

German Expellee Organisations in the Enlarged EU

STEVE WOOD

This article examines German expellees (Vertriebene) as an interest group in domestic and enlarged European Union contexts. While their background and motivations may be unique, they have similarities to other non-party actors aiming to influence political and/or legal processes. German governments have made rhetorical and financial expressions of support but privileged foreign policy considerations over core expellee demands and sought to contain them as an internal issue. EU enlargement and accession by CEE states to its legal bases has been interpreted as opening new possibilities. A 'Europeanising' of 'justice' may have unintended implications for relations among European states and peoples.

INTRODUCTION

There is an extensive literature on the Germans expelled from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) between 1944 and 1948.¹ It encompasses their pre-war existence, the experience of expulsion and flight, integration into (west) German society and associated problems, interaction with the nascent (west) German state, and contribution to the rebuilding of post-war society. Expellee organisations, however, rarely feature in academic work on the well-researched field of interest groups. They are usually overlooked or receive only brief mention, though they have operated as a vocal and populous example of special interests in a society where (neo-)corporatist structures were well established.² In the German context of organised representation, expellees³ are a unique case and have been treated as such by the state, even if the posture of governments has varied.

This article contends, firstly, that the description 'interest group' is accurate, even if the expellees are not among those generally understood or studied as belonging to the category, such as commerce and industry associations, unions, environmental protection groups, social welfare lobbies, or ethical-religious organisations. Some of these 'classical interest groups' emerged after expellees began pressuring political parties and the state. Expellee organisations are not easily situated in existing typologies or analytical frameworks, especially from American and British perspectives.⁴ However, their activity in the post-war German and later the emerging 'European' polity corresponds to the interest group classification in important ways: they are organised; they strive to influence political parties to further particular goals; they

are not themselves a political party. In response to enquiries on the nature of expellee organisations, some of their own officials confirm that they do constitute an interest group while others ascribe a non-political role.⁵

Secondly, this case can be viewed from comparative politics and international relations perspectives or as an interdisciplinary phenomenon that reflects the entwining of domestic and foreign affairs. The aims of other interest groups appear prosaic in comparison with the highly sensitive international dimension of some expellee objectives.⁶ In response to their claims and numbers, the German state has provided official recognition and financial disbursements for over five decades, as partial compensation for individuals and as support for organisational expenditures. From 1989 there was an upsurge in expectations on German governments to enforce political demands on certain CEE states, principally Poland and the Czech Republic. This was linked to the dependence of these post-communist states and societies on reunified Germany and their aspirations to integrate into European structures. Some expellee representatives considered that this conferred leverage on Germany and their own demands.

Thirdly, I argue that international pressure, usually implicit, and their assessment of the consequences, meant that German governments declined to vigorously pursue these demands on the expellees' behalf. As enlargement of the EU to include CEE approached, it became more difficult to constrain all groups and individuals. The deepening of EU legal and institutional frameworks gave additional impulse to those seeking return of property or compensation.⁷ This was an unintended consequence of 'Europeanisation', or an expansion of the EU 'security community', for which the FRG had striven. The position of the current SPD–Green government in response to expellee activity is consistent with a prudential realist approach.

The peculiar status of expellee organisations among the collective corpus of German or European interest groups, and their location at the nexus of domestic and international politics, means that they are difficult to situate within one discipline and a corresponding literature. That there is relatively little written on them in broader contemporary discussions of interest groups may also be a consequence of a continuing governmental objective to downplay the expellees' significance and contain their external effects.

