

Duplicate.

Polish expulsions

10, Lowndes Square,

L. Bevin

S.W.1.

Sloane 9542.

14.8.45.

To Bevin

My dear Minister,

Many thanks for your note.

I am most anxious to avoid troubling you, especially when you have additional great matters on your hands. But please (because of its extreme urgency) excuse my sending a note on the expulsion of Germans by Poland, contrary to your decisions at the Potsdam Conference.

You are, no doubt, much more fully informed than those of us who get the facts from "The Times" correspondent at Berlin, but it is clear that the facts given by him (in spite of his natural desire to avoid offending Polish feeling) were an understatement of the extent to which the Polish Government has disregarded the exhortation to act in an "orderly and humane" manner and to suspend expulsion.

2

I know well that you would wish British influence to be used to discourage disorderly action leading to needless suffering, *but* I want to urge that there is a greater problem involved, namely the problem of peace in the distant future. Both the manner and the extent of Polish annexations affect the question whether Germany will in the distant future accept the situation and become, as Churchill adumbrated, a "good neighbour" state in the European Council. Therefore it seems evident that any moderating influence which can be exercised by the British Government is extremely worth while.

When Churchill proclaimed a policy of compensating Poland for loss of territory in the East by acquisitions in the North and West, the policy was debated in the Lords. (I had put down a motion urging the danger of creating incentives to German revenge in the distant future.) The loss of Pomeranian land, where the population is solidly German and which is an ancient part of Germany, will be an incentive to revenge least likely to be forgotten by the Germans in the future,

especially as it is clearly contrary to the Atlantic Charter.

Churchill's proposal was supported on the assumption that the deportation which must follow annexation would be carried out in an orderly way, comparable to that of the deportations arranged between Greece and Turkey. Nobody imagined that they might mean the kind of thing recently reported, such as people dying of starvation by the roadside.

On the purely humane side of the matter perhaps something could be done by way of relief work, and I venture to ask you to see that enquiries are made as to (through the agency of UNRRA which is operating in Poland) the possibility of preventing starvation in the districts where the Poles are removing the German population, though requested at Potsdam to "suspend further expulsion, pending the examination by the Governments concerned, of the report of their representatives on the Control Council".

(E. Bevin)

10. 9. 45

German Deportations (E. Cooper)
In Lds expected order.

Facts

The increasing and justified concern as shown by correspondents in the press about the plight of the thousands of Germans who are being forcibly ejected from Poland and Czechoslovakia into a starving fatherland, without means of subsistence, (will not mitigate the victims' sufferings.)

Fore-sight
Lack of

(The matter has now passed from the sphere of politics into that of pure humanity.) The root of this disaster lies surely in the lack of fore-sight and control of the Great Powers who set Poland and Czechoslovakia on their feet.

We are repeatedly told of immense numbers of German men, women and children, (all human beings,) who are starving, diseased and dying (without any hope of decent treatment which ever way they turn, and to whomsoever they appeal.)

Victims
exhaustive
all + sundry
many millions
a blot

This, in a century which is supposed to be civilized, will for ever remain a blot on the fame of (all nations concerned, large and small, and especially on the Great Powers who control the post-war world.)

War
results -
revenge

(We pray that wars shall be no more; but we are working that, as soon as the Germans shall have regained power, wars, far more terrible than the one through which we have just now passed, ~~will take place~~ will be brought about, it may be in a hundred years' time,

by the desire of the Germans to avenge the brutalities of the deportations now taking place. The Poles and Czechs are a civilized peoples, and many, no doubt, ~~regret~~ ^{deplore} the actions

of their governments. ^{but} We are told that democracy is to be
the form of future governments, and it is surely now the
time for a wise, foreseeing and humane democracy to make
its voice heard in protest ^{actions,} against the inhuman ~~lethargy~~ and
cynical lethargy in regard to the sufferings of helpless
people, of the governments which are supposed to represent
their wishes. How that is to be accomplished, how to stop
the present European cancer from spreading, is perhaps a
matter ~~not~~ ^{and negotiation} worthy of the most serious consideration [^] of all
European and Trans-Atlantic Foreign Offices and officials.
(Death is swift, but disease is long.)

P.C.'s effort.

18, Cowley Street,
Westminster,
London, S.W. 1.

August 21st, 1940.

The Alien Problem.

Dear Sir,

May I suggest that the feeling of uneasiness caused by the secrecy which still surrounds the question of enemy aliens would be allayed by an official assurance that the policy laid down in the White Paper is being carried out without delay? It has been admitted that mistakes have been made. The public would like to receive an assurance that - where possible - they are being remedied. So far, the only assurance received is that where the services of an alien can be of proved utility to the country, use will be made of such services. What, in this policy, becomes of the British tradition of protection to the victims of political persecution?

Now that the Home Office has taken over the care of refugees, could it give us an authoritative statement on the following points:-

- (1) Have effective steps been taken to reunite families? Have husbands and wives been allowed to be interned in the same camp? Have husbands or children sent overseas in error been returned to their families?
- (2) Have those who had built up businesses over a period of years, and whose loyalty to this country was well known, been allowed to return to their businesses?

- (3) Have those who were mistakenly interned been released?
- (4) Have the incredible delays in regard to correspondence at the internees' camps been obviated?
- (5) Has the stigma on the integrity of our news services been removed by allowing internees access to newspapers and to B.B.C. news without restrictions?
- (6) Have the conditions in the camps, as regards food, hygiene and equipment, been brought up to a reasonable standard of decency and sufficiency?

The answers to the above questions will not give information to the enemy except to emphasise that this country is governed, not by panic legislation, but by its slowly evolved traditions of justice and reason. It has not failed before to give protection to the weak and sanctuary to the persecuted.

Yours truly

(Signed) NOEL-BUXTON.

The Editor,
The Manchester Guardian,
40, Fleet Street,
E.C.

Inf 46

1547

Points marked red as true
now - a memo - then in July.

Note on German Prisoners of War

The situation in Prisoner of War Camps in this country is becoming very serious. The root of the trouble is hopeless uncertainty about the date of repatriation. Prisoners of War do not know whether they will be repatriated next year, in five years' time, in twenty years' time, or not at all. This uncertainty produces political and moral effects which may be described without exaggeration as disastrous.

Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers find the attitude of the prisoners as follows:

- (1) If the Geneva Convention were interpreted according to its spirit, the prisoners should be repatriated immediately. It is argued that the letter of the Convention is not being broken, because no peace treaty has been concluded. The prisoners reply that the argument is not valid, as the Allies themselves have prevented the establishment of a responsible German government with which a treaty could be concluded. The prisoners consider, therefore, that they are no longer prisoners of war at all, but slaves working by duress for the victor.
- (2) They further consider themselves in an even worse position than criminals, as a criminal knows the date on which he will be released.
- (3) If work must be done by "Germany" for her victors as reparation, then it should be done by the whole German people and not only by those who happen to be prisoners of war by a mere accident.
- (4) Told that they are being held because of scarcity of food in Germany and because of difficulties of transport, the prisoners reply that they do not believe it, and that they want nothing better than to share with their families any sufferings that the latter may have to undergo. They find it unbearable to reflect that their families may be starving, while they themselves are shut away and prevented from doing anything to help. At the moment, the prisoners are thinking particularly about next winter and wondering how their wives, worn out after a lengthy war and its aftermath, and gravely undernourished, will be able to bring up their children properly without a father's guidance.

24 M
Confidential
Date of German Release of War
Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers note a rapid change in the atmosphere of the Camps since the beginning of the present year. In particular:

- (1) The spiritual atmosphere has most gravely deteriorated. There is not merely a general feeling of hopelessness but bitterness and hatred.
- (2) Educational activities had previously flourished. Now they are paralysed: prisoners of war refuse to attend courses, and walk about in misery. They say they don't want to be educated, but to be sent home.
- (3) There had previously been a growing acceptance of the principles of Christianity and democracy. This process is now being reversed, since the prisoners of war consider that indefinite incarceration is wholly opposed to those principles. Far from becoming Christians and democrats, they are becoming extremist and nihilistic. At best there is apathy: at worst, moral degradation and superstition (such as fortune telling by cards) to a disastrous degree. In thirteen camps nine suicides and five attempts at suicide have taken place recently.
- (4) Future friendship between this country and Germany is being jeopardised. Many prisoners who had previously been anglophil have become the opposite. The whole movement of sentiment, which had previously been in the direction of friendliness and even affection, is now towards hatred. In thinking about the future, more and more prisoners feel that they no longer have anything to hope from Britain but must look elsewhere.

German Prisoners of War in British Hands : Some Facts and Suggestions .

I. The Present Situation

(a) Numbers. On May 15th, 1946, 338,000 German prisoners of War were held in this country, and a further 97,000 in British hands in the Middle East. In addition to these, about 80,000 German POW's are still in British camps in Belgium, and an unknown number in British camps in Italy.

Since February 1946, large numbers of German POW's have been brought to this country from the USA, Belgium and Canada, so that their present number is approximately 500,000. Further numbers are expected. The large majority of the POW's is employed in agriculture or other unskilled work; as remuneration they receive up to 6/- per week for which they can buy razor blades, tooth paste, cigarettes etc.

(b) Grading. A rough estimate shows that as a result of the political screening which is undertaken by the authorities, about 15% of the prisoners may have been marked as "white" (reliable anti-Nazis), about 60% as "grey" (not any longer to be considered as Nazis), and about 25% as "black" (still considered Nazis).

In the Middle East there are many POW's who served in the famous 999 Division which consisted of former inmates of Concentration Camps, who were forced into the German Army and which was treated as a penal unit. About one third of them are former political prisoners of all shades, while the rest are ordinary offenders. Among the former are men of the highest political and moral qualities. In this country also there are POW's who were recruited for the German Army from prisons and concentration camps, among them many who have been behind barbed wire for more than ten years.

(c) Repatriation. No definite policy has been announced so far with regard to the repatriation of German POW's; they do not know whether they will have to remain in this country for another six months or for several years, and would prefer any definite policy to the present state of uncertainty.

So far repatriation has only taken place in exceptional cases which fall into one of the following categories:-

1. POW's who are disabled or seriously ill; their number seems to be considerably larger than that of all other repatriated POW's taken together.
2. A very small number of individual POW's who have been asked for by the Allied Control Commission.
3. The majority of POW's of the former broadcasting camp Ascot (about 600).
4. POW's repatriated under the "Oberon" scheme which provide for repatriation of "white" POW's, domiciled in the British Zone of Occupation, who are requested by the Control Commission, on account of their qualifications, for example teachers, legal and financial experts, policemen etc. About 400 prisoners have been repatriated so far under the Oberon scheme.

(d) Morale. Owing to the lack of any official declaration about the length of captivity, there is growing unrest in the camps. Many POW's have not seen their families for many years; news is often scanty. Many have no news at all from home because they lived in parts of Germany annexed or administered by Poland, or in the former Sudeten Territory. The information which reaches the POW's often gives rise to rumours, for example news about the food situation in Germany, or letters from relatives that German POW's have returned from Russian captivity, or that certain Nazis or SS men have been repatriated. All this provides a most fertile soil for a whispering propaganda and negative influences within the camps.

The influx of German POW's from the USA into the camps has increased this unrest. Food in most American POW's camps was plentiful, and the POW's could buy many things in their canteens which were taken away from them on arrival in this country. Above all they had been told by American

officers on leaving the USA that they were going "home" only to discover later that they were sent to Britain instead. So the "Americans" have created grave problems and increasing difficulties in the POW camps in Britain.

German POW's from Belgium, who have recently been brought to this country, although selected for their fitness, arrived in a pitiful state of malnutrition. Their stories about "Belsen rations" in British camps in Belgium have contributed to a further decline of morale among the POW's.

