospitals for displaced persons and constitute an irreplaceable clinical documentation.

There are eight employees concerned with this activity.

### Archives concerning Children of Displaced Persons

These documents relate to missing children of non-Germans as well as to such children who lived separated from their families after the war, i. e. all the juveniles who were not yet 18 years old at the end of the war. Their original names and their ancestry are unknown in some cases.

Three employees are working in this section.

The documents kept in this section provide a source of information on foreigners, who for some reason, were mainly on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany between 1939 and 1945, assigned as voluntary or forced laborers in all branches of economy, in civil services and in agriculture.

The essential activity consists in establishing documentary evidence of employment and transferring proof of illnesses suffered, reported in pension claims. The number of documents to be examined is increasing constantly. All other employees are concerned with this activity.

2.2. War-Time Documents Section

Persons in this section are mainly documents concerning displaced persons who were, after the war, taken care of by relief organizations on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and England.

This section established certificates of residence which are required for identification authorities. Questionnaires are also at its disposal concerning various data on the places of residence of displaced persons during the war. This kind of information can prove to be of much use to the investigation. The X-ray photographs and medical records originate from former owners for displaced persons and constitute an irreplaceable clinical document.

There are eight employees concerned with this activity.

2.3. Activities concerning Children of Displaced Persons

These documents relate to missing children of non-Germans as well as to such children who lived separated from their families after the war, i.e. all the juveniles who were not yet 18 years old at the end of the war. Their original names and their ancestry are unknown in some cases. These employees are working in this section.

### Historical Section

This section contains documents of general nature concerning the period of National Socialist persecution. These archives include among others decrees and ordinances of various ministries and higher NS-authorities which were subordinate to the Reichsführer of the SS Himmler. Regulations and directives of the respective camp administrations are also to be found there.

35 employees are working in this section.

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Of these five archive-sections the Concentration Camp Document Section and the Historical Section are the most important. Therefore, it is indispensable to devote a special chapter to each one.

### Concentration Camps Document Section

The documents of concentration camps comprise lists and individual records of prisoners of concentration camps which existed on the territory of the Reich from 1933 to 1945 as well as in the German-occupied countries. There are lists of arrivals, reports on strength of CC-administrations, deportation lists of persons directed from Germany and from occupied countries to various destinations, questionnaires and individual index cards, personal effects cards and lists, medical records with particulars on the state of health and the medical treatment of prisoners, work cards and post control cards.

In addition, the archives hold some indexes from the Gestapo in Germany and also a small number of files from the "Volksgerichtshof" (the People's Court) as well as liberation lists which were established by the Allied Forces.

There are also lists concerning the deportation of Jews who came mainly from the territory of the Reich, from the occupied countries of Western Europe and from Czechoslovakia, i. e. from the former protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, and partly from Slovakia.

This section contains documents of general nature concerning the period of National Socialist persecution. These archives include among others orders and ordinances of various ministries and higher NS-authorities which were subordinate to the Reichsmarschall of the SS Himmler, Regulations and directives of the respective camp administrations are also to be found there. 75 employees are working in this section.

Concentration Camps Document Section

The documents of concentration camps comprise lists and individual cards of persons of concentration camps which existed on the territory of the Reich from 1933 to 1945 as well as in the German-occupied countries. These lists of arrivals, reports on strength of CC-administrations, lists of persons freed from Germany and from occupied countries, investigations, questionnaires and individual index cards, personal cards and lists, medical records with particulars on the state of health and the medical treatment of prisoners, work cards and post control cards.

In addition, the archives hold some indexes from the Gestapo in Germany and also a small number of files from the "Volksgerichtshof" (the People's Court) as well as liberation lists which were established by the Allied Forces.

There are also lists concerning the deportation of Jews who came mainly from the territory of the Reich, from the occupied countries of Western Europe and from Czechoslovakia, i.e. from the former protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, and partly from Slovakia.

It is possible to find information in these documents concerning the following: duration of incarceration, reason given for the incarceration (political, racial, religious etc.), general state of health on arrival in the concentration camp, illnesses contracted during the incarceration, type of forced labour performed by the prisoner, transfers to outlying commandos or to other concentration camps, now and then references to release or to death. Furthermore the individual documents sometimes contain information about the incarceration of near relatives. The personal effects cards and the established lists contain references to clothing and to valuables which were taken from the prisoners.

The task of this section consists above all in the processing of inquiries concerning deportation; however, its activity is very diverse. All certificates are established only on the basis of documentary material. As has already been mentioned with regard to death cases, the Special Registry Office is competent to issue death certificates. Moreover, this section processes requests for photocopies or medical records which concern illnesses contracted during the time of incarceration. Inquiries for Memorial Books written in remembrance of the victims of deportation, for archives and for publications as well as for public prosecutors are also processed in this section. Finally tracing inquiries pass through this section if the person sought had been incarcerated in a concentration camp.

