

THE LAND OF THE DEAD

Study of the Deportations From Eastern Germany



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With an Introduction signed by: Roger N. Baldwin; Alfred Bingham; William Henry Chamberlin; George S. Counts; John Dewey; Christopher Emmet; Varian Fry; Dean Christian Gauss; Arthur Garfield Hays; John Haynes Holmes; H. V. Kaltenborn; The Rev. John LaFarge, S. J. Francis Neilson; Eustace Seligman; George N. Shuster; Norman Thomas; Dorothy Thompson; Oswald Garrison Villard; Robert J. Watt:—

COMMITTEE AGAINST MASS EXPULSION

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INTRODUCTION

WE, the undersigned Americans, are deeply disturbed by the policy of mass deportations now practiced in Europe and by the comparative silence of our press and the total silence of public opinion on this vital issue. We therefore wish to bring to the attention of our fellow-citizens the particularly flagrant application of this policy to the inhabitants of Eastern Germany. We are singling out this group now not because of any political or emotional preference, but because they form the largest single bloc of expelled persons and therefore present the greatest problem.. The plight of the second largest group, the Sudeten-Germans and Hungarians of Czechoslovakia, has already been brought to the attention of the world by a pamphlet recently issued by the American Friends of Democratic Sudetens, of which some of us were sponsors.

We are offering the present pamphlet to the American public not in any spirit of recrimination, but in the belief that only knowledge of the truth can guide us to a lasting and democratic peace. We are prompted by concern for those standards of justice and humanity which used to be the pride and armor of American policy. We are convinced that to the extent to which these standards are betrayed, the coming peace will be built on quicksand.

The facts concerning the mass expulsions in Europe are these: Over and above the millions of human beings uprooted by the Axis Powers and by the Soviet Union during the war, more than 20 million people in Eastern Europe are today either threatened by expulsion from their homes or have already been expelled. It appears that millions of the able bodied among them have been separated from their families and carried off into slavery, and it must be feared that as many as three million have perished in the process of expulsion owing to maltreatment or to lack of food

and shelter. Evidence of these facts from impartial and even hostile sources is provided in this pamphlet.

Among those expelled are approximately 3 million Poles from east of the Curzon Line and more than half a million Hungarians in Slovakia. German-speaking peoples, however, constitute by far the largest percentage,—a total of roughly 17 million. The bulk of these Germans, some 10 million people, belonged neither to minority groups living in foreign countries, nor were they settlers sent by Hitler to populate conquered provinces. On the contrary, they constituted the indigenous population of such ancient German provinces as Silesia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, and East Prussia, and their right to their homes had not been questioned for centuries.

As a result of this policy of mass expulsion, whole provinces the size of some American States, are being depopulated. At a time of great want and distress, rich agricultural areas are reduced to unproductive steppes and once busy industrial cities are turned into ghost towns. In the Western and Soviet Zones of Germany, on the other hand, where these deportees have to be resettled, appalling conditions of overcrowding are being created. The resulting food and housing shortages cause disease, unrest, and a dangerous decay of all moral standards. They retard, and perhaps ruin, the prospect of a reeducation of the German people, cause an intolerable strain on our occupation forces and a heavy burden to our taxpayer.

The toll in human life and happiness defies description. Though the Potsdam Declaration enjoined that all expulsions should be carried out in an "orderly and humane" manner, they were in fact accompanied by unspeakable barbarities and hardships. Two quotations from Anne O'Hare McCormick, a trained and scrupulous observer, sum up the horror of the present position:

"The scale of this resettlement and the conditions in which it takes place are without precedent in history. No one seeing its horrors firsthand can doubt that it is a crime against humanity for which history will exact a terrible retribution." (*New York Times*, October 23, 1946.)

"If the Allied statesmen had imagined how heavily this wandering mass of helpless people would beat upon themselves they could not have assumed so casually the moral and historic responsibility for the most inhuman decision ever made by governments dedicated to the defense of human rights." (*New York Times*, November 13, 1946.)

These facts must be exposed at last, so that the American people can form a just estimate of the present world situation. It is the right as well as the duty of Americans to protest since the economic and political results of the deportations fall partly on the American people. The extra cost in food and other forms of UNRRA relief which the wrecking of agricultural and industrial production in some of the richest areas of Europe has caused, involved the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars, besides the far more terrible loss in health, happiness and human lives.

In conclusion we wish to declare the following:

(1) We deplore and condemn the policy of uprooting and expelling populations whether used as a means of "solving minority questions" or as a device to change frontiers against the wishes of the people concerned. We believe that this practice offends against the basic principles of our civilization and accomplishes nothing but the creation of new hatreds and injustices. It specifically flouts the provisions of the Atlantic Charter, the only declaration of war aims by the United Nations as a whole. We call upon the people and the Government of the United States to join us in this condemnation and to do their utmost to repair the damage and injustice already inflicted.

(2) We believe that mass deportations, by their very nature, can never be either "orderly" or "humane." In addition, we wish to register our protest against the cruelties unfortunately committed by some of our Allies in the course of these expulsions, as well as against the silence of our Government in the face of these facts.

(3) Concerning the expulsion of the entire native population of Eastern Germany, we believe that the democratic reconstruction of Germany, our avowed aim, will be impossible while millions of refugees burden an already crushed and disintegrated economy, and that an intolerable burden is thereby being put on the Allied occupation authorities and the American and British taxpayers.

(4) We fear that the puppet government of Poland, a country which earned the respect and sympathy of the whole world by her heroic resistance, has done grave damage to Poland by making exorbitant demands for territory in the West and by expelling the population of provinces whose fate has not yet finally been decided by the Allies. Through this action the

present Polish government has acquired areas which it has not the resources to digest and develop, and has added a new barrier of hatred between Germany and Poland which will force the latter into permanent vassalage to Soviet Russia, unless the evil is undone. But we emphasize that the Polish people must not be held responsible for the acts of the present government, which was imposed on them from without.

(5) We must also warn that the annexation of Eastern Germany by Poland will tempt a future Germany to seek redress by aligning itself with Soviet Russia at the expense of Poland. If Germany is thus driven into the arms of Communism, the cause of freedom in the United States, Great Britain, and Western Europe may be gravely endangered.

(6) We believe that a long-range solution of the deportation problem necessitates the drawing of Germany's Eastern frontiers in such a manner as to permit most of the deported populations to return to their homes. When Germany's Eastern frontiers were drawn at Versailles, the benefit of the doubt quite naturally went to Poland, not to Germany. The more closely these frontiers are approximated in the present settlement, the more lasting will be the peace.

(7) We sympathize whole-heartedly with the grievous losses suffered by Poland at the hands both of her enemies and her allies, including the loss of nearly half her pre-war territories in the East, without consulting the people and in violation of the Atlantic Charter. But we do not believe that one violation of the Charter can be corrected by another. We believe that Poland can best be compensated for her losses, not by the accession of non-Polish territories, but by all-out economic aid in her reconstruction and industrialization, to be rendered in the form of reparations or by other means. We also urge that the United States should use its influence and bargaining power to persuade Russia to restore to Poland such indubitably Polish territories as the city and area of Lwow. Thus we wish to see the principles of justice applied in the East as well as in the West, instead of balancing one injustice by another.

(8) Realizing that the return of most Eastern Germans to their homes will take time if it is ever achieved, and will not solve the whole problem in any case, we urge (a) that an interim program of aid to expelled persons be drafted immediately. Present conditions of distress and degradation among them cannot be allowed to continue much longer, the more so since they prevent the economic recovery of Western Germany. (b) The International Red Cross last summer recommended that those Germans who have been driven from their homes be given the status of displaced persons. We endorse this recommendation. The American Friends Service Committee also made a special appeal for them which deserves the utmost support of the American people.

(Signed) **Roger N. Baldwin — Alfred Bingham — William Henry Chamberlin — George S. Counts — John Dewey — Christopher Emmet — Varian Fry Dean Christian Gauss — Arthur Garfield Hays — John Haynes Holmes — H. V. Kaltenborn — The Rev. John LaFarge, S.J. — Francis Neilson — Eustace Seligman — George N. Shuster — Norman Thomas — Dorothy Thompson Oswald Garrison Villard — Robert J. Watt.**

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I. THE PROBLEM

AT the conclusion of the Yalta Conference, on February 11, 1945, Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Stalin issued a communiqué in which they declared that "Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the North and West. They feel that the opinion of the New Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions and that the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the peace conference."

Inasmuch as the territories referred to were German and had been recognized as such even by the Treaty of Versailles, this decision was the first official indication that, with regard to Germany, the Big Three had decided to abandon the Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941, whose second point had put all Allied Governments on record as desiring "to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned."

The Yalta decisions were carried over, on a more tentative basis, into the Potsdam Agreement of August 2, 1945, in which it was stated that "pending the final determination of Poland's western frontier" German territory to the East of the Oder and West of the Neisse Rivers should be "under the administration of the Polish State and for such purposes should not be considered a part of the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany."

