

Charter of the German Expellees

Conscious of their responsibility before God and men, conscious of their affiliation to the Western Christian community, conscious of their German origin, and realizing the common task of all nations of Europe, the elected representatives of millions of expellees, after careful deliberation and after having searched their conscience, have resolved to make public a so-lemn declaration to the German people and to the entire world, defining both the duties and the rights which the German expellees consider their basic law and an indispensable pre-condition for the establishment of a free and united Europe.

1. *We, the expellees, renounce all thought of revenge and retaliation. Our re-solution is solemn and sacred in memory of the infinite suffering brought upon mankind, particularly during the past decade.*
2. *We shall support with all our strength every endeavor directed towards the establishment of a united Europe in which the nations may live in freedom from fear and coercion.*
3. *We shall contribute, by hard and untiring work, to the reconstruction of Germany and Europe.*

We have lost our homeland. The homeless are strangers on the face of the earth. God himself placed men in their native land. To separate man forcibly from his native land means to kill him in his mind.

We have suffered and experienced this fate. We therefore feel called upon to demand that the right to our native land be recognized and realized as one of the basic rights of man, granted to him by God.

However, as long as this right has not been materialized for us, we do not want to stand aside under imposed inactivity, but rather want to strive and work with all members of our nation in new, purified forms of brotherly and con-siderate cooperation.

For this reason we claim and demand, today as in the past:

1. *Equal rights as citizens, not merely before the law but also in every-day life;*
2. *Just and reasonable distribution of the burdens of the last war among the en-tire German people and an honest application of this principle;*
3. *Reasonable integration of all professional groups of expellees into the life of the German people;*
4. *Incorporation of the German expellees into the reconstruction work for Europe.*

The nations of the world should become sensitive of their co-responsibility for the fate of the expellees who have suffered most from the hardships of our times.

The nations should act in accordance with their duties and their conscience as Christians.

The nations must realize that the fate of the German expellees, just as that of all refugees, is a world problem the solution of which calls for the highest moral responsibility and for a commitment to tremendous effort.

We therefore call upon all nations and men of good will to join in the mutual endeavor to find a way out of guilt, misfortune, suffering, poverty and misery which will lead us all to a better future.

Stuttgart, August 5th, 1950