

FOREIGN SERVICE BULLETIN



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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

To Help the Italian People

Toward the end of April, the American Friends Service Committee began a new project in Italy where its former service had been only with refugees in cooperation with the Inter-governmental Committee for Refugees. The new work is to provide transport for movement of repair materials in devastated villages to help the Italian people help themselves in the long-overdue rebuilding following the march of military campaigns last year.

David Hartley of the AFSC has been released by the IGCR for this work, and working with him are several members of the Friends Ambulance Unit as well as one Italian citizen. The AFSC has provided two trucks and one command car.

The place chosen for this work is Chieti Province, in east central Italy, an area heavily contested by the armies. The villages selected are Montenerodomo, Palena, and Colledara. The team is at present housed in three rooms of the home of a private family near Casoli, the accommodations being offered without cost.

It is hoped that this small undertaking may provide a liaison between the people, their government, and the Allied Commission, by encouraging the beginning of essential work and providing the transportation to make it possible.

"Piles of Debris"

In a recent letter, David Hartley describes conditions in the villages:

"The most obvious thing one sees is the destruction, heaps of rubble cluttering the streets. One stands in the middle of one of these villages and lets one's eyes sweep in a complete circle and sees nothing but great piles of debris with a few parts of buildings still standing. This view is made more tragic by the very nature of the terrain itself which allows no two houses on the same level and causes the debris from some of the houses to go sliding several hundred feet down to the fields below.

"Then there is the effect of this destruction on the people. Many have moved to small huts on their land, but many have remained in the villages and are living in the best accommodation they can find. In many cases, five to ten people share a small room. Often these rooms have a part of the wall missing or the floor is so poor that one wonders if it will hold. When we have seen these rooms during the day, the beds are generally stacked against the walls giving a cluttered effect to a room already full of cooking utensils, saddles, and other family belongings. What these rooms are like when the family is eating or sleeping one can imagine.

"Cleanliness, even on minimum standards, is practically impossible especially with the large amount of dust as a result of the destroyed buildings and construction going forward. As to sanitary conveniences, we have still to find anything resembling what one would consider essential to life.

Morale of the People

"The people themselves seem to have varied reactions. Some seem content to sit in their doorways and complain of the situation they are in and ask for help. I do not suggest that they should be condemned for this attitude, because the task ahead appears to be beyond human abilities, and there is low morale. Consider living in a room with six or eight other people, sleeping on the floor, carrying water great distances, being continually dirty because of the dust, and trying to feed children at the present prices. To consider rebuilding, one has to count on the high prices of materials, the high cost of a stone mason, and the impossibility of transport.

"Other people have already gotten at the job of clearing the debris and making preparations for building a shelter. The men and boys do the heavy work of lifting heavy stones and beams, but the women and children down to seven or eight years of age do their share of carrying water and brick and supplying various tools when needed. In this manner, the debris is gradually stacked for later use and some sort of house begins to take form, not magnificent, but one or two rooms with perhaps a big room opening down the slope behind for the animals and storage. As a house begins to go up from the foundations, there is a general feeling of satisfaction and the beginning of the hope that the terrible mess can be cleaned up and a town rebuilt."

* * *

FOOD SUPPLY IN PARIS

"The food situation in Paris seems to get worse instead of better; certainly as far as proteins are concerned. We have had this last month a fat ration of 500 grams which represents a slight increase over preceding months but all food is fairly scarce, even fresh vegetables are frightfully expensive. You have to pay \$1.50 for a pound of strawberries, cherries nearly one dollar a pound. Even lettuce, if bought by the pound, costs about 50 cents. Other vegetables seem to be non-existent. . . . I dare say the arrival of tens of thousands daily of returning prisoners and deportees accounts to some extent for the disappearance of meat from the markets but I can assure you its lack is hard to put up with after so many months already experienced of defective food supplies."

—Secours Quaker report, Paris, France

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The Food Situation in Europe

The following statement has been submitted to the Government by the American Friends Service Committee.

