

been settled, can we hope to proceed with the rebuilding of Europe. It is important that we should have a clear idea of the issues involved. There has been and still remains much misunderstanding concerning the number of refugees and their racial and national composition; and I should like, therefore, briefly to review the facts in the case. It is estimated that about thirty million persons were displaced from their homes in Europe during the war. Of these some ten million were removed to Germany as labourers in agriculture and industry. Some of these went voluntarily because of their enthusiasm for the Nazi cause, but many more were coerced, becoming virtually slave labour. In addition, several million were prisoners of war, and about a million were held in concentration camps. The remnants of these groups constitute the core of the present displaced persons' problem. To these must be added a quarter of a million or more children whose parents were killed in concentration camps or during military operations, or who wandered over the country following the moving armies, or who were placed with families in Germany, France and the low countries. Following the end of hostilities in Europe, the task of sorting out and repatriating these displaced millions fell on SHAEF and on UNRRA displaced persons' teams, which succeeded in moving the majority of them in orderly fashion back to their former homes. From V-E day to April, 1946, some six million displaced persons have been repatriated; and the task of repatriation has been continued, thanks to the admirable work of UNRRA, the intergovernmental committee on refugees, and the British and United States military governments.

There still remains, however, what we may call the irreducible minimum, those who, after almost two years of peace, remain homeless and the responsibility of the victorious allies. These number approximately one million people, mostly in displaced persons camps in Germany, Austria and Italy. They comprise roughly 400,000 Poles, 200,000 Baltic peoples, 70,000 Yugoslavs, 150,000 Jews and 100,000 Ukrainians. Of these, some 600,000 are found in the United States zone, 350,000 in the British zone and 50,000 in the French zone. The rest are in smaller groups. In other words, they are mainly from central and eastern European countries and are unwilling, for either political, economic or racial reasons, to return to their homelands.

It is well to examine what manner of people are these displaced persons. As we have seen, they are of varied origins, occupations, cultures and abilities, but all have undergone common experiences. They have

[Mr. Croll.]

been uprooted from their homes and separated from their families, many of whom met death at the hands of the invaders. They spent years in internment camps or barracks, where lack of humanizing contacts with friends and loved ones, coupled with the brutality of the Nazi overseers, has broken and upset their previous life pattern.

Most of the displaced persons showed little interest in politics. There was deep hatred of the oppressor. But the violent uprooting and long separation from their homeland tended to blur their political as well as their other affiliations. To add to these deprivations, they enjoy none of the rights guaranteed to prisoners of war by international convention, and even the little privileges of food parcels and gifts were denied them.

The majority of these persons were set to work in the German economy. Eastern Europeans were usually assigned to agriculture and heavy manual labour, while western Europeans were employed largely in industry. As might be expected, their output of work was usually less than half that of the German workers, owing to their resentment, inferior living conditions, and lower level of skill, coupled with a great deal of deliberate sabotage.

Yet even before the end of hostilities the displaced persons were beginning to rise out of the depths. Community life, if only on a very rudimentary level, became reestablished; and with the advent of peace and fewer deprivations, some return to a more normal behaviour pattern was possible. So long, however, as the homeless remain virtual prisoners in the same camps that housed them in the days of their slavery, and so long as four-fifths of them continue in enforced idleness, we may expect their resentment and restlessness to continue unabated.

These people have no future, in their present way of life. We must help them to become self-sustaining economically if we ever hope to rebuild them morally. At present they are homeless and hopeless. Their host countries look upon them with hostility. So many Germans have been deported from the east into the United States and the British zones that the population has increased from 34,000,000 in 1939 to 43,000,000 in August of this year. No doubt some of them can be integrated into the German life; but there is little there worth while. It is very crowded, and even they are looking to the British and to the Americans for food to be provided for them, while all the rest of the world appears in their eyes to be indifferent to their fate.

We must not forget the children. In their desire to destroy the biological basis of