

for the time being the outlook in this respect as in most others is hopeless. The Russian and Chinese Communists between them have completely sabotaged the magnificent industries of Manchuria, which it would take decades to build up again to the former Japanese standard; whilst to finance the war against them has necessitated an inflation of the currency, which has rendered the formerly proverbially cheap labour of China so expensive that export trade from the rest of China is at a practical standstill; which in turn has necessitated the prohibition of all imports.

Probably in this post-bellum age of ours everybody believes that his own country has been hit hardest and that there misery is greatest and most widespread. But everywhere surely the nadir has by now been reached and things at least do not go on getting worse: everywhere, except in China, where Communist effort is deliberately directed to prevent the peasant from sowing this year's crops, by burning farmsteads, confiscating seed-corn and draught animals (or slaughtering them); where bridges, railways and roads are systematically being destroyed again and again and again; where the reconstruction of the great Yangtse dams and dykes last year was to have been frustrated by them, in order to render homeless millions of people and to make the cultivation of their fields impossible. As long as they can help it, the Red armies are not waging war against the governmental forces arrayed against them, but against reconstruction, order and recovery. Death and destruction are their objectives, epidemics and famine their allies. It certainly is a way of keeping down population figures.

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THE FIFTH ETAT IN GERMANY

IT is gradually becoming possible to assess the figures concerning the expulsion of Germans from the eastern parts of Europe, from Eastern Germany, Sudetenland, Hungary, Rumania, Jugoslavia and adjacent countries. Each new figure implies a larger, more extensive, more irreparable sum of human misery; and means, moreover, an accumulation of new problems in almost every field of human relations, the full size of which is quite obviously not yet realised anywhere.

The latest figures are as follows. Those expelled number altogether about 11 millions, of whom approximately half, 5½ millions,

are Catholic. In the American Zone there are now $3\frac{1}{4}$ millions, in the British Zone $3\frac{1}{3}$ millions, in the Russian Zone $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and about 100,000 in the French Zone. It is assumed that about 3 million people died in consequence of the expulsion; these are not included in the above-mentioned total of 11 million. Out of a total of 4,500 Catholic priests who worked among these people only 2,500 are still alive. Only 15 per cent of those expelled had the opportunity of taking enough of their belongings with them in order to have a minimum of clothing, furniture and outfit of any type.

This article is not intended to be an accumulation of statistics, but it does seem necessary to start with these bare, objective figures which are published authoritatively by the headquarters of all German Catholic Charities. Perhaps a reader should read them twice, should try to compare them with the population of Scotland (about 5 millions) or Switzerland (about 4.1 millions) or any other country, just as one tries to come to grips with astronomical figures. Without any such help they are simply too large to have any meaning; they are elusive because so incredible in our times.

This article, too, is not intended to describe the living conditions, the basic needs, the material situation—though no appeal in that regard could be too emphatic. For all who read this article these questions may be left to the mere consideration of the statistics. But there are realities hidden behind these facts, which are only slowly becoming recognisable and understandable, which those concerned cannot themselves value fully, which are beyond the scope of any authority—which, nevertheless, may have a decisive bearing on the future of Europe and the world.

THE FIFTH ETAT

First of all it is necessary to consider the social outcome of this avalanche on the structure of the rest of Germany—already so widely shattered by losing the war, or rather by the devastation of the bombs during the war and by the post-war policy and the new—if not legal—frontiers which *de facto* exist. Again one should start with a few comparisons. To take a parallel, there are millions of Irish people who came to the United States, which at the time was a very under-populated new continent. Even now, after almost 100 years, they are not fully integrated into the population of the U.S.A., though this population as such is the most ready for absorption; they still have the sense of being Irish-Americans, and one can only reflect on how these people are affecting the whole structure of the States, socially, religiously, politically, etc. Much the same can be said of the German, Italian and other strains in America. There is another example from the immediate past, almost

ridiculously small compared with the German problem of the present day. Between 10 and 15 years ago, about 40 or 50 thousand Germans and Austrians came to this country of whom only a small percentage intended to stay and has in fact remained. What problems were created by that situation; the selection of the emigrants, their economic resettlement, their housing problems, the psychological effect of the general phobia against all foreigners—one of the key-notes of any country—their personal integration into the new life and way of living, their internal political loyalties, feuds and affiliations. And all this for only 40,000 among 40 millions.