The Conference also reached the following agreement on the "removal" of Germans from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary:

"The three governments having considered the question in all its aspects, recognize that the transfer to Germany of German populations or elements thereof, remaining in *Poland*, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, will have to be undertaken. They agree that any transfers that take place should be effected in an orderly and humane manner.... The Czechoslovak government, the Polish provisional government, and the control council in Hungary are at the same time being informed of the above, and are being requested meanwhile to *suspend further expulsions*. . . ." [Italics ours.]

Anne O'Hare McCormick, one of the most distinguished American journalists, writing in the *New York Times*, November 13, 1946, suggests that perhaps the Big Three had not "considered the question in all its aspects." She says:

"If Allied statesmen had imagined how heavily this wandering mass of helpless people would beat upon themselves, they couldn't have assumed so casually the moral and historic responsibility for the most inhuman decision ever made by governments dedicated to the defence of human rights."

Deportations Illegal

However inhuman the Potsdam decision may have been, it nevertheless restricted the right of the Polish Government to expel Germans to the territory of Poland proper. Even there it asked for a temporary suspension of expulsions until new homes could be found for the expelled persons in Germany. Most Americans understood the Potsdam Agreement to mean that the Polish government should be entitled to expel the prewar German minority of Poland, numbering about one million people, and the half million Germans from Baltic and Balkan countries whom Hitler had settled in Western Poland after the conquest of that country. They were

confirmed in this view when President Truman, in his report to the Nation on August 12, 1945, referred to one million and a half Germans who remained to be expelled.

The Communist-dominated Provisional Government of Poland, however, decided to interpret the Potsdam Agreement very differently. It went on the assumption that Eastern German provinces, such as Silesia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, and East Prussia, tentatively assigned to Polish administration, were legally Polish territory and that consequently the indigenous population of these areas could be expelled wholesale. They did not even heed the warning of the Big Three that "since the influx of a large number of Germans into Germany would increase the burden already resting on the occupation authorities," all expulsions should temporarily cease and, when resumed, should have "regard to the present situation in Germany."

That this interpretation of Potsdam was unilateral and arbitrary is borne out by the following sentence in President Truman's speech of August 12, 1945:

"A considerable portion of what was the Russian zone of occupation in Germany was turned over to Poland at the Berlin Conference *for administrative purposes* until the final determination of the peace settlement." [Italics ours.]

If the term "*administrative purposes*" includes the wholesale expulsion of the local population, words have lost their meaning.

In making this arbitrary interpretation the Polish Provisional Government violated the Potsdam Agreement just as it violated the Yalta pledges concerning the establishment of a democratic regime and the "holding of free and unfettered elections." Mr. Michael Foot, speaking in the House of Commons on October 26, 1945, recognized this fact, saying:

"It is important to recognize that the Potsdam Agreement did not merely say that these deportations should be undertaken in a humane and orderly manner, it also said that these deportations should be suspended until there had been a report from the Control Council.... Therefore it is clear that ... there has been clear, open defiance of the agreement by the Polish Government."

A year later, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, in more cautious language, expressed an almost identical view. Speaking in the House of Commons on October 22, 1946, he said:

"As regards the Polish frontier, I will not try to conceal the fact that it was with the greatest reluctance that we agreed at Potsdam to the vast changes upon which our Russian Allies insisted. It was inevitable that such enforced, large-scale emigration of people should provoke the deepest reaction in Germany, and I fear we have not seen the last result of the Polish affair. Our own assent to the provisional arrangements at Potsdam was given in return for various assurances made by the provisional Polish Government, to the effect that they would hold free and unfettered elections as soon as possible...."

We see no reason why we should finally ratify the cession of this vast territory to Poland, without being satisfied that those assurances have been fully carried out. We should also wish to be assured that the Poles were able to develop this territory so that the economic resources were properly used, and that it did not become a wilderness from which the Germans had been excluded, but which the Poles were unable to populate." [Italics ours.]

Poland Cannot Fill Vacuum

Mr. Bevin, while thus denying Poland's title to Eastern Germany, and her right to expel the local inhabitants, also raises a very interesting point of Poland's ability to populate the areas in question. The German territories East of the Oder and Neisse rivers, comprising one-fourth of

the pre-Hitler Reich, were formerly inhabited by more than ten million people, who were distributed thus:

East Prussia	2,500,000
Silesia	5,000,000
Eastern Pomerania (incl. Stettin area)	1,400,000
Eastern Brandenburg	1,400,000
Posen-West Prussia	400,000
Total	10,200,000

Out of this total only half a million, at best, considered themselves non-Germans and are therefore not subject to Polish deportation decrees. The remainder have already been expelled or are in process of expulsion. An area, roughly the size of the State of New York is thus being stripped of almost its entire population.

The Provisional Polish Government claims that Poland has ample manpower to fill the vacuum. It points, especially to the Poles deported from former Polish territory east of the Curzon line. These people, who are not being driven from their homes, but are being evacuated under agreements signed by the Polish Government, number only three million. The Polish Government is therefore endeavouring to recruit additional settlers among the population of Central Poland, stressing that fact that old Poland was too densely populated and that great opportunities are beckoning in what is now called the "Recovered Territories." *

* The term "Recovered Territories" is intended to convey the impression that Eastern Germany is ancient Polish land, once forcibly wrested from the Poles, but now restored to its rightful owners. Concerning this theory, the Encyclopedia Britannica (Fourteenth Edition, Vol. XX, article on Silesia) states that the Polish Dukes of Silesia "adopted the policy of inviting German settlers to fill their vacant land, and founding towns which enjoyed German law, their lands soon became virtually German. The result was much material prosperity, forest and swamp lands were reclaimed, the weaving and mining industries acquired great importance, and Breslau, which was re-founded about 1250 as a German town, became a large market of the East and West."

To judge by frantic appeals through radio and newspapers,** the program of recruiting new settlers has so far met with little success. Though the Polish Government claims that four million people have already been settled in Eastern Germany, this figure is being questioned by all neutral observers. A revealing picture of the type of "settler" moving into these territories was given by radio Warsaw on September 10, 1945. "Why is it difficult to find room in Westbound trains?", the broadcast asked, and then proceeded to explain:

"Decent citizens think that these trains are full of settlers. Each one of these so-called settlers has a passport and a colonization ticket entitling him to a free ride. The decent citizen is astonished when he sees the same trains coming back even more crowded, loaded not only with people, but with bundles, baggage, parcels, rucksacks, bicycles, sewing machines, typewriters, radios, etc. The 'settlers' return as carpetbaggers with all manner of goods which they acquired more or less illegally. The first trip was successful, so they try it again. When one province has been stripped, the 'settlers' move on somewhere else: From Silesia to Pomerania, from Pomerania to East Prussia, and back from there to Silesia."

** Typical of such appeals was the following broadcast of Radio Warsaw: "The county of Sagan, formerly in the German province of Lower Silesia, consists of 7,700 square kilometres. It has only one town, Sagan, with a prewar population of 23,000. Possibilities for settlers are excellent. Hardly 400 Poles are living there now. The county has eleven mills, one starch

factory, two breweries, six distilleries, and nine dairies. There is great need for industrial and administrative personnel, doctors and all other professions."

Germany Unable to Absorb Millions

Poland's inability to fill the depopulated provinces of Eastern Germany is matched by Germany's inability to absorb ten million Eastern Germans in a shrunken territory, in addition to the influx of some five million Germans from the Sudetenland, Hungary, and the Balkans. If the Reich's pre-Hitler territory were to remain unimpaired, the latter might conceivably have been absorbed, especially in the more thinly populated areas of the East. With Germany's breadbasket annexed by Poland, the vast flood of refugees—some 15 million in all—cannot possibly be fed, and with the Reich's industries destroyed or dismantled these people can nowhere find employment.

If all expulsions and annexations foreshadowed at Potsdam were to be carried out, population density in Germany would be dangerously increased, whereas in Poland it would be considerably lowered. Before the war, there were 382 inhabitants per square mile in Germany against 231 in Poland. The new figures would be approximately 550 for Germany and 160 for Poland. Accurate statistics, of course, will be unavailable until new census figures have been published. The trend, however, is quite clear. On one side of the border there would be a near-vacuum, on the other side an overflow of people. Such conditions of gross inequality and disequilibrium have produced dangerous tensions and conflicts throughout history.

Dangerous Precedents

Mass expulsions or "population transfers," as they are sometimes politely called, have frequently been justified by pointing to the Greco-Turkish population "exchange" after World War I. This experiment, which British Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon called "a thoroughly bad and vicious solution for which the world will pay a heavy penalty for a hundred years to come," has been quite falsely labelled a success. While it is true that it was instrumental in bringing about better relations between Greece and Turkey—owing to special circumstances not present in the Polish-German case—it also created explosive social conditions in Greece, unable to integrate over one million new citizens. On this subject the *New English Weekly* of January 18, 1945, had this very pertinent observation to make:

"Of the million or so of Greeks who were taken from Turkey and brought back to Greece, few refitted themselves into the national life. They mostly settled in shacks on the hills around Athens, where they remained an unhappy mass of humanity, productive of little but anarchic-bolshevist agitation. They did much to promote, if not create, the lively discords, in which Greece has lived ever since, and we would be surprised if their existence is not a potent factor in the present violent dissensions which have just cost many precious lives, British as well as Greek. Yet this repatriation was an achievement of 'peacemaking' upon which the League of Nations preened itself notably at the time, and is being upheld as an example to be followed in several cases, in which the consequences are not likely to be less incendiary."

