

POPULATION

Thirty Million Homeless

Gigantic problem must be faced by the United Nations at close of hostilities. Not all will want to return to their old homes.

► THIRTY million homeless people forcibly transplanted by Nazi policies or by the necessities of war—these uprooted people pose a gigantic problem for the United Nations upon conclusion of hostilities.

Suggestions for the approach to solution of the problems are offered in a report by the National Planning Association under the direction of Clarence Pickett, of the Friends Service Committee.

The dispossessed people are by no means all Jewish refugees from religious or "racial" persecution. Some have fled from battle zones. Some were transplanted for labor in war industries or on farms. Some were moved for military service. Some are prisoners of war or have been interned by belligerent countries.

The numbers are the estimates of two groups: The Inter-Allied Committee on Post-War Requirements, known as the Leith-Ross Committee, and the International Labor Office. The two estimates, although both are necessarily rough, are in substantial agreement. The ILO estimate, prepared by Eugene M. Kulischer in consultation with the late Pierre Waelbroeck, has a total of 30 millions and includes some 10,000,000 people moved into Soviet territory. The Leith-Ross total is 21.5 million, but does not include the movement into USSR.

Neither estimate makes any attempt to include the movements of people which may be expected after the war when many groups will find themselves on the wrong side of new national frontiers.

Some of the recommendations of this report are:

Although the natural longing of an overwhelming majority of displaced persons to return home and reunite with their families should not be thwarted, neither should repatriation be dogmatically insisted upon. There will be some who like their new homes much better than the land from which they came, and who have been accepted by the people of the new location. Individual preferences in such cases should be given consideration.

Where absorption in the new location

is both desired and feasible it should be made possible. A great many very desirable persons have come to the United States as refugees, for example; it would be unfortunate, the writers of the report believe, if such persons should be deported.

Some measures should be taken for the legal protection of those refugees who cannot, for one reason or another, be repatriated and who have not acquired another nationality. The problem of "stateless" persons—literally men without a country—demands the most careful consideration. Denationalization and denaturalization became a favorite weapon of totalitarian states against their political opponents after World War I, the report states.

The least that should be done for the stateless peoples, the report urges, would be the granting of a provisional identity document similar to the famous international "Nansen Passport." This should facilitate travel and return as well as work and residence.

The scope of both UNRRA and the Intergovernmental Committee should be extended to permit the expeditious handling of repatriation problems, and an unemployment service for displaced persons should be worked out, perhaps by the International Labor Office in consultation with both UNRRA and IGC, the report recommends.

Science News Letter, September 30, 1944

ASTRONOMY

New Comet Bright Enough To Be Seen Without Telescope

► THE COMET reported by a New Zealand astronomer was bright enough to have been seen with the naked eye by many soldiers in the Southwest Pacific. When discovered on September 13, the comet was of the fifth magnitude and therefore could be seen without the aid of a telescope.

The comet was spotted near the southern constellation of Volans, the flying fish, by D. C. Berry, director of the comet section of the New Zealand Astronomical Society. News of its discovery was

forwarded from Carter Observatory at Wellington, New Zealand, to Harvard College Observatory, clearing house for American astronomical information.

The right ascension of the comet when found by Mr. Berry was seven hours, 40 minutes, and its declination negative 75 degrees. The comet, which had a short tail of one degree or less, was moving eastward at the rate of 22 minutes a day, and northward with a speed of three degrees, 12 minutes.

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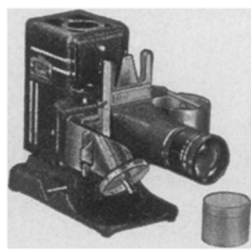
One Operation Sterilizes And Separates Cream

► SEPARATING cream and sterilizing it are ordinarily conducted as separate processes. They are made parts of the same operation in a separator on which Peter W. Damon of Barton, Vt., has obtained patent 2,357,384. The inventor accomplishes this by introducing into the separator hood hollow steam spaces, suitably shaped to make close contact with the surfaces over which the milk and cream flow after they are separated.

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