These latter immigrants came either with means or guarantors, in a prepared and orderly way. To some extent they had to begin life from the bottom, but they could work in their own class as business or professional men or artisans or else switch over to a new way of earning their living; in every case they were a small and insignificant number easily adapted into particular classes of society. All this, of course, is not true for these 11 millions now expelled. The vast majority of them is of rural stock, formerly farmers or farmhands. They cannot acquire farmlands of their own as there is simply no free land; to a large extent they cannot work on existing farms as these normally already have their owners and workers. Another factor is that the agricultural and climatic conditions are so different that a man who was a highly specialised farmer in, say, the German settlements of Transylvania and now finds himself suddenly in the Bavarian Alps is practically at a loss in his own profession. Rather similar difficulties arise for professional men. What is to be done in the case of a Civil Servant or barrister trained and examined in Czechoslovakia? For these people there are other reasons which, though less important in themselves, increase the difficulty of their re-employment. Their clothing, shoes, etc., are under standard, even under the standard expected generally in Germany. They cannot move from place to place, even if they have prospects of a job, since regulations forbid movement into already overcrowded regions. Hence they have simply to remain in the place where they first drifted into Germany—some camp or barracks where they were admitted or shifted by the authorities. The only group which has any professional possibilities at all is that of the highly specialised technicians and craftsmen, but there are precious few of these, a much lower percentage than there should be in an orderly society of 11 millions. A very large proportion was taken away by the Russians as slave workers before the expulsion of the rest. In some parts, e.g. Czechoslovakia, some groups of these specialists were exempted from the expulsion, even

forbidden to emigrate, in order to preserve specific German skill and knowledge in certain industries, notably in the manufacture of glass, etc. Quite apart from all this, the whole age-structure of these many millions is incompatible with any integration. As already mentioned, the Russians deported a considerable number of able-bodied people for their own economic purposes, which means that the best age groups, already depleted by the war, are entirely understaffed. Moreover, in the other groups there is, as a result of the war and expulsion, an unnaturally high percentage of ill, crippled or mentally deranged people who, instead of contributing to any economic recovery, are a drain on resources.

There are important psychological reasons on the side of the receiving areas which hamper integration. Apart from the question of religious denominations which we will discuss later, there is, for example, the obvious resentment of the native population against 'foreigners' who desire jobs, living space, food, clothing, educational facilities—all things already insufficient for the old population. Less easily realised, perhaps, are the immense divergencies between the people of places like Bavaria, the western side of the Rhine or Sleswig, which are all receiving areas, and the people driven out of East Prussia, the Sudeten, the old German settlements in Croatia, etc. Even the written language of Germany proper and the districts of the old Hapsburg Empire differs as much as the style of English and American newspapers, and the barrier of different dialects of the spoken language makes the difficulty of communication even greater in the country parts. It is therefore important that when the D.P. begins to talk he is simply classified as a foreigner. There are now some districts where the 'foreigners' far outnumber the original population, such as Holstein, where some villages have between 200 per cent and 325 per cent D.P.s compared with the original population. The district of Schleswig-Holstein has 1.4 million old, and 1.1 million new inhabitants, and it must be borne in mind that the yeomanry, the most conservative element in Germany, predominates in these parts.