HISTORY AND OBJECTIVES

Around 14 million persons of German ethnicity were expelled or fled from CEE during and after the Second World War. Many had land and/or other property confiscated or destroyed. While their integration into a defeated and truncated post-war Germany was difficult, the expellees organised relatively rapidly. An umbrella organisation, to which numerous regional sub-divisions (*Landesverbände* and *Landsmannschaften*) belonged, was founded in 1949. Known as the *Zentralverband der vertriebenen Deutschen* (Central Association of Expelled Germans – ZvD), the size of the group and the magnitude of their grievances amplified the pressure they could exert on political institutions. According to one contemporary observer the expellees and refugees were 'a potent political force ... and may in the future determine the actual pattern of German political life'.⁸ In the 1950s they formed a single-issue political party, the *Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten* (BHE – Association of Homeland

Expellees and Those Deprived of Their Rights), viewed by the rest of the electorate as 'nothing but an interest group'.⁹ The party dissolved and expellees' representative organs focused on being just that — an interest group. Their main targets have been German governments at state and federal levels: for political and legal recognition, as potential sources of financial compensation, and as channels or proxies through which to obligate other states and the international community. A foundational Charter of the Expellees rejected any form of revenge and proclaimed reconciliation as a goal. It also affirmed some material and moral demands, including 'that the right to our native land be recognised and realised as one of the basic rights of man, granted to him by God'. Because this right had not then, or to the present, 'materialised', the expellees put (most of) their energies into integrating themselves in and rebuilding post-war (West) Germany.¹⁰

There has been an emphasis on achieving official acknowledgment of expellees' suffering¹¹ and/or a 'gesture' from, most especially, the Polish and Czech states.¹² Universalised by supporters as human rights issues, the claims are not universally shared or recognised. One reason is the perception by other actors that behind the moral and emotive pleas is an agenda of material aims, to be pursued by legal means after a breakthrough in the form of an admission is acquired. For some individuals, regional and other sub-units, and the ZvD's successor, the *Bund der Vertriebenen, Vereinigte Landsmannschaften und Landesverbände e.V.* (BdV), the restoration of property or compensation in lieu and a 'right of return' to their homeland (*Heimat*) remained goals. The Silesian branch of the BdV asserts that a 'healing of the expulsion' involves not only a resolution of the 'property question', but also 'the prosecution of criminals, the right to homeland, the right to German cultural goods, implementation of European standards of minority rights for the German ethnic group, and more'.¹³ The first item among the declared 'purpose and goals' of the Bavarian branch of the BdV is: 'To work for the realisation of a right to self-determination, the right of all expelled German groups to a homeland from which they derived, the preservation of general human rights, and a just order among the peoples and states of Europe.'¹⁴

Notwithstanding this, an official at the same branch regarded it as an 'apolitical' or 'not political' entity, in the sense of not being connected to or engaging in the same activity as political parties.¹⁵ It should be added that not every expellee or refugee is 'political' or belongs to an organisation. Of those who do, not all wish to pursue the most controversial objective with which expellees are associated, a return of property or damages in lieu. In this regard, member of the European Parliament (MEP), Bernd Posselt, perceives three main types of expellee: (1) those who accept their property as lost and do not attempt to retrieve it; (2) those who pursue it tenaciously; (3) those who know they will not retrieve it but deploy a perceived moral right as a 'deposit' (*Pfand*). They have a psychological-emotional motivation to pursue their claims.¹⁶

For German federal governments the political effects of expellee groups had to be contained within the state's (new de facto) borders. Although in regular statements conservative parties were stronger advocates than the left, the entire political class was compelled to accept that the *force majeure* of international politics prevented the realisation of claims made against other states. Even in the Land of Bavaria, where the Christian Social Union (CSU) is considered a strong supporter of the Sudeten Germans, the largest expellee community (*Volksgruppe*), the pressure that

the CSU as governing party has or could exert on sovereign states is limited. The influence of expellee groups was effectively restricted to acquiring public financial assistance.

