

The German Occupation of Poland

Of all the countries occupied by Germany, Poland suffered the worst. Six million people, around eighteen per cent of the population of Poland, died as a result of Nazi policies, of whom half were Jews. Poland became the main killing ground of the Jews, both from within and outside the country, and a kind of laboratory for Nazi racial ideology. Indeed, as a doctrine of racial imperialism, in many ways Nazism achieved its purest expression in Poland.

Yet, until 1939, Hitler's policies towards Poland had been reasonably moderate—by comparison, for example, with Czechoslovakia. His Non-Aggression Pact with Poland of 25 January 1934 represented a reversal of the anti-Polish policy consistently pursued by the German Foreign Ministry since the loss of Prussia's Polish territories in 1919; and his requests for Danzig and for guaranteed access through the Polish corridor were on the surface modest.¹ At that stage, Hitler appears to have merely wanted to turn Poland into a satellite of Germany. However, her refusal to make any concessions and, above all, the fact that she was able to mobilise Britain and France in her defence to the extent of going to war transformed Hitler's behaviour towards Poland.

With the outbreak of war in September 1939, Hitler was clearly bent on large-scale annexation and the only question was whether he would be prepared to permit the existence of semi-independent rump Polish state. Initially, he seems to have leant in this direction, mainly in the hope of

¹ See above pp. 661, 773.

securing diplomatic advantages from it, in particular peace with Britain and France. At an interview with Ciano on 1 October, Hitler gave the impression that he was prepared to allow a Polish rump state to exist as a satellite of Germany. In his Reichstag speech on 6 October he referred to the 'ridiculous Polish state' which was simply 'a spoilt child of the western democracies and deserved 'to be swept from the face of the earth'. But he also talked about 'the formation of a Polish state so constituted and governed as to prevent its becoming again either a hot-bed of anti-German activity or a centre of intrigue against Germany and Russia'.²

However, little was done to prepare for the creation of such a Polish state and the few feelers put out by Poles sympathetic to Germany, notably by the leading Germanophile, Władysław Studnicki, were ignored or rejected. Moreover, Russia's opposition to the idea of a rump Polish state and, in particular, her decision to annex permanently a large slice of eastern Poland, to a large extent pre-empted the decision, since no Polish Government would be prepared to tolerate such a loss of territory or retain credibility if it did so. In fact, Hitler appears not to have been very enthusiastic about the idea from the start and, once it became clear that Britain and France were not prepared to make peace, so he moved towards a policy of large-scale annexation and exploitation. For a time, until the late spring of 1940, he envisaged a rump Polish state under direct German control as a 'homeland for the Polish people'. But then, in his euphoria over the victory in the West, and with his plans for 'living space' in the Ukraine and the Baltic blocked—for the time being at any rate—by the pact with Moscow, he moved towards the goal of germanizing the whole of Poland through racial selection and mass resettlement. Such ambitions echoed but went beyond those which Pan-Germans such as General Ludendorff had attempted to realize during the First World War and which had been kept alive by academics and right-wing pressure groups during the 1920s and 1930s.

(i) The Political Reorganization of Poland in October 1939³

Under the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 24 August 1939, which was revised on 28 September, Germany had acquired 188,000 square kilometres (km.) of Polish territory containing a population of 20.2 million, of whom 17.3 million were Poles and 675,000 Germans. The Soviet Union had acquired 201,000 square km. with a population of 11.9 million, of whom 4.7 million were Poles and the remainder Ukrainians, Ruthenes and Jews. Under the revision of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 28 September 1939, Russia handed over

² See M. Domarus, *Hitler. Reden 1932 bis 1945*: Vol. 2 (Wiesbaden 1973) p. 1391.

³ See the map p. 1320 below.

to Germany the district of Lublin and the eastern part of the district of Warsaw, agreeing to move the demarcation line back to the river Bug in the centre, in return for Germany's willingness to grant her control over Lithuania.

The question remained of how much Polish territory Germany should incorporate directly into the Reich and what should be done with the rest. Whereas the Foreign Ministry and the Interior Ministry wanted to restrict the amount of Polish territory incorporated into Germany more or less to the Prussian areas transferred to Poland under the Versailles Treaty of 1919, Hitler and Göring both insisted on Germany acquiring a much larger slice of territory. The result was that the so-called 'incorporated territories' finally covered 90,000 square km. with ten million inhabitants, of whom some eighty per cent were Poles—an area almost double the size of the previous Prussian territory.