For several years we have been watching with great concern the steady deterioration of the food situation in Europe. Since the Allied invasion this process has been accelerated by destruction of transport facilities so that conditions which were not good under German control are becoming alarmingly bad wherever the Allies are operating.

American sympathies naturally are with the liberated countries which have been under Nazi domination, but looking at the food situation in Europe from an impartial viewpoint, it is evident that hunger is going to be very great in Germany. In fact, it is our judgment that the United States will soon be called upon to feed millions of destitute Germans, as well as provide food for the liberated countries.

What troubles us most is that the American people do not seem ready for this grave responsibility. At no time has the Government felt able to insist upon strict rationing in order to accumulate foodstocks adequate for the needs that now confront us. While there has been some complaining about rationing, no real hardship has been felt and no substantial decrease has been made in American food standards.

This fact is doubly unfortunate. In the eyes of Europeans we are consuming food inconsiderately. Moderate consumption is of vital importance if we are to build peace based upon mutual respect and appreciation. We also are cutting ourselves off psychologically from Europe by not experiencing some measure of rigorous rationing which has characterized life in Europe for a number of years.

Effects of Hunger

In the final analysis, we feel that the feeding of Europe is a moral obligation upon the American people whose standards of living are the highest in the world. To flaunt prodigality in the face of vast suffering on the Continent imperils hope of reconciliation and understanding between the New World and the Old. While emphasizing the spiritually destructive results of widespread and unrelieved hunger, we also fear its physical ruinous effects. In a continent suffering malnutrition are the possibilities of sweeping epidemics which know no national boundaries.

Foreseeing these dangers early in the course of the war, we approached the British and American Governments for permission to carry on token relief among the children of Occupied Europe, shipping through the blockade supplies which would be under our control. This request was denied repeatedly, but in each instance we were assured by the highest authorities of both the British and American Gov-

ernments that ample stockpiles of food would be accumulated to meet all possible needs the instant Europe might be liberated. Since the defeat of Italy and the Normandy invasion we have learned that there are no substantial food reserves available for the civilian populations in Europe and that there is practically no shipping to transport what limited supplies might be obtained. From personal contact, with French people in particular, we know that our failure to fulfill these pledges made prior to liberation is proving most damaging to the cause of democracy and international accord.

Responsibility of American Public

It is not our function to ask that the Armed Forces be required to reduce their food consumption in order to have more food to apply to relief work. It is widely stated that the military rations are far in excess of actual need and have been a cause of considerable friction between us and our Allies. Nonetheless, we know that neither the Armed Forces nor the American people will ask for any reduction of food or comforts for our fighting men. It would not be unreasonable, however, to inquire if the Armed Forces are taking all precautions to control the wasteful use of food. Military extravagance in this respect is said to be very great and what might be saved could make a substantial contribution to relief operations.

Ultimately, the responsibility for accumulating food stockpiles for relief purposes rests with the American public. As civilians, we ought to be helped to see the enormous extent of the need, largely created by our own military might, and be given some opportunity to relieve the suffering. This is not an impossible task. Basically, Europe is able to produce the bulk of its food supplies. What we now face is a temporary emergency with special consideration for next winter.

Reduce Our Standard of Living

Accordingly, we would like to suggest that the American people be asked to accept much stricter rations. Even if the Government is not ready to impose ration restrictions, we would like to be given the opportunity to try voluntary self-rationing in order that hungrier people than ourselves may be fed. More than two years ago we requested the Office of Price Administration for permission to appeal for ration points which individuals would contribute in order that special war relief stockpiles might be accumulated. This request was denied, but we now feel it is time to ask again that our Government reveal to the people the full extent of the need in Europe and propose measures which will reduce

our extravagant standards of living. We believe that throughout the country there are millions of men and women who feel a sense of responsibility for repairing the appalling destruction to which Europe has been subjected. If the Government can see its way clear to take this momentous step and restrict American food consumption or offer some voluntary method whereby we might impose restrictions on ourselves, we believe that the whole psychological atmosphere will change for the better, and the United States will enter fully into a mature understanding of its responsibilities as the best fed nation on earth.