The morale of the genuine anti-Nazis is particularly low. They know that every sincere anti-Nazi with a clean record is needed most urgently in Germany to strengthen the democratic forces. They did what they could to strengthen democratic tendencies in the camps, often victimised by Nazi POW's, and were successful in starting the re-education of various "grey" camps, often without receiving any recognition or encouragement.

(e) Labour Output. All concerned acknowledge that, so far, the German POW's have worked extremely well. It can, however, be expected that their labour output will decline if present conditions continue. Most POW's argue that even a convict is told the length of his sentence, and that even workers compulsorily recruited from Western European countries by Nazi Germany received normal wages part of which they could remit to their families.

II. Some Criticisms.

(a) Grading. It seems that many POW's were confronted with rather awkward standard questions such as "Who is the greatest man in history?" or "What would you do if I (the screening officer) were Hitler?" or "Would you agree that all the former occupied countries should be rebuilt first by the Germans while Germany itself should be left as it is?"

Many opportunists among the POW's tried to give the answer to such questions which was expected of them. Many genuine anti-Nazis, on the other hand, showed too much self-respect; they were thus graded "black" or "grey", while former Nazis were classified as "white", in spite of their open admission of long Nazi connections.

(b) Personnel. There are camps in which the genuine anti-Nazi POW's are still treated as some sort of second-class Germans by the Camp Commandants either through lack of political understanding, or through a prejudice against everything "left". Many Commandants think that the work would suffer if they allowed political freedom, or appointed genuine anti-Nazis as camp leaders instead of the regular N.C.O.'s who preserve a strict military discipline. Thus, in many camps, the German side of the administration is still in Nazi hands or in those of typical Prussian N.C.O.'s. The same often applies to the German camp doctors. Anti Nazi POW's complain that they are victimized, and that Nazis receive favours.

(c) Medical Repatriation. Here again the German camp doctors have many opportunities to victimize anti-Nazi POW's, for medical repatriation is handled almost entirely by German doctors. Many camp doctors are Nazis or equally dangerous German nationalists.

(d) General Repatriation. In the case of repatriation under the "Oberon" scheme it is usually the technical qualification of a man which counts, and not so much his political and personal reliability. Moreover repatriation has usually been carried out under highly unsatisfactory circumstances, e.g. 600 men from Ascot POW camp were dragged through a number of camps first in this country, then in Belgium, and finally in Germany, and their treatment during the itinerancy was, in addition to a number of administrative mistakes, so bad, that it is to be feared that by the time of their final discharge all positive efforts which had been made in this country had been frustrated.

A very successful effort of re-education is at present being made at Wilton Park Training Centre. The POW's who pass through the courses at Wilton Park are mainly selected anti-Nazis. It is discouraging that, after completing the course, they are sent back to their camps instead of being

repatriated. There is a grave danger that the great opportunity will be wasted of sending men back to Germany who are, or have become, sincere friends of Britain.

(e) Segregation of "Black" POW's. Re-education efforts are, at present, largely confined to POW's listed as "white" or "grey". Among the latter category are many who claim to be anti-Nazis on opportunist grounds; while among those listed as "black" are undoubtedly many young soldiers who were Nazis for idealistic reasons, and simply know nothing else but Nazism. In the "black" camps they are left under the influence of older and inveterate Nazis.

III. Suggestions

For all these reasons, we would suggest the following points for urgent consideration : -

- (a) A definite statement by the British Government as to the probable length of captivity.
- (b) It seems most desirable and would be of the greatest psychological value to work out a release scheme (similar to that for demobilisation of H.M. Forces) so that the most depressing uncertainty of the POW's can be overcome. In this scheme priority should be given to political victims of Nazism, cases of human hardship, age groups and certain essential occupations. We would like to suggest : -
 - (1) All prisoners who suffered for their political or religious anti-Nazi convictions and were in concentration camps or prisons under the Nazis.
 - (2) All prisoners who have been active anti-Nazis already before 1945 or who refused to join the Hitler Youth for political or religious convictions, should be released according to age groups.
 - (3) All prisoners over 42 years of age as far as they were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (4) All prisoners with dependent children or other dependent relatives as far as these prisoners were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (5) Qualified experts who are politically reliable and do not fall under the Oberon-Scheme.
 - (6) The rest of the non-Nazi prisoners according to age groups.
 - (7) Special consideration and priority should be given to the release of young prisoners either with a view to employing them in vital industries (e.g. mining and building industries) or their being specially trained for youth work, provided they have not been imbued by the Nazi spirit.

This scheme requires a thorough overhaul of the practice of repatriation methods, in particular the setting up of special repatriation and reception camps with a specially qualified staff, in this country as well as in Germany, and a good co-operation between the repatriation authorities in both countries.

This scheme should start as soon as possible, and its putting into practice need not interfere with any other existing scheme (e.g. the Oberon-Scheme).

- (c) It is obvious that, even with the utmost speed it will take some time until the various groups under the scheme can be repatriated. It is, therefore, most important that there should be in the meantime a considerable improvement of the standard of living, of the earnings, and of the general status of all POW's who would fall under the scheme.

INTERNMENT OF ALIENS

Points still requiring Attention

by Charles Roden Buxton

July 18, 1940

In spite of reassuring statements in the Debate on July 10th, the following points still require to be raised, whether through Questions or directly with the Ministers concerned :

- (1) Have instructions yet been given to the police to exempt from internment the persons coming under the categories specified for exemption? I have heard of several cases during the last few days, i.e. since the Debate took place, which suggest that the police have either not been given precise instructions, or else are not in every case carrying them out. I have heard recently of sick men who were in need of medical care being taken away. In some cases the internment of persons who ought under the regulations to be exempted (e.g., men or women who have visas and tickets for America, and who frequently cannot be traced in time to catch their ship) does not only cause distress to the Refugees and their families, but also involves the Refugee organisations and the public funds in unnecessary expense.
- (2) Have the police been instructed to carry out the internment in as humane a manner as possible? Might they not be given a general instruction that Refugees are to be distinguished from criminal offenders, that they should be allowed sufficient time for packing and other preparations; that they should be enabled to take adequate luggage, and that the conveyance of these internees in the "Black Maria" is entirely unsuitable?
- (3) As regards conditions in the Camps, cold, hunger, and lack of occupation are still complained of. The use of prisons for internment of innocent aliens, especially that of women, ought to be given up.
- (4) What steps have been taken to speed up the examination of claims for exemption from internment made on behalf of persons already interned?
- (5) Regarding the deportation of interned "class C" Refugees there seems to be compulsion and need for clarification. For instance, it ought to be open to any of these people who come under the categories specified for exemption to choose to stay in this country until their claim for exemption has been considered. I have heard of Refugees with visas for America, who have in the meantime been deported to Australia. Surely this is not only distressing to the Refugees, but an unnecessary burden on British funds and shipping.
- (6) What steps are being taken to prevent separation of families, whether by enabling women to have their small children with them (which is not always allowed), and by setting up Camps where husbands and wives may be together; or by not deporting separate members of families without enabling their near relatives to accompany them.
- (7) Will it be made absolutely clear to the Dominions that "class C Refugees" (and also many of "Class B", who were expecting to have their cases reviewed) are not suspicious characters, but have been interned under general orders which imply no aspersion against the individual?

REFUGEES from NAZI OPPRESSION

A Survey of the Present Situation

by

Dorothy F. Buxton, 6 Erskine Hill, N.W. 11.

June 18. 1940.

At a moment when national defence is the sole preoccupation it may be timely to point out that the problem of the 64,000 German and Austrian refugees from Nazi Oppression has also its bearing upon it. Grave dangers are arising for British interests in connection with the new policy towards refugees which has suddenly been adopted. It appears indeed to be creating new problems and dangers on a larger scale than it is solving them. The present policy was improvised in the panic created by the methods exposed in the invasion of Norway, Holland, and Belgium. That the British situation as regards refugees is not comparable to what has obtained in the above countries is shown by the fact that whereas in England great care was exercised in the admission of refugees, in the countries above mentioned non-refugee Germans could enter and reside with the greatest ease and did so in large numbers. It was these resident Germans far more than the refugees, in fact no specific cases of refugee-traitors have so far been published and even more native Fascists who aided the invaders. Nor should it be overlooked that the attitude of suspicion and hostility against refugees now being promoted is in line with the intensive propaganda carried on by the Fascist organisations in our own country, many of whose leaders have now been found to be inimical to our national interests.

Present situation

Internment

Since May the 12th 1940 about 11,000 Germans and Austrians have been interned. We may ask how are they differentiated from those who have not been interned? Among them are a large number of C cases who were residing in the coastal and other districts effected. Their loyalty had been established by the police and the Tribunals and in the vast majority of cases cannot be questioned. As regards the refugees placed in 'B' by the Tribunals as being less worthy of confidence it is well-known that the Tribunals acted on widely differing principles. Some Tribunals began by putting all cases in 'B' who were not interned. Others appeared to have a rule to place all domestic workers in 'B'. Others put all residents in refugee hostels in 'B'. Procedure was so varied that the Home Office after some weeks issued new instructions about it, and later on decided to have the 'B' cases reexamined by new Tribunals. (Unfortunately these second Tribunals have now stopped as all B cases have been interned.)

The Internment Camps.

As far as we know the following camps are being used at present for permanent or temporary accomodation of male internees:

Warner's Camp, Seaton, Devon
Aliens Camp, Kempton Park, Sunbury on Thames
Aliens Camp, Huyton nr. Liverpool
Aliens Camp, Mooragh, Estate, Ramsey, Isle of Man
Aliens Camp, Wharf Mills, Bury, Lancs.) Most of the Germans &
Aliens Camp, Cowley Barracks, Oxford) Austrians at the time
to which our information
relates, now transferred.

There are two main complaints from all the camps:

- 1) Shortage of food
- 2) Prohibition of all newspapers and of the wireless, i.e. of all reliable news. General delay of delivery of letters to and from camps.

Ad 1) Shortage of food. The internees are always hungry. This continues in some camps where the internees arrived already six weeks ago.

Ad 2) Prohibition of all newspapers and of the wireless. This together with great delay in delivery of letters (both to and from the camps) means the absence of all reliable news at a time when all conditions make for nervous tension.

"Protected areas"

Protected areas now cover approximately a 20 mile strip along the East and South Coast but penetrate further inland covering the whole of East Anglia, the main parts of Kent, Sussex, Cornwall etc, large areas round Liverpool, Bristol, Bath, Cardiff, Pembrokeshire and the greater part of Scotland. Certain areas in Bucks, Berks, Hertfords and Middx have recently also become protected areas. "Enemy aliens" are not permitted to stay in such areas without written permission by the police. This permission is hardly ever given and people are therefore forced to leave their homes, their jobs, their friends within 24 to 48 hours (or sometimes three days). (Today, June 18th, a new regulation has been made under which the police may exempt from evacuation orders persons under 16 or over 70, sick and infirm and people engaged in work of national importance.)

As new areas are made 'protected' every few days the places still open to refugees become progressively smaller, and it is impossible for them to go anywhere with some security for the future.

In Hendon and Goldersgreen the police are now prohibiting the entry of refugees who have been suddenly turned out of other areas, on the grounds (they say) that Hendon and Golders Green are also going to be declared a protected area. In this case a sudden exodus of many thousands of refugees would be involved. (Incidentally it would mean a disastrous blow to all the shops, landlords and business interests of the whole neighbourhood.)

Wholesale Dismissal from Aliens War Service and from important industries.

Instructions (presumably official) were received by all hospitals to dismiss all refugee nurses inspite of the fact that special permission had been previously granted to them after minute examination by the Aliens War Service Department. The numbers affected are over 400 (mostly fully qualified). Meanwhile urgent appeals are being issued for volunteer nurses. The same thing has happened with refugees doing work of national importance (chemists, engineers, scientists etc.) These dismissals have taken place not only, as might have been expected, in protected areas, but all over England.

