



LORD BEVERIDGE
"What has happened is enough for justice and punishment"

and old people for whom one has to care. There's the misery of idleness and wasted power, of not being able to do one's job. Think of the displaced scientists who cannot or dare not go back to their countries of origin, of clever youths barred from universities because as boys they were Nazis, and many more. There's the misery of families torn to tatters. The wives and mothers of millions who are prisoners of war, the hundreds of thousands of husbands and wives of every race—Germans, Poles, Yugoslavs—who haven't heard of their mates for years, and don't know whether they are alive or not. How much being able to do one's job means for happiness I realised when I met the most smiling people in a Lithuanian camp—two doctors and a nurse looking after the health of their fellows. They had just been helping a new displaced person into this world, a night-old baby lying under a beautifully hand-embroidered coverlet. What family affection means for happiness I realised when I went from 200 bunkers, where solitary men and solitary women were dosing down in this miserable waste, to another bunker where husbands and wives were able to be together. There we sensed at once a difference—of human happiness. I spoke to one couple there, whose home had come down to 80 cubic feet without a window or furniture—a nightwatchman resting on his bunk, his wife busy at hers. "We're managing," they said.

Hunger for Books

Though a visit to Germany to-day is a searing experience, Germany is not yet a place without hope. It shows the amazing resilience of human nature. As one British medical officer put it to me: "The health of the people, though in the spread of tuberculosis it shows danger signals, is on the whole illogically good. They are an exceptionally orderly and friendly people." They are also, or were until Hitler came, a highly educated people. The universities have all been started again and are crowded out. I found the hunger for books voiced as often as the hunger for food. I found overflowing audiences interested to hear me on Social Security and the economics of full employment, and asking highly intelligent questions for as long as I would answer them. And behind the present misery is the memory of the 12 nightmare years of Hitler's rule from which they have escaped.

One sees a woman living in a camp (four families to a room, with two curtains for a pretence of privacy) and asks if her husband is with her. "Now he is," she answers, "but for three years under Hitler he was in prison for having taken in the forbidden paper." We meet another woman playing with children in a camp and ask if these are her children. "No," she answers, "I have no children. My husband was an engineer who refused to join the Nazi party, so soon after we were married they took him to a concentration camp and in three months I got a letter to say that he was dead." Nazi victims are all in the same pool of misery to-day.

The position of the British zone is very serious. What makes it nearly desperate is that to-day is 15 months after the surrender, and there is as yet hardly any signs of improvement. I've no time to-night to set out a detailed programme of reform, for getting (in one way or another) more coal, more food, some consumer goods, the beginnings of an attack on housing, freer communication between Germany and the rest of the world, or for getting the displaced persons back to normal life. I will be content, before I end, to draw a few general morals.

Three Morals

The first moral comes from the accomplished devastation of the towns. Shops, schools, churches, hospitals, libraries, irreplaceable historical and artistic monuments of a more civilised age than our own, lie in rubble and ruin. It is just that the German people who carried war so ruthlessly into other lands should have learned at last in their own land what modern war means. But for the German people as a whole, apart from the few criminal leaders, we should regard what has happened to them as enough for justice and punishment. We should turn now from punishment to reformation. That is the first moral.

The second moral is that, whether we like it or not, it is of vital British interest to make a material, economic success of our zone of Germany. We can't withdraw from our zone without throwing away nearly everything for which we fought the war. We must stay there so that the Germans cannot make war again, until they and all other nations have given up wanting to make war. We can't stay in Germany however on our present basis of impoverishing her except at heavy material cost.

The third moral is, that it is of vital British interest to make a psychological success of our zone, to make the people there contented, peaceful, friendly. We are not doing so now. At Potsdam in July, 1945, we abandoned the Atlantic Charter of 1941. From Potsdam we set out on a programme of lowering the standard of life in Germany, of destroying industry, of depriving her of trade. The actions of the Allies, since the surrender of Germany, make the Atlantic Charter a hypocrisy. German people have shown that they have some terrible things in them, but they have also great virtues of industry and order. They are unequalled in music, and unsurpassed in science. I am not suggesting for a moment that we should ignore the terrible things. We ought to remember the victims and never allow power and lust to come once more to the top in Germany. But in the last resort one can drive out evil only by implanting good, by teaching human kindness to drive out cruelty, teaching democracy to drive out dictatorship, teaching honour to drive out treachery.

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