On behalf of the American Friends Service Committee,

CLARENCE E. PICKETT,
Executive Secretary.

* * *

Russian Refugees in France

Members of the Perpignan delegation of Secours Quaker have visited a group of Russian refugees at Couiza who are installed in an abandoned hat factory.

The conditions of the refugees were fairly comfortable largely due to their own initiative with the help of the Russian and French officers in charge. The refugees, including 500 men, women, and children, received military allocation and food ration, and the French Red Cross was able to maintain the condensed milk ration for children up to 13 years.

Secours Quaker was able to help with provision of blankets, women's clothing, irons, and other articles.

The Secours Quaker representatives report that there has been "a good bit of interest in the country for these refugees, and their choral groups received numerous invitations to sing in festivities, even in places distant from Couiza. This gave them the opportunity to earn a little money and also gave them a feeling of independence."

* * *

Jugoslavs near Marseille

Members of the Secours Quaker delegation at Marseille have been able to assist in small ways a camp for Yugoslav refugees in the area. The camp is under the direction of the Ministry of Prisoners, Deportees, and Refugees, managed by a French military captain with a group of French and Yugoslav officers. The organization and atmosphere seemed excellent, but many supplies were lacking.

Such things as soap and potatoes were supplied through Secours Quaker, and the Quaker representatives were also hoping to find the means of securing clothing, shoes, medical supplies, sheets, mattresses, and such things as shaving equipment. It was expected that the camp would see much movement and that new arrivals of refugees would arrive as others were repatriated. The lack of change of clothing was particularly severe.

The Voice of Bengal

*"From the breath of our heart comes the people's cry
For food and life and light and air,
For the body's strength and the mind's bright cheer
And the noble daring of unfettered soul."*

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

The words of the late Bengali poet speak as the voice of India in behalf of the victims of disease and malnutrition which are still taking their toll after the great famine.

Tagore's words distill the spirit which impelled nineteen non-official voluntary relief societies in India to form the Bengal Medical Relief Co-ordination Committee early in 1944 to supplement official efforts to control the epidemics and destitution which the famine brought. In the recent history of Bengal, there is no parallel instance of such an united effort of the people. Under the call to this great humanitarian emergency effort, people of all shades of politics and belief were assembled.

The Friends Ambulance Unit and the American Friends Service Committee in India have been a part of this united endeavor; the FAU-AFSC India Section is, in fact, one of the nineteen component organizations in the BMRCC along with others such as the All-India Women's Conference, Bengal Muslim League Relief Committee, Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha Relief Committee, Servants of India Society, and Teachers and Students United Relief Committee, to mention only a few.

The AFSC-FAU is not only an operating member of the Bengal Medical Relief Coordinating Committee but has made a grant of Rupees 28,000 (app. three rupees equal one U. S. dollar) to the BMRCC to be used over a period of six months in six mobile medical units for the vitamin and drug program. The AFSC-FAU also is giving support to the Bengal Civil Protection Committee, one of the cooperating groups of the BMRCC, with a grant of Rupees 36,000.

In all aspects of its work the FAU-AFSC seeks to cooperate as closely as possible with all relief agencies, official and non-official.

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CHINESE CO-EDS JOIN F.A.U.

Six Chinese university girls have volunteered for work with the FAU China Convoy as an expression of their desire to give Christian service to China. Four have joined the hospital staff at T'eng Cheng, and two are on the staff of the Huei Tien hospital in Kutsing.

* * *

LADY MOUNTBATTEN VISITS CHINA CONVOY

Lady Mountbatten, accompanied by Commissioner Blunt of the British Red Cross Society, has visited two of the FAU medical teams, at Paoshan and at T'eng Cheng.