The EU's eastern enlargement altered foreign and domestic political dynamics. Expectations on parties that ostensibly support expellee goals will intensify if they enter into government at the federal level. For the SPD–Green incumbents, who have insistently dismissed these as unrealistic and having no role in German–Polish or German–Czech relations, the threat of court action is firmly on the European agenda. The formation of the *Preußische Treuhand* for this express purpose caused (further) waves of anxiety.¹⁷ Some political actors were concerned by the potential to ignite an international powder keg. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's statements in Warsaw on the sixtieth anniversary of the uprising against Nazi occupants, that the German government would oppose any claims for property return or compensation by expellees, demonstrated that the latent international influence of this interest group had transformed into real impact.¹⁸ In criticising Schröder's speech, BdV President Erika Steinbach stated that most expellees had no demands for property return, and that the BdV 'distanced' itself from actions like those engaged in by the *Preußische Treuhand*. She also re-emphasised the legal situation, which 'provides the foundations for the activities of individuals or such organisations'.¹⁹

Another controversial initiative for which Steinbach has been an enthusiastic promoter is a proposed 'Centre Against Expulsion', through which the experience of the German expellees would be documented in a contemporary museum-like context.²⁰ It would be one form of visible, institutionalised recognition that the BdV has been so insistent on obtaining. Among the German elite the concept generated as much opposition as support, not least because of the apprehension incited abroad. Further evidence of the intensifying controversy was provided when in September 2004 the Polish Sejm responded to the uproar about 'German' intentions by passing its own resolution, by 328 to zero with one abstention, on counter-claims against the FRG.²¹ The government of Marek Belka soon declared that this would not be pursued and that the matter was once and for all finished. That remains to be seen.

THE GERMAN CONTEXT: STRUCTURE, ACTIVITY AND EFFECTS

The BdV is based in Bonn and has a membership of around two million. This makes it the second largest interest group in Germany with only the larger unions (or combined unions) having more members. It is the official umbrella organisation for multiple sub-units. There are 16 *Landesverbänden* and 21 *Landsmannschaften*, characterised by their current or pre-war regional base. There are also many other groups linked by a common if loose general identification of origin and historical destiny. Some are principally 'cultural' and 'social' in orientation, comprising small-scale regular gatherings and larger institutions like the *Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen*; those focused on direct links to the homeland and maintenance of certain features or infrastructure (*Heimatversorge*); specific sub-groups, like the *Bauernverband der Vertriebenen*, representing persons employed in rural industries at the time of departure from CEE; and more dynamic and forceful entities like the *Preußische Treuhand*. These varied associations emphasise their independence from one another, from

political parties, and from the state. Most members share, personally or as descendants, the experience of expulsion. Ultimately this is why almost all groups are in receipt of public funds, whether for the promotion of cultural–historical research and links with regions now in CEE states,²² wider regional representation by the *Landmannschaften*, or the BdV headquarters itself.

Deutsch and Edinger stated in the 1970s that, in contrast to economically oriented *Verbände*, ‘only a few of the special socio-political interest groups play any significant role in the Federal Republic. The most important of these are the organizations of expellees’.²³ These are integrated in a policy network of formal and informal contact with government, parties and bureaucracy. All presidents of the BdV or its forerunners have been members of the Bundestag. While the expellees and their descendants are numerous, and there is a multiplicity of organisations oriented to advancing their objectives, the principal channels to power are via prominent political personalities. Such individuals presently include BdV President Steinbach, who is a CDU (Christian Democratic Union) member of the Bundestag, Erwin Marschewski, the Chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary working group ‘Expellees and Refugees’, and his predecessor, Hartmut Koschyk.²⁴ Despite the left parties generally having a rather antagonistic relationship with expellee organisations, some SPD and Green members, including Peter Glotz, Markus Meckel, Elke Leonhard and Antje Vollmer, have had a direct or more sympathetic involvement. In 2001, Interior Minister Otto Schily (SPD) attended the annual *Sudetendeutschen* meeting where he advocated the repeal of the Beneš Decrees.²⁵

The *Sudetendeutschen Landmannschaft* (SdL) is among the most outspoken of the various groups. Although declared as non-partisan (*überparteilich*), it is closely associated with the CSU, which has an ongoing dominance of politics in Bavaria. The CSU is a patron of the Sudeten Germans, endorsed as Bavaria’s ‘fourth tribe’. The Sudeten Germans have a reserved room at the Bavarian representation in Berlin and a new and expanded Brussels bureau will also provide them with ‘political support’.²⁶ The SdL’s official spokesman, Jochen Böhm, was a CSU President of the Bavarian *Landtag*. Posselt, a CSU MEP and Chairman of the SdL, is one of the most active promoters of Sudeten German causes. Through his engagement, and the presence of other CSU MEPs, the SdL is assured of a voice at the European institutional level.

