

Conclusion

All the European countries surveyed here had alien policies based on slightly differing precepts that derived from their respective domestic social, economic, and political circumstances. The predominance of Liberalism in the nineteenth century and its strictures on the relationship between the individual and the state had an impact on alien legislation in all countries considered. Resident aliens were considered *de facto* members of the nation and therefore protected against abuses of state power. All other immigrants were granted some protection (equality before the law, basic rights), based on the provisions within each state's constitution, but this could go even further for those immigrants who were defined as refugees.

During and immediately after the First World War, these policies were adapted, initially to exclude unwanted political elements and to meet diplomatic imperatives. In particular, the fear of 'alien' ideologies such as bolshevism being imported from abroad entailed a loss of the liberal protection based on the rights of man. Identifying these ideologies as alien reflected the strong push towards nation-building in the early twentieth century as part of the integrative revolution in response to the democratisation of politics. Political elites wanted a state-community that shared a national identity. Policy towards aliens was also caught up in this integrative policy; imposing on immigrants the duty to assimilate in order to preserve a cultural *status quo*. However, the precise nature of this assimilation was subject of controversy, and attempts to homogenize the population or protect an established cultural order produced an exclusionary trend which perceived certain ethnic or religious groups as inassimilable.

Changes in alien policy during this period were nonetheless still predominantly determined by economic interests. Increasing democratisation gave a voice to the previously politically disenfranchised and enabled them to oppose state policies that were detrimental to what they perceived as their interests. A protectionist immigration policy was one of the innovations concomitant with the transformation of the liberal state into a nation-state. However, countervailing forces remained. There were the interests of tourism, international travel and trade that placed a premium on the free movement of peoples, but most importantly the interests of employers who wanted free access to the international labour market, but at the same time wanted to recoup their investment in procuring manpower abroad. In practice, the turmoil in the years after 1918 was ultimately replaced with more relaxed policies before the economic recession of the early 1930s finally convinced each of the liberal western European state to reappraise its immigration policies and led to restrictions on the admission of immigrants and especially foreign labour.

The transformation of alien policy that began at the end of the nineteenth century had thus two objectives: economic protection, a result of the increasing power of labour within the political system, and concerns about national identity that has been dubbed 'nativism'. In this

process, the more ambitious use of alien policy by increasingly interventionist states meant that the liberal political culture that had traditionally acted to defend the individual against the state lost of its influence. Security measures taken as a result of the First World War dramatically changed the operation of pre-war immigration and residence policies, and these were seldom completely restored after 1919. From a position of near equality, aliens were increasingly excluded from the rights afforded to citizens of these countries.

This demise of Liberalism can clearly be seen in changes to policies on refugees. Before 1914 there had been a general acceptance in liberal states that those who had to flee their country for political reasons had to be protected, but after 1918 the right to asylum had all but ceased to exist. Refugees arriving at the borders of the liberal states of Europe were now habitually dealt with under the terms of the newly erected protectionist immigration policies. Russian and Armenian refugees were the first victims of this change in attitude, but thanks to the political sympathy aroused by these anti-bolshevist Russians their arrival was no lasting problem. Most importantly the need for additional labour in Western Europe at the moment of their arrival facilitated their reception.

Thus, it is important to realise that the arrival of refugees from Nazi Germany after January 1933 did not take place in a legislative vacuum, but against a background of existing structures, legal precedents and controls. Put another way, nearly all the factors that played some role in determining policy during and after 1933 were already in place long before the Nazis came to power. No national immigration policies were identical, but two basic models can be identified: the British model that emphasized external immigration control, comprising border controls and visa schemes, and the Continental model where control was much more a mixture of external and internal control. Within the Continental model we can distinguish two types: on the one hand the centralized one and on the other the decentralized type employed by countries such as Switzerland, Denmark and the Netherlands. In these latter countries, regional and local authorities had considerable influence on the practical application of aliens policy that created local variations within these countries. Another important difference within the Continental model was the manner in which undesirable immigrants from Central Europe were removed. For example, while France merely obliged such people to leave the country on their own initiative, the Belgian authorities physically took them to the border and the Dutch formally extradited them to the German authorities. These differences in national immigration policies would ultimately have important repercussions for the refugees from Nazi Germany.

