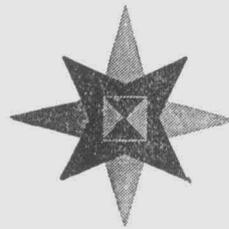


# FOREIGN SERVICE BULLETIN



THE DEEPER NEED IN FRANCE . . . . .	2
QUAKER STAR TO AUSTRIA . . . . .	3
DEVELOPMENTS IN FINLAND . . . . .	4
EXPLORING RELIEF FOR GERMANY . . . . .	5
A NEW EUROPEAN TRANSPORT UNIT . . . . .	5
CHILDREN'S SHOE SHOP . . . . .	5
HUMAN NEEDS IN POLAND . . . . .	6
FAREWELL TO POWELL HOUSE . . . . .	6
VISITOR TO THE ORIENT . . . . .	7
FACTS FROM FRANCE . . . . .	7

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**AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE**

# The Deeper Need in France

By MARGARET FRAWLEY

It is too early to appraise the spiritual forces in France and in Europe, to estimate the degree of damage in a torn social fabric, the qualities of faith, courage and strength which will be forthcoming for the rebuilding. Americans, who have suffered so much less, can only lend their own faith and try to understand the European experiences of these past six years.

That quiet, staid little city, Geneva, seems gay and carefree after Paris. It is only by the contrast that one realizes how heavy life in France is. People are indescribably tired, tired because it is such a burdensome task just to maintain life—to keep warm and to try to find enough food. Five years of malnutrition contribute to that weariness. Malnutrition can also change the personality, make one more fearful, more closed in. The Frenchwomen who shiver all day in lines talk about food and how to keep warm and of prices which are seven times those of pre-war days. Behind their occasional smiles and a Gallic humor which still flashes through are shadows. Last year they worried about "Him" in a prison, labor or concentration camp in Germany. Many of them know now their men are dead. The woman in the line mourns him in her heart and regrets there is no black cloth so that she may ease the pain by public mourning. If the man is home the first rejoicing of his spring homecoming is over, she is worried about his health, the black moods of depression which pull him back into those experiences he tries to put away, about the unemployment which increases and means he will have no work this winter. She worries about Marie's cough and teen-age Jean who is always hungry and whether Jean's shabby, broken boots can be mended again.

## The Burden of War Memories

The experiences of the recent past press too close to be quickly thrown off. For four years the French people lived in fear symbolized by the tramp of heavy boots on the street, the racing motor of the Gestapo car in the night. These sounds, to many civilians of occupied Europe, are what the thunder of planes overhead can be to a battle-shocked soldier. They remember, too, the daily humiliations of a proud people under the pressures of foreign occupation. That is why they are likely to tell over and over again the stories of their participation in the Resistance, the one moment when they could express what they felt, the pride in having risked death to save a hunted human being, to have expressed their defiance in action.

For others the experiences in prisons and in camps were at such a depth of cruelty and indignity that they can only slowly grope their way out of that nightmare darkness into the sunlight. A man out of

Dachau tells with shame and surprise of his father's death in camp and of hiding the body for ten days so that he could collect the dead man's ration. Another tells of shuffling down the line where an officer by rule of thumb designated men and women for labor or for the gas chamber. The dead are close about these survivors.

## Spiritual Wreckage

The years of propaganda unloosed hate, which sometimes festers even among those who sought to reject it. Hate against Jews, hate against other Frenchmen, these were the poisons of destruction. Thousands responded by hating Germans.

The prisons in France are full. Many of the prisoners collaborated with the Germans, many were guilty of a single indiscretion, a thoughtless comment. For these latter the punishment often far outweighs the crime. Because of the existence of so-called occupied and unoccupied zones in France, the confusion of issues is deeper than in some of the other countries which suffered occupation. There is general recognition that the nation must find unity, but the deep cleavages are not easily bridged.

The experiences of these years have blurred many moral values. Goods are in short supply and during occupation the Black Market was regarded by many as a way of cheating the conquerors of their requisitions. It was the source by which food was provided for patriots in hiding. But the Black Market thrives after liberation and Frenchmen are cheating themselves, hampering equal distribution, retarding recovery.

Inflation has mounted in France since liberation. The recent political crisis centers on financial difficulties. When the franc seems as worthless as it does today in France, there is no incentive to thrift. Economic insecurity accentuates all the other insecurities.

Fear, a propaganda of hate, cruelty leave their marks. They are the deeper perhaps because people are ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed. Knowing the experiences through which France has come, one is heartened that so many human values are undamaged, that men and women did find, side by side with the cruelty and violence, love and trust in one another. Even out of that great weariness men are turning to some of the tasks of slow rebuilding.

For the rebuilding and the spiritual reconstruction will be slow. Hunger and cold will pass, but the road to genuine reconstruction, to the achievement of the spiritual values which they believe in, will be a long, hard road back.