An even better example is furnished by the history of the Jewish people. Driven from their native land in the first century A.D., they have been subjected to discrimination and persecution wherever they went, the Nazi policy of extermination being only the latest and most barbarous of many outbursts. Now, two thousand years after their expulsion, a large segment of the world's Jewry is desperately trying to return to their original homeland, long since occupied by a different people. It does not bespeak the wisdom of our statesmen that at this very moment they are planning a new and more extensive program of expulsion.

What guarantee is there that the Poles of Lwow, the Sudeten-Germans, the Silesians, and the East Prussians will not still strive to "go back" centuries from now? Anticipating such develop-

ment, American occupation authorities have adopted drastic measures to break up any social and political cohesion among expellees, thus inflicting additional hardships on these people. Communities which succeeded in escaping together are deliberately dispersed over several cities and counties. Even special refugee welfare organizations are prohibited. One evil, as Schiller said, always calls forth another.

The Moral Issue

But perhaps the most dangerous aspect of forcible population transfers is that they implicitly deny the existence of the inalienable rights of the individual. In an age already dangerously beset by nationalistic passions, the defenders of the expulsion policy attribute to the nation an absolute value in which the "merely relative" value of the individuals is unconditionally submerged. The democracies are thus accepting Hitler's race theory. The "Rights of Man" are being replaced by the "Rights of Nations." This trend, if not stopped and reversed, will be a serious threat to our civilization.

Even Mr. Sumner Welles, unfortunately seems to have fallen victim to this fallacy, though he wants population transfers kept within certain limits. In his recent book, *Where are we heading?* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1946) he says:

"In my belief the minority problems cannot be solved through frontier and territorial readjustments alone. Populations must be transferred under international control, even though in some cases such transfers may involve a million human beings (p. 127).

Mr. Welles, however, does not think that the population transfers should be used to justify any such large-scale territorial changes as are now involved in the Polish-German case. For he says:

"The general line of the Oder has been tentatively agreed upon by the four major powers as Germany's new Eastern frontier with Poland.... If the peacemakers make this decision a final one, they will perpetrate an injustice and a social and economic blunder which will inevitably make for lasting friction and for European insecurity.... The future Germany must provide a home and the means of livelihood for several millions of Germans over and above its inhabitants before 1936. After the deal made by Hitler with the Kremlin in August 1939, the Germans who had been residents of the Baltic States were brought back to Germany. Since the end of the last war all surviving Germans from German-occupied Poland have fled to Germany. The Sudeten-Germans who have been expelled from Czechoslovakia and the Germans who have been able to leave East Prussia and Transylvania have also increased Germany's population. Much of the territory lying between the Oder and the western boundary of the former Polish Corridor is rich farm land.... The new German frontier with Poland, if drawn with just regard for the economic needs of the German people, would run considerably to the east of the Oder line." (pp. 120-121.)

Mr. Welles, one of the authors of the deportation policy within the State Department, also declares that;

"the emigrants should receive full compensation for the properties they cannot remove. In the event the emigrants cannot find a new home in Europe, they should be helped by the agencies of the United Nations to settle in those countries overseas which are now already encouraging European immigration as an essential requirement in the development of their national resources."

Neither of these recommendations is being heeded at present. It has been stated that immigration into Argentina will not be permitted until after the signing of a German Treaty, and the State Department recently turned down the request of a ranch owner in Utah for the immigration of several hundred displaced Germans whom he wanted to settle on his lands.

Compensation for property losses found no place in the Potsdam agreement. Yet, these expellees from Eastern Germany and the Sudetenland are being stripped of their possessions—their farms, their homes, their work benches, their furniture, their clothing and their bank accounts—before they are pushed across the border. This constitutes a clear violation of international law, which demands respect for private property even in time of war. The right of property will be seriously undermined if the United States consents to mass expropriations on so vast a scale.

The Principles of Versailles

Present practices stand in shameful contrast to earlier procedures, even to the Versailles Treaty, which was never considered a model of wisdom and moderation. The United States delegation at the Paris Conference of 1919 was pledged to uphold the principles President Woodrow Wilson had enunciated in his famous speech to Congress, on February 11, 1918, where he declared:

"that peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were chattels or pawns in a game, even the great game now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of a mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival States; and that all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and consequently of the world."

These noble principles were not always faithfully applied by the United States delegation and were frequently opposed by America's European Allies. Nevertheless, a peace treaty emerged whose territorial clauses, while always giving the victor the benefit of the doubt, followed in the main the ethnographic dividing lines drawn by nature and history. Special treaties were signed guaranteeing the cultural, economic, and political rights of minorities in several Eastern European States. While frequently violated, they nevertheless offered substantial protection against the kind of outrages now committed against ethnic groups.

In many doubtful areas plebiscites were held under the protection of Allied armies. In the case of the Polish-German frontier, a plebiscite in the Allenstein district of East Prussia resulted in a majority of 97% of the voters in favour of Germany; another plebiscite in the Marienwerder district of West Prussia showed 92% of the voters in favour of remaining with Germany. In Upper Silesia, where 60% of the votes were cast for Germany, 40% for Poland, a new frontier was drawn so as to leave only predominantly German districts within the Reich.

Whatever provinces remained with post-Versailles Germany was therefore overwhelmingly German in character and political allegiance. This explains why the map-makers of today have been anxious to avoid further plebiscites. Not one of the proposed territorial changes would find the support of the local population in an honest plebiscite. Polish haste in expelling all Germans from Eastern German provinces under Polish control can only be explained as an attempt to forestall any future demand for a referendum. The Atlantic Charter nevertheless makes the holding of plebiscites in all disputed areas obligatory.

Contrast to Danish and Italian Behaviour

Present Polish and Czech behaviour toward minorities and Allied sanction of mass deportations stands in glaring contrast to the magnificently Christian and democratic behaviour of the people and government of Denmark, which also suffered under German occupation. Toward the close of the war, more than 200,000 German refugees from East Prussia fled into then occupied Denmark. Though almost two years have passed since Denmark's liberation and Germany's collapse, the Danish Government, knowing that conditions in Germany do not permit the

absorption of additional refugees, has sheltered and fed its 200,000 uninvited guests at great expense to the Danish taxpayer. One may well ask whether the attitude of the Danish Government or that of the present Government of Poland contributes more to the building of a lasting peace.

In another part of Europe, Italy and Austria have recently given proof of the fact that enlightened and civilized conduct in international affairs is not yet wholly dead in Europe. While Allied statesmen at Paris haggled over the terms of peace to be imposed on their former foes, the representatives of these two ex-enemy nations got together and settled a generation old border dispute in a spirit of compromise and neighbourly cooperation. While the Tyrolean border, resented by the Austrians, was not changed, the Italians granted virtual self-rule to their German-speaking minority, agreed to the abrogation of the Mussolini-Hitler pact for exchange of populations and abolished customs and other barriers between the inhabitants of the northern and southern halves of Tyrol. The difference between this agreement and the "solution" attempted at Potsdam for the Polish-German border is so glaring that the statesmen and peoples of the world should ponder its implications.

Millions Unaccounted For

One of the most sinister aspects of the expulsion policy is the fact that in the course of its execution apparently several million human beings have been "lost." At least, they cannot be accounted for by any statistics now available. Recent census figures for the four zones of Germany, including Berlin, reveal a total population of approximately 66.6 million. Yet, on the basis of pre-war statistics, Germany should have a total population of 76.5 million, after the completion of expulsions from North-eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the Balkans. German military losses during the war are estimated at 3.6 million and civilian bombardment victims at half a million. This total loss of 4.1 million, however, was at least three-quarters offset by the high birth-rate during the first years of the war. This would give Germany a present population of 75.4 million, from which 4 million, still held as prisoners of war, would have to be subtracted.

If these figures are right—and a margin of error admittedly will have to be allowed in view of the incompleteness of wartime statistics—a total of 4.8 million people are unaccounted for, almost as many as perished in Nazi extermination camps. Where are these people, are they held as slaves or did they perish in camps and on the road? It was this fact which prompted Winston Churchill to issue a call of warning in his House of Commons speech of August 16, 1945, saying:

"I am particularly concerned at this moment with the reports reaching us of the conditions under which the expulsion and exodus from the New Poland are being carried out ... enormous numbers are utterly unaccounted for. Where are they gone and what has been their fate? ... Sparse and guarded accounts of what has happened and is happening have filtered through, but it is not impossible that a tragedy on a prodigious scale is unfolding itself behind the iron curtain which at the moment divides Europe in twain."

Unfortunately, it must be presumed that a very large percentage of those missing have been put to death by their tormentors or have perished for want of food and shelter. Senator Capehart, according to the *Congressional Record* of February 5, 1946, estimated that as many as three million human beings may have perished in the process of a "transfer" that was to have been "orderly and humane."

