

The following article appeared in, Bonn newspapers in March of 1852

TO ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO EMIGRATE

A warning and appeal from the German government administration to people who would like to emigrate dated March 15, 1852.

There is much discussion concerning emigration from Germany in these times. German authorities are forced to warn those who would like to emigrate from our land of the antipathy and sometimes violence emigrants may face after they arrive in their new land. These problems faced by new arrivals in foreign lands are not much different than the political and social repression that now exists in Germany.

The central administration of the Organization of German Emigration and Colonization has published the following statement:

More than ever before, thousands of German people are preparing themselves to exchange their own native land with a far and unknown land on the other side of the ocean. Because of this, we, the undersigned administrative council, issue a serious warning to all those who are planning to emigrate.

The hopes of emigrants are to make a better life and perhaps earn a good living in America or Australia. These hopes are not more than good dreams that will turn into nightmares. If you don't believe us—we whose responsibility is to care for our population and we who have visited America and we who are in undisrupted communication with overseas countries—then listen to the voices of serious Germans who have left for America. And listen to the voices of impartial Americans.

The German Association of New Orleans, which is composed of respected Germans of this city who help and advise new German immigrants have issued this warning:

We appeal to the Germans who are thinking of emigrating from Germany!

As long as you have work, stay in your own country and make a family. If you emigrate, you will come to a land where the climate, speech and customs are totally different from yours. It has happened in many cases that immigrants who have made large sacrifices to immigrate but could not make it in America could not obtain enough money to return to Germany.

The Finance Minister of the United States stated a short time ago that farmers are able to produce only a 1 % to 3 % profit. In Wisconsin, where many immigrants go, farmers can produce only a 1/2% profit and sometimes barely produce enough for their subsistence. The North American Consul, Mr. Fleischmann who gives these numbers in detail in his very good book The North American Farmer, says emphatically:

From this composition follows that the capital invested in farming on the fields and cattle raising does not produce more profit than in Germany. Yes, farming in America is worse than in Germany because no one is interested in it.

All of you who cannot survive under capitalist farming, nothing is left other than to work for daily wages in the hardest and most unusual work. This work will only provide bare subsistence. Normally, you will not be able to provide for an education for your children. In foreign lands, schools are far away and very expensive.

You cannot normally go to church because good German preachers are very rare. Ambitious doctors, like in Germany, can be found only in the big cities. In rural areas there are a lot of quacks with high prices who do not care about the well being of the people and who are swindlers and who cheat the poor settlers in the worst way. The unfamiliar climate faced by the German settlers causes much sickness. Very serious fevers are normally everywhere and are not preventable and are contagious. Often these fevers are deadly if medical care is found. If an illness or another bad experience hits you, there is nobody who will care for you. No community, no land owner and no industrial person will help you.

In your new foreign land, whose language you don't know, far away from your friends and relatives, you will find yourself alone in the lonely forest and in a continuous decline. This has happened to thousands of our German citizens.

Nobody will hear their cry for help, but the Americans tell many of these kinds of stories. One cannot lie. There were easier times when one could live a normal life in North America. But since many hundreds of thousands have left for America the cities are full and the price for good farmland has gone up. Every year, achieving a good life is getting harder and harder. Still everybody who knows about conditions in America and Australia and who are telling the truth will say that when added together the money for his journey with his wages in the new land, even if he is very thrifty, he would still be better off in Germany. Or at least at the same status as in America.

Because of this, everybody who wants to emigrate should be very certain that he knows what he's doing. Don't listen, in the name of God, to so-called 'good friends' who describe America or Australia in glowing terms. If you research the situation well, you will find that those friends either only know what they've heard or that they are agents for shipping companies who want to earn their wages from your bad experience.

Also don't believe the letters who are said to have come from a relative or a friend. They are very often lies, even if it may sound realistic to you. They will always write something better than what really exists. Frequent research proves that those people who wrote to their own brothers and sisters lied to their family claiming a very good living standard when they were really suffering greatly.

Even if your work here in Germany is very bad, better times will come. Those who believe in God and have a clear conscience have never suffered here in Germany. Because of this we appeal to anyone who is thinking of emigrating: Stay in our land and raise a big family!

Berlin, 15 March 1852

The Central Office for Emigration and Colonization