Under the new arrangement the Prussian province of East Prussia was extended eastwards to include the Suwalki salient, and southwards to include both the small district of Soldau, which had been ceded to Poland by Germany in 1919, and some 12,000 square km. of the Polish district of Warsaw, bounded on the south by the Vistula and on the east by the Narew. Suwalki was added to the *Regierungsbezirk* Gumbinnen and Soldau to *Regierungsbezirk* Allenstein. The remaining area, which was renamed *Regierungsbezirk* Zichenau, extended to within twenty miles of the city of Warsaw and contained around 800,000 Poles, 80,000 Jews, and 15,000 Germans.

The new *Reichsgau* Danzig-West Prussia incorporated *Regierungsbezirk* Marienwerder which had been detached from the western side of East Prussia. It also included the Free City of Danzig and the Polish province of Pomorze. It consisted of 25,000 square km. and had a population of 2.15 million. Of the three *Regierungsbezirke* into which the *Gau* was divided, Danzig had 55 per cent German population, Marienwerder 35 per cent, and Bromberg 14 per cent.

South of Danzig-West Prussia, the new *Reichsgau* Posen (from 29 January 1940 renamed Warthegau) included the pre-1918 German province of Posen (Polish province of Poznań) but extended another 150-200 km further east to take in the bulk of the Polish province of Łódź and part of the province of Warsaw. The population of 4.2 million contained 3.96 million Poles (85 per cent), 327,000 Germans (7 per cent), and 366,000 Jews (8 per cent).

The Prussian province of Silesia was extended beyond its pre-1918 boundaries to include the whole coal and iron basin of south-west Poland, the coal mining districts of Teschen and parts of the Polish provinces of Cracow and Kielce. It gained 10,000 square km. from Galicia (pre-1918 Austrian Poland) and from Congress Poland (pre-1918 Russian Poland) and around

2.5 million population, of whom the vast majority were Poles. Upper Silesia was divided at the end of January 1941 into Lower Silesia (Breslau) and Upper Silesia (Kattowitz).

The remaining German-occupied Polish territory, which was not incorporated into the Reich, consisted of some 98,000 square km. and had a population of some eleven million. It comprised the Polish province of Lublin and parts of the provinces of Warsaw and Cracow. It was initially termed the 'General Government of the Occupied Polish Areas', but on 31 July 1940 was renamed the 'General Government' (*Generalgouvernement*). This change reflected the decision to give it the status of an 'adjunct territory' (*Nebenland*) of the Reich and to adopt a policy of germanization.

Under the 'guidelines for the establishment of a military administration in the occupied eastern territory', issued on 8 September 1939, civil administrative staffs were assigned to each of the three military districts into which German-occupied Poland was divided. Significantly, Hitler appointed hard-line Nazis to head these staffs: Albert Forster, the *Gauleiter* of Danzig (West Prussia), Arthur Greiser, the President of the Danzig Senate (Posen), and Dr Hans Frank, a *Reichsleiter* of the Nazi Party and a Reich Minister without portfolio (Łódź and the remaining occupied territory). This military government began to operate on 25 September and before long tension developed between the military and civilian staffs over the latter's ruthless ideologically-inspired policies. The Army soon became anxious to escape the burden of responsibility for such unpleasant measures and Hitler was delighted to oblige by removing Polish territory from military administration as fast as possible. On 6 October, he announced in his Reichstag speech that he wanted 'all the territory which was to be united with Germany to be integrated into the Reich at the same time'. Two days later, on 8 October 1939, he signed the following Decree on the Organisation and Administration of the Incorporated Eastern Territories, which came into effect on 26 October 1939, five days earlier than originally envisaged:

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§ 1. (1) In the process of reorganizing the Eastern territories the *Reichsgaue* of West Prussia and Posen (Poznań) will be incorporated in the German Reich.

(2) At the head of each *Gau* there will be a Reich Governor [*Reichsstatthalter*].

(3) The Reich Governor of West Prussia will have his official residence in Posen.

§ 2. [4] The *Gau* of West Prussia shall be divided into the administrative districts of Danzig, Marienwerder, and Bromberg (Bydgoszcz).