The above
justify the
have served
of suspicious
more and more
Dismissals
stories are

Effect of Anti-Alien Propaganda.

The above official measures appear to the public fully to justify the allegations made in the anti-alien propaganda, and have served to give it an enormous stimulus. Such an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility has now been created as to make it more and more difficult for refugees to carry on at all.

Dismissals of refugee domestics and refugee workers in factories are reported on a large scale, and the general intolerance is reflected in difficulties made by landlords, shopkeepers etc. (Reports and letters from internment camps and from people who had to move out of the protected areas, etc. are given in the appendix, and illustrate the above points.)

Suggested Proposals.

The present policy against aliens, and refugees in particular, is causing a situation which is most undesirable and even dangerous from every point of view. One cannot overlook the psychological situation which is created when men experience once more so many of the things which they had thought to leave behind in Germany. They lose their jobs, they are driven out of their homes, often at 48 hours notice, they are bullied and driven to despair by the attitude of large part of the general public. Their moral and material resources are strained to breaking point. They know themselves to be attacked in the front by Hitler, and now in the rear by the very people who promised them shelter from Hitler's persecution. A number of alleviations for the present situation can be suggested: Immediate measures should be:

- (i) Improvement of food and accommodation in the camps.
- (ii) Permission of papers and wireless, in the camps.
- (iii) Anti-refugee propaganda to be checked by statements from authoritative quarters, and by some instruction from the Government to the press.
- (iv) Facilities for the use of refugee labour with utilisation of their skill, training etc. (doctors, nurses, scientists, factory owners etc.) or for training, in such work as forestry or agriculture.
- (v) By the early announcement of protected areas allowing as long a period as possible for the refugees to make new arrangements and the specifying of some areas which will remain open to refugees (so far as human foresight and military plans can guarantee it).

(Nosa thinks the food is very improved now)

Can the refugees in France be saved?

Though this problem does not fall within the scope of this memorandum, we feel the urgent desire to appeal to you to save the Austrian and German refugees in France who have now to face falling into Hitler's hands. It is, of course, a gigantic problem, but even apart from the Jewish refugees we would draw attention to the many thousands of political refugees, and those who have been active in fighting Nazism since they left their country, who have nothing to expect but a firing squad. Every effort should be made to save their lives. Temporary camps could be set up for them in this country pending transport to some other country and all effort should be made to get the U.S.A. or other overseas countries to offer them asylum.

Large scale emigration of refugees

Large scale emigration of refugees from Nazi oppression to overseas countries from our own country seems also indicated, in view of the damage to their position. Their situation has become so precarious that everything possible should be done to speed up their re-emigration by planning wholesale emigration for large groups with the help of the U.S.A. and other overseas countries and the Dominions.

Refugees from Nazi oppress.

D.F. Buxton.

Appendix A.

The Internment Camps.

Warners Camp, Seaton is one of the Camps established immediately after the outbreak of war. It is the site of a former holiday camp, There were no serious complaints before the influx of masses of new internees in consequence of the great round up, but now there are not enough mattresses people sleep on the ground. There is also a food shortage.

Kempton Park is used as a Transit Camp. Has been set up on a race-course. Internees sleep in tents or in the premises of the race-course. About 3500 men have been accomodated temporarily. 1000 of them reported removed to Wharf Mills, the rest to Huyton. Serious inadaquacy of food. (N.B. There are no doubt or will be new arrivals there.)

Huyton a newly built estate, used to house about 3500 people. They live in empty houses with no furnituro, sleep on paliasses on the floor, some sleep in tents. There is constant change in the population of this camp, because it is apparently used as a clearing camp before people are sent to the Isle of Man. Serious shortage of food. No bread supplied.

Wharf Mills Bury this new camp established only a few weeks ago is in a most terrible condition. It is a derelict cotton mill with no sanitary arrangements for the 1000 men interned there, infested with rats, bugs and other vermin, no furniture, no outdoor exercise possible, because the buildings are so closely surrounded by barbed wire that the men cannot walk outside the house. The glass of most windowpanes is broken. Serious shortage of food.

To illustrate the complaints mentioned in the memo some letters from the camps are quoted below: (One must remember that these letters are written under censorship and are evidently very carefully worded).

A man from Huyton writes: "I apologize for writing so little only we are not allowed to write more than 24 lines. In the first days of our internment we only got the "steam of the cabbage" (this is a German expression denoting starvation diet). Since then there is a slight improvement. I have met about a dozen of my former Austrian friends who have been living all over England. We tried to help each other as much as possible. If a parcel arrives one shares it with others..."

Another from Huyton writes: "There is a great paper shortage and therefore we cannot write. There is no canteen and no bread; but the food we get is well cooked. We live in houses, but there is nothing in them. This camp is terribly overcrowded with people, it is far worse than Seaton..."

Another from Seaton: "...I will need 4 shillings per week to supplement my food. Books must be sent by the publishers directly; papers are not permitted at present. I would be grateful to you if you could send me anything you could spare from your sugar-ration. Also I would appreciate it if you could send me a mattress..."

Another from Kempton writes: "...make our lives as cheerful as possible. The young people between 16 and 25 have met and we arrange for sports and games; we formed a choir and hold classes. But we miss very much any material such as books, papers etc...if life goes on like this my contour will change very much!" (N.B. The writer is a specially thin man).

In a letter from Newcastle: "... have had news only once from our internees in Huyton. They all ask for food, especially tinned food (owing to delay in transit). The young ones up to 25 live in tents, the others in empty houses. Furniture, they have only what

they produce
From another
husband in Hu
whether in Hu
the floor she ha
the younger
lectur

they produce for themselves."

From another letter: "...One of the relatives has been to see her husband in Huyton. All the men are hungry. The first question was whether she had brought some bread. They sleep on pallets on the floor of the empty houses...The old people are very depressed the younger ones try to keep up their spirits and arrange for lectures, classes, games, discussions and variety evenings...."

One of the first letters from Wharf Mills which has reached me says: "...We have no papers and no news. The result of this is that the most hairraising rumours are spread. We are left to imagine, however, that perhaps they are surpassed by events. We hope to get papers and books again, for this is essential if the atmosphere is ever to become calmer.."

Women Internees.

Most of the women are interned in the Aliens Camp at Port Erin, Isle of Man. Unlike the men they are not under military authority, but under the Home Office. Their letters show that they are well satisfied with their accommodation and food. Their only complaints so far concern the fact that they have to pay so much for extras, e.g. 3 d for a bath and 6 d a week for an extra blanket etc. which tells hardest on the domestic or factory workers (mostly Austrians) who have not been in a position to save. Many hardships have, however, been caused by the internment of old women between 60 and 70, many of whom are ailing.

Refugees from Nazi oppression,
D.F. Buxton.
Appendix B.

The Anti-Alien propaganda, Protected areas etc.

The present policy has been aggravated by the ferocious and mischievous propaganda which has found all the more credence because the allegations seemed to be confirmed by the actions taken by the authorities. Very little has been done from official and authoritative quarters to check this propaganda, or to make known the opinion of responsible Government representatives such as Mr. O. Peake, M.P. who declared in the House that he was not aware of any hostile action committed by any refugee since the outbreak of the war.

The effect of this propaganda, and the lack of any official action to counter it has been deplorable both for the spiritual and the material situation of the refugees and for their security.

Hundreds and thousands have been dismissed from employment which owing to the shortage of British labour was becoming open to them, and on all hands they are subjected to suspicion and ill-treatment etc.

The banning of large "protected areas" to enemy aliens has started the stream of miserable and despairing wanderers in this country. Within 24 or 48 hours, at times within 3 days people who have already once or twice experienced the break up of their home have to leave their homes, their employment, their friends once more. They have to try to find a place where the population will tolerate them, where there is a chance to find work under much more difficult conditions than ever before. These people are even worse off than the internees because they are very often penniless, and are not even given the security of an internment camp.

@ having been proved in a court of law

If the policy of protected areas is extended, and no opportunity of work and proper residence is given to these who are driven out, there will be created "somewhere in England" a huge ghetto of penniless refugees of all descriptions, who will not know where to turn in their plight.

A refugee representative from Bristol writes: "All German and Austrian refugees have to leave Bristol within 3 days. There is a terrible mess, as nobody knows where to go. We believe that those who have not been able to leave within the 3 days will be sent by the police to a poor relief institution in a non-protected area. We are trying to find agricultural jobs for the young people on farms and would like to accomodate them in groups together, but time is so dreadfully short that we wont be able to accomplish anything within 3 days. We hope to accomodate them somewhere, somehow for the time being. We will try to keep in touch with them, and find them something more permanent afterwards".

From Newcastle: " We have just been told that we have to leave Newcastle on Monday. We will all go to Durham; at first we will take rooms and perhaps we can open a hostel to accomodate the women. About 8 families will go to London, some go to Manchester or Leeds. Luckily some of the people who have to leave have sufficient money to pay their fares. We have to care for about 30 people mostly domestics. We have about £ 15.- left in our funds which we will distribute to our women so that they can send parcels to their interned men" (In Newcastle as in all towns on the East and South-East Coast, all male "enemy aliens" have been interned, about 6 weeks ago). "All people who live near the coast have been before another Tribunal, most of them have been interned.."

Prisoners
Same simple letter

Need not be returned.

(Last July I think after the Pots Conference got up by Gollancz)

LETTER TO THE PRESS

Dear Sir,

We are gravely concerned with the plight of the German prisoners-of-war in this country. Although more than a year has passed since victory, they are told nothing about the date on which they may expect to be repatriated. But there comes a point beyond which men cannot live without hope.

Visiting ministers of religion and others report a very rapid spiritual deterioration in the camps during the last few weeks.

Men who might have gone back to Germany full of determination to build a more liberal society there are becoming hard and cynical: they say that our liberalism and Christianity are a pretence: and respect for the British institutions is rapidly being replaced by indifference and even hatred.

There is a dangerous feeling that they can no longer hope for anything from us, and must look elsewhere.

*

It is, above all, this uncertainty about their fate which is demoralising the prisoners: they feel that convicts are better off, for at any rate they know when their imprisonment will end.

But other factors add to their wretchedness. They receive letters from relatives at home in the gravest distress, but are prohibited from sending gifts, even from their own rations.

While their employers pay the Government the full Trade Union rate for their services, they themselves receive as a maximum a penny halfpenny an hour. Then there is the non-fraternisation rule, which by turning men into pariahs is an offence to Christian principles and is felt by the prisoners to be such.

** 'good workers' now receive 50% more, & other very slight improvements but it still represents a miserable pittance.*

We therefore earnestly beg His Majesty's Government:

1. To draw up a definite scheme for the release of these men, if necessary by various categories, at the earliest possible dates;
2. To announce this scheme to the prisoners with the minimum of delay since the certainty of release even at a relatively distant date would be less intolerable than the present uncertainty;
3. To pay working prisoners the rate for the job (less expenses for keep), part of the money perhaps being paid week by week and part being credited to them for their use after release;
4. To permit the despatch of food parcels, etc., to relatives;
5. To relax the non-fraternisation rule.

We make this plea for the sake both of our common humanity and of the British good name.

Violet Bonham Carter, Henry Carter,
R. Newton Flew, Victor Gollancz,
H.J. Laski, Lindsay, Gilbert Murray,
Marian E. Parmoor, R.R. Stokes.
14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2

From "Save Europe Now"
Prisoners

CONFIDENTIAL

German Prisoners of War in British Hands : Some Facts and Suggestions .

I. The Present Situation

(a) Numbers. On May 15th, 1946, 338,000 German prisoners of War were held in this country, and a further 97,000 in British hands in the Middle East. In addition to these, about 80,000 German POW's are still in British camps in Belgium, and an unknown number in British camps in Italy.