The predecessors of the BdV and *Landmannschaften* were able to achieve a major benefit for their clientele through the implementation of the *Lastenausgleich*, a financial compensation measure enacted in 1952 to distribute the burdens of wartime loss among all citizens of the then West Germany. Through a series of other rulings the Federal Constitutional Court (B VfG) legally instituted the role of the BdV on behalf of the expellees and in maintaining the culture of their former homeland in ‘the consciousness of the whole German people’. An associated aspect is that many expellee organisations are in receipt of at least some, and often their principal funding, from public sources in order to fulfil these tasks. Claus Offe regarded them as the archetype of a ‘politically subsidised’ interest group characterised by ‘massive ideal and material subsidies’, whose goal is not the ‘representation of member interests, rather the disciplining of members and the generation of integrative symbols’.²⁷ A 1994 resolution of the Bundestag confirmed that ‘whoever was expelled has claims to recognition’.²⁸ Damages claims (*Schadensersatzansprüche*) are to be made to the Federal Finance

Ministry (BMF). Since 1990 the BdV has also concerned itself with an additional mass of legal and other questions regarding persons who had resided in the former German Democratic Republic.

On expellee-related matters, Germany's legal and political spheres have often been in conflict. While the state's premier legal entities institutionalised the representative character of the BdV and linked organisations, supported the *Lastenausgleich*, and left open the possibility of civil action, political actors frequently opposed or tried to curtail expellee activity when it threatened to inflame relations with other states. This particularly applies to the SPD and Green parties. When foreign policy considerations were present, the support of conservative parties was primarily rhetorical, occasionally extending to the passing of resolutions in federal or Land parliaments. This provoked disquiet in Poland and the Czech Republic but has been limited in its practical effects.

The German elite has largely ignored an uncomfortable situation in the hope that it will go away. It may now, with German state resources, be faced with compensating German claimants to obviate them pressuring the Polish and Czech states via the European Court. Germany may thereby buy its way out of a political conflict that threatens to destabilise bilateral relations and European integration more broadly. There are some ironies here. Germany is the most legalistic state in Europe and has been among the strongest supporters of a Europe wherein policy and legal decisions are determined through supranational community institutions. It could be confronted with an international predicament arising from history and sharpened by a clash of the two fields: *Recht* and *Europa*.²⁹

An 'internal German solution', as intimated by Steinbach,³⁰ would effectively mean an expansion of the *Lastenausgleich*. It would place additional pressure on an already strained national budget and be opposed by most of German society. The persistent and often controversial content of expellee lobbying has given them a strong media resonance. Besides their clientele numbers and contacts in many fields of German society, the BdV undertakes extensive press and public relations work. International forces and the prioritising of them by German governments have restricted expellee organisations from achieving some of their chief goals. However, the legal aspect of EU institutionalisation and enlargement may compel the current German government to find new measures to resolve this issue.

THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Since their initial Charter, intended as the 'basis of an all-European peace settlement', the German expellee organisations have been 'Europeanising' the content of their written and verbal statements. Individual or group aims have been situated in broader European perspectives and potential solutions, or extended to encompass 'humanity' *in toto*. This direction or strategy has intensified, without attracting much attention from scholars of interest groups in a European context.³¹ As the proposed Centre Against Expulsion generated controversy, other ethnic examples along with wider European and international features were emphasised, the intention being to discursively embed the German experience among those of others. A Centre with an expressly 'European' orientation was

supported by the SPD and Green Bundestag fractions,³² though both Schröder and Green Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer were opposed to the idea.