The point illustrated by all these facts is the creation of a fifth class in Germany, a class not united by social position, profession or descent but by the mere fact of being expelled; that they come from districts outside the political frontiers of the Germany of today; that their integration into the surrounding population, if possible at all, will not take place for years, perhaps generations, to come, that their standard of living is extremely low without any adequate hope or probability of a change for the better. Perhaps the most compelling force in the creation of this fifth class is the

contrast between their present condition and their former mode of life. In the recent past many of these people belonged to the well-to-do or at least settled classes; they were compelled to leave their home and fortune behind in countries now foreign and closed to them. They are now deprived of everything they cherish, and that not through any fault or political error of their own—there are just as many anti-Nazis and anti-Nazi groups among these who are expelled as there are creators, backers and fellow-travellers of that evil system, but there is no distinction in fate between them. On the contrary, it is well known that the wholesale loss of papers and records has enabled many a wanted Nazi to disappear and emerge elsewhere with the 'clean' papers of one expelled. This 'fifth état', as it is now commonly called in inter-German discussions, is characterised by all these facts the consequences of which are only too obvious.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

The political consequences must be manifold. First of all, the fifth état is the wanton creation of an unknown irredentist movement in Europe which overshadows any previous one not only in the number of people concerned but also by the fact that it is instigated not by national, linguistic or idealistic loyalties of some kind or another but by the naked desire of self-preservation. In this country we know the small band of heroic Poles who fought the war on our side, who are still loyal to the London Government and who cannot hope to return to their ancestral homes unless the whole situation in Eastern Europe is changed—and this obviously cannot happen except by political-military events on the largest scale. Their hopes may be shared by an Underground movement in the whole of that part of the world which is now submerged under the Red flood. These latter are more or less in their old surroundings whereas the members of the fifth état are not. They know that their old homes are still standing, their acres, partly not even used now, are waiting for their old masters, their crafts—disappearing through disuse—are needed. They know, too, that they will never really settle in this new land which is not theirs though it is German soil. The most they can expect is that their children may be allowed to become part of the proletariat of this new country. Homesickness, weariness, daydreams, hurt pride, all make them wait for the day when they will be able to return to their native parts. They know very well that this they cannot do except in the wake of a fighting army: so they wait for this fight and this army.

In this way, therefore, is Germany being prepared for Democracy, Christianity, European Feeling and the Renouncement of Power

and Militarism: a population of 11 millions practically forced to dream of war and victory: legitimate and humanly understandable war-aims are newly created. The Atlantic Charter will be seen as a trap for people of good will; the victors are entitled to call everything committed by the vanquished a crime against humanity. Right is power, and . . . did not Hitler say all this before? It would be bad enough if these people were simply grudging, maltreated, powerless, unemployed old men and women, but they form a large proportion of the German electorate, a political factor if not a military one. All that makes them hope for their return—including the immedate revision of existing frontiers—makes the rest of the German population, or at least a high percentage of it, hope to see them gone. A third political factor is the American German electorate. Truman and his people respect so strongly the voting power of American Jewry on questions like Palestine, Zionism, etc., and the voices of the American German electorate, not less numerous though perhaps not so vociferous, are there already, very distinct and not too pleasant, for anyone who cares to hear.

There is something like a tragicomedy behind this story: a farce after a Greek drama. Just now hundreds and thousands of Czech refugees, escaping from Moscow's grip on their country, are coming over the mountain frontiers into Germany through country formerly settled by the now expelled German minority. Most of them belong to parties—such as that of Benes—who were instrumental in this violent expulsion. They are now taken to camps which have been and still are partly in use by displaced Germans from the same border. The two groups in the camp had the same passports only a short time ago; now, the old refugees make life as unpleasant as possible for the new ones, their former expellers. Various administrative steps have to be taken to settle these things. For the time being, the problem is in miniature. But what is behind it?

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT

We mentioned in the beginning that about half of the new population in Germany is Catholic. As the average population of the old parts of Germany had only $\frac{1}{3}$ Catholics, this flood increases the percentage to a large extent arising from the fact that the Germans in the old Hapsburg Empire—not including Austria—were overwhelmingly Catholics. The gain is partly compensated by the fact that the Catholic Saar district is to a certain extent autonomous. There is the fact, almost unknown to the outside world, that in some cases whole dioceses are now on the march: literally on the road. The whole population of the diocese of Warmia-Ermland was expelled, also the Prelature of Schneidemühl. In the Archdiocese of

Prague and Olomouc, and particularly in some of their suffragan sees, whole deaneries and parishes are practically deserted. The best part of the Archdiocese of Breslau is in the same position. The protest of the Hungarian Hierarchy against the expulsion of the German part of their flock is well known. Some Jugoslav and Rumanian dioceses are in the same situation as the Czech ones, though perhaps their German faithful and priests had a better fate in the long run. The diocese of Danzig has practically ceased to exist.

