

Report on Europe¹

TIME LIMITATIONS on the discussion of a complex subject are always annoying, but they have at least the virtue of compelling one to select, to present what is most important, and to leave subsidiary matters for another occasion. All I can do here, therefore, is to make a few generalizations, urge a few of my own convictions, reveal my prejudices, without being able to fill in either the detailed factual background or the often tortuous processes of inference that give depth and credibility.

Stripped down to essentials, what this audience desires to hear from me is some answer to the following questions: (1) What are conditions in Europe in general, especially insofar as the problems of bookmen are concerned? (2) What can we do to get books from Europe with satisfactory coverage and regularity? (3) What can we do to help Europe with its library and cultural problems? In treating these questions it is necessary to break down Europe geographically a bit. First of all, we lop off the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland. We dispose of the Scandinavian countries because I do not know much about them and am not going to try to tell you anything about them. From all reports they are in reasonably good condition and present us with no real problems. Next we eliminate Switzerland. Here is a country which came through the war relatively untouched. It always had a good book trade and an admirable library system, both of which it still has today. Many of you

had the opportunity to meet Dr. Pierre Bourgeois, the new Swiss national librarian, in the spring and to form your own opinion as to how good Swiss libraries and librarians are. Switzerland again presents no problem. Finally we put off discussion of those countries east of Germany and Austria, chiefly because I must plead ignorance. Certain straws in the wind may, however, be noted. Normal commercial relations can again be resumed with Czechoslovakia. The Library of Congress is getting books from Poland and Hungary. Regular and comprehensive acquisition of Russian books is, as we all know, one of the urgent needs of American research libraries. There are indications that these needs will be met.

We are thus reduced to the Iberian peninsula, Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Austria. Of these countries I personally know most about Spain, Portugal, France, and Germany. I have visited Austria on a tour of inspection and carefully supervised from Germany the operations of our able representatives in Austria over a period of some six months. Similarly I have directed the wartime acquisitions program for the Low Countries up to the point where it could revert to normal commercial procedures. While I have not had a chance to see Italy, I have discussed the situation on numerous occasions with Manuel Sanchez, who has been there with a vengeance!

All these countries suffer from certain handicaps and deficiencies, characteristic most of the defeated Axis countries and least of the Iberian nations, which remained neutral during the war. The chief of these is

¹Paper presented at the Conference of Eastern College Librarians, Columbia University, Nov. 30, 1946.

material depletion. Whether it has been due to the ravages of war or to disruption of commerce or to mismanagement of the nation's economy, all these countries lack materials of many kinds. The situation is desperate when food or coal is concerned. In our own special realm, however, we are time and again faced with inability to get books moving because agents lack such simple items as string, wrapping paper, or nails. I am told that even in the United States, which is looked up to with awe by Europeans because of the wealth of its natural resources, scarcity of nails is now seriously impeding the building of new houses. In Europe during the war, steel and iron were being used for bullets and cannon. In Europe after the war, steel and iron are being used for industrial reconstruction—and the production of steel is severely reduced by lack of coal. The great coal-producing regions of western Europe are not meeting the production levels that might be expected partly because the miners do not have a diet sufficiently high in calories. No food, little coal; little coal, little steel; little steel, other metal substitutes; other metal substitutes, no nails; no nails, no cases of books exported; no cases of books exported, no dollars to import food. There, roughly traced, is the circle, and it is indeed vicious.

Economic Factors

The food deficiency in Europe is general and serious, not only in occupied countries but also in liberated and former neutral countries. One hears impressive stories of recovery in the Low Countries (which *have* done remarkably well) and in France. Luxurious living is possible in Brussels, Paris, the Riviera, Madrid, Lisbon, but the economic inferences drawn from this seem to me largely erroneous. The plain fact is that the common people of Europe are very badly off. The manager or owner of a

bookstore in a large European capital may be able to take visitors to a sumptuous luncheon, but his workers are not eating well enough to keep healthy and energetic. In the last analysis, it is these workers who carry through the intricate, trying operations which culminate in our receipt of foreign publications.

Another economic fact which enters into the picture is the simple lack of manpower. Bookdealers cannot get help. Most of the countries we have in mind have suffered serious depletion of manpower: France is a notorious example. Economic competition for available labor makes it difficult for bookdealers to get any employees, let alone those who have the requisite special skills.