(2) The *Gau* of Posen shall be divided into the administrative districts of

Hohensalza (Inowrocław), Posen, and Kalisch (Kalisz).⁴

§ 3. (1) The provisions of the law regarding the setting up of the administration in the *Reichsgau* Sudetenland (Sudetengau Law) of 14 April 1939 shall apply to the setting up of the administration of these *Gaus* except where modified by this decree.

(2) All branches of the administration shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Reich Governor. The Reich Minister of the Interior shall decide, in agreement with the responsible Reich Minister, upon the transfer of particular branches of the administration to the existing special agencies of the Reich. Special offices for regional districts shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the *Landräte* until further notice.

§ 4. With regard to those parts of the territories which lie on the frontiers, the administrative district of Kattowitz (Katowice) will be included in the province of Silesia and the administrative district of Zichenau (Ciechanów) in the province of East Prussia . . .

§ 6. Residents of the incorporated territories who are of German or kindred blood shall become German nationals in accordance with provisions to be issued later.

(2) Ethnic Germans [*Volksdeutsche*] in these territories shall become Reich citizens in accordance with the Reich Citizenship Law.⁵

§ 7. The laws hitherto in force shall remain operative in so far as they do not conflict with the process of incorporation into the German Reich.

§ 8. The Reich Minister of the Interior may, in consultation with the responsible minister concerned, introduce Reich law and Prussian law by decree . . .

§ 12. (1) The Reich Minister of the Interior shall be the central authority with responsibility for the reorganization of the Eastern territories . . .

(2) He shall issue such judicial and legislative regulations as are necessary for the implementation and amplification of this decree.

§ 13. (1) This decree shall take effect from 1 November 1939.

Then, on 12 October 1939, Hitler approved the following Decree on the Administration of the Occupied Polish Territories. This decree focused on the Polish territory occupied by Germany which was not intended to be incorporated into the Reich:

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In order to restore and maintain public order and public life in the occupied Polish territories, I decree

§ 1. The territories occupied by German troops shall be subject to the authority of the Governor General of the occupied Polish territories, except in so far as they are incorporated in the German Reich.

§ 2. (1) I appoint Reich Minister Dr Frank as Governor General of the occupied Polish territories.

⁴ From 1940 Litzmannstadt (Łódź) (eds).

⁵ See Vol. 1, pp. 534 ff (eds).

(2) I appoint Reich Minister Dr Seyss-Inquart as Deputy Governor General.

§ 3. (1) The Governor General shall be directly responsible to me.

(2) All branches of the administration shall be directed by the Governor General.

§ 4. The laws at present in force shall remain in force, except in so far as they conflict with the taking over of the administration by the German Reich.

§ 5. (1) The Council of Ministers for the Defence of the Reich, the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, and the Governor General may make laws by means of decrees . . .

§ 7. (1) The cost of administration shall be borne by the occupied territory . . .

§ 8. (1) The central authority for the occupied Polish territories shall be the Reich Minister of the Interior.

2. The administrative decrees required to implement and supplement the present decree shall be issued by the Reich Minister of the Interior.

§ 9. (1) The present decree shall come into force as soon as and to the extent to which I withdraw the order given to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army for the exercise of military administration.

Hitler ordered German military administration in the 'Polish occupied territories' to cease on 26 October 1939 and the decree came into effect on that date.

(ii) The ideological programme for Poland

Hitler made clear at an early stage his views on the future treatment of Poland in an interview with Rosenberg on 27 September 1939, as the latter noted in his diary:

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. . . The Poles: a thin germanic layer, underneath frightful material. The Jews, the most appalling people one can imagine. The towns thick with dirt. He's learnt a lot in these past weeks. Above all, if Poland had gone on ruling the old German parts for a few more decades everything would have become lice-ridden and decayed. What was needed now was a determined and masterful hand to rule. He wanted to split the territory into three strips: 1. Between the Vistula and the Bug: this would be for the whole of Jewry (from the Reich as well) as well as all other unreliable elements. Build an insuperable wall on the Vistula—even stronger than the one in the west. 2. Create a broad cordon of territory along the previous frontier to be germanized and colonized. This would be a major task for the whole nation: to create a German granary, a strong peasantry, to resettle good Germans from all over the world. 3. In between, a form of Polish state [*Staatlichkeit*]. The future would show whether after a few decades the cordon of settlement would have to be pushed further forward.

