

STERILIZING LAW IN GERMANY TO TAKE EFFECT TUESDAY

BERLIN, Dec. 31—Some 400,000 mental and physical hereditary defectives in German asylums and prisons, or still at large, come under the sterilization law with the new year.

This sweeping law promulgated by the nazi government is the most sensational of 26 major measures which go into effect January 1.

Under threat of 150 marks (approximately \$55.50) fine, medical authorities in prisons and public and private hospitals, nurses, midwives and welfare workers have been racking their brains to hand in as complete lists as possible of all hereditary incurables in their care so that the 1700 new eugenic courts, with power to decree sterilization, can begin work at once.

A circular letter of instruction sent by the federal minister of justice to all state administrators of justice makes it mandatory upon judges and others who come in contact with criminals who seem hereditarily endowed with a penchant for committing crimes, to report these cases forthwith.

New Year's day being a holiday, the courts will begin to function on the second—as the Koelnische Zeitung puts it, "prevent such characteristics as are only a burden to the nation as a whole, from being inherited from one generation to another."

Disapproval of the Roman Catholic clergy, reflected in a reference to the law by Pope Pius in his recent message to the world, has been allayed following upon representations to the German Government by Cardinal Bertram.

The government in reply promised not to compel any Catholic judge to serve on a eugenic court nor to order the surrender of a criminal to such a court, and not to compel any Catholic physician to perform the sterilization operation.

sentiment in the press appeared favorable, the Koelnische Zeitung commenting that "the fact that sterilization is being applied on a national scale insures ultimate success."

Not a single paper raised the issue of encroachment on personal liberty, although the Koelnische Zeitung interpreted the clause permitting persons to undertake voluntary detention in reliable institutions at their own cost, as a substitute for sterilization, as discrimination against the poor.

It has been computed that the 1700 courts, of which 1000 are for the state of Prussia alone, and 27 higher courts, will have to function at least two years to dispose of the 400,000 cases estimated to come before them.

The cost of the operations, estimated at 14,000,000 marks (about \$5,000,000) will be charged to funds allocated to sick benefit institutions and public welfare.

Expenditure for care of the nation's insane alone amounts to 700,000,000 marks annually and it is hoped that this big item as well as others—as for instance care of the blind, deaf and dumb—will be completely eliminated from the national budget in about 30 or 40 years.—Tribune.