Since February 1946, large numbers of German POW's have been brought to this country from the USA, Belgium and Canada, so that their present number is approximately 500,000. Further numbers are expected. The large majority of the POW's is employed in agriculture or other unskilled work; as remuneration they receive up to 6/- per week for which they can buy razor blades, tooth paste, cigarettes etc.

(b) Grading. A rough estimate shows that as a result of the political screening which is undertaken by the authorities, about 15% of the prisoners may have been marked as "white" (reliable anti-Nazis), about 60% as "grey" (not any longer to be considered as Nazis), and about 25% as "black" (still considered Nazis).

In the Middle East there are many POW's who served in the famous 999 Division which consisted of former inmates of Concentration Camps, who were forced into the German Army and which was treated as a penal unit. About one third of them are former political prisoners of all shades, while the rest are ordinary offenders. Among the former are men of the highest political and moral qualities. In this country also there are POW's who were recruited for the German Army from prisons and concentration camps, among them many who have been behind barbed wire for more than ten years.

(c) Repatriation. No definite policy has been announced so far with regard to the repatriation of German POW's; they do not know whether they will have to remain in this country for another six months or for several years, and would prefer any definite policy to the present state of uncertainty.

So far repatriation has only taken place in exceptional cases which fall into one of the following categories:-

1. POW's who are disabled or seriously ill; their number seems to be considerably larger than that of all other repatriated POW's taken together.
2. A very small number of individual POW's who have been asked for by the Allied Control Commission.
3. The majority of POW's of the former broadcasting camp Ascot (about 600).
4. POW's repatriated under the "Oberon" scheme which provide for repatriation of "white" POW's, domiciled in the British Zone of Occupation, who are requested by the Control Commission, on account of their qualifications, for example teachers, legal and financial experts, policemen etc. About 400 prisoners have been repatriated so far under the Oberon scheme.

(d) Morale. Owing to the lack of any official declaration about the length of captivity, there is growing unrest in the camps. Many POW's have not seen their families for many years; news is often scanty. Many have no news at all from home because they lived in parts of Germany annexed or administered by Poland, or in the former Sudeten Territory. The information which reaches the POW's often gives rise to rumours, for example news about the food situation in Germany, or letters from relatives that German POW's have returned from Russian captivity, or that certain Nazis or SS men have been repatriated. All this provides a most fertile soil for a whispering propaganda and negative influences within the camps.

The influx of German POW's from the USA into the camps has increased this unrest. Food in most American POW's camps was plentiful, and the POW's could buy many things in their canteens which were taken away from them on arrival in this country. Above all they had been told by American

officers on leaving the USA that they were going "home" only to discover later that they were sent to Britain instead. So the "Americans" have created grave problems and increasing difficulties in the POW camps in Britain.

German POW's from Belgium, who have recently been brought to this country, although selected for their fitness, arrived in a pitiful state of malnutrition. Their stories about "Belsen rations" in British camps in Belgium have contributed to a further decline of morale among the POW's.

The morale of the genuine anti-Nazis is particularly low. They know that every sincere anti-Nazi with a clean record is needed most urgently in Germany to strengthen the democratic forces. They did what they could to strengthen democratic tendencies in the camps, often victimised by Nazi POW's, and were successful in starting the re-education of various "grey" camps, often without receiving any recognition or encouragement.

(e) Labour Output. All concerned acknowledge that, so far, the German POW's have worked extremely well. It can, however, be expected that their labour output will decline if present conditions continue. Most POW's argue that even a convict is told the length of his sentence, and that even workers compulsorily recruited from Western European countries by Nazi Germany received normal wages part of which they could remit to their families.

II. Some Criticisms.

(a) Grading. It seems that many POW's were confronted with rather awkward standard questions such as "Who is the greatest man in history?" or "What would you do if I (the screening officer) were Hitler?" or "Would you agree that all the former occupied countries should be rebuilt first by the Germans while Germany itself should be left as it is?"

Many opportunists among the POW's tried to give the answer to such questions which was expected of them. Many genuine anti-Nazis, on the other hand, showed too much self-respect; they were thus graded "black" or "grey", while former Nazis were classified as "white", in spite of their open admission of long Nazi connections.

(b) Personnel. There are camps in which the genuine anti-Nazi POW's are still treated as some sort of second-class Germans by the Camp Commandants either through lack of political understanding, or through a prejudice against everything "left". Many Commandants think that the work would suffer if they allowed political freedom, or appointed genuine anti-Nazis as camp leaders instead of the regular N.C.O.'s who preserve a strict military discipline. Thus, in many camps, the German side of the administration is still in Nazi hands or in those of typical Prussian N.C.O.'s. The same often applies to the German camp doctors. Anti Nazi POW's complain that they are victimized, and that Nazis receive favours.

(c) Medical Repatriation. Here again the German camp doctors have many opportunities to victimize anti-Nazi POW's, for medical repatriation is handled almost entirely by German doctors. Many camp doctors are Nazis or equally dangerous German nationalists.

(d) General Repatriation. In the case of repatriation under the "Oberon" scheme it is usually the technical qualification of a man which counts, and not so much his political and personal reliability. Moreover repatriation has usually been carried out under highly unsatisfactory circumstances, e.g. 600 men from Ascot POW camp were dragged through a number of camps first in this country, then in Belgium, and finally in Germany, and their treatment during the itinerancy was, in addition to a number of administrative mistakes, so bad, that it is to be feared that by the time of their final discharge all positive efforts which had been made in this country had been frustrated.

A very successful effort of re-education is at present being made at Wilton Park Training Centre. The POW's who pass through the courses at Wilton Park are mainly selected anti-Nazis. It is discouraging that, after completing the course, they are sent back to their camps instead of being

repatriated. There is a grave danger that the great opportunity will be wasted of sending men back to Germany who are, or have become, sincere friends of Britain.

(e) Segregation of "Black" POW's. Re-education efforts are, at present, largely confined to POW's listed as "white" or "grey". Among the latter category are many who claim to be anti-Nazis on opportunist grounds; while among those listed as "black" are undoubtedly many young soldiers who were Nazis for idealistic reasons, and simply know nothing else but Nazism. In the "black" camps they are left under the influence of elder and inveterate Nazis.

III. Suggestions

For all these reasons, we would suggest the following points for urgent consideration : -

- (a) A definite statement by the British Government as to the probable length of captivity.
- (b) It seems most desirable and would be of the greatest psychological value to work out a release scheme (similar to that for demobilisation of H.M. Forces) so that the most depressing uncertainty of the POW's can be overcome. In this scheme priority should be given to political victims of Nazism, cases of human hardship, age groups and certain essential occupations. We would like to suggest : -
 - (1) All prisoners who suffered for their political or religious anti-Nazi convictions and were in concentration camps or prisons under the Nazis.
 - (2) All prisoners who have been active anti-Nazis already before 1945 or who refused to join the Hitler Youth for political or religious convictions, should be released according to age groups.
 - (3) All prisoners over 42 years of age as far as they were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (4) All prisoners with dependent children or other dependent relatives as far as these prisoners were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (5) Qualified experts who are politically reliable and do not fall under the Oberon-Scheme.
 - (6) The rest of the non-Nazi prisoners according to age groups.
 - (7) Special consideration and priority should be given to the release of young prisoners either with a view to employing them in vital industries (e.g. mining and building industries) or their being specially trained for youth work, provided they have not been imbued by the Nazi spirit.

This scheme requires a thorough overhaul of the practice of repatriation methods, in particular the setting up of special repatriation and reception camps with a specially qualified staff, in this country as well as in Germany, and a good co-operation between the repatriation authorities in both countries.

This scheme should start as soon as possible, and its putting into practice need not interfere with any other existing scheme (e.g. the Oberon-Scheme).

- (c) It is obvious that, even with the utmost speed it will take some time until the various groups under the scheme can be repatriated. It is, therefore, most important that there should be in the meantime a considerable improvement of the standard of living, of the earnings, and of the general status of all POW's who would fall under the scheme.

From - Save Europe Now:

Confidential

Note on German Prisoners of War

The situation in Prisoner of War Camps in this country is becoming very serious. The root of the trouble is hopeless uncertainty about the date of repatriation. Prisoners of War do not know whether they will be repatriated next year, in five years' time, in twenty years' time, or not at all. This uncertainty produces political and moral effects which may be described without exaggeration as disastrous.

Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers find the attitude of the prisoners as follows:

- (1) If the Geneva Convention were interpreted according to its spirit, the prisoners should be repatriated immediately. It is argued that the letter of the Convention is not being broken, because no peace treaty has been concluded. The prisoners reply that the argument is not valid, as the Allies themselves have prevented the establishment of a responsible German government with which a treaty could be concluded. The prisoners consider, therefore, that they are no longer prisoners of war at all, but slaves working by duress for the victor.
- (2) They further consider themselves in an even worse position than criminals, as a criminal knows the date on which he will be released.
- (3) If work must be done by "Germany" for her victors as reparation, then it should be done by the whole German people and not only by those who happen to be prisoners of war by a mere accident.
- (4) Told that they are being held because of scarcity of food in Germany and because of difficulties of transport, the prisoners reply that they do not believe it, and that they want nothing better than to share with their families any sufferings that the latter may have to undergo. They find it unbearable to reflect that their families may be starving, while they themselves are shut away and prevented from doing anything to help. At the moment, the prisoners are thinking particularly about next winter and wondering how their wives, worn out after a lengthy war and its aftermath, and gravely undernourished, will be able to bring up their children properly without a father's guidance.

From - 2nd Group 1100

Wife of German Prisoners of War

Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers note a rapid change in the atmosphere of the Camps since the beginning of the present year. In particular:

- (1) The spiritual atmosphere has most gravely deteriorated. There is not merely a general feeling of hopelessness but bitterness and hatred.
- (2) Educational activities had previously flourished. Now they are paralysed: prisoners of war refuse to attend courses, and walk about in misery. They say they don't want to be educated, but to be sent home.
- (3) There had previously been a growing acceptance of the principles of Christianity and democracy. This process is now being reversed, since the prisoners of war consider that indefinite incarceration is wholly opposed to those principles. Far from becoming Christians and democrats, they are becoming extremist and nihilistic. At best there is apathy: at worst, moral degradation and superstition (such as fortune telling by cards) to a disastrous degree. In thirteen camps nine suicides and five attempts at suicide have taken place recently.
- (4) Future friendship between this country and Germany is being jeopardised. Many prisoners who had previously been anglophil have become the opposite. The whole movement of sentiment, which had previously been in the direction of friendliness and even affection, is now towards hatred. In thinking about the future, more and more prisoners feel that they no longer have anything to hope from Britain but must look elsewhere.

Lord Buxton.

(Newspapers in Office.)

14.10.46.

Notes.

German Prisoners of War.

- 13.9.46. 15000 Prisoners of War go home each month.
(News Chron. Page 1. 13.9.46)
- 15.9.46. 200,000 German prisoners still in Denmark.
(Observer. Page 5. 15.9.46)
- 16.9.46. Appeal for Germany. Save Europe Now. Bishop of
Chichester, Prof. G. Murray, Lord Lindsay,
Earl Russell, V. Gollancz, Rev. Henry Carter.
(News Chron. Subscriptions wanted.
now)
- 17.9.46. Prisoners of War to be returned/to help build
Germany anew on the foundations laid by the
British administrators.
(Evening Standard. p.2. Leading article.
" " p.4. German Prisoners
out unguarded at 13 hostels near Chatham. "When
you see them say "Good morning" or "good evening"
but do not detain them in conversation. ...You
can talk to prisoners of war on the public
highway, but if they talk to you they are committing
an offence". (Colonel Goldsmith, Camp Commandant,
Walderslade, Kent.)

