

# American Friends Service Committee

20 South Twelfth Street



Philadelphia, Penna.

## BULLETIN ON RELIEF IN FRANCE

Bulletin #33

For the Use of Editorial Comment and Re-publication

September 10, 1941

### AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

#### IN UNOCCUPIED FRANCE

Generous men and women throughout the United States, church groups and philanthropic committees have contributed funds to make the work of the American Friends Service Committee possible in France. The Committee is glad to make acknowledgment to its many donors and to restate its hope that this work may continue as an expression of the power of unselfish love in this period of widespread war.

Funds donated to the Service Committee, which are allocated to specific projects or are earmarked for a national group, are carefully expended for that purpose. Nevertheless, the Service Committee is primarily concerned with human need, regardless of nationality, race or religion. It values unallocated donations which may be applied to its relief of suffering, according to the judgment of Service Committee representatives in the field.

As another grim winter looms for the millions in unoccupied France, the Service Committee program continues to emphasize the care of children, refugee services, and modest programs of rehabilitation of French and refugee families.

#### Care of Children

Food shortages take their first toll among the growing young. The larger part of the Service Committee budget abroad is, therefore, devoted to the care and protection of children. It is a service responsive to changing conditions, admittedly inadequate in the face of the widespread suffering and reaching only the neediest.

School Feeding - More than 50,000 children in 400 schools will continue to receive supplementary rations for the midday meal. These supplies - rice, cocoa, sugar, dried vegetables - supplement the soup provided by the local committees and are a bulwark against inadequate rations at home.

Milk Distributions - War and the division of France into the occupied and unoccupied zones has reduced available milk supplies in unoccupied France. Through official French baby clinics, Quaker milk is distributed daily to some 10,000 babies. These food distributions are supervised by Service Committee personnel.

Vitamin Distributions - In recent months vitamins have been distributed to 180,000 children over a period of weeks and under medical supervision. It is

hoped that additional vitamins may be sent.

Colony Care - Nearly a thousand children of French and refugee nationality are cared for in spacious houses in the country. In these hospitable homes they find food, shelter and loving care. Pinched faces grow round again, happy work and play crowd out memories of hungry, frightened days.

Home Colony Care - For the many French families who have already suffered separation from fathers who are among the prisoners of war, further separations would be unendurable. Yet the children need additional food, a little help. Under the careful supervision of delegates of the Service Committee, extra rations are being given to carefully selected French families.

Concentration Camps - Some 4,000 refugee children are still interned with their parents in concentration camps. Children over 18 months must eat the same scanty rations as adults, so the Committee brings in extra rations, materials and equipment for schools, clothing for the unheated barracks, medicines.

### Refugee Services

The tides of war and its accompanying racial and national prejudices, have made thousands homeless, deprived them of a country and of citizen status. Thousands of these people are now in their third, even fourth, year of internment. Some, living free in the cities, dread internment behind the barbed wire.

For the few who are able to emigrate, the Service Committee delegates give such assistance as they can in helping the individual prepare his papers. At all the Friends Centers, there is assistance in finding members of the family living outside of France, contact with relatives and friends who are sometimes able to give financial assistance. In many instances, it is impossible to give material help, but delegates can offer understanding.

The plight of the thousands in concentration camps touches all who are concerned with human suffering. Friends through visits to the camps have worked to establish soup kitchens for the old and ill; to equip camp hospitals; to provide books and to install workshops for men and women to banish the dragging idleness of camp life.

Supplementing this camp service, hospitals have been established in nearby villages for the internees. Reception centers function in such cities as Marseille for refugee women and children, and homes for elderly refugees have been opened in various parts of France.

### Rehabilitation Work

As Europe enters this third year of war, there is an increase in malnutrition and starvation so that feeding the hungry becomes the major task of any group concerned with relief. Yet efforts to open opportunities for self-help continue. Frequently it is possible to give modest employment through community workrooms in the cities where the Friends have offices. Occasionally the provision of money for equipment enables the individual to become self-supporting.

Plans have also been launched for the establishment of French and refugee families in abandoned villages in unoccupied France. This program described in the

Service Committee bulletin #31 of June 27 necessitates careful selection of families, repair and reconstruction of homes for their use, and provision of small industrial projects which will enable them to be self-sufficient. It has been estimated that the cost of undertaking such a project for a single village is approximately \$3,000.

Friends Offices in France.

Through seven offices in unoccupied France, Friends services function. These offices are:

Marseille - 29 Boulevard d'Athenes (Headquarters)

Auch - 1 rue Charras

Lyons - 27 rue Sala

Montauban - 3 rue Porte du Moustier

Montpellier - 15 rue Boyer

Perpignan - 30 Avenue des Baleares

Toulouse - 16 Boulevard Bonrepos