On 17 October 1939, Hitler informed Keitel of his views on the future government of Poland:

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1. The armed forces should welcome the opportunity of avoiding having to deal with administrative questions in Poland. On principle there cannot be two administrations.
2. Poland is to be made autonomous. It will be neither a separate part of the German Reich nor an administrative district of the Reich.
3. It is not the task of the administration to turn Poland into a model province or a model state in accordance with the principles of German order; nor is it its task to put the country on a sound basis economically and financially. The Polish intelligentsia must be prevented from forming itself into a ruling class. The standard of living in the country is to remain low; it is of use to us only as a reservoir of labour. Poles too are to be used for the administration of the country. But the formation of national political groups will not be permitted.
4. The administration must work on its own responsibility and must not be dependent on Berlin. We do not want to do anything there which we do in the Reich. Responsibility does not rest with the Berlin ministries, since no German administrative unit is involved. The accomplishment of this task will involve a hard ethnic struggle [*Volkstumskampf*] which will not permit any legal restrictions. The methods will be incompatible with the principles which we otherwise adhere to. . . .
5. *Our interests are as follows:* The territory is important to us from a military point of view as an advanced jumping-off point and can be used for the strategic concentration of troops. To that end, the railways, roads and lines of communications are to be kept in order and utilized for our purposes. Any tendencies toward stabilizing the situation in Poland are to be suppressed. 'Polish muddle' must be allowed to flourish. The fact that we are governing the territory should enable us to purify the Reich territory also of Jews and Polacks. Collaboration with the new *Reichsgaue* (Posen and West Prussia) only for resettlement purposes (compare Himmler mission). Purpose: Shrewdness and severity must be the maxims in this ethnic struggle in order to spare us from having to go into battle again on account of this country.

The key role in the racial and settlement policies in Poland was played by the SS. On 25 August 1939, a special section 'Operation Tannenberg' had been set up in the Security Police Main Office to organize five special task forces (*Einsatzgruppen*). One was allocated to each army and each was subdivided into four *Einsatzkommandos* of 100–150 men allocated to the Army corps. Their role was defined as follows: 'The task of the *Einsatzkommandos* of the Security Police is to combat all anti-Reich and anti-German elements in enemy territory behind the front line troops.' They were specifically instructed to arrest all persons 'who opposed the

measures of official German agencies or are obviously intending to provoke unrest and, on the basis of their position and prestige are in a position to do so.'⁶ The following two documents contain excerpts from Heydrich's instructions to the Security Police and SD on its task in Poland issued at meetings in the Reich Security Main office (RSHA). The first is dated 7 September 1939:

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. . . A Protectorate-type government is not envisaged for Poland but rather a purely German administration. This will correspondingly require a major commitment of the Gestapo and criminal police . . .

The leadership class in Poland is to be rendered harmless as far as possible. The remaining inferior population will not be given any particular schools but will be suppressed in some way or other.

5. The expulsion of the Polish Jews from Germany must be carried out, including those Jews who came from Poland and have meanwhile acquired German citizenship.

The transfer of prisoners is causing problems. It has been decided that the leadership class, which must on no account remain in Poland, will be put in German concentration camps, while temporary concentration camps will be established on the frontier behind the *Einsatzgruppen* for the lower classes who can then be deported to the remaining part of Poland immediately.

Two days later, Heydrich summed up his policy to Lieut-General Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel by telling him that 'the nobility, the clerics (*Popen*) and the Jews must be killed'.⁷ The following document is dated 27 September 1939:

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. . . It is initially envisaged that developments in what was previously Poland will take the form of the creation of German Gaus in the former German provinces and, in addition, the creation of a Gau with a foreign population with its capital in Cracow. Seyss-Inquart⁸ is envisaged as the possible leader of this Gau. This foreign Gau will lie outside the new East Wall which is to be created. The East Wall will contain all the German provinces and the foreign Gau will be a virtual no-man's-land in front of it. The RFSS will be appointed as settlement commissioner

⁶ See *Deutschland im Zweiten Weltkrieg* Bd. 1. (Berlin (East) 1975), p. 187.

⁷ See *Deutschland im Zweiten Weltkrieg* Bd. 1. *op. cit.*, p. 186.