15. 10. 46. German P.O.W's. may be allowed to stay
News Chron. 15. 10. 46. p. 6

G. Prisoners. *DJB*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

DJB P.O.W. WORK, 1945 - 6.

Early in 1945 there were 190 camps. By the autumn there were 263 and also about 100 hostels where men from the camps had been boarded out to be nearer their work (on the land or repairing roads, buildings etc.) The total number of P.O.W is approximately roughly equal to the total population of say 24 towns the size of Lichfield, or of 9 towns the size of Winchester. The organisations or individuals concerned with work for this vast population are.-

- (1). War Prisoners Aid Department of the World Alliance of the Y.M.C.A.
- (2). Chaplain General of the Forces.
- (3). The Apostolic Delegate for Great Britain.
- (4). The British Council of Churches, (only quite recently mobilised).

Education and 'Re-education'.

The Y.M.C.A. represents a secular branch of Christian activity and there fore is primarily concerned with Welfare work and Education. It took the initiative however in procuring a co-worker qualified to take Lutheran services (in German) in the camps. Hence the invitation to Pastor Forell.

For a long time he fulfilled the double task of pastoral work and also of the specifically Y.M.C.A. work. He collected books and instruments as he went along and promoted the starting of classes in every camp visited, and when at all possible, of a band.

Pastoral Work.

The visiting and holding of services in 2 - 300 camps scattered all over the country to the far north of Scotland would obviously demand scores of pastors to be effectively carried out. Forell has persuaded the W.O. to sanction the services of some (not all!) of the Confessional (refugee) pastors. (All of them were already fully employed and can only give part time to the P.O.W. work). In addition Forell has been able to get permits for two colleagues from Sweden who speak German. There are also chaplains among the P.O.W. but for a long time they were not in a position to function. Forell has been able - to some degree - to arrange for them to do so. Nevertheless the numbers of pastors are quite inadequate. Many camps are in very inaccessible places and some have never yet been visited at all. This imposes a great strain on Forell and others who make the utmost efforts to achieve the impossible.

In general the difficulties inherent in this P.O.W. work are overwhelming and it takes very exceptional qualities to begin to overcome them. Imagine taking services, or attempting other pastoral work before a single German hymn book or Bible is available! Imagine the task of starting handicrafts without tools, or classes in all sorts of subjects without a single German text book or writing materials! This 'start from scratch' had to be made in nearly 200 camps; and after 2 - 3 years continuous effort many things are still in very inadequate supply (18,000 Bibles and N.T.s were procured through an application to the Oecumenical Commission at Geneva - an example of what one 'good idea' can achieve, and a shipload of paper, by Forell's instrumentality was brought from Sweden.)

Education.

Professors and teachers have to be found and approved from among the P.O.W. themselves, and the attempt made to distribute them throughout the camps according to the needs of the students. A system of questionnaires has been established with a view to ascertaining these needs and potential personal for meeting them, involving a vast amount of office work. Again P.O.W. of specially high qualifications must be sought out to fill the post of Directors of Education in each camp.

Forells' work has not only followed the routine lines, but thanks to his resourcefulness and drive has led on to important developments.

Training Centre.

He gained the consent of the W.O. to the establishment of 'School Camp' for (1) the training of school teachers.

(2) the training of candidates for ordination.

The number of applications for this training is very large. Forell interviews all candidates and after this preliminary sifting he submits individual reports to the W.O. by whom each case is strictly vetted.

The number of students ^{& teachers} admitted so far is approximately 400,

~~There are also a number of students who are not admitted~~

drawn from the camps all over the country. The number would be far larger were it not for the long delays required by the process of 'vetting'.
A library of 800 theological books & 1000 teachers books were collected for the Printing Press. School-camp by May 1945, & a circulating library organised from there.

The Training Centre (or 'School Camp') makes very extensive new calls on the book supplies. Forell devised the scheme of a printing press worked by the P.O.W. themselves. This is in full swing. Again, however, nothing can be done without the sanction of the W.O. (thus C.R.B.'s book had to be scrutinised both in the original and in the German translation!) The ^{printing} press is used mainly for text books, ^{German plays, German hymn sheets (50,000)} but also for a monthly News Sheet and a 'Christian News Letter' which circulates to all camps and for the first time make possible some degree of community life for these otherwise isolated blocks of German humanity

The Scope and Difficulties of the work, are to a slight degree indicated in the following typical extracts from many pages of Notes based on answers to the questionnaires ~~sent~~ sent out to the camps at an early stage of the Y.M.C.A. work.

Information was sought inter alia as to the numbers of teachers available in each camp and as to the number and subjects of books required. The answers in many cases were "worked out in such detail as to convey a most impressive picture of the active spirit prevailing and of the readiness of P.O.W.s to respond to any educational suggestions."

Replies to the second set of 25 questionnaires gave "further evidence how much more could be achieved" in the sphere of education were it not for the "depressing insufficiency of the present stocks of means of instruction preventing much educational work in the camps which would otherwise have been started at once."

... "The 10,000 copies of the 'Kleine Englische Sprachschule' now received from the U.S.A. is only a beginning to fill the vast gap in this particular connection."

Out of the 25 camps in question no less than 7 had no minister. At the same time another camp had 7 Protestant pastors (who might be filling the gaps in above camps). Of qualified teachers one camp had 29 and another with an equal number of P.O.W. only 4.

Camp had 30 qualified teachers and 1925 students, but they had only one school book (a dictionary); they also asked for 2,000 exercise books and 2,000 pencils.

Several camps with very few or no courses had 12 - 17,000 potential students if the necessary means of instruction could be forthcoming.

Camp had 10 professional teachers but no facilities for courses. In Camp there were 14 courses and 1,800 students.

Camp there were 20 courses (1,010 students) in preparation for matric, and other exams, but only one text book and an English grammar. Camp sent in a request for teachers in 11 different subjects.

In Camp there were 200 musicians who between them could play 17 different musical instruments but there were no instruments at all!

.....

In the third quarter of 1945, 45,600 religious and educational books were distributed to Camps and hospitals, 40,000 Gospels, 11,400 books of plays (printed by the P.O.W. press), not counting a great number of pamphlets etc.

.....

Organisation.

The offices and the staff of the War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A. which have to cope with vast problems of organisation (only slightly indicated in the above notes) are very small and inadequate. No doubt the work would have been far more restricted than it is, and have followed more routine lines had it not been for the gifts of imagination and of driving power which Pastor Forell brings to the work; and also his remarkable power of getting on with the British commandants, ~~and~~ above all with the W.O. officials and of gaining their approval and co-operation. The fact however that W.O. consent is required at every step creates such delays and obstacles that the amount nevertheless achieved seems most remarkable. Thus no teacher or any one

else can ever be transferred from one camp to another without exhaustive W.O. enquiries and consideration).

Forell's salary is paid by his Swedish Church as a contribution to the good cause. His expenses are in the main met by the ^{World Alliance of} ~~the~~ ^{the} Y.M.C.A. When the war ended however, the American Y.M.C.A. on which the W.A. Funds mainly depend, lost much of their interest in the work for P.O.W. and sent a cable to announce a serious cut in their contribution. This brought the retention of some of the already far too small office staff into jeopardy. And yet the vast superstructure of educational work depends entirely on this slender basis, where a few devoted workers struggle to keep going a complex and highly productive machine. Apart from this the need of expenditure on all sorts of things which are needed quickly and cannot wait to be discussed (and perhaps turned down) by Committees are constantly arising in Forell's journeys from camp to camp all over the country. In certain situations the only solution is for him to make the necessary payments himself. The amount he can achieve with some independent financial resources is out of all proportion to their size. At any moment moreover, he may once more be faced with the demand for the discharge of some assistant who is indispensable. This sword of Damocles is always hanging over his head and the only security for much of his magnificent work lies in the support he can privately obtain from English sympathisers. *(of which we are the chief!)*

D.P. Bruster

I enclose these papers, but may
I have ^{yellow one} them back soon? (I expect
you have them in any case?)

The repatriation scheme is a
good step forward since the Conf. &
the letter. But the ^{individual} men can't
yet tell whether they will come at
the end of the queue - ^{with} perhaps 2
years still to wait. And in the
meantime they see violent Communists
& former Nazis being ~~sent~~ given
priority & sent home, as a result
of an arbitrary & futile 'screening'
which is worse than useless.

But I will send the typed notes
Administration, Love & sympathy, &
as soon as possible. ^{gratitude, from Dorothy.}

Oct 15

Peaslake

My dear Ned,

I have today returned
from a 5 days tour with Forell
who was visiting POW camps.

Tomorrow (or next day)
I shall have a typist & intend
to put down notes on all that
I learnt from Forell. I shall
post you a copy immediately.

I think the best short
statement I know is the Save Europe
letter enclosed; & all the important
~~the~~ aspects were well raised at the
Conference in July of
which I enclose the Report.

as interpreter etc & did a fine work for
the POW. But now he gets letters from
them expressing terrible disappointment
at their exclusion from the Repatriation
scheme (Howard Oct 8) &
anticipates riots & 'go-slow' methods,
& turning to Communism
there. I am asking him to let me
see these letters so as to type out
extracts.

As regards the enclosed notes I am
asking Forell to check them. Am not
quite sure what he had in mind
when he said formers should help
with the screening (a ridiculous farce
at present). He may have meant
formers other than POWs themselves.

How Charlie must admire you
for sticking to your public activities when
you must be so harassed & distracted.
With much love
Dorothy

P of W

Whingate, Peaslake
Surrey
Oct 18.

Dearest Noel,

Herewith my notes from Forell.
They cover a good part of the ground.
But I haven't got by me e.g. the
most recent additions to pay of POW.
as I hand on all Hanson or press
references on this subject ^(of P.W.) to Forell
himself & he keeps the file.

I have not mentioned the
very urgent matter of the 999
Penal Division in the M. East - nor
of the ~~the~~ general question of the
+ 100,000 P. W. there: - in Egypt, Benghazi
etc. One of my best friends among
young refugees here (ex-service men now)
spent a long time attached to these camps

P.O.W.

Private

(one cant mention Forell's name)

Notes based on talks with Pastor Forell.