Cholera in Calcutta

Since the middle of April a severe cholera epidemic has been raging in Calcutta. There were about 9,000 deaths in Bengal during the first five-week period, but the epidemic is now abating. The India Section of the American Friends Service Committee-Friends Ambulance Unit formed itself into mobile inoculation teams. In cooperation with the Public Health Department, the Section had inoculated about 21,000 persons when word was last received in Philadelphia.

FAU Inoculation Teams

Christopher Taylor, Officer-in-Charge of the Section, wrote on May 10: "The outbreak of cholera coincided with the presence in Calcutta of 12 reinforcements for the China Convoy. With their massive and moral support, inoculation teams were put into the field, if it is not too fanciful to describe the streets and bustees (slums) of Calcutta by such a name. The teams comprised members of the India Section, the China Convoy, male and female; they included Americans, Canadians, English, and Indians, two Friends in the army on leave from Burma, a nurse from a U. S. Army Hospital (also a Friend), an Indian lady doctor, and medical students from Calcutta University. Two loud speaker vans belonging to the Calcutta Corporation gave moral support and provided light music; a new truck provided

through the Governor by the Australia-India Association was used as a mobile dispensary.

From Government Offices to Slums

"First contact (with the hypodermic needle) was made in 'Writers Buildings', the seat of the Bengal Government. Members of the Finance Department were suitably immunized as were those of the Accountant General's office, the Intelligence Branch of the Police, the General Post Office, Brooke Bonds Tea Factory, and the Survey of India Map office.

"The attack was then switched to the Calcutta slums, and teams worked from Air Raid Precaution posts. This was slower but had its moments of excitement, as when invitations came to visit and inoculate households where tradition normally kept the ladies from public view.

"The sight of one AFSC member working in a bustee area followed by a squad of small and nearly naked boys, carrying alcohol, needles, cotton wool, and vaccine will remain long in the memory. Children were less apprehensive than adults and after inoculation were as zealous as any new convert in rounding up friends and relations. Inoculation was regarded as a free cure for all ills. Three words only were necessary: 'Atcha' (all right), 'Bus' (all over), and 'Teek' (all right)."



Results of Vitamin Experiment in India

A complete summary of the results of the vitamin experiment described in the last issue of the Bulletin has been received from India. This experiment was conducted by the All-India Institute of Public Health and Hygiene using five schools near Calcutta.

Multivitamins supplied by the American Friends Service Committee were used in this scientifically controlled experiment, conducted during the first three months of the year, and administered to school children in the following manner: three multivitamin pearls a day for the first four days, 2 pearls a day for the next four days, and a single pearl a day for the rest of the period. 181 children were included in the experimental group and 156 acted as control. The control group received a course of vitamins at the conclusion of the experiment.

Periodic examinations were made, and both the control and experimental groups were followed up, when necessary, to their homes. A survey of the economic strata of the families was also made.

Decided Improvement

At the end of the investigation a decided improvement in the deficiencies was noted in the experimental group as a result of the feeding of multivitamin pearls. The number of diseases due to dietary deficiencies was reduced by 53.5 per cent in contrast

with the control group in which an increase of 11.4 per cent was noted. The beneficial effect was marked in case of Vitamin A deficiencies, less marked in case of Vitamin B₂ deficiencies, and only partially seen in case of Vitamin C deficiencies.

The clinical summary describes the analysis of deficiencies and how they are distributed, and describes as well, the relation of family diet and economic status. Results of stool examination showed that 50 per cent of the children were infested with one or other types of helminthics, such as hookworm.

Need for Milk

The experiment showed that an adequate supply of milk was indicated as one of the remedies for the deficient children and families. Of all children examined, 50 per cent used no milk at all, only four per cent used milk in sufficient quantities, and the remaining 46 per cent used milk in inadequate amounts.