The enlargement of the EU, most pertinently the entry of Poland and the Czech Republic, brings a new dimension. Other political and legal channels are potentially available and the ostensibly supranational context has encouraged the pursuit of formerly unapproachable goals. As yet the expellees have no dedicated permanent representation, in the manner of hundreds of other interest groups, in Brussels, although one official surmised that 'perhaps Bonn has something in plan'.³³ They have had an impact on national and European mediation systems and procedures, as evidenced in an array of legal expertises, investigations and judgements associated with them.³⁴ Several have been made by or on behalf of European institutions including the Parliament and Commission. The prospect of individuals or groups resorting to the European Court of Justice or European Court of Human Rights stimulated the interest of governments in all relevant states, despite their concurrent attempts to dismiss this as 'not an issue'. During the Prodi Commission's tenure, the Directorate-General for Enlargement and its then Commissioner, Günter Verheugen, were also prominently involved.³⁵

Among expellee representatives there are different views on EU enlargement. Some were strongly against Czech or Polish entry. One official characterised the (then unconfirmed) enlargement as a 'timebomb'.³⁶ Others interpret it as an advantage in that problems can be 'differently treated'.³⁷ Edmund Stoiber has regularly invoked the Beneš Decrees theme, situating it in the European institutional and 'community' context. At the annual gathering of Sudeten Germans in 2004 he declared: 'If the Czechs thought they would have quiet I have to tell them: Now a new discussion begins. We will fight, one year, five years, ten years. But in the end we will succeed'.³⁸ Repeated statements demanding repeal of the Decrees, which 'do not belong in a European legal and value community', are inconsistent with the CSU's practical political behaviour. While all CSU MEPs voted against the entry of the Czech Republic to the EU, in the German parliament, where the CSU had, with its CDU sister party, a majority in the Bundesrat, they did not formally oppose Czech entry. Meanwhile, many Poles suspected that their country joining the EU might present new opportunities for Germans to reclaim land lost after 1945. Images of irredentist expellees predominated over those of Germans who may have merely brought investment to regions that desperately needed it. Marcin Zaborowski has written that:

One of the most spectacular outcomes of these fears was the apparent impact of the 'German factor' upon Warsaw's strategy to advocate an 18-year transition period on land-purchasing by other EU nationals after Poland became an EU member. It is widely believed that a fear of German buy-ups, particularly in the territories that before the war were German, was of paramount importance in determining this policy.³⁹

European integration has affected the German system of interest group intermeditation.⁴⁰ Concurrently, Poland and the Czech Republic have depended on German governments restricting the possibilities for members of a particular interest group to pursue claims against them or to prevent their entry to the EU. The hypersensitivity and intriguing nature of the theme is underpinned by the possibility that, at the European level, (supranational) law may prevail and, by another route, re-intensify

the political dimension in domestic (German, Polish, Czech), European, and broader international contexts.

CONCLUSION

According to Singleton *et al.*, the influence of government is such that:

The goals of interest groups can usually only be achieved through government action (or inaction). This may take the form of a new law or the repeal of an old one, the exercise of ministerial or administrative discretion, the promulgation of a regulation . . . or simply infinite delay in the carrying out of a policy to which the group is opposed.⁴¹

Alternatively, governments may exercise infinite delay in enacting policies which an interest group may desire but to which the government as state executive is opposed. In this case it has appeared that the German political establishment has waited for an “actuarial solution” whereby the expellees, and the issue, eventually pass away’.⁴² For the past half-century expellee organisations have been active, conspicuous, and entrenched in civil society. Because some elements have controversial political objectives and effects beyond the borders of the state, they have often been viewed as a negative influence, despite their contributions to post-war Germany’s economic, social and cultural life. Concurrently there are indicators of orientation difference or splintering among the various groups. This is manifested in differences of approach, in stated or apparent end goals, leadership rivalry, and definitions as principally ‘cultural’ or ‘social’ or working for ‘reconciliation’ or ‘recognition’. Relatively few describe themselves or their activities as political. Nonetheless, for external observers, especially in Poland and the Czech Republic, there is a focus on what is perceived as an aggressive pursuit of contentious aims, even if many individual expellees or their descendants do not actively share these.

