Let us turn now to the place of the Swabian refugees and expellees in Germany, the old mother country which once again found herself giving haven to the long absent offspring. The first transports bearing Danube Swabians from Hungary arrived in the United States zone of occupation in Germany in January, 1946 and they continued to flow until December of that year. By that time the American occupational authorities refused to admit any more transfers to that part of Germany because the Swabian newcomers, numbering over 178,000, only worsened the already hopelessly wretched economic and demographic situation which existed in that totally destroyed territory. Thus the rest of the transfers were directed to the Soviet zone of occupation in eastern Germany, and by summer, 1948, with the arrival of the last transport from Hungary, some 50,000 Swabians were placed there.

The harboring places which these people found were, indeed far from adequate. Western Germany, hit by the bulk of the refugee wave, was in ruins at the end of the war and overcrowded by millions of refugees and expellees. About three million dwellings were completely or partially destroyed; transpor-

1 In 1960 there were over 12.8 million refugees and expellees in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), only little less than one fourth of its whole population.

Originally some 8 million people were conveyed to West Germany. However, after 1946 about 1 million expellees who had been placed in East Germany left (mostly illegally) that zone and moved to the Federal Republic. Furthermore, since 1945 more than 3.6 million Germans, regular residents of East Germany and East Berlin have asked for and received asylum in West Germany. Since the erection of the Berlin Wall to the end of 1965 West Germany registered 29,552 persons who had left illegally the eastern sector of Berlin for its western part. In addition 17,666 (mostly aged)
tation facilities, public buildings and factories lay in debris; fuel and clothing could scarcely be found and people subsisted on a starvation diet. The situation on East Germany was about the same; in Austria it was slightly better, but Austria was allotted only half a million refugees.1 Another severe impediment in the way of the newcomers was the notorious population density in West Germany, which – with the influx of the refugees – had reached by 1955 the staggering figure of 528 persons per square mile and has been, of course, increasing ever since.2

But worse than any loss on the material plane was the spiritual and moral vacuum in war-ravaged Germany, with yesterday’s idols fallen and new ideals not yet risen. It was, indeed, the darkest, most chaotic period in the history of the German nation, marked not only by the loss of millions of its sons,3 billions worth of its goods, and almost half of its territory, but also by the loss of hopes and aims in life by its starving and confused people. It was into the midst of this dark and desperate situation that the Swabians of Hungary were thrown, together with millions of other hungry and despondent German refugees.

persons came from East Germany to the Federal Republic with official authorization. (On the other hand, since 1949 only some 250,000 expellees and refugees emigrated from West Germany to other western countries of whom some 25,000 had returned by 1965.) Data condensed partly from the statistics of the Federal Ministry of Expellee Affairs, Bonn and partly from the Expellee Press Service, Göttingen, February 10, 1966, p. 3.

By June 30, 1964, 9,520,243 residents of West Germany’s 56,747,000 total population (16.4 per cent) were identified as expellees. Ibid., November 6, 1964, XIII, p. 4.

In the years since 1950 close to 500,000 Germans, up to that time living in eastern European countries, were transferred to the Federal Republic. Of these some 290,000 came from the formerly German eastern provinces beyond the Oder and Neisse rivers and some 200,000 from other eastern European countries; 70,000 of these from Yugoslavia, 50,000 from Poland, 30,000 from Czechoslovakia, 15,000 from Rumania, 6,000 from Hungary, 10,000 from Danzig, 8,000 from the Memel District and 5,000 from the Baltic states. Ibid., December 9, 1965, XIV, p. 2. The transferees from Rumania, Hungary and Yugoslavia were all Danube Swabians.

1 Of which some 12,000 were Swabians from Hungary.
2 In contrast, the figure for the United States in the same year is 54; for the USSR 31; for Canada 4; and for Australia 3. Of course, over-population in West Germany, that had been a curse until the fifties, proved to be rather a blessing later with the German economic “miracle” and the ensuing boom demanding more and more people to produce and to consume. However, once the present boom halts for whatever reason, the population explosion in West Germany is bound to constitute again a grave problem.
3 The grand total of Germans who perished during the war and in its wake (until 1946) amounts to more than 5.5 million; 3,760,000 members of the German armed forces died in action or in prison camps; the Allied air raids killed 537,000 civilians; 1,270,000 civilians died during their flight and/or expulsion. Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, ed., Dokumente deutscher Kriegsschäden, I (Bonn), pp. 33–39.