The processing of cases is often very difficult. Sometimes, the person sought cannot be identified in the documents. Misspellings owing to linguistic difficulties arising then, intentional or unintentional false information, incomplete or unintentional discrepancies are the reasons. The surnames and first names of the person sought often deviate from those given in the documents. The same difficulties occur with regard to dates of birth. This is not owing to the differences existing between the Gregorian, the Julian and the Jewish calendars, but is due to the fact that certain ethnic groups attach little importance to the exactness of day, month or even to year of birth. Moreover, inaccurate particulars which were sometimes given by the registered persons for certain reasons have to be taken into account. In fact, some declared themselves to be older or younger on arrival in the concentration camps in order to be considered fit for work, and consequently to escape

It is possible to find information in these documents concerning the following questions of incarceration: reasons given for the incarceration (political, racial, religious etc.), general state of health on arrival in the concentration camp, illnesses contracted during the incarceration, type of forced labor performed by the prisoner, transfers to outlying compounds or to other concentration camps, how and when references to release or to death. Further more the individual documents sometimes contain information about the incarceration of near relatives. The personal effects cards and the established data contain references to clothing and to valuables which were taken from the prisoner.

The majority of this section consists above all in the processing of individual identity registration however, its activity is very diverse. All certificates are maintained only on the basis of documentary material. As has already been mentioned with regard to death cases, the Special Registry Office is responsible for issuing death certificates. Moreover, this section processes reports for the reception of medical records which concern illnesses contracted during the time of incarceration. Individual (for Memorial) books written in the form of the notes of the victims of deportation, for archives and for publications as well as for public presentations are also processed in this section. Finally, the identity papers pass through this section if the person sought had been in the camp and in a concentration camp.

The processing of cases is often very difficult. Sometimes, the person to be identified is mentioned in the documents. Mistakings owing to linguistic differences existing here, identical or similar names, false information contained in administrative documents and the reasons. The surname and first names of the person sought often deviate from those given in the documents. The same difficulties occur with regard to date of birth. This is not owing to the discrepancy existing between the Gregorian, the Julian and the Jewish calendars, but is due to the fact that certain ethnic groups attach little importance to the exactness of day, month or even to year of birth. Moreover, inaccurate partitions which were sometimes given by the registered persons for certain reasons have to be taken into account. In fact, some declared themselves to be older or younger on arrival in the concentration camp in order to be considered fit for work, and consequently to escape

extermination. Some documents indicate only the age or the year of birth.

The prisoner numbers which were issued to inmates in the concentration camps are extremely important for purposes of their identification. Moreover, in certain documents the prisoner appears merely under his number. As the International Tracing Service has not come into possession of numerical lists, which were then certainly established, it has reconstructed these lists on the basis of documents of concentration camps by the creation of a numerical index. If the prisoner whose number is known used an alias during his incarceration, which he often does not remember anymore, his identity is only ascertainable through consultation of the numerical index.

The registration of prisoners was apparently done according to uniform rules. However, the exactness and quality of data of one camp vary from that of another. The prisoners were registered with so much accuracy merely for reasons of security. All documents concerning concentration camps were ordered to be destroyed on the approach of the Allied Forces. It must therefore be counted as especially fortunate that this voluminous documentary material is at disposal in spite of the aforementioned given orders.

The examination of documentary material requires very exact knowledge of the persecution during the period of National Socialism as well as of the various kinds of documents from the concentration camps. Not only should the history of the persecution be known, but also the history of the various places of detention.

The records of the concentration camps, although voluminous, are very incomplete. That is why the International Tracing Service often has to impart a negative reply to numerous incoming inquiries. Nearly half of the requests that directly refer to deportation (requests for certificates of incarceration, death certificates, medical records, medical reports) have a negative result. This troublesome as well as regrettable state of affairs is indeed understandable if it is kept in mind that only the documents of Concentration Camp Buchenwald and Dachau are so to say complete. The documents of Camp Flossenbürg do contain gaps, but they are nevertheless quite numerous. The records

extension, some documents indicate only the age or the year of birth. The prisoner numbers which were issued to inmates in the concentration camps are extremely important for purposes of their identification. Moreover, in certain documents the prisoner appears merely under his number. As the International Tracing Service has not come into possession of numerical lists, which were last certainly established, it has reconstructed these lists on the basis of documents of concentration camps by the creation of a numerical index. If the prisoner whose number is known used an alias during his imprisonment, which he often does not remember anymore, his identity can be established through consultation of the numerical index. The collection of prisoners was apparently done according to uniform criteria, even the register and quality of data of one camp vary from another. The prisoners were registered with as much accuracy as possible. All documents concerning concentration camps were destroyed on the approach of the Allied Forces. It must be noted, however, as especially fortunate that the voluminous documentary material is disposed in spite of the aforementioned given orders. The collection of documentary material requires very exact knowledge of the situation during the period of National Socialism as well as of the various camps from the concentration camps. Not only should the material of the prosecution be known, but also the history of the various camps. The records of the concentration camps, although voluminous, are very incomplete. That is why the International Tracing Service often has to impart a great deal of help to numerous tracing inquiries. Nearly half of the requests that directly refer to deportation (requests for certificates of incorporation, death certificates, medical reports, medical reports) have a negative result. This is troublesome as well as regrettable state of affairs is indeed understandable. It is kept in mind that only the documents of Concentration Camp Buchenwald and Sachsen are so far complete. The documents of Camp Flossenbürg do contain gaps, but they are nevertheless quite numerous. The records

of Camps Dora and Mauthausen have few important gaps; those of Camps Natzweiler, Stutthof and Niederhagen-Wewelsburg are not complete but are also numerous. On the other hand, the documentary material of Ravensbrück is incomplete and that of Camps Auschwitz, Gross-Rosen, Sachsenhausen and Neuengamme very fragmentary; this also applies to Camps Lublin and Krakau-Plaszow.

With regard to Extermination Camps Belzec, Sobibor, Chelmno and Treblinka, the International Tracing Service possesses no documentary material as the victims of these camps were nowhere registered.