⁸ Dr Arthur Seyss-Inquart had played a leading role in the Anschluss, see above pp. 700 ff. He was to become Reich Commissioner of the Netherlands 1940–1945 (eds).

for the east. The deportation of the Jews into the foreign Gau, expulsion over the demarcation line, has been approved by the Führer. However, the whole process is to be phased over the period of a year. The solution of the Polish problem—as has frequently been explained—will vary between the leadership section (Polish intelligentsia) and the lower working class Poles. Three per cent of the political leadership at the most is still in the occupied territories. This three per cent must also be rendered harmless and be put in concentration camps. The *Einsatzgruppen* must draw up lists in which the notable leaders are included, and then lists of the middle class: teachers, priests, nobility, legionnaires, returning officers etc. These too must be arrested and deported to the remaining area [i.e. the General Government-to-be] . . .⁹

The leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen*, in particular Schäfer for the industrial area [Upper Silesia] and Damzog for the north east [Danzig and West Prussia], must consider how, on the one hand one can integrate the primitive Poles into the work force while at the same time expelling them. The aim is for the Poles to remain permanently seasonal and migrant workers; their main place of residence must be the district of Cracow.

Himmler's appointment as 'settlement commissioner', forecast by Heydrich, was formally announced in the Decree of the Führer and Reich Chancellor for the Strengthening of German Nationality of 7 October 1939:

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The consequences of the Versailles Treaty have been removed in Europe. As a result, the Greater German Reich now has the opportunity of admitting into its territory and resettling those Germans who were hitherto obliged to live abroad, and to arrange the settlement of the population groups within its sphere of interest so as to improve the lines of demarcation between them. I entrust the *Reichsführer SS* with execution of this task according to the following regulations:

§1. In accordance with my directives the *Reichsführer* has the duty:

- (1) of repatriating persons of Germanic race or nationality resident abroad who are considered suitable for permanent return to the Reich;
- (2) of eliminating the harmful influence of those alien sections of the population which constitute a danger to the Reich and German national community;
- (3) of forming new German settlements by the transfer of population and, in particular, by settling persons of German race or nationality returning from abroad.

The *Reichsführer SS* is authorized to issue such general regulations and to take such administrative measures as may be necessary to carry out these duties.

In order to carry out the tasks assigned to him in §1 (2) above the *Reichsführer SS* can assign specific areas of settlement to the sections of the population concerned . . .

⁹ For this section of the document which refers to the Jews, see below p. 1053 (eds).

§3. The tasks assigned to the *Reichsführer* with regard to the reorganization of the German peasantry will be carried out by the Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture following the general directives of the *Reichsführer SS*.

For other matters connected with his duties, the *Reichsführer SS* will make use within the territory of the German Reich of the existing authorities and institutions of the Reich, the states and the municipalities as well as other public bodies and the existing settlement associations. . . .

Himmler's appointment as Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of German Nationality (RKFDV) reflected the fact that he had already been given the responsibility for resettling the Germans of South Tyrol, which had been agreed with Italy in June 1939, and had already established a staff to carry it out under *SS Brigadeführer* Ulrich Greifelt. Moreover, the task would also involve extensive use of his police apparatus.

Himmler saw his role as RKFDV as involving two main tasks. On the one hand, he maintained that 'the removal of all persons of alien race from the annexed eastern territories is one of the most important aims to be achieved in the German east'. However, on the other hand, he believed it was equally vital to regain German 'blood' which had been 'lost' through intermarriage with inferior races: 'It is therefore an absolute national-political necessity to "screen" the incorporated eastern territories and later also the General Government for such persons of Teutonic blood in order to make this lost German blood available again to our own people'.¹⁰ The guidelines which governed the general settlement policy of the Staff Main Office of the RKFDV were defined in the introduction to a book published in 1940 with the title 'Basic Principles, Guidelines, and Directives for Manpower Deployment (*Menscheneinsatz*)' from which the following excerpt is taken:

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. . . The sections of German nation living beyond the borders of the Reich will be relieved of their role of acting as a cultural fertiliser for foreign states . . . The Führer's call to various ethnic groups to return to the Reich represents a complete revolution in German policy regarding the national issue. The previous and often romantic enthusiasm for the fact that Germans were scattered throughout the world has given place to the demand for the return of valuable German blood in order to strengthen the Reich. However, those Germans who return will be required to adapt themselves organically [!] to the discipline and order of the Greater German Reich. We cannot and will not allow a situation to continue in the German east

¹⁰ See N. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, *op. cit.* Vol. 2, p. 80.

where, for example, a Baltic German group exists side by side with Volhynian and Bessarabian German groups. The concept of Baltic, Volhynian and Bessarabian Germans must, on the contrary, be eliminated as soon as possible . . .