Countless others are known to be held as slave labour in Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. The January 1947 issue of the *Review Of World Affairs* (London) reported that thousands of German women are known to be working as slaves in the mines near Sverdlovsk. Tens of thousands of civilian slaves are working in the mines of Upper Silesia. Czechoslovakia is retaining about 300,000 Sudeten-Germans as slave labourers. The matter would seem to

warrant at least a thorough investigation by those Powers who really believe that the war was fought for freedom and against slavery.

II. ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

If 15 million expellees—10 million from Eastern Germany and at least 5 million from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the Balkans—are to be added to the population of a Germany deprived of one-fourth of its territory, what will this mean from the economic and political point-of-view?

The enormity of the problem thus created is well illustrated by recent statistics from the British and Russian zones. For instance, the population of the province of Schleswig-Holstein, normally 1.5 million, has been almost doubled. In the province of Hannover the increase was 35%—from 3.4 million to 4.6 million. In Oldenburg an increase of 28% was noted.

Similarly in the Russian zone, the province of Mecklenburg, with a normal population of 900,000 had to take in 1,960,000 expellees, or more than twice the number of original inhabitants. In the western part of the province of Brandenburg, with a pre-war population of 3.6 million, there are now an additional 3.1 million deportees, and the population of Western Pomerania, normally 670,000, was swollen by 940,000 refugees from the East.

In the American zone which principally receives expelled persons from the Sudetenland and Hungary, the situation is no better. Edwin Hartrich reported to the New York Herald Tribune of September 18, 1946, that a typical small village near Frankfurt, called Niederhofheim, is now "permanent host" to 200 expelled persons, though its normal population numbered only 425. In Bavaria many villages doubled and trebled inhabitants. What would happen in the United States, if some thirty million destitute people were suddenly dumped on these shores?

In Poland, on the other hand, even the optimistic reports of the present Polish government show a catastrophic decline in the population of formerly German cities. Thus Poland of Today, the propaganda publication of the Polish Embassy in Washington, in its issue of May, 1946, reported that the population of Breslau had declined from 630,000 to 168,000, the population of Danzig from 235,000 to 118,000, and the population of Stettin from 242,000 to 74,000.

The Foreign Policy Association, in a pamphlet by Fred H. Hoehler entitled "Europe's Homeless Millions" (New York, November-December 1945) commented on this problem thus:

"An artificial population vacuum has been created in East Central Europe, while, on the other hand, millions of Germans had been forced to enter Central Germany, for the most part in the Russian-occupied zone. From an economic *point of view this dislocation means that between seven and twelve million people from agricultural areas have been moved into a region that is much more industrialized.* There they do not find the facilities for agricultural production that they had left behind. In time to come, this dislocation cannot but have a bearing on the economic future of Germany as a whole. All plans for Germany's future are incomplete as long as the element of German displaced persons is not taken into consideration." [Italics ours.]

No Housing

The most pressing of all expelled person problems in Germany is that of emergency housing. In pre-war Germany there were 18.1 million dwelling units. Of these, 2.4 million were located east of the Oder and Neisse rivers. The remainder were subject to bombings, and to other forms of destruction. According to an estimate prepared in the Institute of World Economics in Kiel, and distributed by the Catholic Charities' organization, only 7.8 million dwelling units remained intact at the end of hostilities. Those housing conditions were almost desperate even before the arrival of the trains and trucks with the homeless from the East and South.

In July 1946, a Select Committee of the British House of Commons reported, after a tour of the British zone: "In 1939 there was a rough average of four people to a house. On VE-Day this average had risen to ten." The repair of a number of not heavily damaged houses produced some improvement, but in spite of this fact "about 20,000 persons in Hamburg alone are still living in cellars—some as the Sub-committee found from experience, in highly unsanitary conditions."

When the expelled Germans began to arrive in large numbers, they were first put into camps. It seemed necessary to find houses for them, however, before winter came. There being no space left in the cities, the newcomers were concentrated in the rural areas. Commission after commission went through the homes to see where another family, or a part of a family, might yet be accommodated. A letter from a reliable German, dated November 6, 1946, contains this sentence: "No private house has half a room left to give up to refugees."

The rule was adopted that no one, expellee or local resident, could complain as long as there were four square yards a person. This means that a room of four by four yards had to suffice for a family of four—living room, bedroom and kitchen all in one—without there being an opportunity to separate men and women. In many instances even the four square yard minimum was not provided. A letter describing conditions in Schleswig Holstein, written by a well-known English lady married to a German, says: "Never have I seen such over-crowding anywhere in Europe. A normal size dining room is divided into three and that is the home for three families from Koenigsberg."

Over-crowding is aggravated by the almost complete lack of personal belongings. Few of the refugees were able to bring along pots and pans, knives and forks, or any of the other things essential to civilized living. Where a tin can may be found it is gratefully pressed into service, and spoons and forks are shaped from wood with whatever tools are available. By and large, it is necessary to use the household utensils—and, of course, the furniture—of the family with which the expellees are quartered.

The immediate result of the quartering of the expelled persons in rump-Germany was to create an explosive atmosphere. The principle upon which the temporary accommodation of these people was based could be expressed in the words: "Misery loves company"—newcomers and old residents are being pulled down together to a level upon which life can simply not continue in the long run. Crowded living conditions, naturally, encourage crime and endanger moral standards. Besides, they multiply the dangers of infection. This applies not only to venereal diseases--the fight against which is aggravated by the lack of medicines which in many cases reaches unbelievable proportions—and to tuberculosis which is now spreading rapidly, but also to children's diseases.

The *Isar-Post*, a Bavarian newspaper, published in its issue of August 6, 1946, a memorandum submitted by the leading physicians of Landshut to the Military Government, the Mayor, and the Commissar for refugees, which contains these sentences:

"Prophylaxis of diseases is, on account of the limited dwelling space, no longer possible, and heed can no longer be paid to the rule that prevention is better than care. A substantial part of the catastrophically high infant mortality (at present every third newly-born baby in Landshut dies) is caused by the enormous dwelling density (Wohndichte)."

Under these circumstances it was to be expected that people with an under-developed social consciousness should resist help to the deported even where such help might have been possible. Not infrequently it was necessary to place the expelled in the homes assigned to them with the help of the police. In Bavaria, refusal to accept such newcomers was made punishable with a fine up to 10,000 Marks and imprisonment up to 5 years.

Even so, incidents occurred of the kind which the *Mittelbayrische Zeitung* of July 2, 1946, reports in these words:

"A peasant drove a refugee woman and her children from his farm with a whip. The desperate woman took her life. The peasant was punished by expropriation. His farm was assigned to a wounded veteran."

It should be obvious that the refugees cannot be allowed to stay where they have now been quartered. New homes must be built. However, the expense of rebuilding, and repairing, the houses destroyed or damaged during the war was estimated at pre-war costs at 50 billion Marks. If this could be done, it would only restore the number of dwelling units existing in rump-Germany before the war. If for the ten million expellees housing units are built at the rate of four persons to a house (or apartment), this would require 2.5 million more units. At 8,000 Marks a unit this would involve an additional outlay of 20 billion Marks.

Houses, of course, require furniture, household utensils, etc. If all that was lost were to be replaced the cost has been estimated at another 50 billion Marks. Replacement of even a part of the losses would mean a substantial outlay. These estimates acquire their full meaning if compared with the national income which an article in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* (issue of July 26, 1946) placed at from 25 to 30 billion Marks.

According to Allied plans Germany's national income might be allowed to rise to 40 billion. But even if this figure were reached—and it is doubtful that this can be done—an expenditure for housing, and the replacement of furniture and personal belongings, of from two to three times a country's national income, is a task so staggering that it will not be solved for a generation. Meanwhile people have to live, and die, in the crowded quarters they now inhabit.

No Food

The problem of food is perhaps even more urgent. Before the war, after generations of efforts to bring about self-sufficiency, Germany still imported close to 20 per cent of her foodstuffs. The Eastern provinces of which she now finds herself deprived produced 22 per cent of the food consumed in Germany. This change alone makes Germany dependent upon foreign food for 40 per cent of the total, a higher percentage even than is now the case in Britain with her great industrial production and export trade. The situation is aggravated by the fact that the Sudeten-Germans, and the German-speaking groups from Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia are also driven into the rump of Germany. Thus, if normal diets prevail, 50 per cent of Germany's food would have to be imported.

Moreover, German agriculture finds itself disastrously deficient in fertilizer, agricultural implements, and transportation. Measures will be taken to improve the situation in the future, but it should be borne in mind that under the terms of the Level of Industry plan Germany will not be able to produce nitrogen sufficient for her own needs. The amount of agricultural implements to be produced is fixed at 80 per cent of pre-war, without regard for the fact that many machines were worn out during the war, and that, if some of the calories consumed by horses and other draft animals were to be freed for human consumption, a sharp increase in mechanization of the farms would have been indicated.