Not rarely does it occur that in certain cases the International Tracing Service is able to establish a certificate of incarceration for a person for whom it holds no camp document. This exception concerns former political deportees who received a parcel from the International Committee of the Red Cross during their incarceration. Deportees who received such parcels had to sign with name and date the acknowledgement of receipt which was enclosed in every parcel; these acknowledgements of receipt were then sent back to Geneva. This list of acknowledgements of receipt was placed at the disposal of the International Tracing Service and is also regularly consulted. Thus, if no document is available with regard to the incarceration of a deportee, but if he had fortunately received a parcel during his incarceration, this acknowledgement of receipt is an irrefutable proof that the inquirer was incarcerated in a concentration camp. Hence, it is possible to establish a certificate of incarceration for him.

There is also other proof which is no less astonishing. Here concerned is a control list of lice ("Läusekontrolle") referring to the number of lice found on the prisoners of Concentration Camp Gross-Rosen. The responsible persons of this camp had the peculiar idea to regularly conduct lice control. As the documents of Gross-Rosen are very incomplete, the names of the inquirers often do not appear in the records of this camp. It often happens that the lice list supplies the only evidence of incarceration. As the deportees had simply become numbers, the list contains only the

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The report to International Camps Bork, Stutthof, Lublin and  
Krasno-Blazna, the International Teaching Service possesses no documentary mate-  
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It is noted that it occurs that in certain cases the International Teaching  
Service has established a certificate of incarceration for a person for  
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prisoners who received a parcel from the International Committee of the  
Red Cross during their incarceration. Reporters who received such parcels  
indicated the name and gave the acknowledgment of receipt which was  
sent to the International Teaching Service. These acknowledgments of receipt were then sent  
to the International Teaching Service and as this regularly occurred,  
the International Teaching Service is able to establish with regard to the incarceration of a  
person that he had formerly received a parcel during his incarceration.  
Acknowledgment of receipt is an irrefutable proof that the prisoner was  
in a concentration camp. Hence, it is possible to establish a  
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There is also other proof which is no less convincing. Here concerned  
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of the prisoners often do not appear in the records of the camp. It often  
happens that the lice list supplies the only evidence of incarceration. As  
the reports had simply become numbers, the list contains only the

prisoner number and the number of lice (Nr. 82.591: 1 louse). However, for the fellow-inmates who had no lice, there is no proof of incarceration. As can well be imagined the case of Gross-Rosen is an exception, as for example, in Auschwitz, one louse meant death. The former deportees of Auschwitz have certainly not forgotten the placard on which a large louse with a death's head is depicted with the inscription "one louse, your death!" and in Polish "Wesz to śmierć!"

#### The Historical Section

As has already been mentioned the historical section holds documentary material of general nature. Here concerned are only documents referring to groups of persons which fall into the sphere of activity of the International Tracing Service, i. e. victims of the persecution, foreigners who, for some reason, were on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany as voluntary or forced labourers during the war and displaced persons (DP's).

The available documentary material mainly concerns the concentration camps and the persecution. Besides the decrees and ordinances of the various ministries, the historical section holds orders of the "Reichssicherheits-hauptamt" (Central Security Office of the Reich, Section IV Gestapo and partly Section V "Reichskriminalpolizei" = Reich Criminal Police Office) and of the "SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt" (SS-Main Office for Administrative and Economic Affairs) which took over the administration of concentration camps beginning in March 1942. Here concerned are also orders and directives of general and statistical nature which were issued in every concentration camp, as well as files of chief public prosecutors which contain very precise information concerning the places of detention depending on the Ministry of Justice, and particularly on evacuations from eastern parts of the Reich.

All these documents are analyzed, classified and examined.

For several years now the Historical Section has been intensively engaged in the preparatory work for the planned BOOK OF REFERENCE

prisoner number and the number of his (Wf. 22.281; 1 page). However, for the fellow-prisoner who had no face, there is no proof of identification. As can well be imagined the case of Gross-Rosen is an exception, as for example, in Auschwitz, one does not need death. The former deportees of Auschwitz have certainly not forgotten the legend on which a large house with a girl's head is depicted with the inscription "one looks your death" and in Polish "Was to śmierci".

The Historical Section

As has already been mentioned the historical section holds documentary material of general nature. Here concerned are only documents referring to groups of persons which fall into the sphere of activity of the International League for Human Rights, i.e. victims of the persecution, foreigners who, for some time, were on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany as a result of forced labor during the war and displaced persons.

The available documentary material mainly concerns the concentration camps and the persecution. Besides the decrees and ordinances of the various ministries, the historical section holds orders of the Reichsaussenministerium.

The Central Security Office of the Reich, Section IV Gestapo and the "Verwaltung V Reichsaussenministerium" = Reich Criminal Police Office (Verwaltung V "Reichsaussenministerium" (SS-Verwaltung für Ausländer und Economic Affairs) which took over the administration of concentration camps beginning in March 1942. Here concerned are also orders and directives of general and statistical nature which were issued in every concentration camp, as well as files of child prisoners which contain very precise information concerning the places of detention depending on the Ministry of Justice, and particularly on evacuations from eastern parts of the Reich.

All these documents are analyzed, classified and examined.

