

IS GERMANY FIGHTING FOR "LIVING SPACE"?

Margaret E. Bateman

Reprinted from *The Square Deal*, March-April, 1941

When Herr Hitler states that his people are crowded and must have more "living space," we in Canada who have less than three and a half persons to each square mile, wonder just how much truth there is in his argument.

Investigation of official figures shows that Germany has 361 persons to the square mile. The United Kingdom has 491; Italy has 344; The Netherlands 577, and Belgium 698!

As to how Germany makes use of this "living space," we find according to the 1938 statistical year book, that the total area, including Austria but excluding Sudentanland, is 137 million acres. Of this, 82 million are cultivated; 7 million are in roads, parks, etc. Houses and courtyards take up 2 million, while 6 million acres are marsh and waste land. This makes up 97 of the total 137 million acres. The balance of 40 million acres is uncultivated forest or woodland.

240,000 acres of this uncultivated land belongs to ex-Kaiser who is the largest private landholder in Germany. Sixteen former noblemen own from 60 thousand to 75 thousand acres each, a total of nearly one million five hundred thousand acres. More than two-thirds of this uncultivated land.

The taxation system of Germany is such that the owners of this large unused area are not taxed according to selling value but on yield value. They are therefore in control of 40 million acres of the country and yet they bear only a very small proportion of the extremely high taxes paid by the population in general.

Fighting for "living space," while the ex-Kaiser holds 240,000 acres and sixteen other men have an average of nearly 100,000 acres each, (mostly uncultivated), and while the other owners control thirty-eight million acres, entirely uncultivated.

The German people do not need to fight for land in Poland, Czechoslovakia or elsewhere. They should be fighting for their own land!
