

## EIN UNBEKANNTES MEMORANDUM ZUR AUSSIEDLUNGSFRAGE

*Von Johann Wolfgang Br ü g e l*

Die Akten des britischen Außenministeriums für 1945 (FO 371, Volume 46 814, im Londoner Public Record Office) enthalten ein bisher unveröffentlichtes Memorandum von Wenzel Jaksch zur Frage der Aussiedlung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus der Tschechoslowakei. Es war Anfang August 1945 unter dem unmittelbaren Eindruck des diesbezüglichen Beschlusses von Potsdam geschrieben worden und ging von der Annahme aus, daß zur Durchführung der Aussiedlungsaktion „in ordnungsgemäßer und humaner Weise“ eine inter-alliierte Instanz geschaffen würde, die dann auf die Linderung des millionenfachen Leids Einfluß nehmen könnte. Wenige Tage vorher hatte die Labour Party mit Ernest Bevin als Außenminister die Regierung angetreten, und Jaksch erhoffte sich offenbar von ihr, wenigstens angehört zu werden.

Er übergab das Memorandum der ihm persönlich bekannten Ellen Wilkinson, die soeben die Leitung des Unterrichtsministeriums übernommen hatte, und diese sandte es an Hector McNeill, der Staatsminister und damit „zweiter Mann“ im Außenministerium geworden war. Beiden war die Problematik vollkommen fremd, und McNeill, bis Juli 1945 ein schottischer Journalist, war die politische Rolle Jakschs ganz unbekannt. In einem handschriftlichen Begleitbrief vom 9. August 1945 stellte Ellen Wilkinson Jaksch als „the leader of the Sudeten German Social Democrats“ vor, der ihr und „all our Transport House people“ (Parteizentrale) gut bekannt sei — was die Frage aufwerfen mußte, warum Jaksch nicht den normalen Weg über die Zentrale der Labour Party gewählt hatte. Ohne auf den Inhalt des Memorandums einzugehen, empfahl Ellen Wilkinson, McNeill möge Jaksch anhören.

Die zur Sache und zur Person von McNeill befragten Beamten des Außenministeriums sprachen sich gegen eine Anhörung von Jaksch aus, umso mehr, als es unwahrscheinlich sei, daß das inter-alliierte Organ, mit dem Jaksch zusammenarbeiten wolle, geschaffen werden würde. Daraufhin ging das folgende, vom 23. August datierte, Schreiben von Hector McNeill an Wenzel Jaksch ab:

Dear Sir, A memorandum which you wrote on the transfer of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia to neighbouring countries has been forwarded to me by Miss Ellen Wilkinson. I do not feel that at the moment it would serve any useful purpose for you to come and see me, as I am unable to add anything to the statement on the transfer of populations which was included in the Berlin communiqué. However, you may rest assured that the question is being watched closely by His Majesty's Government and I feel sure that public opinion in this country will ensure that we shall do all we can.

Die Denkschrift vom 8. August 1945 hatte folgenden Wortlaut:

*Memorandum*

We warmly appreciate the humanitarian spirit which appears to have informed the wording of the Potsdam document so far as the transfer of population is concerned. Though the acceptance of the transfer shatters the very foundations of Sudeten Labour we bow to that historic fact. Our only aim remains to reduce the human suffering involved. Therefore, we want to co-operate loyally in the inevitable measures which will be deemed necessary by the Allied Control Commission in charge.

This was the considered opinion of 300 exiled functionaries of Sudeten Labour who held a conference in London on 5th and 6th August. I should like to add that the attitude of the conference was determined by the desperate appeals from our comrades at home. After the experiences of the last months the Social Democrats and Trade Unionists no longer ask for exemption from the transfer. They want to join the great exodus. They want to find new homes where their basic human rights are respected. The whole problem boils down to an „orderly and humane“ transfer as envisaged at Potsdam.

We had to face a similar situation after Munich. Owing to the peculiar conditions then prevailing only 3000 of our comrades — out of 30 000 who had escaped into the interior of Bohemia — were able to reach free countries. However, we learned something about the difficulties of an „orderly and humane“ transfer.

Mr. Bevin is certainly aware of the magnitude of the problem which entails the shifting and resettlement of 7—10 million people. We trust that he will be informed of the amount of hardship already incurred and of the danger of starvation and disease that lies ahead. Therefore, we wish to emphasize but two points:

1. An inter-allied organisation is required to cope with the task under a constructive aspect. The Turko-Greek exchange of populations after the last war offers some analogies.

2. A chance of organized self-aid should be given to the deportees, especially with regard to preparations for a new settlement in Germany, Austria or overseas.

Any elaboration of these points would, inevitably, touch almost all the different aspects of any European settlement. Public opinion in Great Britain, America and other countries will, unfortunately, move too slowly to prevent a disastrous development in the expulsion drama during the next winter. On the other hand, the fate and future of 9—10 million uprooted people may well be a test of the peace settlement that is to come.

We ask ourselves, therefore, whether Mr. Bevin, even if burdened with so many problems, could move ahead of public opinion by taking certain preparatory steps. We should be happy to learn that one of his assistants has been entrusted with the task of preparing suggestions for an „orderly and humane“ resettlement of the population to be transferred. At any rate, we should be most grateful to have a chance of permanent contact with one of Mr. Bevin's assistants in order to pass on information and suggestions in the matter.

August 8th 1945

Wenzel Jaksch m. p.