Since 1951 the main working instrument of the various sections of the archives was the CATALOGUE OF CAMPS AND PRISONS IN GERMANY AND GERMAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, 1939 - 1945, which was published in the course of 1949, 1950 and 1951. Since that time the International Tracing Service has acquired numerous documents concerning concentration camps and other places of detention as well as documentary material of general nature. Through this steady acquisition, the CATALOGUE OF CAMPS AND PRISONS was soon out of date and after a few years it became necessary to replace it by a supplementary or new edition. After thorough consideration, it was decided in favour of the second solution. Together with this decision the Federal Ministry of Finances asked the International Tracing Service to compile this register as quickly as possible in correlation to the final alteration of the Federal Indemnification Law of 14th September 1965 (Par. 42, Section 2). After several years of work it then became possible, in 1969, to publish the "Preliminary Register of Concentration Camps and their commandos and of other places of detention under the control of the RF-SS in Germany and the German occupied territories 1933 - 1945" (VORLÄUFIGES VERZEICHNIS DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER UND DEREN AUSSENKOMMANDOS SOWIE ANDERER HAFTSTÄTTEN UNTER DEM REICHSFÜHRER-SS IN DEUTSCHLAND UND DEUTSCH BESETZTEN GEBIETEN, 1933-1945).

After six years this register is also outdated. Due to the additional, voluminous documents and after thorough investigations, it was not only possible to ascertain new places of detention (6 early concentration camps and 94 commandos), but also to acquire much information of great importance, as for example, dates of opening and closing of numerous places of detention (10 early concentration camps and 527 commandos). Changes of lesser significance could also be made, among others, of the name of the employer and kind of labour performed (in the case of 121 commandos).

Under these circumstances it has become necessary to undertake a complete revision of the preliminary edition, and it is to be hoped that the Register of Places of Detention will appear towards the end of 1975.

For several years now the Historical Section has been intensively engaged in the preparatory work for the planned BOOK OF REFERENCE

Since 1951 the main working instrument of the various sections of the archives was the CATALOGUE OF CAMPS AND PRISONS IN GERMANY AND GERMAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, 1933 - 1945, which was published in the course of 1949, 1950 and 1951. Since that time the International Tracing Service has acquired numerous documents concerning concentration camps and other places of detention as well as documentary material of general interest. Through this steady acquisition, the CATALOGUE OF CAMPS AND PRISONS was soon out of date and after a few years it became necessary to replace it by a supplementary or new edition. After thorough consideration it was decided in favour of the second edition. Together with this decision the Federal Ministry of Finance asked the International Tracing Service to prepare a register as early as possible in correlation to the final situation in the Federal Indemnification Law of 14th September 1952 (Par. 43, 44, 45). After several years of work it then became possible, in 1958, to publish the "Preliminary Register of Concentration Camps and their branches and other places of detention under the control of the HF-SS in Germany and the German occupied territories 1933 - 1945" (VORLÄUFERREGISTER DER KONZENTRATIONSLAGER UND DEREN ANSCHLÜSSELÄGER UND ANDERER HAFTSTÄTTEN UNTER DEM REICHSPÜHRER-SS IN DEUTSCHLAND UND DEUTSCH BESetzten GEBIETEN, 1933-1945).

After six years this register is also outdated. Due to the additional acquisition of documents and after thorough investigations, it was not only possible to ascertain new places of detention (5 early concentration camps and 10 early concentration camps and 537 commandos). Changes of lesser significance could also be made, among others, of the name of the employer and kind of labour performed (in the case of 131 commandos).

Under these circumstances it has become necessary to undertake a complete revision of the preliminary edition, and it is to be hoped that the Register of Places of Detention will appear towards the end of 1975.

For several years now the Historical Section has been intensively engaged in the preparatory work for the planned BOOK OF REFERENCE

CONCERNING PLACES OF DETENTION. In this Book of Reference the theme of the concentration camps will be more extensively treated analytically. Plan, organization and administration of the camps will be dealt with in the first part. The other chapters will present details concerning the distribution of functions with special attention to regulations and orders for the carrying out of incarceration and the treatment of prisoners.

Furthermore, the Book of Reference will contain detailed information on individual questions such as the classification of concentration camps into camp levels according to the degree of rigorousness in the treatment of the prisoners, kinds of detention, permission to write, labour assignment and also concerning the treatment of death cases with consideration to the category of incarceration of the prisoners and to their nationality.

This information will be compiled from all known available decrees and ordinances as well as from various references found in registration records of prisoners. The Book of Reference will be supplemented by a geographical register of all known places of detention, which will include a schematic presentation of historical and statistical facts. In order to avoid any possible misunderstandings the places of detention depending on the Ministry of Justice shall also be mentioned therein, as well as the seats of the Gestapo, while according to experience, the prisons were often attached to these. For the establishing of the main part of the Book of Reference, numerous valuable newly acquired documents will be consulted.

#### Master Index

All names available in the documents of the International Tracing Service are entered on reference cards and inserted into the Master Index. In addition to the personal data and source of information, every reference card bears the file number plus a brief description of the document in which the name of the respective person appears. All incoming inquiries pass through the Master Index before they reach the various sections where they are processed.

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technical questions such as the classification of concentration camps into  
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purpose of the main part of the Book of Reference numerous valuable  
photographic documents will be consulted.

Master Index

All names available in the documents of the International Trading Service  
are entered on reference cards and inserted into the Master Index. In addi-  
tion to the personal data and source of information, every reference card  
bears the file number plus a brief description of the document in which the  
name of the respective person appears. All incoming inquiries pass through  
the Master Index before they reach the various sections where they are  
processed.