All through the war, strict controls were clamped on trade. In 1944 a European bookdealer told me he had stopped shipping to an American university because he had to fill out eighteen government forms before he could get a shipment off! While this particular story turned out to be somewhat exaggerated, trade was really badly hampered. In the eighteen months which have elapsed since the atomic bomb was dropped, all too few of the controls have been lifted. Even the Library of Congress, which is a government agency, has been held up for months in several European countries before purchases could be paid for. Today the Trading with the Enemy Act still rears its ugly head even when proposals are made to ship publications on academic exchange to former enemy countries. Also it is very hard to find anybody in Washington who will give a clear-cut ruling on such a proposal. Nevertheless, progress has been made in easing trade with Europe, particularly exports from Europe. All European governments are eager for dollar credits. This has enabled us to buy European books, since the dollar value is usually deposited to the credit of the exporting nation and the dealer

is paid by his government in the currency of the realm. Belgium, Holland, France, and recently Austria have consequently returned to more or less normal trading practices. It is now possible for individual American libraries to place orders with dealers of their own choice in those countries and no longer to depend upon the mass purchasing operations until recently conducted by the Library of Congress Mission. National bibliographies are published in all these countries and can be obtained through the mail. The Library of Congress gave up cooperative buying in Belgium, Holland, and France earlier this year and has given it up in Austria as of November 1. The *Anzeiger für den Buch-, Kunst- und Musikalienhandel* provides excellent information about the Austrian book trade; the *Oesterreichische Bibliographie* furnishes a medium of selection; payment can be made by arrangements already established between the Korporation der Wiener Buch-, Kunst- und Musikalienhändler (acting for the trade) and the Austrian National Bank in New York; and shipment can be made by the dealers.

Library of Congress Mission

I wish to say as little as possible about the Library of Congress Mission here. A final report is in preparation, the substance of which will, I hope, be published. Yet it is impossible to report on Europe without sketching at least the outline of the mission's work, the promise of its achievements in Germany, and the prospect for American libraries to acquire German publications in the near future.

It may be revealing to tell you something about the physical conditions under which we worked. The mission was attached administratively to G-2, U.S.F.E.T., but it worked closely with military government, and several of its outposts were tied in ad-

ministratively with local military government units. Billeting, messing, and transportation were provided by the Army. In Frankfurt we lived in comfortable houses or apartments formerly occupied by the officials or employees of the central I.G. Farben offices, and we ate at the I.G. Farben Kasino Mess, a very attractive building. We covered vast distances chasing publications, sometimes in trains (the degree of whose comfort ran the entire gamut), sometimes in sedans, most often in jeeps, and occasionally in trucks. The main office of the mission was in a sprawling I.G. Farben plant seven miles from the center of Frankfurt. Here we had a large warehouse and a railway siding, so that materials could come in, be crated or re-crated, and be dispatched to a port. In Berlin the mission occupied three floors of the tower of the Telefunken Building, thus enabling it physically and spiritually to look over the situation in Berlin. At the height of its operation this outpost had three warehouses, one with a railway siding. The energy and resourcefulness of Dr. Zuckerman, in charge of the Berlin unit, were such that he could probably have taken over a whole railroad station if he had decided he needed it. In Munich Mr. Stuurman had two offices, one in the city proper in the Postbau, and the other in the Third Army Documents Center at Freising, a few miles out. In Stuttgart Mr. Allen had office space with military government and was sumptuously housed and fed in the magnificent villas which crown the hills ringing the city. Our Vienna offices were with G-2, which was most hospitable, and Mr. Birnbaum managed to find as his billet an apartment where he could live in what the rest of us considered to be the Sybaritic luxury of an Oriental potentate. Mr. Glennen was attached to the American liaison mission at Baden-Baden and lived in a nice little house

on one of the many small rises of that pleasant and undamaged resort. Mr. Fleming's office was in the American Consulate in Hamburg and his food and housing were taken care of by the British authorities with their customary courtesy. That, very briefly, is how we lived. Now, what did we get done?

Work Accomplished

First of all, the Leipzig-stored materials. The first shipment ought to have left the New York Port of Embarkation by now and to be in your hands any day. The second shipment, representing the remaining 60 per cent of the stored stocks, will be delivered to the Library of Congress Mission in Berlin before the end of the year, providing libraries have signified willingness to accept the materials and have made payment. Receipt of these materials will fill in the most important wartime German periodical gaps in American libraries. The Library of Congress is gratified to have had a hand in effecting delivery of these materials. Great credit is due to the German dealers and to the War Department for their foresight, and to the Soviet Military Administration for its understanding and cooperation.

The number of volumes shipped from Germany and Austria by the Library of Congress Mission now exceeds one million. Of these many were turned over by the War Department and may have to be specially processed to satisfy the requirements of the department. Many others form special collections which must not be broken up, and hence cannot be thrown into the stockpile for distribution. Purchases from Germany and Austria will amount to between two and three hundred thousand dollars. You know much better than I what kind of material has shown up in the distribution, but I may say that the best is yet to come. We in the field have had time to

do practically no bibliographical work. A recent spot check of *Neuerscheinungen der wichtigen wissenschaftlichen Literatur*, 1939-45, Teil I, compiled at Bonn University and covering medicine and the natural sciences, showed that over 50 per cent of the titles were in the list of German imprints published by the Library of Congress or had been acquired by the mission. The check is unscientific and weighted in our disfavor. It tells nothing about how many duplicates of the titles will be distributed, but there are solid grounds for optimism.