On the eve of the refugee crisis of 1933 all countries had the legislative means to deal with people coming from Germany, but rapidly realised that practical solutions were difficult to enforce. The authorities balked at expelling 'Jewish' and political refugees who had entered the countries illegally or whose visas or residence permits had expired. For

humanitarian reasons deporting them to Germany was considered unacceptable, while passing them on to other states created diplomatic problems. National policies towards aliens continued to have many differences, but there was a general strengthening of internal controls in the countries of continental Europe that made it increasingly difficult for refugees to remain unnoticed or to stand in for their own upkeep. The arrival of 'Jewish' refugees played a crucial role in this process of restrictionism, but it has to be seen primarily as a continuation of the policies adopted to counter the effects of economic recession rather than directed specifically against those fleeing from Germany. Thus, while the numbers of people coming from Germany between 1933 and the summer of 1935 declined, the climate of increasing restrictionism nonetheless continued.

In effect, the main determinants of policy in this period remained the custom and practice of aliens policy combined with increasing economic nationalism, anti-bolshevism, and (fears of) antisemitism. This development has to be seen more as an expression of the increasing power of representatives of labour and the middle classes in government, than as a reaction against the influx of refugees from Nazi Germany *per se*. The latter received a great deal of attention in the media, out of all proportion to their actual numbers. Their portrayal as a continuous and increasing flow of immigrants gave important ammunition to restrictionists who saw Jews (and communists) as 'alien' to the established cultural boundaries of the nation and undesirable as prospective citizens and even a danger to national unity. Although the measures enacted affected a much broader constituency, the arrival of the refugees from Germany was an important, albeit symbolic, catalyst in the final push for restrictive alien legislation in the later 1930s.

In those years there was also a convergence across Western Europe in both policy and treatment towards those regarded as refugees. A striking example is the way that Belgian and French refugee policies – which had operated on completely different lines in the summer of 1933 – had become so similar by the beginning of 1934. Although no Western European country had a legal provision for these fugitives, there was hardly any thought given to a blanket exclusion. Switzerland did have an administrative provision for refugees, and she was quickly followed by the other liberal states of Western Europe. Traditions of nineteenth century liberalism were thus strong enough to force all liberal states to open their borders for refugees. The protection of refugees was a principle that liberal states upheld, it was an essential element of the national self-image and sections of public opinion could be mobilized for its defence. The creation of the 'refugee' as an administrative category within immigration policy was also the result of refugee resistance to being treated as normal immigrants. Refugees were increasingly dissociated from other forms of immigration and more benevolently treated. Only a geographically isolated Great Britain was to a large extent able to withstand this pressure for change. The British authorities accepted refugees, but they

remained in a position to control who was admitted and under what circumstances. This was a luxury denied to their continental counterparts who, as frontline states, had to come to terms with large numbers of uninvited refugees.

Crucial in immigration policy was who the authorities defined as refugees. By 1935, political and 'Jewish' refugees were treated differently in most countries. Political refugees were given certain privileges such as longer-term residence status and even permission to work, whereas 'Jews' were given some form of temporary protection at most. This can be explained in part by the fact that political fugitives corresponded more closely to the traditional image of a refugee; of people who, because of their political ideas and deeds, had suddenly to flee their country to save their life or freedom. Such political refugees had not planned their flight and their departure was often in defiance of the authorities in their homeland. By force of circumstance they arrived suddenly and empty-handed in a neighbouring country. Such (political) refugees also benefited from support given to them inside countries of refuge by left-wing political parties. This led to a type of informal refugee status being afforded in most liberal states in Continental Europe and a more formal refugee status in Switzerland. Western European states continued to give asylum to political refugees even when they ignored restrictions placed on their working or engaging in political activities, but increasingly relied on prisons and internment camps as a deterrent. In comparative terms the Netherlands was definitely the least generous towards political refugees, its leniency towards them often only amounted to a choice of frontier over which to be expelled.

Conversely in both Belgium and France, the entry of socialists into government in the mid 1930s gave the impetus for some improved facilities for refugees. In France, concessions were limited to an amnesty for all refugees from Nazi Germany present in France in 1936, but the French Popular Front government refused to formalize refugee policy for new arrivals. Belgium on the other hand joined Switzerland by drawing a clear dividing line between refugees and immigrants in immigration policy. Refugees became legally entitled to claim asylum. Elsewhere there was an unwillingness to grant a specific legal status to those fleeing persecution and policy remained informal and discretionary.