The German expellees are a unique European interest group and one of the most durable. They differ from others, most of which are almost entirely concerned with current issues, in that they want to ‘correct’ a historical development. This also has contemporary effects, even if the realisation of some far-reaching goals has not occurred. German federal governments and most of the political elite have had to balance statements of understanding and recognition of the suffering and contributions of this still large component of German society, backed with financial distributions, with an ongoing ‘containment’ policy determined by foreign policy realities. The post-enlargement EU is now perceived as an avenue for interest representation. European channels are hailed as an indicator of the widening and deepening of democratisation and the rule of law in Europe. This may facilitate claims before supranational courts in the areas of restitution, compensation in lieu, and a ‘right of return’. Thus expellee groups are active promoters, including through forums like the European Parliament, of an agenda with significant ramifications for governance and international relations in Europe. As a contribution to non-state political activity, whereby diverse actors operate in a pluralistic, quasi-‘domesticated’ context, their lobbying activity has a paradoxical aspect. Along with the contrary positions taken by others, it is hindering a broader concurrent goal of a unified

European polity wherein international tensions are greatly reduced if not rendered irrelevant. Even as the German government attempted to mediate and impose restraint, disputes between some expellees and their indirect interlocutors in Poland and the Czech Republic incited the opposite.

NOTES

1. Hans Graf von Lehndorff, *Dokumentation zur Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa* (Bonn: Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, 1960); Albert De Zayas, *A Terrible Revenge: The Ethnic Cleansing of the East European Germans, 1944–1950* (New York: St Martins Press, 1994); Mathias Beer, 'Im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Zeitgeschichte: Das Großforschungsprojekt "Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa"', *Vierteljahresschrift für Zeitgeschichte* 46/3 (1998), pp.346–89; Fritz Habel, *La question des Allemands des Sudetes*, trans. Ursula Heinzmann (Munich: SdL, 1985); Dierk Hoffmann, Marita Krauss and Michael Schwartz (eds.), *Vertriebene in Deutschland: Interdisziplinäre Ergebnisse und Forschungsperspektiven* (Special Edition *Schriftenreihe der Vierteljahresshichte für Zeitgeschichte*) (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000); David Rock and Stefan Wolff (eds.), *Coming Home to Germany? The Integration of Ethnic Germans from Central and Eastern Europe in the Federal Republic* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2002); Stefan Wolff, 'The Politics of Homeland: Irredentism and Reconciliation in the External Minority Policies of German Federal Governments and Expellee Organisations', *German Politics* 11/2 (2002), pp.105–27.
2. Cf. Hans-Peter Ullmann, *Interessenverbände in Deutschland* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988); Martin Sebaldt, *Organisierter Pluralismus: Kräftefeld, Selbstverständnis und politische Arbeit* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997); Jürgen Weber, *Interessengruppen im politischen System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Munich: Bayerische Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1976); Klaus von Beyme, *Interessengruppen in der Demokratie*, 5th edn (Munich: Piper, 1980); Lewis J. Edinger, 'Pressure Group Politics in West Germany', in Jeremy J. Richardson (ed.), *Pressure Groups* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp.175–90. An exception is Everhard Holtmann, 'Politische Interessenvertretung von Vertriebenen: Handlungsmuster, Organisationsvarianten und Folgen für das politische System der Bundesrepublik', in Hoffmann *et al.* (eds.), *Vertriebene in Deutschland*, pp.187–202.
3. The term encompasses those who actually experienced expulsion and descendants who have inherited the status.
4. Cf. Scott Ainsworth, *Analyzing Interest Groups* (New York: Norton, 2002); Graham Wilson, *Interest Groups* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990); Gene M. Grossman and Elhanan Helpman, *Special Interest Politics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).
5. Interviews and correspondence with the author, expellee group representatives, Munich and Bonn, 1999–2004.
6. See Samuel Salzborn *Heimatsrecht und Volkstumskampf. Aussenpolitische Konzepte der Vertriebenenverbände und ihre Praktische Umsetzung* (Hannover: Offizin, 2001).
7. This was foreshadowed in Timothy Garton Ash, *In Germany's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1993).
8. Jane Carey, 'Political Organization of the Refugees and Expellees in West Germany', *Political Science Quarterly* 66/2 (1951), pp.191–215.
9. Graham Wootton, *Interest Groups* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1970), p.21.
10. *Charta der deutschen Heimatvertriebenen* (Stuttgart, 5 August 1950).
11. Deutscher Bundesrat, 'Entschließung des Bundesrates zur Erhebung des 5. August zum "Nationalen Gedenktag für die Opfer von Vertreibung"', *Drucksache* 460/03, 11 July 2003.
12. Gernot Facius und Hans-Jörg Schmidt, 'Prag lehnt "humanitäre Geste" an Sudeten strikt ab', *Die Welt*, 3 July 2003.
13. Rudi Pawelka, 'Auftrag der Gründer der Vertriebenenverbände erfüllen', *Münchener Schlesierblatt* 54/645 (April 2004), p.1.
14. Bund der Vertriebenen/Landesverband Bayern, *Satzung*, Article 2.1, Munich, 23 March 1985.
15. Interview with the author, BdV, Munich, April 2004.
16. Interview with the author, Munich, July 2004.
17. Christoph von Marschall, 'Schatten der Vergangenheit', *Dialog* 55/56 (2001), pp.9–10; Thorsten Klute, 'Entschädigungsklagen ohne Erfolgsaussicht?', *Dialog* 67 (2004); Rudi Pawelka, 'Wirkung der Vertreibungsdekrete besteht fort', *Münchener Schlesierblatt* 54/645 (April 2004), p.3; 'Da müssen

