

Anti-Semitism in Germany

Long-range Education Program Held Essential

Anti-Semitism is still strong in Germany, according to a recent survey conducted by the Public Opinion Surveys Unit of the Research Branch, Information Control Division, OMGUS.

Nationalistic sentiment among Germans has tended to increase in the past eight months as indicated by comparing figures on this attitude with those compiled in a previous survey. These conclusions were predicated upon interviews with 3,415 persons, selected scientifically as a cross-section of the US Zone and Berlin.

The study indicates that about four in 10 persons in the zone can be said to be seriously disposed to exhibit racial prejudice. Another fifth of the population while not exhibiting positive prejudice are negative in their views and hence cannot be expected to counter any expressions of anti-Semitism.

The result of the survey which was based on the answer to selected questions enable a division of the persons sampled into five groups: those with little bias, 20 percent; those who are nationalists, 19 percent; those who are racists, 22 percent; those who are anti-Semites, 21 percent; and those who are intense anti-Semites, 18 percent.

Many factors seem to influence the formation of these attitudes. Sex proved to be significant in measuring anti-Semitism, since the women of the zone are markedly more biased than the men. Locality also influenced prejudice; small-town people were found to be more biased than those from large cities. Bavaria as a Land displayed the least bias (though Munich has a much greater percentage of anti-Semites than any of the other cities sampled), with Wuerttemberg-Baden the worst, and Hesse not far ahead.

According to the survey, "neither service in the Wehrmacht nor membership in the NSDAP has much bearing on the degree of anti-Semitism. Nor are people who grew up under the Nazi regime much more preju-

diced than people who were adults when Hitler came to power. On the whole, attitudes toward this problem seem to become fixed before the eighteenth year.

"In general, it was found that prejudice toward Jews was greater among people with a lower status in society, those with the least education and those with unspecialized jobs. Religious and political affiliations were also shown to affect attitudes. Protestants tended to be more biased than Catholics, but in both groups those who attended church regularly were shown to be more prejudiced than those who attended irregularly.

"Another factor of some importance in its bearing on anti-Semitism is social and political apathy. There is no question but that the most prejudiced are also the least critical, the least well informed, and the least interested in political affairs and problems. It cannot be determined whether this group insulates itself from ideas and the critical approach because they wish to nurse their prejudices or whether they are prejudiced because they are isolated from the world of ideas. However, the fact is that this apathy and prejudice go hand in hand. Bigoted people in Germany are not only unfavorably disposed toward Jews more frequently than other citizens but tend to hold more unfavorable opinions on such topics as denazification."

The survey emphasizes that "the elimination of anti-Semitism is a long-range problem. The fact that people of better education tend to have relatively less racial prejudice than the uneducated is important, for it shows the way in which the problem must be met. The school, where much of critical opinion is first formed, is the place for combating prejudice of all kinds, and this is no less the case when the problem is anti-Semitism. A positive and well-directed effort to teach racial tolerance in German schools should do much to eliminate the problem over a period of years."

Dr. R. Thomas Alexander, for many years a professor at Columbia University, has been appointed Acting Chief, Education and Religious Affairs Branch, IA&C Division, OMGUS. Dr. Alexander is responsible for the formulation of policy in German education and is in charge of all phases of MG program for the re-education in the US Zone.

In assuming his position, Dr. Alexander stated: "It has always been realized by Military Government that the re-education of Germany is a long-range job which may take generations to accomplish. However, it must also be realized that this program will succeed only if it has the support of each and every person engaged in the occupation. One thoughtless and irresponsible act by an individual or group of Americans can undo re-education which took months or even years to accomplish.

"The re-education of Germany is not the job of a few men and women but one of the primary responsibilities of all occupational personnel. Such support in thought, word, and deed is as vitally needed as material support of the youth activities program and an understanding of the problems which will have to be met and solved if Germany is to be made over into a peace-loving nation.

"However, the support of the occupational personnel is not the final solution to this problem. In order to help the German re-educate themselves we must have the support of American educational forces. We need help from outside not only in the form of intellectual understanding but in the material forms books, papers, and modern instructional aids. The re-education of Germany is the first experiment of its kind in history, and it must be successful. It cannot and will not be successful unless it is supported by every member of the occupational forces with the help of the societies of teachers and educational experts back home."