Little changed before 1938 and only political activists whose lives or freedom were endangered were eligible for asylum. This was the case in Belgium and Switzerland, with a formal refugee policy, and in Denmark and France which retained an informal refugee regime. These policies had few, if any, effects on those fleeing Germany's racial anti-Semitism. The 'Jewish' refugees' reasons for flight were not considered sufficient in themselves to accord them a privileged status as 'refugees'. Although 'Jews' fleeing Nazi Germany are nowadays often portrayed as refugees *par excellence*, before 1938 'Jews' were less visibly the victims of state persecution than political activists, and this helps to explain the less 'generous' response.

In 1933 it was possible for 'Jews' to arrive from Germany and be treated as regular immigrants, provided they could show sufficient means to establish themselves. However, increasing German restrictions on the export of goods and currency made this more difficult, and the increased imposition of work and business permit legislation meant that only very few 'Jewish' refugees were able to enter Western European states on this basis. For the vast majority, the only option was to arrive in a chosen country of refuge, and then look for support from the indigenous Jewish communities or their refugee committees. These committees effectively decided who were temporarily protected by granting financial aid. In this manner the authorities were able to fulfil their humanitarian 'obligations', without incurring any financial costs or adding any foreign workers to their labour market. The fact that the Jewish organizations provided a possible solution by arranging facilities for their re-emigration made further concessions unnecessary.

The political costs of a humanitarian policy towards ('Jewish') refugees should not be underestimated. Although the authorities made no binding commitments and left a great deal of discretion to its administrators, 'Jewish' immigration from Nazi Germany was largely uncontrolled. Aliens who had arrived illegally or overstayed their permits were not subject to expulsion if the Jewish refugee aid committees supported them. These committees therefore carried a heavy burden, as they were effectively sub-contracted by the state to make decisions and then supported those chosen on a temporary basis while at the same time expediting their re-emigration without incurring any costs for the host country. For potential refugees, the existence of even temporary protection could be a pull factor. Although the design of this informal refugee policy enabled the authorities to reaffirm immigration control at any time, it could also convey an impression of loss of control over the country's frontiers and this was often used against governments by political groups seeking to exploit anti-immigrant sentiment within the population.

The differential treatment of 'Jewish' and political refugees was undermined by the radicalization of Nazi antisemitic policy in the aftermath of the Anschluss. At this point, all countries had to confront the reality of large numbers of 'Jews' arriving at the border or inside the country with genuine evidence that their lives might be in danger if they returned to Germany. Yet in spite of the overwhelming weight of evidence, refugee policy remained largely unaltered and by the summer of 1938, 'Jewish' refugees were even encountering outright hostility; from consular authorities, at the border and even inside the countries of refuge themselves. Most liberal states of Continental Europe started to deport refugees from within the country which was the most conspicuous departure from previous policies. That refugees who had succeeded in entering the territory of a liberal state and were recommended by the local refugee committee for protection were removed by force amounted to a challenge of the moral codes of behaviour of these liberal states. France did

not follow this trend, even though the French authorities only partly legalised the residence of refugees. France seldom physically deported people, but the reception was no more welcoming than elsewhere, as in France internment was used as a deterrent.

The reasons for this rupture in refugee policy were common to all countries. Most importantly 'Jewish' flight after the *Anschluss* (with the obvious connivance of German authorities) was raging out of control. The arrival of ever more refugees, stripped of their possessions convinced the authorities that they should halt further 'Jewish' immigration, notwithstanding the guarantee of the Jewish committees. This restrictive attitude within Continental Europe has to be seen within its international context as it became increasingly difficult for those 'Jewish' refugees who had been granted provisional asylum in the liberal states in Continental Europe to find any country willing to take them as immigrants. While numerous states paid lip service to the idea of international negotiation to provide a solution to the problem of refugees from Germany and elsewhere, the lack of positive action from the Evian Conference in the summer of 1938 demonstrated a complete lack of collective political will. Thus the whole issue remained primarily a domestic one, tempered only by its effects on relations with Germany on the one hand, and relations with neighbouring states on the other. Each European government had to consider the other states' policy and each of them was afraid to become the magnet, implying that the policy of the most restrictive state set the tone. The fear of being out of step or too generous triggered pre-emptive actions and produced an upward spiral of restriction.

The illiberal policy of denying 'Jewish' refugees any protection was initially legitimized by the German policy of dumping. The liberal values which had guided refugee policy until then were exchanged for decisiveness in face of this violation of international law. However this resolve was only the trigger for a full-blown attack on the temporary protection of 'Jewish' refugees. The Dutch authorities even blatantly called (non-political) refugees 'unwanted', but it seems that the Netherlands was quickly surpassed by the other Continental European countries who eliminated most humanitarian considerations in daily migration management practice.

