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Autor: Ludwig, Carl
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rare are the cases in which sons and daughters earn fixed wage in cash. Generally receipts are pooled in common funds. This forms the basis of the economic force of the farmer's class and of the accumulation of savings even though the profit be low.

A peculiar phenomenon in the working organisation of agriculture in Switzerland is the availability to agricultural smallholders of labour working in industry. Particularly the textile industry has always employed home workers attending at home to a small agricultural holding. The engineering industry too, has a large number of workers being members of farmers' families, who return to their own family or to their parents' family in the evening in order to assist in agricultural work. This side developed increasingly during the industrial boom of the post-war epoch, proving a great drain on agriculture, depriving the latter of necessary and even indispensable workers. The profitable additional income from industry is very welcome in the farmhouse, though complaints concerning the shortage of agricultural workers are multiplying. The preservation of homework in these small holdings is not only an aid to the farmer's family but constitutes also a helpful reserve for industry in its economic ups and downs.

Ownership of Farms.

Fifty per cent. of all agricultural holdings in Switzerland consists of farmers as own landlords, the balance is held under various types of leases. Leasehold farms are in high demand and more often than not it proves impossible to find any.

A large number of agricultural farms change hands by way of heritage. In addition to enabling the heirs to take over a holding undivided the Swiss civil law allows them also the goodwill. When buying on a voluntary basis the farmer is generally bound to pay a much higher price, i.e., the commercial price. During the Second World War and the post-war period State approval had to be compulsorily obtained for the purchase of an agricultural holding. The price was not allowed to exceed the revenue value by more than 30 per cent.

The prices of agricultural holdings are exceedingly different. There are no reliable statistics as to the prices. On the other hand, the accountancy returns of the Swiss Farmers' Association give details in respect to the capital a farmer has invested in his holdings. On the whole, the following average book values covering farms as such (i.e., inclusive buildings and wood but exclusive livestock, implements and machines) in respect of farms surveyed between 1936 and 1945, have been established:—

| Holdings measuring hectares. | Value in Sw.Frs. per hectare (2.47 acre). |
|------------------------------|---|
| 3-5 | 9281 |
| 5-10 | 6604 |
| 10-15 | 5809 |
| 15-30 | 5430 |
| Over 30 | 4795 |

Prices obtained at voluntary sales, however, exceed the above quotations to a very great extent. High prices originate both from the farmers' own competition and from purchases by non-agriculturists. In many cases buyers of small holdings and individual allotments are industrial workers living in the country and earning good wages, while capitalists living in the towns give preference, generally, to larger-sized holdings.

In a general way, rents are a burden to the tenants less heavy than interest, depreciation and repairs are in respect to the capital sunk in the real estate by its owner. In respect to agricultural farms, rents vary between 70 and 320 Frs. per hectare.

The average indebtedness of the Swiss farmers amounts to about 50 per cent. of the capital sunk into agriculture. Mortgage loans account for 4850 million Frs. of the debts. Credit is granted, in the main, by the Cantonal Bank; in addition, numerous savings banks and small banks in the country grant loans on mortgage. In many cases they take over second mortgages as well.

SWITZERLAND'S HELP TO WAR-DAMAGED COUNTRIES

By Prof. Dr. Carl Ludwig, President of the "Schweizer Europahilfe."

(Continued.)

Immediately after the war the majority of refugees consisted of people of whom some had only had to leave their homes during the war: Jews driven out by the Germans, workers compulsorily transferred to Germany, and so on. These displaced persons were originally looked after by the Inter-governmental Committee for Refugees, and then by UNRRA. Later the IRO took them on. Today some 420,000 such refugees are enjoying the material support of the last-mentioned organisation.

As you will have been able to see from the press, the IRO was originally to have been wound up on 30th June, 1950. The 18 member states have, however, since decided that the work of the organisation is to be continued for another six to nine months. It is hoped that it will by then have been possible to resettle 220,000 more persons and to do a great deal to render tolerable the lot of the remainder of the refugees for whom the organisation is responsible—mostly old and sick people who are not fit for further wanderings.

At the present time, however, far greater importance than that of the displaced persons attached, from the point of view of numbers alone, to the second category of refugees, known as the "Ostvertriebenen" (those driven from the East); that is to say, the members of German ethnic groups who had to leave their homes in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia as a result of the Potsdam Agreement of 2nd August, 1945, and the German nationals who were expelled or fled from the regions east of the Neisse and the Oder. At first there was talk of 7½ million "Ostvertriebene" who—as an answer to the national-socialist racial policy and the German annihilation camps—were to be transferred to the west. In reality, however, there are 12½ million of them. At present 4½ million are living in Eastern Germany, and half a million in Austria. The remaining 7½ million are in Western Germany, mostly in the Bizone, and are extremely unevenly distributed among the various Lander. In Bavaria the refugees form 20 per cent. of the population, and in Schleswig-Holstein as much as 34 per cent. Fourteen point eight per cent. of the total population of Western Germany, including the French Zone, are refugees.

The meaning of these figures will at once become clear to us if we imagine the conditions which would prevail in our country—which has been spared the war!—if we were suddenly forced to support an increase in the population of from one to one and a half million persons.

Furthermore, in addition to the 7½ million persons of German race expelled and German nationals driven out, Western Germany has to shelter a million refugees from the Eastern Zone. As the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior announced a few days ago, 76,390 Germans fled from the Eastern Zone to Bavaria alone during the first ten months of the year.

In Greece, which has suffered so heavily the war and the civil war, and is a country with only seven million inhabitants, there are at present 700,000 refugees, that is to say, a tenth of the whole population. Most of these refugees are living under the worst possible conditions.

