

THE HOMING INSTINCT

"Something Must Be Done If Peace Is Not To Bring One Vast Chaotic Trek"

(Written for "The Listener" by J.J.)

EVEN when it is voluntary, separation seldom occurs without suffering. When it is involuntary, it is accompanied by pain, longing and loneliness. It is writ large in the world of to-day. We have to think of something like a hundred million men under arms, and in the vast majority of cases inevitably separated from home and family. Then there are certainly no fewer than 60 to 70 millions of refugees and other displaced persons scattered about the earth. Thus arises one of the biggest problems that will face the world when the war ends (as I write, a conference is sitting in Bermuda to consider it). Quite apart, however, from the displacements required and enforced by war itself, there are quite a number of other factors at work.

To begin with, there is persecution: racial, political and religious. Though tens of thousands of these persecuted people have found a new home where they are rapidly finding permanent settlement, there remain tens of thousands who are still only in countries of first refuge, where the hope of permanent settlement is not assured. Even when they begin to be assimilated, it often happens that many are again uprooted: there are, for instance, the 23,000 European Jews who took refuge in Shanghai. And when demobilisation comes, how welcome will some of these refugees be in their temporary refuge? Civil war has been another cause of movement. Apparently two million people who fled from the Spanish civil war have returned to their country; about 120,000 are accepted by Mexico, where they will presumably remain, but some 120,000 it is estimated, are still unprovided for it.

The "Volksdeutsche"

Then there are the *Volksdeutsche*, those German emigrants who probably rather unwillingly answered the call back to the Fatherland when their real interests were overseas or elsewhere. Will they return, or will they stay where they are now—in many cases on land which the Germans have occupied and from which the normal population has been expelled? This last-named category of fugitives from war zones includes not only women and children and elderly people who fled from advancing armies, but also all the personnel, military and civilian, attached to Allied Governments in exile. Will they ever be able to fit the conditions they will find after the war? The horrors of deportation have fallen mainly upon the unfortunate Jews, though men of various nationalities and races, including Spanish, were among those taken from internment camps in Unoccupied France for forced labour under appalling conditions in North Africa. The U.S.A. has a Commissioner at work among liberated labourers in Allied-occupied North Africa. It is very unlikely, however, that many of the Jews from France and Norway, Belgium and Holland, Germany and Austria, Czecho-

slovakia and similar States, who have been deported to Poland, will survive the extermination policy in vogue there.

Alien Labourers

Germany herself claims to have no fewer than six million alien labourers working for her, though it is probable this figure includes two or three million prisoners-of-war. With British from the Channel Islands among them, almost every country in Europe (particularly Russia and Poland), is represented in this category of "the dispossessed." These labourers are working not only on the land, as at first, but also now in mines and munition factories: probably

"Women of Courage"

"*WOMEN of Courage*" is the title of a new ZB feature which will begin on Friday, May 14, at 9.15 p.m. from all ZB stations. Each episode will give the story of some notable woman of the past or of the present. Among those featured are Madame Chiang Kai-shek, Elizabeth Fry and Marjorie Lawrence.

over half a million are women. For "other purposes," young women and girls have disappeared from the occupied areas. No fraternisation is allowed.

Even before the present war started, transfers of population to Germany were taking place from such countries as the South Tyrol and the Baltic States, and there were also forcible exchanges in the Balkans. Further movements have since taken place, like the settlement of Germans from the Baltic States in Danzig, the removal of thousands from Alsace and Lorraine—some to south France, some to Germany—with imports also from South Tyrol, Prussia, and the Baltic States. One large plan put forward by Germany is for the creation of a huge new Dutch East in the Ukraine, with three million settlers from Holland; this as a compensation for the loss of the Dutch East Indies.

Wise Planning is Essential

Finally, following rapidly upon the track of military occupation in all territories, have come secret police, administrative personnel, and commercial managers. Just as Jewish firms in Germany have been "Aryanised," so firms in Axis-occupied territory have been "Germanised." From all these changes it will readily be seen that at the close of the war not only will all the pre-war problems still remain for solution, but also this new crop of urgent human problems will have to be faced. Clearly their final settlement will call for wise political and economic planning; but it is increasingly evident that something will have to be done long before that, in fact now, if the end of the war is not to see one vast chaotic trek in response to the homing instinct. Therefore, much depends on the present Bermuda Conference.



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