Similar considerations render illusory the intensification of agriculture through land reform or through the reclamation of marshes and forest lands. The capital required for the necessary investments simply is not there. It must be concluded, therefore, that 100 per cent of the food needs of the expellees will have to be covered by imports.

The prospects of employment for the expellees are no better. Under the terms of the Potsdam Agreement from 45 to 50 per cent of Germany's pre-war industrial capacity is to be eliminated.

Authoritative American sources have estimated that this will throw between 3.8 and 4.5 million people out of jobs. If 15 million jobless "expellees" are to be added to those thrown out of jobs by Allied de-industrialization measures, unemployment of truly catastrophic proportions will result.

In addition, more than one-third of the expelled persons are farm people, now landless proletarians. Their resettlement would require more than a million new farms, or some 30 million acres of farm land. Agricultural experts estimate that rump-Germany could, at best, provide some 100,000 new farms with a total acreage of 1.5 million.

The only exception to the rule that the expelled persons will on the whole, not be able to find productive employment lies in the development of typical "sweatshop" industries, where capital equipment is infinitesimal, and where wages are at or below subsistence level. Competition from such industries would hardly be welcome anywhere in the world.

No Jobs

As if to increase the adjustment problems of the deported Germans, the American Military Government does not permit the formation of new villages by the refugees from the Sudetenland. Some of these people, constituting sometimes the entire staffs of factories in the Sudeten area, had hoped to stay together and be allowed to rebuild their plants on German soil. If they are forbidden to do so, one more avenue of escape from the alternative of death by starvation, or living on foreign charity, will finally be closed.

One can only conclude that the task of finding new jobs for refugees in a country in which the jobs for the native population are being cut down severely is equivalent to an assignment of squaring the circle. In August 1945, a census in Schleswig Holstein revealed that of 385,000 men gainfully employed 74,000 were refugees, but the total unemployment stood at 116,000. This means that every single job held by a newcomer caused an old resident to become unemployed. Similar conditions exist throughout Germany and must be considered permanent.

Expelled persons who will never be adequately housed and cannot find employment unless they take homes and jobs away from others, will tend toward political radicalism, a characteristic of all dispossessed. At present, the majority of deportees seem to have voted for the Social Democratic Party, believing that a program of socialisation alone promises them a share of what remains of Germany's assets.

It may well be only a question of time, however, before they will turn to more radical parties, and if a redistribution of property is undertaken which drags the entire population down to a common level of poverty, extremist parties will benefit from this as the Nazis and Communists benefited from the depression of the thirties. Radicalism in the heart of Europe will no more make for peace in the future than it did in the past. President Truman, in his message to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, said:

"We did not struggle to prevent the domination of the world by the Axis Powers only to accept hunger, disease, poverty and insecurity in a world made free by brave men."

"Your task is to achieve freedom from want, to encourage production, help to open up transport and clear communications, and to assure higher standards of living." (*New York Times*, May 26, 1946.)

The combination of the Potsdam program of industrial restriction and the forcing of millions of people into a rump-Germany thus deprived of economic opportunity, is liable to provoke the dangers against which the President warned in such solemn words.

Fears Among Germany's Neighbours

Explosive conditions such as are now being created in Germany will not benefit any of her neighbours. The Danish Government has more than once expressed its apprehension at the influx of expelled persons into Schleswig Holstein, which is creating dangerous population pressure on Denmark's southern border.

In France old fears, ever present since the French birth-rate fell below the German birth-rate, have found new nourishment. French observers have frankly expressed the fear that the population pressure caused in Germany by the influx of the deported Germans will explode towards the West. Population density in France is less than 200 a square mile; in Germany it will be more than 500.

The well-known columnist, "Pertinax," commenting, in his column of August 28, 1945, on the separation of the provinces east of the Oder and Neisse rivers, continues in these words:

"Either within the next 30 years or so, the German nation will be reduced to some 40,000,000 people by the operation of a very low birth-rate the outcome of the new political and economic conditions, or it will surge back with a vengeance."

It is doubtful whether the Western Allies can afford to allow a reduction of the German population in the manner suggested; the conscience of the world, even where now dormant, will awaken in time, to stop such a process. Thus the population pressure will remain. It does not matter whether the dangers to French security which are feared as a result of German population pressure are real or imaginary; the political consequences which the French will draw from it will be the same. The result for Europe will be: more fear, more suspicion, and more armaments.

No Benefit to Poland

The countries which have expelled the German-speaking populations, in particular Poland and Czechoslovakia, will gain no more than anyone else. Economically, what they have done is to create an economic desert. To fill it with new life is a task which neither country is able to solve.

The Polish Government, for example, claims that it will settle in the territories taken from Germany some three million Poles to be evacuated from the part of Poland ceded to Russia. These three million people, who were born and reared under conditions far different from those prevailing in their new surroundings will not be able to take the place of ten million expelled Germans.

Poland, according to the figures published by her own government, suffered population losses of from 5 to 6 million during the war. In addition she has expelled a million Germans living in her country since before the war. Had the refugees from Eastern Poland—if it was really necessary to remove them from the land which they and their forebears too had tilled for generations—been allowed to fill the population gaps caused in Central Poland, they might well have been more productive than in a territory which they cannot populate properly.

Even more serious are the political consequences of the territorial shift for Poland. People in Warsaw are telling one another this joke: "Poland is the greatest country on earth. Her frontiers are on the Oder and Neisse rivers. Her capital is in Moscow, and her population in Siberia." To keep the territory taken from Germany, without which the latter cannot live, Poland will have to rely on Russian support. As a result every Polish government will henceforth have to take orders from Moscow. The Poles will not be masters of Warsaw as long as they occupy Breslau and Stettin.

This fact was foreseen by the Polish Government in exile in London. For, although making some extreme territorial demands (which however unwise were natural in view of Nazi Germany's murderous treatment of Poland), they nevertheless opposed the westward expansion of Poland as far as the Oder and Neisse Rivers. The legitimate Polish Government in London would probably have shown still greater restraint if they had not been in conflict with the puppet government in Warsaw, which catered shamelessly to extreme Polish nationalism in the West, while betraying Poland's national rights in the East.*

Mr. Jan Ciechanowski, former Polish Ambassador in Washington, writes in his book "*Defeat in Victory*" (Doubleday and Company, Inc., New York, 1947):

The recently expressed readiness of the Soviet Government to support the claims of Poland to some German territories, with the view to inducing Poland to give up the eastern half of her territory to the USSR, was interpreted by the Polish Government and people as an attempt on the part of the Soviet Government to make Poland dependent on Russia, and possibly to use her as a springboard for extended Soviet domination of Central Europe, and of Germany in particular," (Chapter XXIII.) will Drive Germany Into Soviet Arms.

The danger that the policy of annexation and expulsion in the East will eventually drive Germany into the Soviet camp is indeed very great. Many Americans are all too prone to assume that the remembrance of past horrors will forever have cured the German people of Communism. They forget that, through our diplomatic mistakes, the Kremlin has been put into the position where it alone has the power to return Eastern Germany to the German people as the price for their adherence to the Soviet bloc.

The fact, that Mr. Molotov on September 16, 1946, declared the Oder-Neisse line to be the final frontier between Germany and Poland, merely means that the leaders of Soviet Russia do not feel that the time has come to play their trump card. It must be clearly understood that no German Government, whatever its political complexion, could refuse this eventual offer by Soviet Russia. If the United States and Great Britain are then on record as opposing the return of Eastern Germany to the Germans, democracy will inevitably lose out in Germany. Herein lies a great danger to the future of democracy in Europe and to the position of the United States in the world.

America Pays for Expulsions

Even today, America and Britain are paving heavily for the loss of Eastern Germany. With the breadbasket of Europe turned into a desert, the American and British taxpayers are compelled to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to purchase food for their zones in Germany. A frightful burden is also placed upon the occupation authorities which are responsible for distributing the endless stream of refugees among the different zones and for providing housing, clothes, relief, and jobs. Probably more than half the present American and British expenditure in Germany could be saved, if Eastern Germany had not been separated from the rest of the country, and if its population had not been expelled.

*Although undoubtedly the Polish Communists, backed by the Kremlin, are the driving force in the present program of unlimited annexations and expulsions, for decades Polish extremists on the Right have had similar notions, which illustrates the frequent identity of view between Fascists and Communists. As an example of this section of Polish opinion might serve the following excerpt from the *Gazeta Gdanska* of April 11, 1926: "We can easily come to an understanding with the Soviets and divert Russian expansionism toward Delhi and Calcutta, while we ourselves march toward Koenigsberg and Stettin. Poland's natural border in the West is the Oder."

It is no exaggeration to say that America pays heavily for every square mile ceded in the East and for every person driven from his home—and will continue to pay for an indefinite time to come. Nor will the price paid by the average American be any less, when Germany has been made "self-supporting," because such a state can, under present conditions, be achieved only at the cost of forced exports and dumping on all world markets. The necessity of sustaining millions of deported people on a shrunken territory will eventually force Germany to double her pre-war exports. With her standard of living artificially lowered—through reparations and de-industrialization—below that of any other Western country, she will be able to sell her goods at prices ruinous to all her competitors. Thus driven into a trade war with the West, the Eastern orientation of Germany will only be promoted.