- sie mit dem Panzer kommen!', *Die Zeit*, 27 May 2004; 'Preußische Treuhand will Rückgabe, nicht Entschädigung für deutsche Vertriebene', *Die Welt*, 4 August 2004, pp.6–8.
18. 'Regierung weist Forderung der Vertriebenen zurück', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 2 August 2004; 'Der Kanzler entlastet sich auf dem Rücken seiner Landsleute', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2 August 2004. Cf. 'Der deutsche Bundespräsident lobt Polen', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 16 July 2004, p.3. Coincidentally, or otherwise, US Foreign Minister, Colin Powell, was also in attendance at the ceremonies.
 19. Erika Steinbach, Press Conference, Berlin, 6 August 2004; Cf. 'Steinbach bietet Verzicht an', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 August 2004, p.4.
 20. See <http://www.z-g-v.de/aktuelles/?id=31>, and Matthias Kamann und Johann Michael Möller, 'In Polen wird Gelassenheit einkehren', *Die Welt*, 29 September 2003.
 21. Thomas Urban, 'Polens Parlament will deutsche Kriegsreparationen', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 11–12 September 2004, p.1.
 22. *50 Jahre Adalbert Stifter Verein 1947–1997* (Munich: ASV, 1998).
 23. Karl Deutsch and Lewis Edinger, *Germany Rejoins the Powers: Mass Opinion, Interest Groups and Elites in Contemporary German Foreign Policy* (New York: Octagon, 1973), p.104.
 24. Hartmut Koschik, 'Benes-Dekrete stören EU-Wertesystem', Debatte über die deutsch-tschechischen Beziehungen, 109 Sitzung des Bundestages, 9 June 2000.
 25. Proclamations by the former president of Czechoslovakia, Eduard Beneš, that provided a legal basis for the expulsion of persons of German ethnicity. See Emil Nagengast, 'The Beneš Decrees and EU Enlargement', *Journal of European Integration* 25/4 (2003), pp.335–50.
 26. Herbert Fischer, 'Am Ende werden wir uns durchsetzen', *Sudetendeutsche Zeitung*, 4 June 2004, p.1.
 27. Claus Offe, 'Das pluralistische System von organisierten Interessen', in Heinz Josef Varain (ed.), *Interessenverbände in Deutschland* (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1973), pp.368–72.
 28. 'Entscheidung des Deutschen Bundestags', *Drucksache* 12/7320, 23 June 1994.
 29. Steve Wood, 'A Common European Space? National Identity, Foreign Land Ownership and EU Enlargement: The Polish and Czech Cases', *Geopolitics* 9/3 (2004), pp.588–607, at 600.
 30. 'Steinbach bietet Verzicht an'.
 31. Cf. Justin Greenwood, *Interest Representation in the European Union* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2003); Jan Beyers, 'Voice and Access: Political Practices of European Interest Associations', *European Union Politics* 5/2 (2004), pp.211–40; Rainer Eising and Beate Kohler-Koch (eds.), *Interessenpolitik in Europa* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005); Emil Kirchner and Konrad Schwaiger, *The Role of Interest Groups in the European Community* (Aldershot: Gower, 1981); Edgar Grande, 'Interest Groups in the European System of Multi-Level Governance', Arbeitspapiere 1/2001 (Munich: Lehrstuhl für politische Wissenschaft, Technische Universität, 2001); Rainer Eising, 'Interest Groups and the European Union', in Michelle Cini (ed.), *European Union Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.192–207.