The Master Index is the alphabetical repertory of names as well as the key to every document. The cards are classified according to the phonetic-alphabetical system. This system, according to the experiences made, is continually being improved and has been adopted on account of the different spellings and deviating forms of surnames, above all in Slavonic and Oriental Jewish surnames which represent about 60% of the total. The use of this system prevents errors in writing, changes, modifications affecting the surnames, especially Slavonic surnames which were adopted into languages with the Latin alphabet.

The Master Index contains at present 39.700.000 cards concerning 12 to 14 millions of persons.

Besides the Master Index, auxiliary indexes were established in the different archives-sections in order to examine the content of the archives expediently.

The List of First Names with its manifold spellings according to the idioms is a valuable aid to the processing of inquiries received by the International Tracing Service. The first names that appear there are given under their various spellings and deviating forms and this in several languages. This list is continually extended based on daily practice. A preliminary list with 709 first names was already established in 1949. A second consisting of three volumes containing already 42.595 first names followed in 1958. This list has just been newly made up in 2 volumes and comprises 841 pages containing 48.096 first names or their variations.

The number of inquiries according to categories is expressed by the following per cents:

- Requests for Certificates of Incorporation	10%
" " Certificates of Residence	3%
" " Death Certificates	3%
" " Medical Records and Medical Reports	2%

The Master Index is the alphabetical repository of names as well as the key to every document. The cards are classified according to the phonetic-alphabetical system. This system, according to the experience made, is continually being improved and has been adopted on account of the different spellings and deviating forms of surnames, above all in Slavonic and Oriental Jewish surnames which represent about 60% of the total. The use of this system prevents errors in writing, changes, modifications affecting the name, especially Slavonic surnames which were adapted into languages with different alphabets.

The Master Index contains at present 35,700,000 cards comprising 1,100 million of periods. In order to examine the content of the surnames, auxiliary indexes were established in the form of surnames-phonetic in order to examine the content of the surnames.

The list of First Names with the modified spellings according to the phonetic-alphabetical aid to the processing of inquiries received by the Central Teaching Service. The first names that appear there are given in various spellings and deviating forms and also in several languages. The list is continually extended based on daily practice. A preliminary list of first names was already established in 1948. A second consisting of 42,700 first names followed in 1958. This list has just been newly made up in 3 volumes and comprises 84 pages containing 100,000 first names or their variations.

The various activities  
of the International Tracing Service

The activities of the International Tracing Service are determined by the nature of the incoming inquiries. The number of these inquiries was always subject to fluctuations that were to a great extent to be expected, or for which an explanation could at least be found. However, if the numbers of inquiries received in each of the last years are compared, it can be observed that the reason for the fluctuations cannot be determined. The number of inquiries, subdivided according to categories or to countries of origin, in some cases vary continually, however in others remain constant.

The extraordinarily large numbers reached in 1973 and 1974 and partly in 1972 were due to the processing of the nominal lists of persons of Jewish faith, who at the beginning of the persecution were living on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany and in Berlin. The checking of these nominal lists is expected to be concluded towards the end of 1976 so that inquiries of this category (Memorial Books in remembrance of the victims of deportation) will not be so numerous from 1977 on.

At the time the International Tracing Service was established, the main task was to institute investigations for missing persons, that means to reunite families. Today these tracing inquiries represent 4% of all inquiries. During quite a long space of time, that is from 1954 to 1970, the requests for the issuing of certificates for purposes of indemnification comprised the largest number of requests. For some years, as could be foreseen, the number of these inquiries has steadily decreased for the reason that the deadline for indemnification has expired.

The number of inquiries according to categories is expressed by the following per cents:

- Requests for Certificates of Incarceration : 12%
- " " Certificates of Residence : 3%
- " " Death Certificates : 2%
- " " Medical Records and Medical Reports : 2%

The various activities  
of the International Trading Service

The activities of the International Trading Service are determined by the nature of the incoming inquiries. The number of these inquiries was always subject to fluctuations that were to a great extent to be expected, for which an explanation could at least be found. However, if the number of inquiries received in each of the last years is compared, it can be observed that the reason for the fluctuations cannot be determined. The number of inquiries, subdivided according to categories or to countries of origin, seems to vary very considerably, however in others remains constant.

At present, the number of inquiries has reached in 1973 and 1974 and partly in 1975 were due to the processing of the national lists of persons of Jewish origin, who at the beginning of the persecution were living on the territory of the present Federal Republic of Germany and in Berlin. The check-

ing of these national lists is expected to be concluded towards the end of 1975 and the number of inquiries of this category (Memorial Books in remembrance of the victims of deportation) will not be so numerous from 1977 on.

Since the time the International Trading Service was established, the main task is to institute investigations for missing persons, that means to request. Today these trading inquiries represent 4% of all inquiries. In a long space of time, that is from 1954 to 1970, the requests

for the issuing of certificates for purposes of indemnification comprised the largest number of requests. For some years, as could be foreseen, the number of these inquiries has steadily decreased for the reason that the dead-

line indemnification has expired.

The number of inquiries according to categories is expressed by the following per cent:

Requests for Certificates of Incorporation	: 12%
" " Certificates of Residence	: 3%
" " Death Certificates	: 2%
" " Medical Records and Medical Reports	: 2%

- Requests for Photocopies	:	1%
- Inquiries " Documentary Evidence of Employment in connection with claims lodged for pensions	:	3%
- " " Memorial Books for the victims of deportation	:	61%
- " from Archives and for Publications	:	2%
- " Public Prosecutors	:	8%
- " individuals	:	4%
- Requests of informative, historical and statistical nature	:	0,4%
- Miscellaneous	:	1%

The number of incoming cases received and processed coming from 40 countries all over the world, totalled 210.465 in 1974 (1973 : 221.860).