There is no escape from this dilemma except the return of the bulk of the expellees to their homes and the readjustment of Germany's Eastern borders along more rational and justifiable lines.

III. "ORDERLY AND HUMANE"

The Potsdam Agreement, while providing for the expulsion of Germans from certain areas, emphatically stated that "any transfers that take place should be effected in an orderly and humane manner." Mr. Sumner Welles also expressed the opinion that "where such transfers of population are judged necessary . . . they should be conducted with the utmost measure of humanity." (*Where Are We Heading?* Harper and Brothers, New York, 1946.)

It may well be doubted whether the uprooting of millions of human beings from the soil which they and their ancestors have tilled from time immemorial can ever be a humane procedure. Yet the expulsion of the Eastern Germans from their ancient homes were accompanied by brutalities and crimes such as not even the most ruthless authors of this policy could have imagined.

Only a few months after the signing of the Potsdam Agreement, on October 26, 1945, Sir Arthur Salter, one of the most responsible Members of Parliament, felt impelled to state in the House of Commons:

"We know that there are millions—it may be 10,000,000 and it may even rise to 13,000,000—of refugees from East Prussia, from Silesia, and from Sudetenland who are being expelled at short notice under conditions which must mean death on a large scale. . . ."

Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, attempting to defend the Potsdam policy in a Common speech of the same day, was nevertheless constrained to admit this much:

"When I was going to the airport to leave Berlin I saw as many refugees coming out of Berlin as were going in. It was a pathetic sight, the stream of perambulators and small vehicles of one kind or another, and the people were nearly all women and children, with very few men at all. One could not help saying, 'My God, this is the price of stupidity and war!' It was the most awful sight one could see."

Published Testimony

Miss Anne O'Hare McCormick, who made a thorough study of the subject in Europe, wrote in the New York Times of February 4, 1946, as follows:

"It was agreed at Potsdam that the forced migrations should be carried out in 'humane and orderly fashion.' Actually, as everyone knows who has seen the awful sights at the reception centres, the exodus takes place under nightmarish conditions, without any international supervision or any pretence of humane treatment. We share responsibility for horrors only comparable to Nazi cruelties."

Mr. F. A. Voigt, writing in the respected British magazine *The Nineteenth, Century and After* (November 1945), relates that a British officer returning from Eastern Germany had described the whole area "as a gigantic Belsen." Mr. Voigt then goes on to say:

"Millions of Germans, Danzigers and Sudetenlanders are on the move. Groups of 1,000 to 5,000 will take the road, trek hundreds of miles, and lose half their numbers by death through disease or exhaustion. The roadsides are dotted with graves. Children have arrived in Berlin looking like the emaciated creatures shown in pictures of Belsen.

"One train, which arrived in Berlin on August 31, started from Danzig on the 24th with 325 patients and orphans from the Marien Hospital and the Orphanage in the Weidlegasse. They were packed into five cattle trucks, with nothing to cover the floors, not even straw. There were no doctors, nurses, or medical supplies. The only food provided when the journey began was twenty potatoes and two slices of bread for each orphan. The patients had nothing, but the train stopped from time to time so that those of the passengers who were fit enough could forage. Some of the villages through which they passed were completely deserted—the crops had not been gathered and the cherries had dried on the trees.

"Between six and ten of the patients in each truck died during the journey. The bodies were simply thrown out of the train. When the train arrived in Berlin, sixty-five of the patients and orphans were removed to the Robert Koch-Hospital, where nine of them died."

A Silesian priest, writing in the liberal Catholic magazine *America* (November 17, 1945) described his own observations in the city of Görlitz, the town of entry for Silesian expellees. This is what he had to say:

"The streets of Görlitz are jammed with endless streams of bewildered people. Carts and waggons are pulled by men and women, living skeletons.----I spoke with the director of the welfare office and the three priests of the parish churches of the town. All were desperate; they had no place to turn for help. One could see that they were at their wits' end.----Shelter was given refugees for one night, but not a bite of food could be furnished. All were forced to continue on their way the next day. Many, too weak to go on, must die.----"

"On every house, fence and tree you find slips of paper written by one refugee to another. Often I read notes from parents seeking their daughters. While crossing the Neisse bridges these girls had been stopped and requisitioned by the Poles for 'harvest work.' The desperate parents were forced to continue on their way without them. In other cases, soldiers returning from the army are not allowed to go across the bridges and seek their families by these messages. Others indicate the direction taken by members of a family. . . .

"Over one small temporary bridge the endless stream of Silesian refugees flows. Standing on the left bank of the river one can see the Polish soldiers stop German refugee carts, loot them completely, remove the horses and then let the people go on. Completely looted of their possessions, hungry, exhausted, without a single means of help, they give way to despair. One woman murmurs: 'This rope is all that remains to me! I'll hang myself today! . . .

"I spoke with Polish officers and soldiers about these cruel methods, especially the looting. Their one answer was: 'The SS was much worse in Poland!' I replied: The SS boasted that they were pagans; you claim to be Christians.' One Polish soldier answered: 'Now we are Poles!'"

Unpublished Eye-Witness Reports

There is hardly any difference between the fate of the Germans in the various provinces of the East. The story is the same in Silesia, Brandenburg, Pomerania, East Prussia, Danzig, and Posen-West Prussia. The following eyewitness reports from different regions all telling the

same terrifying tale, were collected by the Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany and by their relief organizations, as well as by foreign and international relief agencies. Where the names of authors cannot be given for fear of retaliation, the highest ecclesiastical authorities in Germany vouch for the accuracy of the reports.

Fundamentally it is always the same story. Wherever they may come from, these anonymous victims of post-Hitler Nazi methods are streaming into Germany. Penniless, without any personal belongings, without a shred of hope, the newcomers are eyed with suspicion as troublesome guests in some strange German city.

The following is an extract from the letter of a woman from East Prussia written to her niece, January 5, 1946:

"We received notice from the Poles of our evacuation from East Prussia on October 30, 1945. On November 10, the expulsion of hundreds of people started; this number later grew to thousands. To the sound of ringing church bells, we left our homeland at seven in the morning. But even before at 6:00, young Poles with rubber clubs were upon us, shouting: 'Get out! Get out!'

"Then began an unspeakable journey. We were robbed even before we left Maldeuten. They took our food, and as I lost my coat, I had to travel four weeks in open coal cars clad only in a thin summer jacket. At times, we rode on the roofs of coaches. It was so icy, one person fell of the train in his sleep. One stretch—from East Prussia to Stargard (Pomerania)—accounted for 65 deaths. Cars were littered with corpses. One old man lay near us and no one bothered about him, the train had no attendants. The first food we received was near Sangerhausen and Freudenstadt in Thuringia.

"In Danzig, the car was stopped for three days; again, we had nothing to eat. In Stargard, a Russian transport stood across the track loaded with goods for the Soviet Union. At night, the Russians slipped across to our train to rob us of our last possessions. They had lots of time, and they did a thorough job. There was a regulation against plundering, however, and one man advised us all to shout 'Help' whenever the Russians came. The next time they paid us a visit there was a deafening roar from hundreds of throats. Many Russians were frightened away, but some became angry, and began to shoot into the coaches.

"After three days, we were told the Polish engineer had left and had taken the locomotive along. If anyone wanted to go further, he could go on foot. At the central station, a train took us to Scheune, near Stettin, where we found a refugee camp teeming with thousands. We lay close to one another in an ice-cold wind. There was no shelter or cover of any kind. We no longer possessed anything."

"Voluntary" Exodus

When, as a result of British protests, forced deportations were temporarily halted, Polish efforts in the rural districts to persuade Germans to leave their homes "voluntarily" became even more obvious. If they did not want to be beaten or starved to death, what else could these Germans do but apply for exit permits?

A Catholic relief agency describes this procedure as follows:

"The former mayor of a small German village in the Silesian mountains reports that all radios, motor cars, bicycles, and typewriters had to be turned over to the Poles without compensation. Of 140 pigs in the village, only five remain. The village was forced to deliver to the Poles large quantities of rye, wheat, barley, and oats-without payment. Since June, no milk or butter rations have been allowed; in the middle of August, meat rations were discontinued. On September 17,

the bread ration was also abolished. The Polish mayor has stated he hoped that by Christmas at least half of the village population would have starved to death."

East Prussian Horrors

The German Red Cross for Lower Saxonia received, on August 6, 1946, the following report dealing with developments in East Prussia after the Russian invasion:

"More of the refugee families, now living in the Russian or western zones, experienced the most fearful things. They keep silent; their experiences are so dreadful that most people would shrug their shoulders and say the reports are exaggerated.

"At Allenstein, where the Russians arrived unexpectedly, 70% of the 50,000 inhabitants could not flee. Countless cases of shootings, rape, and robbery occurred. The head of the local military hospital, Dr. Gerhartz, tried to protect his wounded soldiers. He was knocked down with a spade. Most of his patients were driven together into the courtyard and shot. 1,500 women at a time - 60 to a wagon—were sent to the Caucasus Mountains where most of them died. Suicide seemed the only way of escape from rape and deportation, from brutal death and torture. Thousands did commit suicide after having killed their wives and children."

