

25 CHILD REFUGEES HERE ON EXCAMBION

First Group to Arrive Since Britain Halted the Movement Represents Five Nations

SHIRER BACK FROM BERLIN

Says Little Bomb Damage Is to Be Seen—Also Germans Will Not Go Hungry

The American Export liner *Excambion* arrived here from Lisbon yesterday with 185 passengers including twenty-five refugee children of five nationalities, the first group of its kind to come here since the war began and the first refugee group of any sort since England put a stop to the movement of children several months ago.

The children were from France, Austria, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and Russia. All will live with relatives and friends in the United States.

The *Excambion* arrived lacking one member of her crew, Oscar Stabler, 36 years old, the ship's barber, who was removed from the liner in the middle of the night as she lay at anchor in Bermuda waters last Saturday.

A mystery man who was defended by some of the crew and openly criticized by others, Stabler was taken ashore by British officials who told Captain W. W. Kuhne that they had found incriminating evidence of an undisclosed nature among his effects and on his person.

Reported Seen With Germans

Crew members who described him as aloof and unfriendly said he had been in some difficulty in Lisbon prior to the ship's departure, and that instead of reporting to the United States consulate he had gone to the German authorities to complain. They added that on this and previous voyages Stabler had been seen in the company of wealthy Germans in Lisbon.

The barber was born in Germany but is a naturalized citizen. Captain Kuhne said he had been on the ship since 1935 and "is a fine barber." Fellow seamen said the barber had been taken into custody in Lisbon and that the Portuguese authorities had kept some of his papers, but Captain Kuhne, explaining that he did not know all the facts, expressed the opinion that the barber had merely undergone the same questioning that all members of the crew were submitted to when they went ashore. He said the men were asked if they had any communist literature.

"I think they [the British authorities] probably found a harmless map of Gibraltar among his effects," the captain said. "I could have explained it. The map was made last year as a souvenir, on the occasion when we were held by the contraband control for several days. It has an X marking the spot where we were anchored all that time."

The refugee children were brought here under the joint auspices of the Unitarian Service Committee and the United States Committee for the Care of European Children. Representatives of the agencies who met the ship said the children, ranging in age from 3 to 14, had been assembled in Marseille on Nov. 25 and had traveled through Spain to Lisbon, via Barcelona.

In the group were the six daughters of the Rev. Edward Theis, a French missionary. They were Jeanne, 14; Jacqueline, 13; Louise, 11; Margaret and Françoise, 9-year-old twins, and Cecile, 6. Jacqueline was born in the United States and the others were born in Africa where their father served. Their parents remained abroad and the girls planned to live with relatives in Philadelphia during the war.

There was also a set of triplets on board, Amelie, Evelyne and Marianne Diamante, 13, who came from Czecho-Slovakia. Agents of the United States Committee said the father of the Diamante children was a dentist.

Three Arrive to Marry

Among the other passengers were three Norwegian young women who came here to marry Americans. They declined to describe life in their country under German domination. One said, "I can't tell you what it is like, but we don't like the Germans." They were Miss Ellen Knudsen, 31, who will become the bride of Per Henry Melhoos of Chicago; Miss Nina Tandberg, 26, who will marry Warner Marshal, a New York broker, and Miss Else Hvistendahl, who will be married to Benjamin McCartney of Washington, D. C.

Miss Tandberg, who met her future husband when she was working at the Fair last year, said that all were from Oslo and that they had met during the voyage.

The ship brought a group of foreign correspondents: Elmer Peterson, former Associated Press bureau chief in Budapest; Whitelaw Reid of The Herald Tribune, James Reston of THE NEW YORK TIMES, William Shirer, continental manager of the Columbia Broadcasting System, who has been in Berlin; Wallace R. Deuel of The Chicago Daily News and Roy Porter of The Associated Press.

Mr. Shirer said in reply to a question about bomb damage in Berlin that the British raids had been too few and too light to have had much effect on a city as large as Berlin, but he added that the German air men were the first to admit that the R. A. F. was "a fairly potent organization."

"The German pilots I've talked to in occupied Channel ports pay high tribute to the bravery and skill of the Spitfire and Hurricane pilots," he said.

Mr. Shirer in a broadcast last night answered some questions that censorship in Berlin had prevented his answering before. With regard to the bombing of Berlin he said:

"For example, if you were to arrive in Berlin tomorrow, say, and just walk around the streets at random, you'd see very little damage. You could walk for an hour without seeing more than one or two buildings down. I don't mean to say that Berlin hasn't been hit. It has, on many a night. But there have been too few planes and their loads too light to damage very extensively a city the size of Berlin."

"If New York, say, received the kind of bombing we've had in Berlin up until the time I left three weeks ago, your experience would be something like this. You'd hear the guns and a few bombs, but the chances are that the next morning when you went to work you wouldn't see any damage yourself. But some one at your office who'd been in the Bronx would describe with some excitement how four

buildings in his neighborhood were smashed. And perhaps another in Staten Island would have a similar tale to tell and some one else from the New Jersey side would report that a factory near his home had been hit. But no blocks of buildings, no great factories wiped out, such as Murrou has described from London.

"Some one put the question to me a few moments ago: Will the German people starve this Winter? The answer is, No. The German people are not going to starve this Winter, or even go hungry. They'll have enough bread, potatoes, cabbage, kraut and even meat—at the present ration of 500 grammes per person of meat each week. And this will tide them over nicely to the next harvest. Of course, it's not a fancy diet. We Americans would not like it at all. But it would be a grave mistake to believe that the German people are going to face starvation in the near future, or anything like it.

Germany's Oil Supplies

"While we're on the subject of shortages, real or alleged—I was asked today whether the Germans weren't running short of oil and gasoline. If they are—and of course it's impossible to know the whole truth about any subject—if they are, there is very little evidence of it. For instance, I get a ration of thirty-seven gallons of gasoline a month for my Ford in Berlin. A year ago, during the early months of the war, I got the same ration, but most of the filling stations were dry, and finally I gave up trying to get enough gas for my car, and put it up for the Winter. But this Winter those same filling stations appear to have considerable stocks on hand, and I used my car right up to the time I left three weeks ago.

"In Lisbon the other day Ed Murrow asked me a question which was also put to me several times today. Ed wondered whether the Germans think they can break the British by bombing alone. One school of thought in Berlin does think so.

"As to the question: Do the Germans think the United States will enter the war?—to be perfectly frank, they think we're already in the war—in all but name. And what's in a name in these days when wars are never formally declared? As the Germans see it, we're doing everything possible to help Britain—short of two things: a formal war declaration. And sending troops. And both, the Germans hold, are, at the present stage of war, wholly unnecessary.

"But there's another point you never heard mentioned. People ask: Will America come into the war in the Spring? But some neutrals are asking still another question:

"Will Berlin, expert as she has been in the matter of timing, necessarily wait until Washington picks the date for America's entry into the war, if it ever is to take place? Or will Berlin, if she thinks America has made up her mind and is only waiting for a favorable moment, herself pick the date—perhaps after consultation with Japan?"

Other passengers were Miss Mary Craig McGeachy, a member of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare, who will be attached to the British Embassy in Washington, and Murray Shipley, 46, of Chicago, who was captured in France last May while a volunteer ambulance driver.