He agreed that what we now have to work for may roughly be classified under four headings:

(1) Non Fraternisation. This is perhaps the worst factor in evoking bad feeling among the P.O.W. and destroying their morale. It is unintelligible to them as it is to so many of us that this rule should be maintained so long after the end of the war. During the war there were obvious reasons for it, but now it can only be attributed to a desire on our part to treat them as outcasts and pariahs. But even so it is inconsistent with our policy in Germany itself where the ban has been lifted. From our own point of view of course it means re-educating them in the opposite direction to what we had professedly intended. How can they be expected to learn anything from us when we are treating them as inferior and undesirable people, and a prisoner who may have a little talk with an English girl who happens to be walking along the road in the same direction is liable to ~~xxx~~ quite severe punishment (I have heard of a case of this). It is in fact a denial of one of the basic ideas of democracy i.e. of the value and dignity of the individual. *And it destroys the best opportunity for the prisoners to acquire understanding of the British outlook etc.*

(2) Chances of Repatriation. The announcement of the repatriation scheme was of course welcomed but it is only one step in the right direction. The individual prisoner cannot tell how soon his turn may come; ~~and~~ at the rate of 15,000 per month it will take *over two* years to work *through*. Moreover, a very depressing feature lies in the erratic nature of the 'screening'. The so-called 'screening' often consists of an interview of a few moments and this is considered enough to unveil the real heart and mind of the man. It is often the tough and hardened liars who get through best. The conscientious man may hesitate in his desire to give a really correct answer. Or the prisoner may be far too nervous to do himself justice; he is well aware that his fate for years to come may depend on what he says; and we all know that if we are nervous we rarely show the best of ourselves or convey a true impression. A really expert psychologist, a man with exceptional powers of intuition, a knowledge of human nature, might possibly be able to arrive at the truth in a few minutes interview. German people moreover, if of the right type, would be helped by their knowledge of the German mind, the history of the Nazi party, and of all the conditions which made up the background of the man before him. It goes without saying that few British people would have any of these qualifications. The result is that many 'Whites' get into the 'Grey' or even the 'Black' category, and many 'Blacks', people trained to self-assurance coupled with duplicity, get into the 'White' category. It has naturally a depressing and embittering effect on the genuine anti-Nazi to see what sort of 'nice boys' we often choose for repatriation. ~~⊕~~ The latter include numbers of Communists who are free in their denunciations of Hitler thereby satisfying their questioners. *The system is a Nazi-like training to fraud.*

In this connection it is really very strange that Commandants of the camps are not apparently consulted. In many cases they acquire knowledge of individuals and also could suggest the right individuals

⊕ In one camp the camp leader said that out of 70 men chosen for repatriation 20 were not 'white' at all; - some had been strong Nazis & later thought it would pay better to switch over to Moscow!

i.e. Nazis Communists

among the prisoners themselves who could help with the 'screening'. *Imagine the effect on German opinion when a former Nazi official turns up again in his former locality !!*

for 90% of POWs
(3) Help for Families. The chief cause of depression and bad morale lies in the anxiety the men now feel about the conditions at home. When letters began to arrive many wives refrained from telling the full truth about their terrible conditions of life, and the prisoners tended to discount some of the awful descriptions that could be read in the press as it seemed to them unbelievable. Now they realise *the bitter realities* that it was all too true. They are terribly anxious as to the fate of their wives and children in the coming winter, exhausted as they know they must be from severe malnutrition and every kind of privation. If only they could send them some help it would be a relief to their feelings. But of course they are not allowed to send parcels. As regards their absurdly small pay Forell believes that many would forego buying even the small necessaries for themselves which the pay can cover-in order to be able to help their families.

(4) Loss of Property. This applies especially to the P.O.W. from America who were able to bring over many useful things, e.g. typewriters, and in some cases quite a lot of dollars. The money is said to be credited to them. This ought to be verified. In the case of other objects a list is made at the outset but there is reason to believe that most of the things disappear. When a man is transferred from one camp to another he often has the embittering experience of being told that his property cannot be found.

.....

General Observations.

If the above matters could to some degree be put right it would effect a tremendous change in the prisoners' outlook and in their desire to work which at present is often at a very low ebb. These improvements in their position are a most urgent matter as the men are becoming very cynical and this can only be cured by deeds rather than by words. Thus when the repatriation scheme works badly they ask themselves, is it after ~~xxx~~ all only a trick? So many of them wait and wait, and their own release seems as far off as ever. Their wives too have given up hope and no longer conceal facts which are *especially* ~~very~~ painful, e.g. the arrival of a baby whose father was a Russian soldier. Or it may be that he hears for the first time that his home has been entirely destroyed; or a prisoner whose greatest interest has been in his books hears that none of them are left. They hear too that their wife or perhaps aged parents have lost up to 4 stone in weight, or that their relations have died of tuberculosis.

In face of all this our lectures on democracy and all the associated propoganda tends to become worse than useless - just a source of further discredit to us because our deeds are in such contrast to our words.

- Addenda
1. Length of time separated from families should be much more taken into account.
 2. Farmans should be given priority - regardless of (nominal) outlook.
 3. Forell is convinced that not more than 15-20% of the Ger people were Nazi at heart. The rest fell into line because they had to - for the sake of their children etc.

This is a copy of the questions but not
of the Debate in Parl. on same day.

Re 999 Div. etc

Hansard Oct. 8. 46.

PRISONERS OF WAR

MIDDLE EAST.

29 and 30. MR. STOKES asked the Secretary of State for War (1)

how many of the German prisoners of war still detained in North Africa belonged to No. 999 German Division; and how many of that number had spend three years or more in German concentration camps before being forced into the German army:

(2) how many German prisoners of war are still detained in North Africa and when it is expected to repatriate them to their own country.

88. MR. DEREK WALKER-SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War whether the arrangements for repatriation of German prisoners of war apply to prisoners at present in the Middle East; and, if so, on what terms and conditions.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. BELLENGER): As explained on 4th June, in reply to a Question by my hon. Friend the Member for West Coventry (Mr. Edelman), separate statistics relating to 999 Division are not available and could not be obtained without a considerable amount of labour. In dealing with repatriation, however, full regard is paid to the individual records of prisoners of war. There are at present about 98,000 German and 5,000 Austrian prisoners of war detained in the Middle East Command, of whom 2,000 anti-Nazi Germans and all the Austrians are to be repatriated as shipping becomes available. It has not yet been found possible to bring the Middle East within the scope of the scheme decided upon for the United Kingdom but an accelerated programme on the lines of that authorised for the United Kingdom will be introduced as soon as circumstances permit.

MR. STOKES: Is not my right hon. Friend aware that these camp officials have very little to do? Surely, it is possible for them to ascertain all about every prisoner under their control. Will he give the House an assurance that those people who are well-known anti-Nazis, as all these fellows are, will be given as speedy a release as possible?

MR. BELLENGER: I think I can give the assurance for which my Hon. Friend asks, that they will be given as speedy a release as possible, but the matter is not so easy to deal with as is the case of prisoners in this country.

Mr. Benn Levy: Is my right hon. Friend satisfied that the repatriations, when they are completed in June, will cover all members of the 999 Division?

MR. BELLENGER: They will take their turn. As I have said, we hope to expedite the arrangements for these men almost concurrently

with the arrangements we are making for prisoners, a much larger number, who have to go from this country back to Germany.

MAJOR LEGGE-BOURKE: Will the Secretary of State give an assurance that the release of these men in the Middle East is not being delayed in order to complete the course in crypto Communism to which they are being subjected by the P.I.D.?

MR.BELLENGER: I was not aware of that fact, if such it be.

MR.EDELMAN: Is it not a fact that these men of the 999 Division were among the first opponents of Nazism in Germany and, therefore, is it not just that whatever the labour involved in order to avoid an injustice, even to a single man, the necessary research should be made?

MR.BELLENGER: Yes, Sir, many of them were, and we will do our best to get them home as speedily as possible.

MR. JAMES HUDSON: In view of the fact that all the Austrian prisoners were found to be satisfactory, would my right hon.Friend give some preferential treatment to the Austrians, who have been labouring under a special grievance in this matter?

MR.BELLENGER: Yes, Sir, they will get some preferential treatment.

MR.STOKES: May I ask my right hon.Friend, in view of the expressions this afternoon, if he will give instructions that these people should be sorted out, as there is plenty of staff and plenty of time to do it?

MR.BELLENGER: I do not know if there is plenty of staff to do it, I do not think so, but I will see that these prisoners are sorted out, as my hon.Friend suggests.

35. MRS MANNING: asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is yet in a position to give a date by which time all German prisoners of war who wish to return to their own country will have left these islands.

106. MR.PETER FREEMAN asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will now announce his intentions with regard to the 400,000 German prisoners of war now in this country; and whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to discriminate in any way between those known to have been victimised for active anti-Nazi opinions and those who have held definite Nazi responsibilities.

MR.BELLENGER: The plans for the repatriation of German prisoners of war from the United Kingdom were announced by His Majesty's Government on 12.September. I am not able, at present, to add anything to the statement then made.

German Prisoners of War in British Hands : Some Facts and Suggestions .

I. The Present Situation

(a) Numbers. On May 15th, 1946, 338,000 German prisoners of War were held in this country, and a further 97,000 in British hands in the Middle East. In addition to these, about 80,000 German POW's are still in British camps in Belgium, and an unknown number in British camps in Italy.

Since February 1946, large numbers of German POW's have been brought to this country from the USA, Belgium and Canada, so that their present number is approximately 500,000. Further numbers are expected. The large majority of the POW's is employed in agriculture or other unskilled work; as remuneration they receive up to 6/- per week for which they can buy razor blades, tooth paste, cigarettes etc.

(b) Grading. A rough estimate shows that as a result of the political screening which is undertaken by the authorities, about 15% of the prisoners may have been marked as "white" (reliable anti-Nazis), about 60% as "grey" (not any longer to be considered as Nazis), and about 25% as "black" (still considered Nazis).

In the Middle East there are many POW's who served in the famous 999 Division which consisted of former inmates of Concentration Camps, who were forced into the German Army and which was treated as a penal unit. About one third of them are former political prisoners of all shades, while the rest are ordinary offenders. Among the former are men of the highest political and moral qualities. In this country also there are POW's who were recruited for the German Army from prisons and concentration camps, among them many who have been behind barbed wire for more than ten years.

(c) Repatriation. No definite policy has been announced so far with regard to the repatriation of German POW's; they do not know whether they will have to remain in this country for another six months or for several years, and would prefer any definite policy to the present state of uncertainty.

So far repatriation has only taken place in exceptional cases which fall into one of the following categories:-

1. POW's who are disabled or seriously ill; their number seems to be considerably larger than that of all other repatriated POW's taken together.
2. A very small number of individual POW's who have been asked for by the Allied Control Commission.
3. The majority of POW's of the former broadcasting camp Ascot (about 600).
4. POW's repatriated under the "Oberon" scheme which provide for repatriation of "white" POW's, domiciled in the British Zone of Occupation, who are requested by the Control Commission, on account of their qualifications, for example teachers, legal and financial experts, policemen etc. About 400 prisoners have been repatriated so far under the Oberon scheme.

(d) Morale. Owing to the lack of any official declaration about the length of captivity, there is growing unrest in the camps. Many POW's have not seen their families for many years; news is often scanty. Many have no news at all from home because they lived in parts of Germany annexed or administered by Poland, or in the former Sudeten Territory. The information which reaches the POW's often gives rise to rumours, for example news about the food situation in Germany, or letters from relatives that German POW's have returned from Russian captivity, or that certain Nazis or SS men have been repatriated. All this provides a most fertile soil for a whispering propaganda and negative influences within the camps.

The influx of German POW's from the USA into the camps has increased this unrest. Food in most American POW's camps was plentiful, and the POW's could buy many things in their canteens which were taken away from them on arrival in this country. Above all they had been told by American

officers on leaving the USA that they were going "home" only to discover later that they were sent to Britain instead. So the "Americans" have created grave problems and increasing difficulties in the POW camps in Britain.

German POW's from Belgium, who have recently been brought to this country, although selected for their fitness, arrived in a pitiful state of malnutrition. Their stories about "Belsen rations" in British camps in Belgium have contributed to a further decline of morale among the POW's.

The morale of the genuine anti-Nazis is particularly low. They know that every sincere anti-Nazi with a clean record is needed most urgently in Germany to strengthen the democratic forces. They did what they could to strengthen democratic tendencies in the camps, often victimised by Nazi POW's, and were successful in starting the re-education of various "grey" camps, often without receiving any recognition or encouragement.

(e) Labour Output. All concerned acknowledge that, so far, the German POW's have worked extremely well. It can, however, be expected that their labour output will decline if present conditions continue. Most POW's argue that even a convict is told the length of his sentence, and that even workers compulsorily recruited from Western European countries by Nazi Germany received normal wages part of which they could remit to their families.

II. Some Criticisms.

(a) Grading. It seems that many POW's were confronted with rather awkward standard questions such as "Who is the greatest man in history?" or "What would you do if I (the screening officer) were Hitler?" or "Would you agree that all the former occupied countries should be rebuilt first by the Germans while Germany itself should be left as it is?"

Many opportunists among the POW's tried to give the answer to such questions which was expected of them. Many genuine anti-Nazis, on the other hand, showed too much self-respect; they were thus graded "black" or "grey", while former Nazis were classified as "white", in spite of their open admission of long Nazi connections.