AFSC representatives in India indicate that the need to keep supplies of drugs, vitamins and milk proceeding from America to India is very great and will be for some months to come. All funds secured by the current nation-wide campaign of American Relief for India, Inc., will go to the continued operation of the AFSC-FAU work.

Medical Pioneering on the Yunnan Front

A letter from Dr. Arthur Barr describes the work of Medical Team No. 7 of the Friends Ambulance Unit on the Yunnan front:

Anti-Hookworm Campaign

"Probably our biggest clinical contribution was to find a high incidence of hookworm among the troops and to do something about it. We had copies made of a circular we wrote telling what hookworm was, what it did to the infected person, enough about the life cycle to understand how it was contracted, the most common methods of contracting the disease, and what could be done to prevent it. These copies were distributed to all groups. We started a thorough systematic examination of all groups and treated those infected. The group had three microscopes so we trained six members of their personnel in diagnosis by examination of the faeces."

The anti-hookworm campaign accomplished the microscopic examination and treatment of some 6800 soldiers, many of whom had follow-up examinations as well. Over 50 per cent of the troops were infected with the disease, and about 20 per cent had double infection of both hookworm and ascaris.

With malaria and hookworm so prevalent, the need for special diets was very great. There was no wheat flour available in the area and the originality of Shiela Lu, the FAU nurse, was called upon in the use of beans and rice flour for special diets. Over 1600 bowls of rich bean milk were served to the patients each month; 350 bean residue biscuits made to a tasty formula served to supplement vitamins, while 530 bowls of blood or liver soup were given to treat anaemic patients. No small part of the special diet supplies, such as beans, came from civilians in the area, in payment for treatment in the outpatient department.

Hospital Is Built

There were no suitable buildings available for a hospital and an inefficient set of old temple buildings was used at first. However, the Chinese Army division under direction of the FAU team put up bamboo and thatch buildings for a complete hospital plant including wards for 64 beds, junior staff and senior staff quarters, out-patient building, laboratory and dispensary, delousing station, kitchen, and operating theatre. There are plans for four more wards of 32 beds each. Much of the material for the buildings was contributed by the civilians of the area, and in return for this service they were given free treatments on market days.

A training program for six Chinese Army surgeons and 20 Chinese nurse-orderlies, especially selected from among the most promising students of a refresher course already given, was started with rotation courses in anaesthesia, laboratory, medicine, and surgery for the doctors. The nurse-orderlies were given special training in keeping of charts,

delousing, diets, and feeding. Thus, when the FAU team was withdrawn, the continuance of the medical services was assured.

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Story in Charcoal

"Since December 1941 the Friends Ambulance Unit China Convoy has been cut off from the supply of new trucks and replacements. As a result, a number of makeshifts and methods of tinkering have been devised. A Hercules Diesel engine may be found on a Ford chassis. With the supply of gasoline dwindling since the closing down of the old Burma Road, the Unit designed its own type of charcoal truck for the main haulage of medical supplies. It has proved to be much superior to other charcoal models in operation in China. The Chevrolet trucks which are rated by the manufacturer at one and one-half tons now carry two and one-half tons with the charcoal system. When technical experts from the Foreign Economic Administration made a survey of transport in China, they found that the Friends Ambulance Unit needed less than one-third the men needed by any other organization to maintain its transport system.

"But the switch from gasoline to charcoal imposed an acid test on the patience of the driver. Over the long-flung desolate route which takes weeks to cover, he has to nurse, coax, and goad his charcoal truck. Usually, the engines are taken apart every 2000 miles, rings replaced, bearings refitted, and everything checked over.

"The service of the Friends Ambulance Unit, the only relief organization in China engaged in the transport of donated medical supplies, has proved very valuable to organizations such as the National Health Administration, the International Relief Committee, the Emergency Purchasing Committee, the International Peace Hospitals, the Ministry of Health, the American Red Cross, and other bodies."

—Extract from a feature article on the FAU in "China Newsweek" published by the Chinese Ministry of Information.