Now, what is the picture in Germany? As is well known Germany has Catholic and Protestant parts. These are not rigidly divided into a Catholic West and South with the rest Protestant as is often assumed, but are closely interwoven, though with certain prevalences in the above sense. The enforced and hasty immigration did not share out the people according to their religion so the effect is that millions of Catholics—this is no over-statement—are suddenly settled in exclusively Protestant surroundings, and vice versa. The diocese of Hildesheim of 280,000 Catholics had to take in 700,000 newcomers. In other dioceses the situation is even worse. Schleswig-Holstein—part of the diocese of Osnabrück—had about 50,000 Catholics and 1,400,000 Protestants: now there are about 300,000 new Catholics there. Similar news comes from the dioceses of Paderborn, Fulda, Limburg, etc. How is this enormous task to be tackled?

The problem can be put quite bluntly. Either we succeed in keeping these people in the faith, in which case we shall have suddenly catholicised districts flourishing in parts where normally we should never expect to find them; or we lose them to indifference or to nationalistic or communist materialism. The other side of the question is equally clear. Either we are able somehow to absorb the non-Catholics now filling the Catholic areas, or at least to assist their own Protestant churches to hold them as Christians—though their hold on the people is uncertain; or we shall see islands of indifference, anti-clericalism or anti-religion growing up in purely Catholic districts. These issues must be faced clearly. Besides their immediate spiritual meaning they will have a formidable effect on future European politics: German politics are widely influenced by 'Weltanschauung' and religion. The Catholic parts, and those where Protestantism was at its best, were the only ones which really resisted the scourges of Nazism and Communism. Hence spiritually and politically everything depends on our answer to these plain, unavoidable questions.

It is obvious that the German Catholics themselves are not in a

position to do the job. It is amazing to see what they do already. In the diocese of Hildesheim 200 new parochial organisations have been erected from the scrap-heap. Churches were loaned by the Protestants, stables converted into places of worship; priests were allowed to say Mass in the afternoon, in vestments of non-liturgical colours; the Eucharistic fast has been dispensed to a large extent; in short, everything has been done to ease an almost impossible situation. One of the main tasks has been to give parishes some tie between past and present, if it be only of sentimental value. Local Saints' Days from the Eastern dioceses are observed in the receiving areas, the old hymns and songs from their lost hearths are revived. All this does not solve the problem, but it does show the way to tackle it. What is needed is a large, almost missionary programme which needs, however, missionary means—which are always means from abroad.

Moreover, the dreadful situation in such 'new Catholic' districts as Hildesheim or Schleswig is a happy one compared with that of over a million of these displaced persons living in the Russian Zone; but even there work is still going ahead. The Sees of Paderborn, Berlin, Fulda, Limburg, Hildesheim and Breslau are doing their utmost. The faithful constantly show their loyalty to the Church and their Bishops: not many official hindrances are put in their way. But if the situation is desperate in the Western Zones how much worse must it be in a country where education is made materialistic by changing the constitution and school laws of the Länder and where everything is done to disrupt the old traditions instead of permitting the revival and re-creation of traditions for those who are uprooted and in danger of becoming spiritual, moral and economic flotsam.

It is impossible to discuss the full range of problems here. There still remains the delicate question of the adjustment of the burden between the various zones and Länder, the influence of all these factors on the federal structure of Germany, the constitutional problems concerning the citizenship of those expelled, whether they be German or of some other country. One thing only is possible: to reveal in its complexity and magnitude a situation unknown to practically the whole democratic world; to force the world to face this problem, one of the decisive, but easily overlooked, hubs of the spiritual and political development of our time; to ask for its consideration in the great policies of nations and in the daily charity of Christian communities.

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