(b) Personnel. There are camps in which the genuine anti-Nazi POW's are still treated as some sort of second-class Germans by the Camp Commandants either through lack of political understanding, or through a prejudice against everything "left". Many Commandants think that the work would suffer if they allowed political freedom, or appointed genuine anti-Nazis as camp leaders instead of the regular N.C.O.'s who preserve a strict military discipline. Thus, in many camps, the German side of the administration is still in Nazi hands or in those of typical Prussian N.C.O.'s. The same often applies to the German camp doctors. Anti Nazi POW's complain that they are victimized, and that Nazis receive favours.

(c) Medical Repatriation. Here again the German camp doctors have many opportunities to victimize anti-Nazi POW's, for medical repatriation is handled almost entirely by German doctors. Many camp doctors are Nazis or equally dangerous German nationalists.

(d) General Repatriation. In the case of repatriation under the "Oberon" scheme it is usually the technical qualification of a man which counts, and not so much his political and personal reliability. Moreover repatriation has usually been carried out under highly unsatisfactory circumstances, e.g. 600 men from Ascot POW camp were dragged through a number of camps first in this country, then in Belgium, and finally in Germany, and their treatment during the itinerancy was, in addition to a number of administrative mistakes, so bad, that it is to be feared that by the time of their final discharge all positive efforts which had been made in this country had been frustrated.

A very successful effort of re-education is at present being made at Wilton Park Training Centre. The POW's who pass through the courses at Wilton Park are mainly selected anti-Nazis. It is discouraging that, after completing the course, they are sent back to their camps instead of being

350 m. Govt. ~~pts~~ 2 (23-10 less 1/- a day + 23 exp)

- 3 -

repatriated. There is a grave danger that the great opportunity will be wasted of sending men back to Germany who are, or have become, sincere friends of Britain.

(e) Segregation of "Black" POW's. Re-education efforts are, at present, largely confined to POW's listed as "white" or "grey". Among the latter category are many who claim to be anti-Nazis on opportunist grounds; while among those listed as "black" are undoubtedly many young soldiers who were Nazis for idealistic reasons, and simply know nothing else but Nazism. In the "black" camps they are left under the influence of elder and inveterate Nazis.

III. Suggestions

For all these reasons, we would suggest the following points for urgent consideration : -

- (a) A definite statement by the British Government as to the probable length of captivity.
- (b) It seems most desirable and would be of the greatest psychological value to work out a release scheme (similar to that for demobilisation of H.M. Forces) so that the most depressing uncertainty of the POW's can be overcome. In this scheme priority should be given to political victims of Nazism, cases of human hardship, age groups and certain essential occupations. We would like to suggest : -
 - (1) All prisoners who suffered for their political or religious anti-Nazi convictions and were in concentration camps or prisons under the Nazis.
 - (2) All prisoners who have been active anti-Nazis already before 1945 or who refused to join the Hitler Youth for political or religious convictions, should be released according to age groups.
 - (3) All prisoners over 42 years of age as far as they were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (4) All prisoners with dependent children or other dependent relatives as far as these prisoners were not active Nazis or have to be treated as such.
 - (5) Qualified experts who are politically reliable and do not fall under the Oberon-Scheme.
 - (6) The rest of the non-Nazi prisoners according to age groups.
 - (7) Special consideration and priority should be given to the release of young prisoners either with a view to employing them in vital industries (e.g. mining and building industries) or their being specially trained for youth work, provided they have not been imbued by the Nazi spirit.

This scheme requires a thorough overhaul of the practice of repatriation methods, in particular the setting up of special repatriation and reception camps with a specially qualified staff, in this country as well as in Germany, and a good co-operation between the repatriation authorities in both countries.

This scheme should start as soon as possible, and its putting into practice need not interfere with any other existing scheme (e.g. the Oberon-Scheme).

- (c) It is obvious that, even with the utmost speed it will take some time until the various groups under the scheme can be repatriated. It is, therefore, most important that there should be in the meantime a considerable improvement of the standard of living, of the earnings, and of the general status of all POW's who would fall under the scheme.

SAVE EUROPE NOW

14 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.2

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Acting Secretary: MRS. PEGGY DUFF.

July 5th, 1946

Dear Sir or Madam,

PRISONERS OF WAR

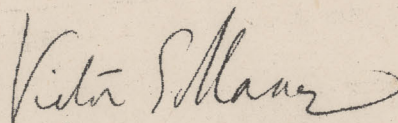
You no doubt get a great deal of circular material: but may we particularly ask you to read the enclosed memoranda, which has been compiled from reliable sources?

A conference to consider this question will be held at the Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster (a minute's walk from St. James's Park Tube Station) on Tuesday, July 16th, at 11 in the morning precisely. We should be grateful if you could make a special effort to attend. It is hoped that some practical proposals will emerge. The conference will be strictly private.

The discussion will be opened by Pastor Forell (who will speak very shortly after 11 o'clock). Forell is a Swedish pastor who was in Germany from 1929 to 1942 for the Swedish Protestant Church. Since the beginning of 1944 he has been in charge of spiritual welfare work in the World Alliance of the Y.M.C.A. (Prisoner of War Aid). He has visited some two hundred camps in England during the last two years under War Office auspices and is in almost daily touch with the P.O.W. situation in this country. He has also visited Germany twice since victory for the purpose of co-ordinating P.O.W. work.

We should be grateful if you would strike out the relevant words on the enclosed postcard, sign it, and post it at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,



Chairman

Note on German Prisoners of War

The situation in Prisoner of War Camps in this country is becoming very serious. The root of the trouble is hopeless uncertainty about the date of repatriation. Prisoners of War do not know whether they will be repatriated next year, in five years' time, in twenty years' time, or not at all. This uncertainty produces political and moral effects which may be described without exaggeration as disastrous.

Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers find the attitude of the prisoners as follows:

- (1) If the Geneva Convention were interpreted according to its spirit, the prisoners should be repatriated immediately. It is argued that the letter of the Convention is not being broken, because no peace treaty has been concluded. The prisoners reply that the argument is not valid, as the Allies themselves have prevented the establishment of a responsible German government with which a treaty could be concluded. The prisoners consider, therefore, that they are no longer prisoners of war at all, but slaves working by duress for the victor.
- (2) They further consider themselves in an even worse position than criminals, as a criminal knows the date on which he will be released.
- (3) If work must be done by "Germany" for her victors as reparation, then it should be done by the whole German people and not only by those who happen to be prisoners of war by a mere accident.
- (4) Told that they are being held because of scarcity of food in Germany and because of difficulties of transport, the prisoners reply that they do not believe it, and that they want nothing better than to share with their families any sufferings that the latter may have to undergo. They find it unbearable to reflect that their families may be starving, while they themselves are shut away and prevented from doing anything to help. At the moment, the prisoners are thinking particularly about next winter and wondering how their wives, worn out after a lengthy war and its aftermath, and gravely undernourished, will be able to bring up their children properly without a father's guidance.

Camp visitors, camp ministers and visiting ministers note a rapid change in the atmosphere of the Camps since the beginning of the present year. In particular:

(1) The spiritual atmosphere has most gravely deteriorated. There is not merely a general feeling of hopelessness but bitterness and hatred.

(2) Educational activities had previously flourished. Now they are paralysed: prisoners of war refuse to attend courses, and walk about in misery. They say they don't want to be educated, but to be sent home.

(3) There had previously been a growing acceptance of the principles of Christianity and democracy. This process is now being reversed, since the prisoners of war consider that indefinite incarceration is wholly opposed to those principles. Far from becoming Christians and democrats, they are becoming extremist and nihilistic. At best there is apathy: at worst, moral degradation and superstition (such as fortune telling by cards) to a disastrous degree. In thirteen camps nine suicides and five attempts at suicide have taken place recently.

(4) Future friendship between this country and Germany is being jeopardised. Many prisoners who had previously been anglophil have become the opposite. The whole movement of sentiment, which had previously been in the direction of friendliness and even affection, is now towards hatred. In thinking about the future, more and more prisoners feel that they no longer have anything to hope from Britain but must look elsewhere.

ON THE EDGE OF THE ABYSS.

The Menace of European Famine.

(To be published by Allen and Unwin).

- Preface: The urgency of the subject. (Lord Hugh Cecil). ?
- Chapter I : Economic situation. The effect of the Blockade, reviewed from Hoover's standpoint. Productivity the central question. The outlook for Europe as a whole. Dependence on U. S. A. Question of credits, etc. (Sir George Paish) .?
- Chapter II : The German Situation: how it developed (treated from a human and imaginative point of view). The attitude of England. Is it feasible or desirable to demobilise hatred ? (Mr. John Galsworthy).
- Chapter III : Situation in Germany: the first hand impressions and conclusions of a doctor and physiologist and a man who strongly supported the war. The menace to Europe of an unstable Germany. (Professor Starling).
- Chapter IV : The Situation in Austria and in Hungary. What it is now and how it has developed during the past nine months. Two nations menaced in their very existence. (Mr. Noel Buxton).
- Chapter V : The situation of the 'liberated' countries. How they were hit by the blockade and are now neglected by the public. Their need of credits: of disinterested sympathy. (Mr. Jerome K. Jerome).
- Chapter VI : The verdict of Labour. Labour sees the famine situation as a final and crushing indictment of a false regime, and a final solution of the famine problem is in a total reorganisation of society where human life is of more account than property. (Mr. A. Henderson or G. Lansbury).
- Chapter VII : 'When saw we ye an hungered ?' The call to Christians to face the supreme social crisis which has never before brings one back to the fundamental tests of Christian ethics. (Bishop Gore).
- Chapter VIII : A program for the English people. The economic and political program and the social and religious aspects of the claims of the new era now in its birth pangs. (Lord and Lady Parmoor)
(practical and constructive only).

Facts. A Statistical.

World production down.

B. Visual. Paris (cream) & Wien (chimneys) ^{spitting}

Famine = decr of popul.?"

~~Factory~~ Food Coal Transport Clothing,

A. Want, Disease, Disorder, Injury to Heads.

~~to~~ Head.

Undeveloped 93%

Rickets 80%

Boy skeleton. milk bone. 90% down.

Frogs, deformed dwarfs.

14 mo 8 lbs. can't use seat.

18 mo 2 teeth.

Look 1/2 age. 7 younger than Rufus.

Soft bones.

Hoover's kitchen. can't eat.

British Food Mission pt.

2) Coal. Trans.

Wood for parks.

Schools shut.

Hotp. hot water. puerperal.

Think when go to bed (rooms unheated).

Reflections. Unhappy to kid
Bourne. Of hate thru out the
Cruelty of child labor
History of conditions
The children will ask us.
So goes page -
Five have -
The even paper.
Polluting & common sense.

SHELLEYS,
DARLINGTON.

11

Famine. (Darlington
Nov 19)

Facts & remedy.
Paris & Wien.

at the time Nov 11.

Principle or "first-damage" to the over-
manhood. (Hoover).

Altruistic, not pure.

leads to the first of us the danger.

Threat Confession.

Our own troubles + war feeling exclude
not for want of authority. Curzon &c.

Misconceptions.

"Pro enemy" ^{"and Germany"} ^{Feds as well.}
But include enemy, ^{Wings to kick.}

"First done O. Memories sd.

"Attack on allies."
Will be unvarnished.

"first got relief
no! to first

DARLINGTON
SHREVELEY

3.

3) Transport. Engines working.
7 lend to Czechs for coal to A. X

4) Clothing. five old clothes.
Woolen than. dreading winter & L. P. M.

B. Disorder. roving bands. medieval.
Hungary explains R (interference)
& arm & (slackers).

Causes. 1) Exhaustion too long. Healing. Prices stupid.
2) Blockade + no credit
3) Partition.

Evidence supporting me.

Curyon
Ceil
Gumb
Hoover
Harling.

British army.
armⁿ delegates.