The increasing difficulty of denying that 'Jews' fleeing Germany were refugees meant that the authorities of the liberal countries bordering Nazi Germany preferred to stem the flow by border and remote controls; external controls that were largely invisible to the public and could be organised through administrative *dictat* and without scrutiny. Border control was strengthened, but it remained dependent on diplomatic considerations. Shortly after the *Anschluss*, several countries executed a straightforward bureaucratic border policy whereby insufficiently documented aliens, i.e. 'Jewish' refugees without visa, were collectively refused admission to the country. Other frontline states were not eager, for the sake of a more effective external control to jeopardize their relations with Germany and developed a more

personalized system of border control to keep 'Jewish' refugees out. Both groups of countries had problems in making such a policy work and differentiating between the unwanted refugees and the mass of travellers. The introduction of the J-stamp on the German passports solved that problem and homogenized, to a large extent, the manner in which 'Jewish' refugees were routinely refused admission, not only at the borders of the liberal states of Western Europe, but also at the desks in their consulates.

Greater efficiency at the border was not the sole purpose of newly developed migration control strategies in the course of 1938. Notwithstanding strengthened and more efficient control, the border remained permeable. To counter this defect, states increasingly focussed on developing preventive measures outside their national frontiers. This strategy of remote control by liberal states aimed to control the movement of refugees before they arrived at their borders. The introduction of the J-stamp is a striking example of how liberal countries -in this case Switzerland (and Sweden)- were manoeuvring to partly subcontract their selective immigration policy to Germany. In trying to re-affirm controls over immigration, liberal countries did not eschew even greater complicity with the Nazis. The most conspicuous example is that by insisting on German cooperation at the border, Swiss and Belgian authorities gave the impetus to the radical shift in German emigration policy in the autumn of 1938 that saw the complete cessation of their dumping policy on their Western borders.

This brutal immigration policy, including the deportation of refugees was enacted through instructions issued to government agencies, local border officials and civil servants, rather than through new legislation that would have to be discussed, justified and formally promulgated. In this way, the executive authorities preserved their complete control of migration management; a control they did not want to relinquish as they strove to keep their actions away from any public scrutiny. However, when challenged, they were quite prepared to legitimise their stance by denying that the 'Jews' fleeing Germany were refugees. The seemingly persuasive argument was that these 'Jews' left Germany with the agreement of the German authorities, while (political) refugees had to flee surreptitiously. The liberal states of Western Europe, including the Netherlands promoted the protection of the political adversaries of the Nazi regime, including the communists, to a fundamental principle in liberal migration management. This mantra gave persecuted political activists an entitlement to asylum and was the counterweight to the attack on temporary protection for Jewish refugees. By 1938 the rigid hierarchy of Nazi persecution employed by Western European refugee policy in 1933 was used to deny 'Jews' fleeing Germany any protection.

The violence of the *Reichskristallnacht* made it obvious that the Nazi state was at least complicit in the persecution of Jews. Switzerland, Luxemburg and Denmark, (although the latter was hardly exposed to migratory pressures) persisted in routine exclusionary practices at the border, but also in the countries themselves. Most people in need of

protection remained excluded. In contrast, Belgium and the Netherlands softened the application of regulations which had dehumanized their immigration policies. In November 1938 the Netherlands reaffirmed its solidarity with the 'Jewish' victims of Nazi persecution, but only a month later the Dutch authorities considered that the sheer numbers admitted could no longer be sustained. Although the Dutch had followed the French example by confining refugees in camps, this was not considered a sufficient deterrent. Deportation of 'Jewish' refugees became again official Dutch policy, although this policy was full of ambiguity. During 1939 the Netherlands equivocated between a policy of forcible deportation and legalization. Belgium, which in November 1938 resumed the policy of protecting 'Jewish' refugees by subcontracting large elements of internal immigration control to the aid committees, did not stop this until the outbreak of the Second World War. This consistency was the result of an assertive humanitarian lobby, expressing itself most virulently at the moment of the *Reichskristallnacht* and galvanized by a Minister in charge of immigration policy who had provocatively defended his inhumane '*realpolitik*'. This coincidence of factors meant that internal migration control moved out of the closed forums of Belgian policy making and into the public arena. This outspoken politicisation of immigration policy meant that the influx of refugees could not be downgraded to a technical matter of migration control and the political elite had to take a watchful public into account.