## Quaker Star to Austria

Following the First World War, both British and American Friends did relief work in Austria, and an international center was established at Singerstrasse 16, Vienna. On the entry of England into war in 1939 British Friends withdrew, but the AFSC was able to keep at least one person in Vienna until 1941, concentrating on giving assistance to persons trying to emigrate from Europe. When the AFSC representative withdrew, a faithful group of Europeans continued to work in the Singerstrasse 16 office until they were obliged to move to another location. Finally word came that the Center was entirely closed.

After the end of the war in Europe it became possible to receive occasional letters from former workers and Friends in the Vienna Center, conveying pictures of the efforts of the people to pull themselves back to normal life in the midst of destruction, destitution, hunger and cold. A visitor to Austria wrote in October 1945: "They need you (the Quakers) here now in Vienna. They need your . . . message of love and kindness more than I can say . . . They are as hungry for understanding and kindness as for bread."

In November the President's War Relief Control Board informed the AFSC that it would be permitted to include Austria among the countries to which it could provide relief. Efforts are under way to purchase foodstuffs for Austria amounting to \$150,000, including supplies of milk, tuna fish and oil from Switzerland. Clothing shipments of ninety thousand pounds are going forward, part of which are already in Switzerland, and children's shoes to a value of \$35,000. A carload of mixed cereal and fifteen tons of powdered whole milk are in New York awaiting immediate shipment. A team of ten AFSC representatives appointed for work in Austria are undergoing preliminary training, with the expectation of flying over as soon as possible. Claude Shotts, formerly with the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, will lead the project, assisted by Arthur Billings, Mary Campion, Mary Forman, George Fredericks, Maria Luisa Gildemeister, Melvin Lueresen, Carleton and Norma Mabee, and George Mathues.

### Life in Post-War Vienna

Margaret E. Jones, a former AFSC representative in Vienna before 1941, and a member of the AFSC office staff, left for Switzerland in November and was able to enter Vienna at Christmas time. She spent nearly two weeks making investigations for the AFSC relief project, returning to Switzerland in January. The city of Vienna, she reports, is badly damaged, though probably not so much so as German cities. "The burned out buildings stand gaunt and jagged, with empty windows—those that were struck by bombs have walls gone, floors hang craz-

ily, high up on what was a sixth floor one can see a door swinging in the wind. And the streets are full of piled up rubble, and always I saw forlorn old people climbing around the rubble piles hunting for scraps of something to burn as fuel . . .

"It was fantastic to walk these streets at night. Only the main streets are really lighted—one needs a flashlight for all others, and one is not encouraged to walk alone after eight or nine o'clock—lawlessness abounds . . . If you look up, the emptiness of the broken buildings brings you quick glimpses of the night sky. As for the apartment houses where people live, most of them have windows covered either with paper or some cardboard material.

"Very few telephones are in service. One sees a few taxis, and many cars of course. But for the most part a few horse-drawn vehicles and dozens of make-shift carts pulled or pushed by men and women make up the only 'traffic.' One day I saw two men pushing an emaciated woman on a homemade stretcher along one of the main streets. And I always was seeing men and women and children carrying on their backs huge bundles of sticks gathered from the Wienerwald to add to their meager fuel supply. One saw this especially on the weekends—sometimes I could hardly squeeze in the tram platform because it was jammed with persons returning from gathering wood . . .

"An ersatz coffee without sugar or milk is available. Food is strictly rationed but the coupons don't mean much, because there is no meat—there is hardly any milk—there is no fat. To live as an Austrian means to eat coffee and bread for supper. In the food shops I saw many packages of dried peas from the United States—they say they have been eating them for months. And bread. And with this limited supply everyone told me 'It's much better than it was.' . . .

"The army welfare agencies are trying most awfully hard to help the situation. A city welfare council has been set up—army officials from all zones with rotating (country) chairmanship, and city welfare and private agency officials are on it. It meets every two weeks at least and sometimes every week . . . A plan suggested . . . is to open 'warming rooms' where from three to eight o'clock, people can come just to be comfortably warm for a few hours. This was presented to the council—and it is hoped to have these rooms going in all zones.

"Nothing is being done for the teen-age group, and we discussed the possibility of the AFSC providing a cocoa-like drink at certain hours for boys and girls in the fourteen-eighteen bracket . . . We talked, too, of the possible educational program for the teen-agers which could go along with the cocoa—and its rehabilitation side of relief work."

## Developments in Finland

Barracks purchased by Douglas Steere in Sweden have been shipped to Finland and re-erected in Rovaniemi and Kemijarvi to serve as living quarters for the AFSC personnel, and also as warehouses for supplies and as community centers.

