

American Friends Service Committee

20 South Twelfth Street



Philadelphia, Penna.

BULLETIN ON RELIEF IN FRANCE

Bulletin #47

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Since November 7 the Committee has had no direct communication with the staff of Quaker relief workers in France. Frequent reports have, however, continued to come from the Committee offices in Lisbon and Geneva.

Relief Services in France

Relief services for French civilians and for foreign refugees are continuing. Financial reserves transferred during the summer and early fall will be sufficient for several months, the program being under the direction of a French committee, Secours Quaker. Experienced European staff members associated with the service since its inception are directing the work.

Friends and supporters of the Committee ask what will be the character of this program in the difficult days ahead. Shortage of supplies in recent months had already shaped the direction of services. Undoubtedly there can be no large scale provision of daily supplementary rations for school children as during previous winters. Reports written in late October do, however, indicate that this feeding was being undertaken on a small scale with supplies already purchased.

Food had also been distributed to a number of high schools to provide supplementary rations for adolescents. Teen age young people, needing food for healthy growth, have received none of the special consideration which official rations have accorded to younger children. To arrest the incidence of malnutrition among this adolescent group, the Committee designated certain of its food stores for supplementary rations in high schools. Admittedly these distributions will meet only a fraction of the need. Those who have been concerned for the health of these young people will have satisfaction in the knowledge that their gifts have made possible this winter service.

Child Care Services

Some 500 children are being cared for in colonies, largely in rural areas where food shortages have been less acute. This service, needed more than ever in this tragic winter of occupation and increased shortage, can presumably continue since each colony is maintained with local food supplies. Wherever possible more children will be accepted for care.

The home colony service to needy children through small monthly supplements of food and money has enabled many families to maintain homes and care for their children. This program is capable of considerable expansion and has the qualities of personal visitation and fellowship which French families will value at this difficult time.

At the end of October there were other projects which Quaker workers were considering. Since American staff members have remained in France it is possible that some of these plans are being realized. One would have provided an endowment for a children's

convalescent home under sponsorship of officials of the department of Pyrenees Oriental. Several committees have been interested in this project and were guaranteeing cash contributions of 12,000 francs annually for the support of a child.

Refugees in France

All reports from France since August have testified to the concern which French people of every religious denomination have felt for the foreign refugees facing deportation from France. They have befriended the children, sharing their own scanty rations. They have intervened courageously to give proof of friendship to those in jeopardy. Quaker representatives have worked with French civilians in this ministry to helpless people, gone with them to embarkation points with food and clothing and medical supplies. It is to be hoped that this Quaker service for those refugees remaining in the camps and in the cities may continue at this time of deepening tragedy.

Many of the Committee's friends and supporters in this country have old ties with France. Many others have helped in testimony of friendship to a suffering people. It is unnecessary to state here that the Committee program in France has been carried on in these difficult years not for shortrange partisan ends but as a channel by which generous American people might share their bread with the people of France. A service without religious propaganda it has been an expression of the healing power of love in a suffering world.

Reserve Funds

Funds of approximately \$50,000 destined for French relief remained in the Committee's hands in this country on November 7. These will be reserved for use when we are again able to help in France.

Money contributed since that date will be used, with the permission of the donors, for French people in North Africa and Switzerland where the Committee already has services. That there is need among French civilians in North Africa is attested by a cable just received from our representative in Casablanca which states:

CIVILIAN RELIEF NECESSITATED BY WAR RECEIVING OUR ATTENTION

The needs of foreign refugees in North Africa is also great. Thousands have existed in squalor and disease in the internment camps and work companies of North Africa. Now they are to be released. They will need clothes, food, and medicine. They will need help in re-establishing themselves in useful work.

Because of the needs which can be anticipated now and the larger needs which will come at the war's end, clothing and sewing groups are being urged to assemble reserves which will be quickly available when the way opens.

Quaker Personnel

Letters to 20 South Twelfth Street have expressed anxiety for American staff in France. These staff members stayed at their work until Thursday, November 12, when they went to the Department of Vaucluse, north of Marseille. The most recent news from them sent on November 27 from Geneva reports that they are not interned although they are apparently not free to move outside the town in which they are residing. Quaker work is by its nature anonymous but we believe there will be interest in this

list of American representatives.

Burritt M. Hiatt, Director
Roderic Davison
Herbert Lagler
Laura J. Loyson
Lindsley Noble
Russell W. Richie
Rosanna D. Thorndike
Gilbert F. White

Eleanor Foster Cohu, an American with French citizenship, has remained with the European staff.

A group of six Quaker workers sailed for service in France early in November and are now in Lisbon. They are:

David and Janine Blickenstaff
David S. Hartley
Roger Scattergood
Kendall G. Kimberland
Eric W. Johnson

The Committee hopes to arrange for their assignment to service in North Africa, London, and possibly Spain.

These are days of transition when we shall need wisdom to give useful service to the children of war; when we shall need support in general funds to meet emergency needs in various areas of distress; when we shall need to approach our tasks with a sense of deep humility for a suffering world.