Notwithstanding the existence of an institutionalized refugee policy, even in Belgium the relative merits of the politically and racially persecuted were still evaluated differently: while political refugees were granted a right of abode, 'Jewish' refugees were denied refugee status. 'Jews' from Germany remained 'only' temporarily protected as part of an informal refugee policy. Administrative discretion was preserved and the concessions to ('Jewish') refugees could be withdrawn. Concomitant with this dual refugee policy, the Belgian authorities also pressurised the German authorities to regulate cross-border traffic in line with existing agreements. These diplomatic initiatives underline the Janus-faced attitude of the Belgian authorities towards those fleeing Nazi Germany. Publicly all refugees were granted asylum, but 'Jewish' refugees received a lesser asylum and at the same time the Belgian authorities secretly tried to convince the Germans to keep their 'Jewish' persecutees 'at home'. The latter strategy of pressurizing the German authorities to stop unauthorized immigration into their territory could also be seen in Switzerland, but was totally absent in Denmark and the Netherlands, countries which refrained from anything that could annoy its powerful neighbour.

The continental European liberal states had to deal with refugees who simply appeared inside its frontiers, but in contrast, Britain could develop a refugee policy without a similar pressing need to respond to the asylum claims of uninvited guests. After *Reichskristallnacht* the British authorities made a conscious decision to offer asylum to

people in danger in Germany and their intervention in offering a solution to a considerable number of victims was a clear departure from past policies. It remained an informal refugee policy financed by charitable sources, but private sponsors obtained considerably more leeway. Britain, as not being a country of first asylum and moreover protected by the North Sea, retained the ability to impose a pre-selection of the refugees she admitted. Still it seems that those few who managed to arrive in the country illegally were treated in a humane manner as there is no evidence of any direct repatriation to Nazi Germany. Outside Europe no country developed a similar pro active refugee policy, on the contrary national protectionism held sway and refugees from Nazi Germany were usually the least welcome immigrants. Re-emigration from the first countries of asylum stalled, posing a problem for Britain and even more so for the frontline states which were left with an increasing number of uninvited and destitute refugees from Germany.

Explaining different refugee and immigration policies

In making direct comparisons between these western European states, it is apparent that their national policies towards aliens in general and refugees in particular differed in 1933 and remained at variance throughout the 1930s. The evolution of policy in the liberal states of Western Europe was dependent on a myriad of factors. The historical legacy is clearly the most obvious element, involving as it does increasing state intervention in matters of immigration. The administrative structures of the state also had a direct influence on the development and execution of immigration policy and on the stances taken on the question of refugees in all countries. There were several other factors which had a direct, and perhaps a crucial influence on the development and execution of immigration policy and on the stances taken on the question of refugees in all countries. The first was the role of the civil service in general and key individuals in particular. To some extent the arrival of refugees from Germany after 1933 prompted fears in bureaucratic circles about the perceived lack of control over immigration. This can be seen against the background of growing concern during the inter-war period about the general efficiency of government and its various agencies. All of this led to a continuing pressure for rules and regulations to be tightened in order to provide the civil servants with the necessary tools to carry out their tasks efficiently. Alongside this, it is essential to consider the role of key individuals in all countries whose specific position gave them a pivotal role in determining how individual states responded to the refugees and to immigration generally. It could be argued that men such as Robert de Foy, Heinrich Rothmund and Eigil Thune Jacobsen were all part of a new technocratic breed, basing their thinking on the precepts suggested above. However fears about the (Jewish and communist) refugees can clearly be seen in their writings of de Foy and Rothmund, suggesting that they also espoused deeply

conservative opinions that were brought to bear on their work. Irrespective of this, their central role in the administration of border control, policing and the execution of admissions policy gave them enormous power in being able to instruct their subordinates on the one hand and to influence cabinet ministers through the provision of information and advice on the other. The role of key individuals and the administration thus has to be evaluated by positioning them within the power structures of both state and society. The Belgian case documents the importance of retaining a broad picture of decision-making on this issue. Here, refugee policy became an issue of public importance in the autumn of 1938 and from then onwards, the responsible government Ministers were afraid of a negative political backlash if more selective refugee policies were introduced. Thus Robert de Foy in Belgium had to bow to political opposition, while his Swiss counterpart, Heinrich Rothmund, did not. Likewise in Luxemburg and Denmark, immigration policy remained largely isolated from public scrutiny and refugee policy largely evaporated in a process of tightened immigration policy.