Figures for the fourth category of refugees, the emigres from the Cominform countries, are lacking, but they too are constantly increasing.

Altogether the present number of refugees in Europe is estimated at 14 million. A considerable proportion are still accommodated in camps: reception camps, transit camps, and permanent camps. Others are living in towns and villages, often in compulsory billets or lodging in some ruin. External living conditions often vary from place to place. Eye-witnesses describe them as being in some cases unfit for human beings. Sometimes families live together; frequently, however, they are separated. Many a refugee does not even know whether his or her closest relations are still alive or not. Opportunities for productive work are limited, and there is still less opportunity for employment in the learned professions. In Schleswig-Holstein, at the end of June, 1949, about 12 per cent. of the refugees were entirely unemployed. In Bavaria where conditions are much more favourable, the number of unemployed refugees during the same period was about half a million. Industry, trade and agriculture are already sated with labour. Also, there is a lack of land suitable for cultivation. Emigration further afield, overseas, encounters almost insuperable difficulties. Receiving countries today regard refugees as alien bodies among their own people, and the refugees themselves do not feel at home in them. They often lack the barest necessities of life, for the precautions for the protection of those affected by the expulsion measures were frequently disregarded. People were fetched from their homes or fields, packed into goods trains, taken to the frontier, and there left to their fate. With the actual refugees, things are just as bad. The worst thing for them all, though, is the fact that they can see no future ahead which might alleviate their lot. They have lost their homes, and their houses and villages are inhabited by others—in Silesia, for instance, by Eastern Poles, who have not the slightest intention of ever leaving the area again.

These refugees, for whom the IRO can do nothing, thus not only constitute an exceptionally heavy burden for the country which shelters them, but are a threat to the whole of Europe. Many of them are becoming anti-social and nihilists. There is a danger that a "cinquieme état" may arise, an international class of the disinherited. The only hope of many refugees is a new war. For that alone can change the political situation and bring about the necessary conditions for a return to their former homeland. They themselves have nothing more to lose, and whatever else may perish affects them very little.

To deal with this distress is, of course, primarily a task for the country concerned. Much is in fact being done in Germany, in Austria and in Greece for the refugees. Efforts are being made to protect them from hunger, cold and disease, to improve their situation, and as far as possible to provide them with work; but the means available bear no relationship to the immensity of the task. The German Minister for Refugees, Lukaschek, in an impressive statement, said that some 4 milliards of Reichsmarks and D-marks had already been raised by the Lander and communes of Western Germany for the direct care of refugees alone. In addition, there are the indirect expenses, resulting from the necessary increase in administration, facilities for education, and so on. An only partially satisfactory solution of the refugee problem in Western Germany would, in Lukaschek's estimation, require a further 28 milliards of D-marks; but how can this money be raised in time? As long as the flow continues from the East, the situation will get worse week by week.

ON COMMON GROUND

By Theo Chopard.

The recent census of the population, taken by the Swiss Confederation, shows a further decline in the rural elements and a fresh increase in the urban and industrial population. In spite of the fact that from 1941 to 1950 the number of inhabitants in Switzerland has increased by nearly half a million, one rural locality out of three has registered a decline in the number of its inhabitants. Within the space of one century, the proportion of persons engaged in farming has fallen from 50 per cent. to 20 per cent. of the whole of the Swiss people. Is it really a fact, as so many would have it, that we are witnessing a flight from the land? Certainly not! Nowhere in Switzerland do we find abandoned farms, deserted villages and hamlets, and uncultivated land, as is the case, for example, in certain regions of France. On the contrary the tiniest plot of land is carefully cultivated. What is then the reason for this steady decrease in its population from which our countryside is suffering? It is self-evident that the attraction exercised by easier living conditions, higher earnings, and more varied possibilities for recreation, plays a considerable role. But this is not the only reason for this demographic movement. The simple reason is that in the agricultural regions the number of births is too high in relation to the possibilities of work and of living offered by the available land. The superficial area of this land is constantly declining. The progress of industrialisation and the progressive extension of towns and cities, is steadily "eating away" arable land. In other words, there is no longer sufficient land to provide work for all those who are born in the farming class. A great many families leave the country because the number of farms is diminishing. The cost of running a farm has become—for a number of various reasons—so high that agriculture is obliged to rationalise its methods of production. Small farms—which are not paying concerns and cannot provide a living for all the members of the family—tend to become eliminated in a pitiless manner. They are cut up and engulfed by larger farms. Only large farms are profitable. But, even they, are no longer important enough to be able to provide work for all; moreover, they cannot pay the wages which can be obtained in industrial undertakings. That is the reason why we find ourselves facing the following paradox: in spite of a birth-rate among the farming class which is too high for the amount of work available, agriculture lacks man-power and is obliged to have recourse to foreign labour. The migration of the rural population to the towns and the steady growth of the latter, is far from desirable. On the other hand, those rural regions which lie at a distance from the urban centres, are not in a position to provide everyone with sufficient earnings. At this point, I would like to specify that the depopulation in question is particularly marked in the outlying parts of the country. In those villages where certain industries have been established, there has been no decline in the population. Thus, it would appear as if the best way to stabilise, to a certain degree, the relations between the farming population and the semi-urban regions, is to decentralize to a still further extent an industrial production which is already proceeding along that road, and, in this way, open up new possibilities of employment to the village populations. Taken as a whole, however, this decline in the rural population which is being deplored, is not a social evil. In a small and highly-industrialised country like Switzerland—a large portion of whose superficial area is covered by mountains and glaciers—farming can offer possibilities of work to only a limited number of persons, of whom the proportion grows smaller concurrently with the growth of the population. In short: the possibilities of employment offered by agri-