Within a period of 30 years, from 1945 to 1974, the number of incoming inquiries totals up to 3.864.863, whereas the outgoing replies reached a total of 5.381.414.

The requests from the Federal Republic of Germany are numerous (183.965). This is due to the checking of lists for the Memorial Book of Jewish victims. Moreover, a certain percentage of German inquiries, as for example requests for the issuing of death certificates and requests for information pertaining to pension matters, are submitted to the International Tracing Service from authorities and offices for persons living abroad. Included in this number are reports sent in reply to inquiries from the Alliance of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, Moscow, which were forwarded to the International Tracing Service by the German Red Cross Tracing Services, Hamburg and Munich.

The second largest number of requests comes from Poland (15.345). Here concerned are inquirers who are predominately older and who request that certificates of incarceration or documentary evidence of employment be established for the purpose of obtaining pensions.

The inquiries coming from Switzerland, which is in third place, are almost exclusively from the Central Tracing Service of the International

12	Requests for photographs
32	Documents
17	Evidence of employment in connection with claims lodged for pensions
25	Memorial books for the victims of deportation
25	from Archives and for publications
82	Public Prosecutors
42	Individuals
0.12	State of administrative, historical and statistical nature
12	Information

The number of incoming cases received and processed during 1974 was 231,589. All over the world, totalled 210,485 in 1974 (1973 : 231,589).

Within a period of 30 years, from 1945 to 1974, the number of incoming cases totalled up to 2,584,822, whereas the outgoing replies reached a total of 2,321,414.

The requests from the Federal Republic of Germany are numerous. This is due to the checking of lists for the Memorial Book of victims. Moreover, a certain percentage of German inquiries, as for the issuing of death certificates and requests for information pertaining to pension matters, are submitted to the International Service from authorities and offices for persons living abroad. In this matter, reports sent in reply to inquiries from the Air Force of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, Moscow, which were forwarded to the International Tracing Service by the German Red Cross Tracing Service, Hamburg and Munich.

The second largest number of requests comes from Poland (15,342). Here concerned are inquiries who are predominantly older and who request that certificates of incarceration or documentary evidence of employment be established for the purpose of obtaining pensions.

The inquiries coming from Switzerland, which is in third place, are the most exclusively from the Central Tracing Service of the International

Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, as well as from the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the USSR which have been forwarded to the International Tracing Service by the Central Tracing Service.

The relatively large number of inquiries from the USA (2.199) are sent mainly by deportees, who emigrated there directly after the war.

For the other countries the total numbers of inquiries are as follows: Czechoslovakia (1.417), Yugoslavia (851), Israel (796), Italy (660), Austria (581), Netherlands (479), France (428), Great Britain (366) etc.

Besides its usual tasks, the International Tracing Service has in the course of the last years been involved regularly in special activities to which it had to devote much attention. One such activity was the problem of pseudo-medical experiments carried out in the concentration camps. The study of these cases was difficult and a very exact examination of documentary material had to be undertaken in order to clarify questions arising in numerous inquiries which were submitted to the International Tracing Service. Because of its special character this problem deserves that an entire chapter be devoted to it.

Administratively speaking, it should be mentioned that the International Tracing Service employs a total of 254 persons. The number of foreign employees totals 43; 17 nationalities are represented.

#### Pseudo-medical Experiments in the Concentration Camps

For many years the International Tracing Service was confronted with this afflicting problem, about which it practically knew nothing. Numerous inquiries, especially from Poland, arrived at its office concerning pseudo-medical experiments. The International Tracing Service has not confined itself to answering the questions raised. It has endeavoured to analyse the documents acquired pertaining thereto in order to be able to give a good general view of the type and scope of pseudo-medical experiments which were carried out in eight concentration camps (Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Mauthausen, Natzweiler and Schirmeck-Vorbruck, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Sachsenhausen).

Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, as well as from the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the USSR which have been forwarded to the International Tracing Service by the Central Tracing Service.

The relatively large number of inquiries from the USA (2,192) are sent mainly by dependents, who originated there directly after the war.

For the other countries the total numbers of inquiries are as follows: Czechoslovakia (2,017), Yugoslavia (661), Spain (300), Italy (589), Austria (475), France (428), Great Britain (366) etc.

In the past few years the International Tracing Service has in the course of its main tasks, the International Tracing Service has in the course of the last years been involved regularly in special activities to which it has devoted much attention. One such activity was the problem of pseudo-

documents and stamps carried out in the concentration camps. The study of these documents was difficult and a very exact examination of documentary material had to be undertaken in order to clarify questions arising in numerous cases which were submitted to the International Tracing Service. Because of the special character this problem deserves that an entire chapter be devoted to it.

Particularly speaking, it should be mentioned that the International Tracing Service employs a total of 154 persons. The number of foreign employees totals 83; 17 nationalities are represented.

Pseudo-medical Experiments  
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Thorough investigations were conducted in order to be able to ascertain the nature of the experiments carried out. Fourteen experiments, which are the subject of a study of 493 pages, were conducted only in the area of Concentration Camp Auschwitz. For completion of the documents the International Tracing Service was engaged in putting together the scattered records from different Archives in and outside of Germany.