As far as SS policy in Poland was concerned, on 15 May 1940, Himmler produced a memorandum entitled 'Some Thoughts on the Treatment of the Alien Population in the East' which was endorsed by Hitler:

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In our treatment of the foreign ethnic groups in the east we must endeavour to recognize and foster as many such individual groups as possible, i.e. apart from the Poles and the Jews, the Ukrainians, White Russians, Gorales, Lemkes, and Kaschubians. If there are any more ethnic splinter groups to be found then these too.

I mean to say that we not only have a major interest in not uniting the population in the east but, on the contrary, we need to divide them up into as many parts and splinter groups as possible.

Also, within the ethnic groups themselves we have no interest in leading them to unity and greatness or in gradually giving them a sense of national consciousness and national culture, but rather in dissolving them into countless little splinter groups and particles.

We will of course use the members of all these ethnic groups and, in particular, the small ones, as policemen and mayors.

The senior positions in such ethnic groups must be restricted to mayors and local police authorities; in the case of the Gorales, the individual chieftains and tribal elders, who are in any case always feuding. There must not be a concentration of these groups at a higher level because only the dissolution of this ethnic mishmash of fifteen million in the General Government and eight million in the eastern provinces will enable us to carry through the racial screening process which must form the basis of our concern to fish out the racially valuable people from this mishmash, take them to Germany and assimilate them there.

For example, within a few years—I imagine four or five—the term 'Kaschubian' must have been forgotten because there will no longer be a Kaschubian people (that also applies, in particular, to the West Prussians). I hope to see the term 'Jew' completely eliminated through the possibility of a large-scale emigration of all Jews to Africa or to some colony. Over a slightly longer period it must also be possible to ensure the disappearance of the ethnic categories of Ukrainians, Gorales, and Lemkes from our territory. Making allowances for the larger area involved, what has been said about these splinter groups should also apply in the case of the Poles.

A basic issue as far as the solution of all these questions is concerned is the question of schools, and therefore that of sifting and assessing the young people. The non-German population of the eastern territories must not receive any education higher than that of an elementary school with four forms. The objective of this elementary school must simply be to teach: simple arithmetic up to 500 at the most, how to write one's name, and to teach that it is God's commandment to be obedient to the Germans and to be honest, hard working, and well-behaved. I consider it unnecessary to teach reading.

There must be no schools at all in the east apart from this type of school. Parents who wish to provide their children with a better education both in the elementary school and later in a secondary school, must make an application to the Higher SS and Police Leader. The decision on the application will be primarily determined by whether or not the child is racially first class and comes up to our requirements. If we recognise such a child as being of our blood then the parents will be informed that the child will be placed in a school in Germany and will remain in Germany indefinitely.

However cruel and tragic each individual case may be, if one rejects the Bolshevik method of physically exterminating a people as fundamentally un-German and impossible, then this method is the mildest and best one.

The parents of these children of good blood will be given the choice of either giving up their child—they will then probably not produce any more children and so remove the danger that this sub-human people of the east might acquire a leader class from such people of good blood, which would be dangerous for us because they would be our equals—or they would have to agree to go to Germany and become loyal citizens there. One has a strong weapon against them in their love of their child whose future and education would depend on the loyalty of the parents.

Apart from the examination of the petitions which parents put forward for a better education, all 6–10 year-olds will be sifted each year to sort out those with valuable blood and those with worthless blood. Those who are selected as valuable will be treated in the same way as the children who are admitted on the basis of the approval of the parents' petition.

I consider it obvious both from an emotional and from a rational point of view that the moment the children and parents arrive in Germany they should not be treated in school and life as outcasts but—after changing their names and despite being treated with vigilance—should be integrated into German life on the basis of trust. The children must not be made to feel rejected; for, after all, we believe in our own blood, which through the mistakes of German history has flowed into a foreign nation, and are convinced that our ideology and ideals will find an echo in the souls of these children which are racially identical to our own. In this respect, above all, teachers and HJ leaders must change their tune and we must never again make the same mistake as was made in the past with the people of Alsace and Lorraine of, on the one hand, wanting to win them over to become Germans and, on the other hand, of using every opportunity to hurt their pride, offend their sense of honour, and undermine their human dignity through mistrust and abuse. Abusive expressions such as 'Polack' or 'Ukrainian' and such like must be out of the question.

