The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (German: Protektorát Böhmen und Mähren; Czech: Protektorát Čechy a Morava) was the majority ethnic-Czech protectorate which Nazi Germany established in the central parts of Bohemia, Moravia and Czech Silesia in what is today the Czech Republic. It was established on 15 March 1939 by a proclamation of Adolf Hitler from the Prague Castle, following the establishment of the independent Slovak Republic on 14 March 1939. Bohemia and Moravia were autonomous Nazi-administered territories which the German government considered part of the Greater German Reich. The state's existence came to an end with the surrender of Germany to the Allies in 1945.

The Sudetenland, located on the Czechoslovak border with Germany and Austria proper, with its majority of ethnic German inhabitants, had been incorporated directly into the Reich on 10 October 1938, when Czechoslovakia was forced to accept the terms of the Munich Agreement. Five months later, when the Slovak Diet declared the independence of Slovakia, Hitler summoned Czechoslovak President Emil Hácha to Berlin and intimidated him into accepting the German occupation of the Czech rump state and its reorganisation as a German protectorate.

Hácha remained as technical head of state with the title of State President, but was rendered all but powerless. Real power was vested in the Reichsprotektor, who served as Hitler's personal representative. To appease outraged international opinion, Hitler appointed former foreign minister Konstantin von Neurath to the post. German officials manned departments analogous to cabinet ministries, while small German control offices were established locally. The Gestapo assumed police authority. Jews were dismissed from the civil service and placed outside of the legal system. Political parties and trade unions were banned, and the press and radio were subjected to harsh censorship.

The population of the protectorate was mobilized for labor that would aid the German war effort, and special offices were organized to supervise the management of industries important to that effort. Czechs were drafted to work in coal mines, the iron and steel industry, and armaments production; some young people were sent to Germany. Consumer goods production, much diminished, was largely directed toward supplying the German armed forces. The protectorate's population was subjected to strict rationing.

German rule was moderate—at least by Nazi standards—during the first months of the occupation. The Czech government and political system, reorganized under Hácha, continued in formal existence. Gestapo activities were directed mainly against Czech politicians and the intelligentsia.
The eventual goal of the German state under Nazi leadership was to eradicate Czech nationality through assimilation and deportation, and the extermination of the Czech intelligentsia; the intellectual elites and middle class made up a considerable number of the 200,000 people who passed through concentration camps and the 250,000 who died during German occupation. Under Generalplan Ost, it was assumed that around 50% of Czechs would be fit for Germanization. The Czech intellectual elites were to be removed not only from Czech territories but from Europe completely. The authors of Generalplan Ost believed it would be best if they emigrated overseas, as even in Siberia they were considered a threat to German rule. Just like Jews, Poles, Serbs, and several other nations, Czechs were considered to be untermenschen by the Nazi state.

The Czechs demonstrated against the occupation on 28 October 1939 the anniversary of Czechoslovak independence. The death on 15 November 1939 of a medical student, Jan Opletal, who had been wounded in the October violence, precipitated widespread student demonstrations, and the Reich retaliated. Politicians were arrested en masse, as were an estimated 1,800 students and teachers. On 17 November, all universities and colleges in the protectorate were closed, nine student leaders were executed, and 1,200 were sent to concentration camp in Sachsenhausen within Nazi Germany; further arrests and executions of Czech students and professors were made later during the occupation. (See also Czech resistance to Nazi occupation)

During World War II, the Reich adopted a more radical policy in the protectorate. On 29 September 1941, Hitler appointed SS hardliner Reinhard Heydrich as Deputy Reichsprotektor of Bohemia and Moravia. At the same time, Neurath was relieved of his day-to-day duties, as Hitler felt the Czechs weren't being treated harshly enough. For all intents and purposes Heydrich replaced Neurath as Reichsprotector. Under his authority Prime Minister Alois Eliáš was arrested (and later executed), the Czech government was reorganized, and all Czech cultural organizations were closed. The Gestapo indulged in arrests and executions. The deportation of Jews to concentration camps was organized, and the fortress town of Terezín was made into a ghetto way station for Jewish families. On 4 June 1942, Heydrich died after being wounded by an assassin in Operation Anthropoid. Following directives issued by Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, Heydrich’s successor, SS-Obergruppenführer Kurt Daluege, ordered mass arrests, executions and the obliteration of the villages of Lidice and Ležáky. In 1943 the German war effort was accelerated. Under the authority of Karl Hermann Frank, German minister of state for Bohemia and Moravia, some 400,000 Czechs were used as forced labor by the German Reich. Within the protectorate, all non-war-related industry was prohibited. Most of the Czech population obeyed quietly up until the final months preceding the end of the war, when thousands were involved in the resistance movement.