It is important to underline the different ways in which policy was carried out. At one level, it is clear that legislation against aliens was not always fully implemented, or that there was a tacit understanding that some of its provisions would not be employed. Thus, there might be implicit toleration of people who, under a strict interpretation of the law, should have been expelled. At another level, it is also clear that the structures and systems in all countries provided a degree of autonomy, both for civil servants and the judiciary, and also for local officials. Centralization appears to have been greatest in Belgium and Luxembourg. In Denmark and the Netherlands, policy implementation was far more decentralized and allowed greater scope for the autonomy of regional or local officials, while during the 1930s, Switzerland shifted further towards the Belgian model with questions of residence being added to border control and admissions policies that were already the responsibility of the federal government. These administrative structures undoubtedly served to influence policy-making in a number of ways. For example, civil servants' autonomy to act independently of political influences or public opinion may have served either to strengthen the enforcement of regulations, or equally to have provided some amelioration of these same regulations. These freedoms, which undoubtedly varied from one country to another and also over time, may help to explain why it is so difficult to ascertain exactly how alien and immigration policies were implemented, at the border or by the police and bureaucrats inside the country.

Last, but not least we should also mention the refugees themselves. The refugees were not merely passive victims, but also agents of their own destiny and their collective actions also influenced the aliens policy of the liberal states. The responses were highly interactive, as the closing of one border deflected refugees towards other borders. Empirical indications point that out. For example it is at the time when Switzerland closed its borders to Austrian Jews that emigration to the Benelux soared. This interactivity among asylum applicants of

various countries is still a largely neglected subject. Further research needs to refine the correlation between the direction of flight, German emigration policy and West European immigration policies. To have a clear picture of this, it is essential to see how individual decisions coupled with the agency of the various indigenous and international refugee aid groups framed the ways in which Western European states tackled this most intractable of problem of the 1930s.

The open-ended situation at the outbreak of the Second World War is testimony of the quandary in which the policy makers in Western Europe found themselves. They were fully aware of Nazi persecution taking place within Germany and therefore carry some responsibility for the failures in maintaining their supposedly liberal values. However this responsibility is a shared one. When the situation in Germany became more and more acute, policy makers in countries outside Europe also tightened their immigration policy and refused to relieve the frontline states of their burden. Although increasing restrictions was always an attractive option, especially when the Nazis systematically stripped the refugees of all their possessions, the very different choices made in the various (frontline) states demonstrates that the outcome was by no means preordained. Respect for human rights remained a value that could be mobilized in political struggles, within the political elite and within society at large.

The sovereign right of the state to refuse an individual entry to its territory, even if he or she was identified as a refugee, was seldom ever contested. Once refugees crossed the frontier they were no longer merely emigrants, but became asylum applicants to whom national norms could be applied. This normative dimension in immigration policy was only partly the result of internationally agreed norms. The international refugee regime was accepted only by some of the liberal states, and in any case imposed few obligations on the immigration policies. Likewise national refugee regimes failed to enforce a humanitarian policy towards the mass of refugees. Even the agencies in Belgium and Switzerland in charge of immigration policy argued that the protection afforded to the (political) refugees was not applicable to the mass of 'Jewish' refugees. Yet even when Western European states resorted to the deportation of 'Jewish' refugees, they still had to legitimise this to liberal public opinion and the various aid and charitable organisations involved. Knowledge of such deportations often sparked off protests and their strength served to some extent to determine subsequent refugee policy. The liberal values, of which granting asylum to refugees was an intrinsic part, were only mobilized against a state when it used its coercive powers inside its own borders, but there was little or no protest against inhumane measures carried out in the form of external controls. The relevant authorities realized this all too well and therefore maintained their preference for external control exercised well away from domestic public scrutiny.

The liberal frontline states seem to have been most successful in keeping out refugees only with the most draconian of policies against aliens. Thus only when forced repatriation was used to return those who had managed to enter illegally via the green frontiers was the migration pressure relieved. Even then, the real effectiveness of these policies remains open to question, but it did relieve the authorities of any responsibility for differentiating the refugees from the rest among these uninvited guests. By including refugees in the category of undocumented aliens who could be automatically deported, immigration procedures became more efficient, but this inevitably made it more difficult for the Western European states to keep up the appearance of being liberal regimes in every sense of the word.