Education must be carried out in a pre-school and after four forms one can then decide whether to let the children continue in a German elementary school or whether they should be transferred to a National Political Educational Institution [Napola].¹¹

After these measures have been systematically implemented during the next ten years, the population of the General Government will inevitably consist of an inferior remnant, which will include all the people who have been deported to the eastern provinces as well as from those parts of the German Reich which contain the same racial and human type (for example parts containing the Sorbs and Wends).

This population will be available as a leaderless labouring class and provide Germany with migrant and seasonal workers for special work projects (road building, quarries, construction); even then they will get more to eat and have more from life than under Polish rule and, while lacking in culture themselves, under the strict, consistent and fair leadership of the German people will be called upon to participate in their eternal cultural deeds and monuments and, in view of the amount of heavy labour required to produce them, may even make them feasible at all.

Although the officials of the SS-Police and the Nazi Party were to be the main instruments of Nazi racial imperialism, the regime was anxious to develop the correct *Herrenmensch* attitudes towards their new colonial subjects among the German people as a whole. In this they benefited from a long tradition of German ethnic arrogance towards the Poles reflected, for example, in the term *Polnische Wirtschaft* ('Polish muddle' or shambles), and somewhat reminiscent of traditional British attitudes towards the Irish. In January 1940 the Press Information Service of the Reich Propaganda Ministry issued the following directive to German newspapers:

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... The attention of the Press is drawn to the fact that articles dealing with Poland must express the instinctive revulsion of the German people against everything which is Polish. Articles and news items must be composed in such a way as to transform this instinctive revulsion into a lasting revulsion. This should be done, not by special articles, but by scattering phrases here and there in the text.

Similarly, it must be suggested to the reader that Gypsies, Jews, and Poles ought to be treated on the same level. This is particularly important since there is no doubt that for a long time we shall be obliged to employ Poles as agricultural labourers in Germany. It is, therefore, desirable to build up a defensive front in the heart of the German nation.

¹¹See Vol. 1, p. 435.

Further, in composing news items, the principle must be adopted that everything representing civilization and economic activity in Polish territory is of German origin.

It will be as well also to avoid speaking in sympathetic terms of Polish prisoners of war. It is preferable to say nothing at all about them in the Press.

(iii) The 'Incorporated Territories'

The decision to incorporate large areas of Poland into the Reich posed the major problem of what to do about the Poles living in those areas who, after all, formed the vast majority of the population. In both *Mein Kampf* and his so-called 'Second Book' of 1928 Hitler had contemptuously rejected traditional policies of assimilation through education and discrimination, which had been practised by both Germans and Poles in these areas since the late nineteenth century. Both he and Himmler wished to clear the Poles and Jews out of the area and replace them with German settlers (germanization of the land rather than the people). This objective determined the first phase of Nazi policy and, even when it came up against insuperable obstacles during wartime, remained their long-term goal. Agreements were reached with Estonia on 15 October 1939 and with Latvia on 30 October for the repatriation of the Baltic Germans to the Reich, and with Russia, on 3 November, to repatriate the Germans in the Russian-occupied part of Poland. The pressing need to resettle the 55,000 ethnic Germans from Latvia, the 15,000 from Estonia, and the 135,000 from eastern Poland provided an added impetus to the policy of expelling Poles and Jews from the incorporated territory upon which the Nazis were already determined.

The autumn and winter of 1939–40 saw a period of more or less unrestrained terror in Poland, particularly in the 'incorporated territories'. It was facilitated by the decision to end military government before a proper civilian administration was in place. The legal and administrative vacuum thereby created was filled by Nazi Party activists and by the *Einsatzgruppen* of the Security Police and SD which, though disbanded on 20 November 1939, were replaced by permanent Security Police headquarters in the major towns. Both the Party and the SD had already established close links with ethnic German groups in the area and now encouraged them to form so-called 'self defence' organizations. These vigilante groups operating under SS leadership were particularly active in West Prussia where nationalist rivalries between Germans and Poles were of long standing. Moreover, these tensions had been intensified by incidents which occurred after the outbreak of war in which some 5,400 ethnic Germans had been killed for allegedly assisting the invaders. These incidents were fully exploited by Nazi propaganda and Hitler had personally ordered that,