For the Czechs of the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, German occupation was a period of brutal oppression. Czech losses resulting from political persecution and deaths in concentration camps totalled between 36,000 and 55,000. The Jewish population of Bohemia and Moravia (118,000 according to the 1930 census) was virtually annihilated, with over 75,000 murdered. Of the 92,199 people classified as Jews by German authorities in the Protectorate as of 1939, 78,154 perished in Holocaust, or 84.8 percent.

Many Jews emigrated after 1939; 8,000 survived at Terezín concentration camp (which was used for propaganda purpose as showpiece). Several thousand Jews managed to live in freedom or in hiding throughout the occupation. The extermination of the Romani population was so thorough that the Bohemian Romani language became totally extinct. Romani internees were sent to the Lety and Hodonín concentration camps before being transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau for gassing. The vast majority of Romani in the Czech Republic today are actually descended from migrants from Slovakia who moved there during the post-war years in Czechoslovakia.

Politics

Czech state president of the Protectorate, dr. Emil Hácha (sitting), listening to a speech of Reichsprotektor Kurt Daluege next to SS and Police General Karl Hermann Frank in Prague, September 1942.

After the establishment of the Protectorate all political parties were outlawed, with the exception of the National Union (Národní současnosti). This local Czech Fascist party was led by a ruling Presidium until 1942, after which a Führer (Vůdce) for the party was appointed.

German government

Ultimate authority within the Protectorate was held by the Reich Protector (Reichspräsident), the area's senior Nazi administrator, whose task it was to represent the interests of the German state. The office and title were held by a variety of persons during the Protectorate's existence. In succession these were:

- 16 March 1939 – 20 August 1943:
  Konstantin von Neurath, former Foreign Minister of Nazi Germany, Minister without Portfolio until 1943. He was removed from office after Hitler's dissatisfaction with his "soft policies" in 1941, although he still held the title until his official resignation in 1943.
  - 27 September 1941 – 30 May 1942:
    Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the SS-Reichssicherheitsfuhramt (Reich Main Security Office) or RSHA. He was officially only a deputy to Neurath, but in reality he was granted supreme authority over the entire state apparatus of the Protectorate.
  - 31 May 1942 – 20 August 1943:
    Kurt Daluege, Chief of the Ordnungspolizei (Order Police) or Orpo, in the Interior Ministry, who was also officially a deputy Reich Protector.
  - 20 August 1943 – 5 May 1945:
    Wilhelm Frick, former Minister of the Interior.

Next to the Reich Protector there was also a political office of State Secretary (from 1943 known as the State Minister to the Reich Protector) who handled most of the internal security. From 1939 to 1945 this person was Karl Hermann Frank the senior SS and Police Leader in the Protectorate. A "paper command" of the Allgemeine-SS, with no operational authority, was also established known as the SS-Oberabschnitt Böhmen-Mähren.

Czech government

The Czech State President (Státní Prezident) under the period of German rule from 1939 to 1945 was Emil Hácha (1872–1945), who had been the President of the Second Czechoslovak Republic since
November 1938, Rudolf Beran (1887–1954) initially still held the office of Minister President (Předseda vlády) after the German take-over. He was soon replaced by Alois Eliáš on 27 April 1939, who was himself also sacked on 2 October 1941 not long after the appointment of Reinhard Heydrich as the new Reich Protector. Because of his contacts with the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile Eliáš was sentenced to death, with the execution carried out on 19 June 1942 shortly after Heydrich's own death. From 19 January 1942 the government was led by Jaroslav Krejčí, and from January to May 1945 by Richard Bienert, the former police chief of Prague. When the official dissolution of the Protectorate was proclaimed after the Liberation of Prague a radio call was issued for Bienert's arrest. This resulted in his conviction to a three-year prison term in 1947, during which he died in 1949.

Aside from the Office of the Minister President, the local Czech government in the Protectorate consisted of the Ministries of Education, Finance, Justice, Trade, the Interior, Agriculture, and Public Labour. The area's foreign policy and military defence were under the exclusive control of the German government. The former foreign minister of Czechoslovakia František Chvalkovský became a Minister without Portfolio and permanent representative of the Czech administration in Berlin.