* * *

IN WAKE OF KWEICHOW OFFENSIVE

One of the members of the FAU China Convoy spent the months of February through April with the Kweichow International Relief Administration as controller for their fleet of three trucks engaged in hauling refugee supplies in that province. FAU cargoes to Kweichow province were almost entirely made up of relief goods, which were distributed in areas suffering because of the earlier Japanese offensive and the universally poor crops.

Statement of Policy: Secours Quaker

by ROGER CHARELS

(Roger Charels is Treasurer of Secours Quaker.)

"At the present time, the bulk of Secours Quaker work in the four southern delegations is child-feeding. We have felt responsibility to go on with this because so few official supplies are arriving. This work begun by American Friends and now carried by French Friends with the assistance of our British and American associates is more than material assistance. It has stood during these five years as an expression of the desire of people overseas to be helpful at a time when France was cut off from the free world.

Help to Normandy

"On the basis of immediate resources available, we might not have undertaken the work in Caen and Le Havre. We might have confined ourselves to work already undertaken. Yet both these cities were devastated by American and British armies. A family which has lost its home is more aware of that loss than of the purposes for which those armies came to France. There are tensions and they have not been dissipated these last months. It seemed important to us that British and American volunteers should work with us in the services of reconstruction in these devastated cities. The service itself is small but it can symbolize the international friendship in which we believe.

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Transport Relief for Bombed-out Normandy

"Many of the small villages are proportionately in a much worse condition than Caen. One village I visited, namely Thury-Harcourt, had a pre-bombardment population of about 1,000 of which 70 have now returned to find the village 75 per cent destroyed. They have now only one 3-ton truck for all their haulage work for feeding, demolition, and reconstruction. Their local railway is unusable because nine bridges have to be rebuilt. They are isolated except for a daily bus service to Caen which runs once in each direction.

"We were able to arrange for two Bedford trucks and a small truck and trailer from Secours Quaker to work there for a week. This idea of supplying a number of trucks to work for the common good of the village under the direction of the Mairie, we feel, is the best service we can do now, and we are making arrangements to work for the badly hit villages of Calvados in turn. We are working at Villers Bocage and next week at Falaise.

"This is the season for the harvest to be planted and we realize only too well that Europe needs a good harvest this year. Yet in Calvados, the fields

More Personal Service

"As the French government is able to alleviate conditions through improvement of supplies and transport we would see our work of distribution decreasing and centering more on the neglected jobs which require more personal service. We have always done the less popular jobs and are prepared to go on with them. We worked in camps for foreign Jews in the face of Nazi persecution and carried food to the trains when so many thousands were deported. We went into the Gestapo prisons during the hard years of occupation. We go now into the political prisons because we believe that in a time when France is working through great difficulties to find her way to new strength in freedom there should be a few who, refraining from judgment, shall continue to express in service love for all men.

"It is axiomatic to say that many of the tragedies of this last decade have arisen from greed and anger and hate. A small group of Friends, even with the wide fellowship which is shared with men and women of every denomination, can perhaps contribute only a little to the easing of these tensions. We do believe, however, that a group working as volunteers can contribute something to a way of life which will bring about genuine peace."

are still mined and all the stocks of sowing seeds have been burned or looted. Hundreds of truckloads of grain and potatoes for sowing will have to be brought in from other areas. We have recently received a request to send trucks to collect potatoes from outlying farm districts.

"Reconstruction building materials will have to be brought in to Calvados from other parts of France and built into houses if Calvados is not to have another winter like the last."

—Secours Quaker delegation, Caen, France.

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FEEDING 25,000 PERSONS

"Through the feeding services in the seven delegations, Secours Quaker is reaching approximately 25,000 persons. Clothing distribution was accelerated in February and March in an effort to get warm clothing to the most needy. Layettes, blankets, shoes, and underwear are still the most urgently needed items."

—Secours Quaker report, Paris, France.

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