

THE MAIN TRENDS OF WEST GERMAN SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE
EXPELLEES FROM THE GERMAN EAST

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The author first attempts to single out and classify the main trends of social development in the Federal Republic of Germany on the basis of the findings of theoretical and empirical sociological research. It is shown that the available material affords no satisfactory answer; indeed, in the view of the scientific sociologists themselves, there can be no such answer. Any analysis must also draw upon the historical dimension. The examination of the basic lines of the situation of society, state, economy and culture leads to perspectives of the Federal Republic's society as one that is in a state of transition, and can only be shaped into something new by a system of public norms imbued with an integrative force. But neither this system nor the face of the emerging society is known. Thus if we are to help shape the coming order, we must master the symptoms of structural crisis as they appear in each individual case. In the democratic state of the Federal Republic, the vehicles of this sociopolitical development are groups and communities like the expellees from the German east.