The most prominent Czech politicians in the Protectorate included:
- Alois Eliáš (1890–1942), a former Czechoslovak General who was executed for his secret contacts with the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in 1942; Prime Minister from 1939 to 1941.
- Ladislav Karol Feierabend, Minister of Agriculture from 1939 to 1940. Joined the London-based Czechoslovak government in 1940.
- Jiří Havlíček, Minister of Traffic from 1939 to 1941.
- Josef Ježek, Interior Minister from 1939 to 1942.
- Jan Kapras, Minister of Education from 1939 to 1942.
- Josef Kallus (1880–1956), Minister of Finance from 1939 to 1945.
- Josef Nebesky, party leader of the National Union from 1939 to 1941.
- Josef Fousek (1875–1951), party leader of the National Union from 1941 to 1942.
- Jaroslav Krejčí (1892–1956), Minister of Justice from 1939 to 1945, as well as Minister President from 1942 to 1945.
- Jindřich Kameníčky, Minister of Traffic from 1941 to 1945.
- Walter Bertsch, Minister of Economics from 1942 to 1945.
- Richard Bienert (1881–1949), Interior Minister from 1942 to 1945, as well as the last Minister President in 1945.
- Adolf Hruby (1893–1951), Minister of Agriculture from 1942 to 1945.
- Tomáš Krejčí, Führer (Vůdce) of the National Union from 1942 to 1945.
- Emanuel Moravec, Minister of Education from 1942 to 1945.

Population

The area of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia contained about 7,380,000 inhabitants in 1940. 225,000 (3.3%) of these were of German origin, while the rest were mainly ethnic Czechs as well as some Slovaks, particularly near the border with Slovakia.

The protectorate was projected to become ethnically totally German. Hitler had approved a plan designed by Konstantin von Neurath and Karl Hermann Frank, which projected the Germanization of the “racially valuable” half of the Czech population after the end of the war.[9] This consisted mainly of industrial workers and farmers.[9] The undesirable half contained also the intelligentsia, whom the Nazis viewed as ungermanizable and potential dangerous instigators of Czech nationalism. Some 9,000 Volksdeutsche from Bukovina, Dobruja, South Tyrol, Bessarabia, Sudetenland and the Altreich were settled in the protectorate during the war.[9] The goal was to create a German settlement belt from Prague to Sudetenland, and to turn the surroundings of Olomouc (Olomütz), České Budějovice (Budweis), Brno (Brünn) and the area near the Slovak border into German enclaves.[9]

Further integration of the protectorate into the Reich was carried out by the employment of German apprentices, by transferring German evacuee children into schools located in the protectorate, and by authorizing marriages between Germans and "assimilable" Czechs.[9] Germanizable Czechs were allowed to join the Reich Labour Service and to be admitted to German universities.[9]

Administrative subdivisions

For administrative purposes the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was divided into two Lands; Böhmen (Bohemia) and Mähren (Moravia). Each of these was further subdivided into Oberlandratsbezirke, each comprising a number of Bezirke.

**Böhmen**

- **Budweis** (Budweis), Gumpolds, Ledetsch, Pilgrams, Tabor, Wittingau
- **Königgrätz** (Chrudim, Hohenmauth, Jitschin, Königgrätz, Königinof, Leitomischl, Nachod, Neubiischow, Neuenburg, Pardubitz, Reichena, Semil
- **Pilsen** (Klattau, Kralowitz Pilsen-Land, Pilsen-Stadt, Pisek, Schüttenhofen, Strakonitz, Taus
- **Prag** (Beneschau, Beraun, Böhmis-Bro, Brandeis, Jungbuszlau, Kladno, Kolín, Laun

**Mähren**

- **Brünn** (Boskowitz, Brünn-Land, Brünn-Stadt, Gay, Göding, Ungarisch-Bro, Ungarisch-Hradisch, Wirchau, Zine
- **Iglau** (Groß-Meseritsch, Iglau, Mährisch-Budwitz, Neustadt, Trebitsch
For party administrative purposes the Nazi Party extended its Gau-system to Bohemia and Moravia when the Protectorate was established. This step divided the remaining parts of Bohemia and Moravia up between its four surrounding Gaue:

- Sudetenland;
- Bayreuth (Bavarian Eastern March);
- Lower Danube;
- Upper Danube.