4/ Dangers

1) Disease. Haden first. ~~the~~ not sentiment.
Small box. Wh² like or like.

2) Loss of trade.

Eng a workshop.

40% of export was w continent.

Rⁿ wheat.

Continent cant ~~all~~ buy w^t selling.

2c Col near water in pump.

say 3 Tools & workman.

3) Revolⁿ. or rehabilitⁿ.

Hunger helved Belakun.

(a) 705
Went at Budapest Aug 5-7

1. *Budapest*

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The situation in regard to food and hospital supplies was extremely urgent, and was greatly aggravated by the peculiar political situation, from which it is impossible to dissociate the question of relief.

The following points specially affecting the position of the Allies came into prominence:-

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b. Hospital shortage - The hospitals were in dire necessity owing to the already most inadequate supplies of milk etc. being suddenly cut off; a great number of the patients were undoubtedly faced with death in consequence.

Many hospitals on August 7th had no supplies to go on with at all. The Roumanians were the cause of this, and their conduct in regard to hospital stores was still more flagrant. For instance, 4 truck loads of medical stores, sent by Mr. Butler and the International Hospital Committee at Vienna were taken over by the Roumanians. It was obviously unsafe for Mr. Butler to

to proceed with the despatch of supplies, which were in readiness at Vienna, so that a total absence of hospital necessaries followed.

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The rights of the Allies under the Armistice of Nov. 1918 to utilize transport, were ignored.

11. Plunder. The requisition of food was in full swing, the troops themselves requiring large supplies, quite apart from the stores which were being despatched to Roumania.

We saw Roumanian soldiers driving quantities of cattle along the streets, and many Army waggons removing stocks of grain or flour. From a farm belonging to one of the hospitals the live stock was forcibly removed.

Among the points repeated to us, which of course we could not verify, but which I understand to be recognised by allied officers to be true, was the despatch to Roumania of quantities of farming implements, motor cars, sewing machines and machinery from factories. Telephone apparatus was removed from private houses.

Even if the Allies maintain their right to forbid the imposition of any terms by the Roumanian Government, the security of the Powers for the reparation due to them from Hungary has been largely prejudiced, and is further injured every day that the Roumanian army remains in the country.

It may easily prove not only that Hungary may require to receive food for the coming year, which would have been supplied by its own harvest, but ^{that} the prevention of sowing arrangements will necessitate Allied relief during the year 1920 - 21 also.

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The loss of life which General Gerton has reported was confirmed by a great deal of evidence, and it is of course quite inevitable that a Balkan State, animated by revenge, will be responsible for the prevalence of atrocities of the worst kind in the villages.

The change from a Bolshevik Government to a Socialist Government, which was in progress with Allied help, would have meant the expulsion of many Red nominees from the public offices, but this took a violent form under the influence of the anarchy caused by the total suppression of Hungarian authority, and by the real or supposed encouragement of antibolshevist excesses by the partisans of the 'whites' acting under Roumanian protection.

It was said that many hundreds were killed in the suburbs, and English residents were convinced of this by the eye witness of Hungarian friends.

Violence was also prevalent in the centre of the town and even in Government buildings, to such an extent that I myself on entering a section of the War Office along with a British Officer, Major Maclean, saw a suspected Bolshevik being brutally battered, while actually in the hands of the official guards, who by this time were all nominees of the 'white' party.

The Englishmen in Budapest thought that pogroms of the Galician Jews, who were regarded as responsible for Bolshevism, were probable owing to the total absence of Allied troops.

As an example of the outrages committed, it was established that a woman, on whom a Roumanian private was billeted, was killed by him with the bayonet, on her complaining of his dirty habits.

If the change of Government had been effected with the inclusion of the four members of the former Government supported by the Allied representatives in touch with Budapest, (namely - Agoston, Boehm, Garami, and Haubrich) the disorders would have been either absent or far less in degree than occurred as the result of the chaos produced by the invasion.

Points of a more distinctly political character appear to be ultimately of even greater importance.

IV. The Damage to Hungarian Governmental Authority.

Whatever Government may supervene, it will be regarded as a foreign creation, and want of confidence will naturally follow from foreign occupation, especially from occupation by a nation hitherto despised and admittedly less civilized. Such weakness connotes ultimate Bolshevism.

V. Increased Arrogance of the Roumanian Government.

This will result unless the Allies show their complete will and power to ^{compel} evacuation and to deprive Roumania of any gain from the invasion.

From my knowledge of governing personalities at Bucarest it seems to me that the successful defiance of the Powers will fortify the dangerous factors.

- a. Much greater difficulty will be experienced in inducing Roumania to sign the treaty regarding the rights of minorities, tariffs, transit, etc.
- b. If the Bratianu Government scores a brilliant success, its power to resist internal reform will be increased.
- c. The ~~Partisans~~ ^{movement for} of an alliance with neighbouring states aimed at defying the Powers in regard to frontiers etc. will become dangerously influential.

VI. Injury to the Prestige of the Powers.

This may prove the chief significance of the crisis. The maintenance of the prestige of the Allies ^{in Eastern Europe} at this moment is essential to the establishment of any effective "League of Nations. It will be seen only too clearly that although the League is not technically established, the machinery for enforcing its decisions is present in even greater degree than will be the case in normal times, and that the Powers, although they are as strong a motive as they will ever have for asserting their authority, are prevented, owing to divisions among themselves or ^{for whatever} cause, from following the ~~path~~ ^{course} which is more than a name.

The Roumanians not only defied the Powers in advancing to Budapest, but they submitted the Allies' representatives to studied insults. Of this the following instances are examples:-

- a. General Gorton was prevented from using the telegraph and telephone wires, and would have been isolated but for the American telephone provided by Mr. Hoover's *relief mission*.
- b. His request to make known to the public the communication of the Allies received from Paris was refused.
- c. The right of the Allies to use the railways was denied on the hollow pretext that orders had been given that trains leaving Budapest should be fired upon, and that the order could not be revoked. A British Officer on official duty was obliged to obtain a private car and motor the whole distance to Vienna.
- d. When General Gorton proposed to inform the Roumanian Command of the telegram received from Paris, he was refused a hearing.

British official opinion in Vienna strongly deplors the appearance of success which the Roumanian defiance of the Powers has achieved, through the absence of any statement indicating the punishment which will be inflicted on Roumania.

The conduct of Roumania is natural to a Balkan State whose traditions are the result of a long period of Turkish domination, and this Near Eastern mentality forms one of the main dangers which international organization has to control.

It is the willingness and capacity of the great States to act firmly, which is essential to a solution, and which may prove to have been submitted by the Hungarian crisis to a *crucial* critical test.

~~The~~ Immediate physical compulsion not being proposed, and the desirability of hastening the departure of the Roumanian Army being admitted, the means of discrediting the Bratiano ~~adventure~~ *adventure*, and giving material to his political opponents at Bucarest, appear to include the following (statement of the Allies' intention, in the event of Roumanian recalcitrance)

6.

1. Severance of diplomatic relations and exclusion from the Peace Conference.
2. Denial of privileges ^{enumerated} ~~enumerated~~ under "the Covenant" ¹¹
3. Stoppage of goods on the seas for Roumania.
4. Refusal of loans. ^{and the threat of}
5. ^{Commercial} ~~Tariff~~ Boycott.
7. Reconsideration of territorial gains in Banat etc., and bridgeheads of South side of the Danube.
8. Heavier debts on territory acquired.
6. Reparation for all thefts and injuries and for ~~the~~ moral damage ^{to} caused by proposal to inflict ~~armistice~~ terms.

COPY.

N.462.

Prisoners

War Office,
Whitehall, S.W.1.
30 July, 1946.

Dear Noel-Buxton,

Further to your letter to me of July 22 regarding the question of German prisoners.

It is true our retention of Prisoners of War in this country is covered by the Convention, though clearly it never envisaged the absence of any Government in the defeated nation and the destruction and dislocation not only in the loser country but also, to a large extent, in that of the victor.

From the political point of view, as I am sure you will appreciate, it is important that we should not off load on Germany more ex-members of the Wehrmacht - with the exception of those with an established anti-nazi bias - until that country has had a chance to settle down. Our policy has been therefore to repatriate the so called "white" Prisoners of War as required by the Control Commission in Germany. The return of these "whites" is shortly to be accelerated and there seems no doubt we shall then proceed with a measure of repatriation of those who if not anti nazi are at least comparatively harmless.

On the other side of the picture the war has imposed exceptional problems, one of the most important being the need for great agricultural output by this country. To gather our harvest, outside labour has been essential. For this and other vital work for which no British labour exists we have turned to the Prisoner of War. I think you will agree both from a moral and practical point of view it should be the Germans who should be called on to make good our shortages which have arisen solely as a result of the war they forced on the world. Incidentally it is important to remember that much of the work they are doing is very materially assisting our efforts to improve conditions in their own country.

What I have said should not be taken to indicate any indifference on the part of the Government to the very natural feelings of the prisoners themselves. We have very much in mind the whole question of repatriation but as you will readily understand it is for many reasons not an easy problem.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan of Churt.

The Right Hon.
The Lord Noel-Buxton, P.C.

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Read in News Chronicle
Prisoners
LETTER TO THE PRESS

Dear Sir,

We are gravely concerned with the plight of the German prisoners-of-war in this country. Although more than a year has passed since victory, they are told nothing about the date on which they may expect to be repatriated. But there comes a point beyond which men cannot live without hope.

Visiting ministers of religion and others report a very rapid spiritual deterioration in the camps during the last few weeks.

Men who might have gone back to Germany full of determination to build a more liberal society there are becoming hard and cynical: they say that our liberalism and Christianity are a pretence: and respect for the British institutions is rapidly being replaced by indifference and even hatred.

There is a dangerous feeling that they can no longer hope for anything from us, and must look elsewhere.

*

It is, above all, this uncertainty about their fate which is demoralising the prisoners: they feel that convicts are better off, for at any rate they know when their imprisonment will end.

But other factors add to their wretchedness. They receive letters from relatives at home in the gravest distress, but are prohibited from sending gifts, even from their own rations.

While their employers pay the Government the full Trade Union rate for their services, they themselves receive as a maximum a penny halfpenny an hour. Then there is the non-fraternisation rule, which by turning men into pariahs is an offence to Christian principles and is felt by the prisoners to be such.

*

We therefore earnestly beg His Majesty's Government:

1. To draw up a definite scheme for the release of these men, if necessary by various categories, at the earliest possible dates;
2. To announce this scheme to the prisoners with the minimum of delay since the certainty of release even at a relatively distant date would be less intolerable than the present uncertainty;
3. To pay working prisoners the rate for the job (less expenses for keep), part of the money perhaps being paid week by week and part being credited to them for their use after release;
4. To permit the despatch of food parcels, etc., to relatives;
5. To relax the non-fraternisation rule.

We make this plea for the sake both of our common humanity and of the British good name.

Violet Bonham Carter, Henry Carter,
R. Newton Flew, Victor Gollancz,
H.J. Laski, Lindsay, Gilbert Murray,
Marian E. Parmoor, R.R. Stokes.
14 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2

G.M.F.

COPY OF A REPORT ON THE CONDITIONS IN BUDAPEST RECEIVED FROM
MR. NOEL BUXTON BY SIR WILLIAM GOODE, BRITISH DIRECTOR OF
RELIEF MISSIONS. - - - - - AUGUST 14. 1919.

I visited Budapest at the request of Mr. Butler, head of the British Food Mission at Vienna, in order to report to him on the shortage of hospital supplies. Our Mission consisted of 5 persons including 2 doctors. We arrived by train on August 5th, a few hours after the Roumanian troops occupied the town, shortly before the Armistice terms were presented. We left immediately after the coup d'etat which was announced on the morning of August 7th. Though on official mission we were refused permission to leave by train, and we travelled by private car to Vienna.

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