The German Red Cross summarizes the experiences of another reliable German, who had fled Russian captivity in his native Danzig, as follows: "The most horrible thing he saw in both East and West Prussia was not the slow starvation and death of approximately 45,000 German prisoners of war near Johannesburg (East Prussia). No, the most ghastly thing he saw were 6,000 to 8,000 German children in the region of Elbing, being driven East by Siberian riflemen, in September, 1945.

"That part of the population of East Prussia which could not flee across ice and snow, was overtaken by the Russians and is now perishing slowly from starvation and disease."

At the Border

The following details were given by Mr. Pfeiffer, a Swiss citizen and Red Cross delegate, to the Reconstruction Committee, Geneva:

"Having wandered for weeks, the refugees from the East arrive at the Russo-American line of demarcation stripped of all their possessions. They are maltreated by the Russian frontier guards, particularly at those places where attempts are most frequently made to get across the border illegally. This reporter saw two women, between the ages of 30 and 40, forced to undress by Russian sentries. After twenty minutes in the rain and snow of an open highway, they were given coats and sent to the American zone. One of the women died in the hospital as a result of serious injuries from countless raping.

"Again, this witness saw three German soldiers, two of them one-legged and with the sound leg wrapped in rags, dragging a third man —without arms or legs—in a little homemade cart. They had travelled from Upper Silesia, a distance of 220 miles in six weeks. Branches tied to their leg stumps served as crutches. Nobody had cared for them; the Russians had dismissed them from captivity as unfit for labour.

"This observer furthermore found three barefoot and scantily dressed children, ranging in age from 4 to 12, trudging along a motor highway in snowy weather. Twenty miles from the nearest source of help, and with darkness descending, they had stopped one of the passing cars. But cars were not permitted to pick up civilians."

Danzig

Professor Otto A. Piper of Princeton Theological Seminary, vouches for the following reports about Danzig:

"I left on August 1, 1945. At Stargard, Pomerania, we were plundered by the Polish militia. This was repeated at every station. Pastor Rink died on the way. Between April and June, we buried 500 people in our cemetery. In all of 1944, our deaths were only one hundred and four.

"Not only people of German descent, but Poles, whose families had lived in Danzig for generations, were also evacuated. People were loaded into cattle cars, 120 to a car. We got no food during the ten days which the train took to travel from Oliva to Guestrow (Mecklenburg). Polish militia offered us loaves of bread at 100 to 200 Zlotys. They told us that anyone who reached the Mecklenburg frontier with more than twenty Zlotys would be shot. Seventy persons in our transport died between Oliva and Guestrow, and another ten after arrival.

"My eighteen year old daughter was raped during the beginning of the occupation of Danzig, an average of 15 times a day. Mothers of four and more children were treated bestially. Nurses in hospitals, near collapse from exhaustion, were raped. In fact, only women employed by the Russians in offices or in kitchens escaped rape. Everywhere, watches and jewellery were stolen; Russian officers did not, however, participate in the raping.

"The Russian staff was billeted in my house. As long as they remained in the house, the women and children and 28 people who took refuge with us remained unmolested. When the Polish administration took over the town, we shared the fate of all others."

A Swiss Doctor Reports

A few case histories, selected from a report given by a Swiss physician to a Swiss Welfare organization, reveal the condition of refugees now staying in one of the reception camps in Germany. Written in a professional and unemotional manner, these reports describe the lives of those Germans who had the good fortune to pass through the Iron Curtain. For some months, the doctor tried to do something to help refugees. He has given us the following picture of his work in order that we might better understand the problem. Comment on these records would be superfluous.

Case One: "Family with four children; father is a graduate engineer. Both parents seem very nervous. After a 15 day journey in an open freight car, the infant fell ill, lay two days with vacantly staring eyes. It had received only some foul bread sweetened with grape sugar cubes; the water itself was taken from pipes, streams, wells, and the boilers of locomotives. Child, very ill when received, died within one day."

Case Two: "An old and exhausted mother arrives from Silesia with 9 children. Father drafted into the Volkssturm of Thuringia—since then, nothing has been heard from him. Youngest child, very ill with stomach trouble, received as hopeless case. The mother lives in an air-raid bunker. She wanted to go to Thuringia to look for her husband, but the trip was forbidden by the Russians. Does not know where to go with her children. No financial resources."

Case Three: "Very weak, emaciated, 3 year old child brought in. The parents, with this child and another, 5 months old, fled from Silesia. For the starving infant, the mother could only provide unclean water and some mouldy bread. All baggage and valuables were seized by the Russians. The child never smiles, is very shy, restless, will not play."

Case Four: "Mother of 10 children came in. Had fled from Silesia after husband was reported missing in Volkssturm. Three children died on the way here, two of tuberculosis, one of starvation. The woman was not permitted to stay long in any town; after a few days, she was always ordered to leave. No relatives, and no resources. Together with the children, she went

from one bunker to another. Received at the clinic, one of the children-16 months old—had the weight of a 3 month old. When the child was later dismissed, the mother had no clothes for it. She had no idea where she would go from here."

Case Five: "Girl desperately sick with diphtheria. Family is from Breslau. While the father remained with the Volkssturm, a 20 year old sister stayed here with the Red Cross. The mother, with this 10 year old emaciated girl and a 2 year old child, has been on the road since January. Always ordered to move on. Knows nothing about the rest of her family or her relatives. Is entirely without means."

Children Suffer Most

The following report on the death rate among the young east of the Elbe, comes from a Protestant relief agency (October, 1945):

"The misery of the children is almost indescribable. It is to be noted that in East Germany, there are now roughly 10,000 children who, having lost their parents, go about as vagabonds and live from stealing. Infants and small children have been virtually condemned to death because there is almost no milk, and mothers are too weak to nurse them. The city of Frankfurt-on-the-Oder is allotted only 15 milk cows for 45,000 inhabitants. The 23,000 citizens of Eberswalde have 8 cows. The children, therefore, are left to die. I know of instances in which mothers took cooked potatoes—the only available food—chewed it into pulp, and then forced it into the mouths of their babies.

"Official estimates of infant mortality in the province of Brandenburg are from 80-90%. For every 45 births, the district of Ruppín registers the death of 41 babies. Recently, many villages report nothing but still-birth. Yet all of this takes place in the farming country, and in villages where one would expect that food would be most plentiful."

Breslau "Racially Pure" Again!

It is often asserted that it is only the Nazis who are deported from the Eastern territories, and that the non-Nazi Germans are given a chance for survival. The following passage from an official transcript of a discussion of German representatives with Russian and Polish officials in Breslau shows no such distinctions made (August 14-16, 1945):

"A conversation at the Russian HQ in Breslau with the adjutant to the military commandant, General Trichoja, was unavailing because the refugee problem is held to be under the jurisdiction of the Polish civilian administration. With the help of the adjutant, we secured from the commandant a travel-permit to ride on any Russian truck: The danger of being robbed is very great if one goes by railroad or walks along the highways.

"At the office of the Polish city administration in Breslau, the central director referred us to the official in charge of refugee affairs, Dr. Tauber. After examining our papers, Dr. Tauber said: 'Tell the head of your district administration not to send any more Germans. I intend to send him back all the Germans still living here.'

"Question from us: Dr. Tauber, would it be possible for those Germans who vote for Poland to return to their homes?

"Answer: No! The city of Breslau will be settled by Poles!

"Question from us: Could not professional men who know both Russian and Polish perhaps return to Breslau?

"Answer: No!

"To the question, when he proposed to expel Germans still living in the city, he answered: 'September? Christmas? Who knows?'"

A Swiss Journalist Speaks

The Zurich Weltwoche, a Swiss paper which never concealed its anti-Nazi attitude, writes (November 16, 1946):

"There is not just one Iron Curtain in Europe. There are two. The second Iron Curtain, of which nobody talks and of which few know, separates the Russian occupation zone in Germany from those former German territories in the East now awarded to the Poles at the Potsdam Conference and beyond the jurisdiction of Allied Military Government.... Behind the Oder and Neisse line, begins a land without security, a land without law, a land of the outlawed and the dead.

"While in the Russian occupied zone there exists a certain order—injustice occurs more by chance than according to program—an arbitrary rule and violence reign in the spacious regions between the former German-Polish border line and the Oder river. When this territory was handed over to the Poles after the Potsdam agreement, the resident German population there first believed that it would not get along any worse with the Poles than it had with the Russians. Today, matters are such that the Germans must turn to small Russian detachments for protection against the Poles. It is a truism that whoever leaves the Polish zone, arrives in Russian-held areas breathing a sigh of relief. Behind him lie empty and looted towns, pestilence-ridden villages, concentration camps, untilled fields, streets littered with corpses. Thugs rob the houses of their remaining furnishings.