 32. Deutscher Bundestag, 'Antrag: Für ein europäisch ausgerichtetes Zentrum gegen Vertreibung', *Drucksache* 14/9033, 14 May 2002.
 33. Interview with the author, BdV, Munich, April 2004.
 34. Among them, Jan Barcz and Jochen Frowein, *Gutachten zu Ansprüchen aus Deutschland gegen Polen im Zusammenhang mit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, erstattet im Auftrag der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Republik Polen, November 2004; Dieter Blumenwitz, *Entfalten die Beneš-Dekrete und das Gesetz Nr. 115 vom 8. Mai 1946 (Straffreiheitsgesetz) noch heute eine diskriminierende Wirkung, die dem Völkerrecht und dem Recht der Europäischen Union entgegensteht?*, Gutachten im Auftrag der Sudetendeutschen Landsmannschaft, October 2002; Jochen Frowein, Ulf Bernitz and Lord Kingsland, *Legal Opinion on the Beneš-Decrees and the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union*, requested by the European Parliament's Conference of Presidents, October 2002.
 35. Cf. Wolff, 'The Politics of Homeland', p.122.
 36. Interview with the author, BdV, Munich, July 1999.
 37. Interview with the author, BdV, Munich, April 2004.
 38. Fischer, 'Am Ende werden wir uns durchsetzen'.
 39. Marcin Zaborowski, 'Power, Security and the Past: Polish–German Relations in the Context of EU and NATO Enlargements', *German Politics* 11/2 (2002), pp.165–88 at 182; Cf. Steve Wood, *Germany and East-Central Europe: Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Relations in the Era of Eastern Enlargement* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).
 40. Gerda Falkner, 'Interest Groups in a Multi-level Polity: The Impact of European Integration on National Systems', Working Paper 34 (San Domenico: European University Institute, 1999); Tanja Börzel, 'Towards Convergence in Europe? Institutional Adaptation to Europeanisation in German and Spain', *Journal of Common Market Studies* 37/4 (1999), pp.573–96; Beate

- Kohler-Koch, 'Europäisierung: Plädoyer für eine Horizonterweiterung', in Michèle Knodt and Beate Kohler-Koch (eds.), *Deutschland zwischen Europäisierung und Selbstbehauptung* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2000), pp.11–31; Beate Kohler-Koch and Rainer Eising (eds.), *The Transformation of Governance in the European Union* (London: Routledge, 1999).
41. Gwyn Singleton, Don Aitkin, B. Jinks and John Warhurst, *Australian Political Institutions* 7th edn (Melbourne: Pearson Education, 2003), p.345.
 42. Steve Wood, *Germany and East-Central Europe: Political, Economic and Socio-Cultural Relations in the Era of Eastern Enlargement* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p.41.