Numerous pertinent works and documents originating from the period of the post-war trials were systematically collected and studied. On the other hand, it was possible in certain cases to question former prisoner physicians who could give their expert opinion and exact information concerning various questions.

Individual studies were made which revealed numerous particulars concerning the experiments, such as:

- the place of experiment
- the type of experiment
- the office that gave the order
- carried out by
- the date of experiment
- the number of persons who were victims of these experiments
- report on the carrying out of the experiment
- the victims and sequels of the experiment
- the evidence from the available CC-prisoners-documents
  - a) detention in concentration camps
  - b) presence in the experimental station
  - c) medical examinations of prisoners
  - d) names of victims
- General findings of the International Tracing Service and list of sources

This work is impeded by two factors: in the first place, the records of such experiments are only rarely preserved, and secondly the entries of these experiments were frequently made either with help of a numbers-code or in the form of abbreviations, the meaning of which could only be discovered by the International Tracing Service after tedious investigations.

Based on this, far more reports could now be made to inquiries which earlier had to be answered negatively. Information could be supplied, and numer-

Thorough investigations were conducted in order to be able to ascertain the nature of the experiments carried out. Thirteen experiments, which are the subject of a study of 403 pages, were conducted only in the area of Concentration Camp Auschwitz. For completion of the documents the International Training Service was engaged in putting together the scattered records from different Archives in and outside of Germany.

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Furthermore, in most cases proof that an experiment had been conducted on a prisoner can only be furnished if the numbers of the block and room in which it took place are indicated.

The result of these particular studies will appear in the BOOK OF REFERENCE CONCERNING PLACES OF DETENTION.

This work was absolutely necessary, both to submit satisfactory replies to inquiries concerning pseudo-medical experiments, and to document as correctly as possible this particular chapter in the history of Nazi persecution.

As may be easily understood the conclusions of these studies, which are of scientific nature, can only be provisional. The greatest attention will be paid to each piece of new information which could change these conclusions and it shall be most carefully attended to that, if necessary, it appears in the Book of Reference.

It should be specified that the documents concerning cases of illness are not only useful in order to ascertain and to confirm the rights of the victims of pseudo-medical experiments, but also to produce the necessary evidence for obtaining pensions.

Physicians also discover useful information therein for ascertaining illnesses of former prisoners, in order to prescribe suitable medical treatment for them.

#### Acquisition of New Documents

The acquisition of new documents has always been one of the main activities of the International Tracing Service whose documentation, although very voluminous, shows many gaps. In the course of the last decades, the International Tracing Service has acquired a considerable number of documents of various types and origin.

The efforts and the visits made by the International Tracing Service in the last years to different authorities and institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany and abroad are directly related to the finding of new documentary material.

The acquired documentary material has made it possible to clarify the fate of numerous missing persons. Proof of deaths is often concerned here. Based on this, far more reports could now be made to inquiries which earlier had to be answered negatively, information could be supplied, and numer-

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ous certificates of incarceration or excerpts from documents could be established.

The acquisition of some documents is especially interesting. So it is worth mentioning for example that the records acquired from The State Museum Lublin-Majdanek help to supplement the very limited documentary material of this extermination camp.

The death books (e.g. from Dachau and Flossenbürg) which have been made available to the International Tracing Service by the registry offices for microfilming are of particular interest because they contain more exact information than that given in the documents of the concentration camps, and facilitate the identification of prisoners.

The information brought by the nominal lists of former workers is highly interesting for the purpose of obtaining pensions.

Further documents of general and historical nature mainly pertaining to questions about camps and also to measures of persecution in the occupied territories were also put at disposal (e.g. by the "Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen" in Ludwigsburg). This documentation is of basic significance for the final REGISTER OF PLACES OF DETENTION and for the BOOK OF REFERENCE CONCERNING PLACES OF DETENTION.

In the course of 1974, the acquisition of new documents reached a never before seen volume since the beginning of the activities of the International Tracing Service. Not only the volume should be mentioned, but also the importance of this new documentary material should be stressed, as it contains 285.282 names. In 1973 a total of 232.250 names of persons appeared in the newly acquired documents, that is more than one half million in 2 years.

Taking into consideration the volume of the documentary material acquired in 1974, it can be presumed that today there are still many unexamined documents.

The International Tracing Service can only express its hope that the existence of any such document which could be made available or photocopied be called to its attention.

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In order to understand the volume of this entire documentation, it suffices to know, that the linear measuring carried out at the end of 1971 amounted to 16.970 metres.

### The New Geneva Conventions

Directly after World War II, the International Committee of the Red Cross undertook steps to proceed not only with the revision of the Geneva Conventions of 1929 but also and above all with the conclusion of a Convention for the civilian population. Furthermore, the consequences of the persecution, which is one of the greatest tragedies of all times, made the creation of such a Convention necessary.

The preparatory work carried out with the co-operation of governmental experts lasted four years. At the end of a diplomatic conference of 4 1/2 months, the authorized representatives of approximately 60 countries signed, on 12th August 1949, this fundamental charter for the well-being of humanity called the "GENEVA CONVENTIONS". These four Conventions ensure a better protection of victims of military conflicts: the first concerns the wounded and sick in the armed forces; the second, the victims of war at sea; the third, the prisoners of war; and the fourth, entirely new, the civilian persons.