Aside from wartime imprints, the Library of Congress will have at its disposal large numbers of publications produced between the wars which have not been collected by American libraries and which are now showing up on their want lists. It is my personal opinion that the value of this type of acquisition can hardly be exaggerated, since it is essential to historical research and will be next to impossible to obtain on the antiquarian market.

Current Serial Publications

Another important category is represented by the serials produced in Germany and Austria after the end of hostilities. Allowing for inevitable gaps (which show up even in sets collected under normal conditions) the mission has acquired very nearly a complete collection of these serials, usually in twenty-five copies. Distribution is now being made. It is essential that cooperating libraries inspect what is being distributed so that judgment may be made as to what to continue to collect in 1947 on a more selective basis. The mission has published *A Check-List of Current Serials in the United States Zone of Germany* and the Library of Congress has distributed it. We hope shortly to make available lists of serial publications in the other zones.

In effect, the work of the Library of Con-

gress Mission in Germany is done. The staff of the mission has been reduced and by the end of the fiscal year will probably consist of one man. Now, effective termination of the mission poses the problem of how other American libraries may acquire German publications. The problem has been carefully thought out, and the mission has sent a proposal to military government which has been approved. The main points of the proposal are as follows:

1. The Library of Congress Mission will cease its mass purchasing on behalf of other libraries and will confine itself to purchasing for the collections of the Library of Congress. Military government will encourage the entrance into the American zone of American bookdealers satisfactory to the Department of Commerce. The Library of Congress heartily approves in principle the application of American bookdealers to do business in Germany.

2. The Library of Congress will continue to advise the Army on the disposition of captured documents and the Army will not recognize claims from other institutions.

3. Publications of the American Military Government will be sent direct to the Library of Congress and will there be processed for distribution under the supervision of the documents expediter.

4. If American libraries desire systematic collection of the publications of allied military governments and of German government agencies, they should appoint a foreign documents expediter, who could be attached to the Library of Congress Mission for administrative purposes but whose salary would be paid by, and whose work would be performed for, a group of cooperating libraries.

5. The Library of Congress Mission, within manpower limits, will continue to act in an advisory and supervisory capacity in the execution within the American Zone of Control, of Council Order No. 4 directing confiscation of Nazi and militarist books. The mission will have access to duplicates for the use of all American libraries.

6. Exchange of academic publications will be facilitated by military government acceptance of the offer of the former Preussische Staatsbibliothek, now the Öffentliche Wissen-

schaftliche Bibliothek, to act as a central agency for German institutions. This sets up a German counterpart to the Smithsonian Institution. The Smithsonian Institution has agreed to undertake an experimental shipment, and as soon as it is satisfied that the machinery works, will notify libraries that they may forward exchange materials which they have been holding.

Concentrate on Current Orders

Several of these points require a bit of elaboration. There is no reason why American bookdealers should not be in Germany by January 1. If necessary, pressure should be brought to bear in Washington. I should advise libraries to concentrate first on their current orders, especially serials. Want lists can come as soon as decision is made whether or not to gamble upon the cooperative acquisitions project. German book stocks are low. Felix Reichmann and I have made independent estimates of the destruction, and we agree upon 75 per cent. Nevertheless, there are still some wartime imprints in Germany which the mission has been unable to purchase. People are reluctant to sell real property for a currency whose future seems unpredictable and whose present purchasing power is negligible because of the lack of consumer goods. A not uncommon experience is to try to buy a book for cash in a bookstore and to be turned down. What is wanted is an exchange of two books for the one which is released. Many dealers have delayed sales to the mission because they have reached the point of diminishing returns in the face of high income taxes. Others are just beginning to get their stocks back or their warehouses into shape. The mission is acutely aware that it lacks adequate representation of the stocks of several of the best-known publishers, among whom the chief are Steinkopf, Fischer, Springer, Niemeyer, and De Gruyter. The reverse side of the picture is that many of the best

publishers, such as Hirzel, the Boersenverein, and the Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, have suffered staggering (sometimes total) losses. In Leipzig, German printing has not made much progress during the past year. Many of the presses have been busy printing books commissioned by the Russian authorities. From a recent visit to that city, however, I have the impression that the coming year will see a marked increase in the production of those titles which Leipzig publishers have been holding in readiness, and especially the birth or rebirth of important scientific journals.