"All this is true, and these are no atrocity stories. Too often we do not want to believe these really unbelievable stories. Too often these disclosures have been brushed aside as 'lies' and 'propaganda.' It is true that in the town G., women of all ages were raped by members of the Polish militia. It is true that in the main railway station of S. all deportee trains were regularly looted to an extent that the passengers had to proceed westward stripped even of their clothes. It is true that in wide-spread areas of Silesia, not a child under 1 year of age is still alive. It is true, that in Upper Silesia all women infected with venereal diseases received a bullet in the head. And that a suicide wave is now spreading over the country. In some places, one tenth of the population took their lives. And that in the so-called labour camps at Sownowice and Centoschlowitz, inmates have to stand in icy cold water up to their neck for nights, and that they are beaten until they faint. ...

"There is no authority to which a peasant, attacked by looters, could turn; there is no police to protect him; there is no judge from whom to obtain justice. Without having a chance for legal defence, everyone must hourly expect acts of violence aimed at his possessions and his life.

"It throws dark shadows on an already sinister picture that, during such looting campaigns, Germans have to suffer who can prove they lost their closest relatives in the fight against the Nazis; that Jews who had been able to survive by living clandestinely are now being killed by the Poles."

When reading these eye witness reports from Eastern Germany, which could be continued ad nauseam, we are tempted to approve the bitter commentary of Mr. Michael Foot who, speaking on the expulsions before the House of Commons on October 26, 1945, said:

"For women and children, creatures such as these, there is for their protection an older law than any promulgated at Potsdam: Tut whosoever shall offend against one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were

drowned in the depth of the sea.' If these infamies are to be allowed to continue there will be a shortage of millstones to set beside the other shortages in Europe."

Collective Guilt

Such is the terrible story. Like the monstrous record of Nazi crimes it shows the depths to which humanity can fall. Nationalism and revenge have produced horrible excesses all through history, but when these passions are deliberately fomented and unleashed by totalitarian governments, then the degradation is complete.

However, the purpose of this pamphlet would be wholly defeated if it led to more bitterness or recrimination between the Polish and German peoples. Our aim is to break the vicious circle of aggression, revenge and hate from which Poland, placed as she is between two great powers, is always the first to suffer.

The Poles, as our introduction makes clear, are the most sinned against of all the United Nations,—the victims first of Hitler's aggression and second of an Allied betrayal. Not only were they deprived at Yalta of nearly half the country which they had defended so bravely, but the Yalta promises of free elections and national independence were never kept. The Polish people are not responsible for the acts of their puppet government, which has just reaffirmed its power by a fraudulent election. The same militia which has been guilty of the above atrocities is used to enslave the Polish people.

So much for the obvious innocence of the Polish people. But there will be many who feel that the German people as a whole were guilty of such terrible crimes against Poland that even the horrors described in this pamphlet can be regarded as a just retribution. However, this judgment ignores the fact that millions affected were children when the Nazi crimes were committed and many others are children now, apart from the old and the sick among those now uprooted.

The only theory on which the deportations can be even partly justified is on the theory of collective guilt which is itself the quintessence of totalitarian doctrine, for instead of judging each individual on his own merits he is judged and punished as a member of a racial, religious or political group. The real collective guilt is that of humanity itself, which under the conditions described is capable of producing almost any iniquity. The blind madness of the deportation policy not only strikes Nazi Germans, but all Germans, including German Jews, who were Hitler's first victims. And finally, as we have seen, even the American people are being penalized by this policy which injures all alike, the innocent with the guilty.

CONCLUSIONS

Nothing would be more fatal than to adopt an attitude of resignation in the face of the disaster now taking place in Eastern Europe, and rapidly spreading its poisonous consequences westward. While untold misery has been inflicted and much irretrievable damage done, the situation is not altogether beyond repair, as long as Americans are willing to face the facts squarely and to stand boldly by their principles.

Former Secretary of State Byrnes took an important step in the right direction when in his Stuttgart speech of September 6, 1946, he clarified United States policy by saying that no final determination of Germany's eastern borders had taken place at Potsdam. He intimated that, while he thought Poland was entitled to some territorial compensation at Germany's expense for the losses she suffered in the East at the hands of Russia, such compensation should be more limited than the extravagant demands of the present Polish Government. While this was not a statement in line with the high principles of the Atlantic Charter, it was at least a disavowal of the most cynical kind of political bargain.

Foreign Secretary Bevin had already preceded Secretary Byrnes in a similar statement in behalf of Great Britain. Speaking in the House of Commons on July 25, 1946, he said:

"I make this solemn confession. I was a party to the Atlantic Charter ... and one of my first experiences, almost before the ink was dry, was to find myself in that Cabinet where I had to accede to a new Polish frontier which I have never yet been able to reconcile with the Atlantic Charter, but which the very necessities of war at that time compelled me to accede to."

United States policy was further clarified when General W. Bedell Smith, Ambassador in Moscow and formerly General Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, declared before the Peace Conference in Paris that the expulsion of populations was "repugnant and unacceptable" to the United States. Though his remark referred directly only to the Hungarian minority in Slovakia, it can hardly be presumed that the United States Government has one set of ethical principles for Hungarians and another for Germans.

The attitude taken by General Smith at Paris seems to be fully assured of bi-partisan support. Herbert Brownell, Jr., then Chairman of the Republican National Committee, on August 24, 1945, made an important policy statement over the National Broadcasting system, in which he said:

"As we view the mass deportations of people and large transfers of territory being made ... we remember that similar acts in history resulted in the sowing of seeds of rancour. Particularly have we felt that where a people have maintained their culture in an area for centuries, the uprooting of these peoples and their culture has left hatred and the urge to revenge in its wake. ... The Senate of the United States has not passed upon these decisions, the people of the United States have not been given an opportunity to voice their views. Someday, when the time is ripe, the people of this country will hold the Administration to strict accountability."

Nor is public support for this policy lacking. *The New York Times* of September 18, 1945, said editorially:

"Russia and Poland have both violated the Potsdam Agreement—Russia by turning over to Polish 'administration' additional territory, including the city of Stettin; Poland, by formally annexing the territory without benefit of a peace conference and by expelling the Germans under conditions that mock the orderly manner prescribed at Potsdam."

World opinion also is rallying to condemn the policy of mass deportations. Foremost in this movement have been the Catholic Bishops of the United States. At their last annual meeting in Washington, on November 16, 1946, they issued a statement saying:

"Something has been happening in Europe which is new in the annals of recorded history. By agreement among the victors, millions of Germans who for centuries have lived in Eastern Europe are being forced from their homes, without resources, into the heart of Germany. The sufferings of these people in their weary travels, the homelessness of them and the hopelessness make a sad story of the inhumanity of their transplantation. Had there prevailed in the councils of the victor nations a right appreciation of the dignity of man, at least arrangements would have been made for transplanting these people in a humane way. We boast of our democracy, but in this transplantation of peoples we have perhaps unwittingly allowed ourselves to be influenced by the herd theory of heartless totalitarian political philosophy."

This view on mass expulsions has been greatly reinforced by the Nurnberg trials. Count Three, Section J, of the Indictment against Goering, Ribbentrop, etc., reads:

"In certain occupied territories, purportedly annexed to Germany, the defendants methodically and pursuant to plan endeavoured to assimilate those territories politically, culturally, socially, and economically into the German Reich, and the defendants endeavoured to obliterate the

former national character of these territories. In pursuance of these plans and endeavours, the defendants forcibly deported inhabitants who were predominantly non-German and introduced thousands of German colonists."

If we substitute "Slavic" for "German" and "millions" for "thousands" we have here an accurate description of what is now happening under Allied auspices in Eastern Europe. It is inconceivable that the United States Government would endorse policies for which the Nazi leaders were tried and hanged under American auspices.

The situation demands a complete clarification of American policy on this issue under the influence of an enlightened public opinion, rallying to the defence of the Atlantic Charter and the democratic principles that have guided American policy in the past. A clear-cut repudiation of the principle of mass expulsion and a reaffirmation of the idea of self-determination would seem to be the only possible course, if a stable world order is ever to be restored.

Unless such American leadership is forthcoming, no minority and no population group anywhere will henceforth be safe. What happens to Sudetens and Eastern Germans today could happen tomorrow to Moslems in India; to Jews in Palestine; to Whites in South Africa; to Negroes in the United States. Once such practices are sanctified by treaty, the consequences to the world and to our civilization will be incalculable. More than 200 years ago, in 1732, the Bishop of Salzburg expelled some 20,000 of his subjects because they were Protestants. They found refuge in East Prussia where they and their children settled and cultivated a desolate stretch of country. In 1945 their descendants were again driven from their new homes,—this time because they were Germans. For what reason will they be shunted about next? Our civilization stands and falls with the right of an individual to his home, which must not be abridged for reasons of state, religion or nationality. If we deviate from this principle now, we are ripe for totalitarianism or the Atom Bomb.

At the time of the Armenian massacres England had a Gladstone who fought uncompromisingly for human rights. Let it not be said that America, in the face of this even greater evil, is unable to produce a champion of humanity.



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**"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the
Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"
(Isaiah 2:3)."**