The resulting government overlap led to the usual authority conflicts typical of the Third Reich era. Seeking to extend their own powerbase and to facilitate the area's "Aryanization" the Gauleiters of the surrounding districts continually agitated for the liquidation of the Protectorate and its direct incorporation into the German Reich. Hitler stated as late as 1943 that the issue was still to be decisively settled.[10]

Stamps, currency, officials and documents  [edit]

A bill of 50 Crowns of the Protectorate.  
1 Crown or Koruna of the Protectorate.  
Stamp of the Protectorate.  
Alois Eliáš, first prime minister of the Protectorate, 1939–1941.  
Personal identification card of the Protectorate.

Stamps of the Protectorate.

See also  [edit]

- List of rulers of the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia
- German occupation of Czechoslovakia
- Restschechei
- History of Slovakia
- Concentration camps Lety and Hodonín
- Out Distance
- Slovak Republic (1939–1945)

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6. ^ The Czechs and the lands of the Bohemian crown, page 215 Hugh LeGaim Agnew
7. ^ The Czechs and the lands of the Bohemian crown, page 215
8. ^ Historical dictionary of the Czech State, page 129 Rick Fawn,Jill Hochman

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External links  [edit]

- Maps of the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia
- Amtliches Deutsches Ortsbuch für das Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren
Timeline of Czechoslovakia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-1918</td>
<td>The Roman Empire established Bohemia and Moravia as Roman provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918–1938</td>
<td>The Austro-Hungarian Empire was defeated in World War I, leading to the creation of the First Czechoslovak Republic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938–1945</td>
<td>The Second Republic was established following the Munich Agreement, leading to the annexation of Sudetenland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948–1992</td>
<td>The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic was established, leading to the creation of the Czech and Slovak Republic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993–</td>
<td>Slovakia and the Czech Republic became independent states.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Former countries in Europe:
- Bohemia and Moravia
- Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia
- Czechoslovak Republic
- Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
- Czech Republic
- Slovak Republic

Former protectorates:
- Austria-Hungary
- Austria
- Bohemia
- Moravia

Carpathian Ruthenia
- Kingdom of Hungary
- Soviet Union

Oblast of the Ukrainian SSR

Administrative divisions of Nazi Germany:
- Gaue
- Reichsgaue

Related topics:
- Gauleiter List of Gauleiters
- Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Czechoslovakia in World War II

Political representation: Czechoslovak government-in-exile

Military units and formations:
- Czechoslovak legions RAF Squadrons: 310 311 312 313 1st Czechoslovak Armoured Brigade
- Czechoslovak 11th Infantry Battalion First Czechoslovak Independent Field Battalion

Resistance members:
- Adolf Opála
- Jindřich Kubíček
- Josef Matoušek
- Rudolf Pešek
- Bedřich Hńák

Resistance groups:
- Out Distance Three Kings

Royal Air Force:
- Josef František František Fajtl Karel Kutelwascher Alois Vaňáčko František Peřina Otto Smrk

Battles:
- Syrian–Lebanon Campaign Siege of Tobruk Battle of Sokolovo Battle of Kiev Battle of the Dukla Pass
- Slovak National Uprising Siege of Dunkirk Prague Uprising Battle for Czech Radio Prague Offensive

Administrative divisions of Nazi Germany:
- Gaue:
  - Gau Baden Gau Bayreuth Gau Berlin Gau Düsseldorf Gau Essen Gau Frankfurt Gau Halle-Merseburg
  - Gau Hamburg Gau Hessen-Nassau Gau Köln-Aachen Gau Kurhessen Gau Magdeburg-Anhalt
  - Gau Mainfranken Gau Mark Brandenburg Gau Mecklenburg Gau Morland Gau München-Oberbayern
  - Gau Niederschlesien Gau Oberschlesien Gau Ost-Hannover Gau Ostpreußen Gau Pommern Gau Sachsen
  - Gau Schleswig-Holstein Gau Schwaben Gau Süd-Hannover-Braunschweig Gau Thüringen Gau Weser-Ems
  - Gau Westfalen-Nord Gau Westfalen-Süd Gau Westmark Gau Württemberg-Hohenzollern
- Reichsgaue:
  - Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreußen Reichsgau Flandern Reichsgau Kärnten Reichsgau Niederondevau
  - Reichsgau Oberschlesien Reichsgau Salzburg Reichsgau Steiermark Reichsgau Sudetenland
  - Reichsgau Tirol-Vorarlberg Reichsgau Wallonien Reichsgau Wartheland Reichsgau Wien

Related topics:
- Gauleiter List of Gauleiters
- Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

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