Many American libraries are anxious to resume direct relations with their former Leipzig dealers, and there is certainly nothing which the Leipzig dealers would greet with greater joy. I wish I could tell you a practicable method of accomplishing this. Unfortunately it still depends upon demolition of zonal barriers, revision of postal regulations, repeal of the Trading with the Enemy Act, and establishment of a currency exchange rate. When American dealers go to the American zone of Germany, it may be possible to arrange through them for provisory resumption of contacts pending normalization of the entire situation.

Return of German Bibliography

German bibliography is resuming slowly but promisingly. The Deutsche Bücherei is once more editing the *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie*. Comprehensive coverage depends upon renewal of the agreement by German publishers to send deposit copies to the Deutsche Bücherei. There are some disturbing signs of separatism to be noted among German bookmen, but the mere existence of the *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie*, with the manifest advantages to the publishers of having his work listed there, will probably overcome them. It still remains true, however, that a unified bibliog-

raphy, like so many other things in Germany, depends for its final success upon political and economic unification. *There* is the point at which politics and scholarship cross.

It will be worth while to enumerate the important current publications in Germany and Austria which have bibliographical utility:

Anzeiger für den Buch, Kunst- und Musikalienhandel. Vienna. 1, August 1945- Weekly

Österreichische Bibliographie. Vienna. 1, March 1946- Quarterly

Boersenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel. Frankfurt a.M. 1, Oct. 6, 1945- Semimonthly

Boersenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel. Leipzig. 1, August 1946- Semimonthly (?)

Mitteilungen des Arbeitsausschusses für den bayrischen Buchhandel. Munich. 1, Nov. 1, 1945- Irregular

Mitteilungen für den Buchhandel in der frankoösischen Zone. Baden-Baden. 1, March 1946- Monthly

The *Check-List of Current Serials in the United States Zone of Germany* is more comprehensive than anything else in its field. In addition there are *Das Antiquariat*, an Austrian journal, and one or two other journals of the booktrade or the graphic arts. The information control commands of the American, British, and French military governments also publish regular lists of current publications licensed by them.

The mission, acting for A.L.A., has kept in close contact with Dr. Eppelsheimer of the Frankfurt Library, who is editing a "German McCombs list" which ought to be ready within a few months. Similarly it has forwarded reports on German library and bibliographical activities, some of which have already been printed and others of which will appear in the future.

Russian Cooperation

In the cultural field the Russian authori-

ties have shown great enlightenment and have taken progressive steps to restore German art, music, and scholarship. They have not only taken these steps to aid institutions in their own zone but they have extended a hand to other zones, most notably in approving a recent statute for the Öffentliche Wissenschaftliche Bibliothek in Berlin which authorizes it to act as a central exchange agency for all Germany.

Resumption of the exchange of academic publications is ardently desired by American and German libraries. I have already sketched the prospect, which I think is definitely hopeful. Some exchange materials have been forwarded to this country by the mission—notably from the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin, the Senckenbergisches Museum in Frankfurt, and the Universities of Heidelberg, Freiburg, and Tübingen. When American publications reach Germany, they will give a great impetus to education and intellectual life in general. The economic situation in Germany is today so precarious, and it is so necessary that the money we put into the economy go for food, that there is little likelihood of Germans being able to purchase American books for some time to come. Exchanges and gifts are therefore the only possibilities.

Council Order Number 4

I wish to say a few words here about the now notorious Control Council Order Number 4. This order raised a storm of protest in America because it was hastily drawn up and perhaps phrased without sufficient care, because it got a sensational press,

and because wild inferences were drawn from these press reports, sometimes by people who ought to have known better. An amendment to the order was later issued, specifically setting aside collections for the use of Germans under proper controls, but none of the four powers ever proposed to burn books or to wipe their existence from the face of Germany. In all four zones some universities retained their Nazi collections, under lock, of course, with the express or tacit consent of the occupying powers. In all four zones central collections of Nazi literature were created. The best single collection is probably at the Deutsche Bücherei; it forms the basis of the *Liste der auszusondernden Literatur* published by the Central Administration for the Russian zone. In the American zone the Library of Congress Mission has supervision of a military government project to collect a central Nazi library, catalog it, and to preserve 150 copies of each title, if possible, for distribution to accredited agencies, to American libraries, and to other nations.

All in all, considering the holocaust, the picture in Germany is much better than could have been expected after a total war. Constant effort, tireless energy, unflagging alertness, unflinching goodwill—these are needed to insure continuing nourishment of our own research centers and effective rehabilitation of German culture in the general interests of world peace. Constant effort, tireless energy, unflagging alertness, unflinching goodwill—was there ever a period of history when these would not have helped to create a better world?