The CONVENTION RELATIVE TO THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIAN PERSONS IN TIME OF WAR stipulates that each civilian, deprived of his freedom for any reason whatsoever, is entitled to treatment equal to that of the prisoners of war, and that the camps for civilian persons must remain open for delegates of the Protecting Power and of the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is high time, that persons not directly taking part in hostilities be respected, protected and humanely treated.

The GENEVA CONVENTIONS incarnate the very ideal of the Red Cross. They are a protest of the spirit against unbridled violence and they make a pressing appeal to the world for peace. Should nations unfortunately once more take up arms, the Conventions will undoubtedly be the last rampart of civilization.

In order to understand the volume of this entire documentation, it will be necessary to know, that the linear measuring carried out at the end of 1971 amounted to 12,870 metres.

The New Geneva Conventions

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Conclusion

Every person who visits the International Tracing Service will admit that it is an institution unique of its kind. The work carried out there - which is in fact the daily gas of the indexes of death - is exceedingly meritorious.

The steady acquisition of new records has led to the largest collection of documentary material of the persecution era existing in the world. It is exactly the documentation center of the concentration camps which the International Tracing Service should be called.

For this reason the value and the necessity of these archives, which should show not only the tragedy but also the history of the deportation, should be maintained.

It is finally not a compelling humanitarian task regarding all those who are victims in the world of concentration camps to perpetuate the remem-

Albert de Goetz  
Director of the ITS

Conclusion

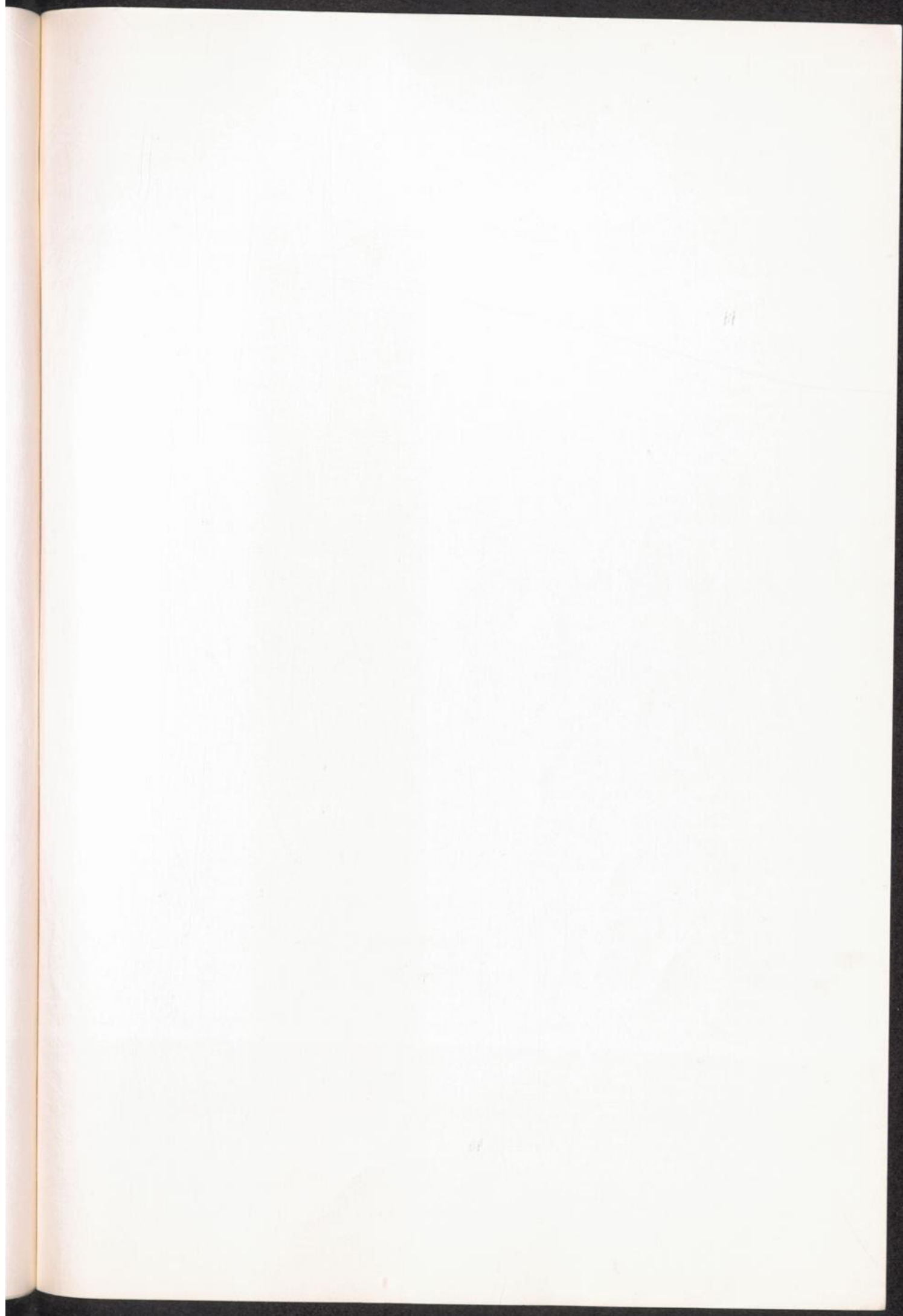
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For this reason the value and the necessity of these archives, which symbolize not only the tragedy but also the history of the deportation, should not be undervalued.

Is it finally not a compelling humanitarian task regarding all those who were victims in the world of concentration camps to perpetuate the remembrance ?

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99