Thomas B. Harvey, William Fredrickson, Naomi Jackson, Mary Barclay and Nancy Foster are in Rovaniemi. Later these will divide into two teams, one to stay at Rovaniemi, and one to work at Kemijarvi. Lena Sundberg, a Swedish Friend, was working with the group until Christmas and may return. James Andrews, Jr., has remained in Stockholm to carry on the purchase of supplies.

### Aid from Finnish-Americans

One of the most necessary items for distribution in the northern area of Finland is high shoes of a ski-boot type, both for children and adults. A Boston shoe firm is supplying 10,224 pairs at a cost of approximately \$28,000. Of this order 1,825 pairs have actually been shipped, with the prospect of the balance following within a month. The AFSC clothing rooms at 20 Warren Street, New York, and at 304 Arch Street, Philadelphia, have packed and shipped 104 tons of clothing. All of this work is done by groups of Finnish-American volunteers. Recent word from Rovaniemi indicates that 47 tons of clothing already have been distributed.

The AFSC workers speak with enthusiasm of the great benefit which contributions of money and service from the Finnish-Americans are bringing to Finland. The child feeding program in the schools of the Rovaniemi area, started in mid-January, is reaching five thousand children between the ages of seven and fourteen, in seventy schools. It is perfectly evident that this piece of work in northern Finland could not be undertaken without the splendid assistance of United Finnish Relief, Inc. and Help Finland, Inc., as well as numerous other Finnish-American groups throughout the country.

### Through and Over the Ruins

Shortly after his arrival in Finland, William Fredrickson wrote an account of his trip after crossing the Swedish-Finnish border.

"We drove along the coast road to Kemi through countryside which is very much like northern Wisconsin—gently rolling countryside with heavy pine and birch forest on all sides, a lot of rather barren open spots, and a few fields that are cultivated in the summer. There are more houses than you would see in Wisconsin, for the area along the coast and along these roads is fairly heavily populated. The men work in the woods most of the time and only have the fields to provide a little supplemental food for the family. We didn't see much destruction because the German retreat was too fast here . . . The damage begins at Rovaniemi, which was the German headquarters in this area. It was a beauti-

ful day as we drove alongside the nearly frozen Kemi River northward. It grew dark around four when we were still an hour away from Rovaniemi and the silent arctic night settled on this frost-white countryside. And then suddenly—Rovaniemi. I can't adequately describe the feeling that came over me as we drove into this ghost city in the white arctic night in which one can see as if by moonlight . . . shock, horror, disgust, wonder, sadness—perhaps a mixture of these. Everywhere on all sides were the heaps of rubbish and the ugly outlines of chimneys against the sky that once were homes. Half-houses that somehow remained standing now house a family or two, and smoke coming out of the ground reveals where some one is living in a cellar. Only a few non-wood buildings escaped total destruction, but they were of course gutted by fire.

Two days later he went to Sodankyla, one hundred miles north, to deliver powdered milk to the hospital.

"After supper the doctor and nurse took us for a little tour to see how the returned evacuees live. The doctor spoke very little Swedish, a little German, and the nurse neither, but we conversed partly in German, partly through Mr. O. The first 'house' we visited was a little shack about 10 by 20 feet in which lived twelve people, the ones we saw quite old and clad in rags. Next we visited the school where a young Swedish-speaking schoolmaster was about to dismiss his forty-odd shy and smiling six- and seven-year-olds. We learned that four of them had been evacuated to Sweden, the rest to south Finland, that the school barrack is used by the upper grades in the morning and the lower grades in the afternoon . . . We then saw a little shack similar in size to the other, in which lived a man, wife, five children and five or six assorted other people . . . We then drove about a mile from the village to visit a family with eight children who had already moved into their new self-built house.

"As we stood just outside the hospital under the star-bright sky in the crisp, cold night, the northern lights began to play over the heavens. I moved around the barracks and found the ruins of the old hospital—four naked chimneys—and through them saw the indescribably lovely shimmering greenish curtain of the northern lights. I think that was a lesson for our world; that we must look through and over the ruins and see God's eternal beauty."

A month later, writing of his various contacts with Finns who are deeply interested in the work which William Fredrickson and the others are trying to do, he says: "Many, many people, with that tragic look deep in the eyes that one finds so often among Finns, on hearing why I am here have clasped my hand firmly and said 'thank you' with a depth of gratitude that has been almost painful for me when I think how little it is that we bring."

## Exploring Relief for Germany

The warmth of public response to the advertisement, "If Thine Enemy Hunger . . ." shows that the desire to give help to the German people is widely shared in America. The same theme has been expressed in public statements by Catholic Bishops, by representatives of church relief agencies, and by a group of thirty-four Senators. Recognition of this wide-spread urge by government agencies is symbolized by the mission, of which Gilbert White, AFSC assistant executive secretary, and James Read, recently discharged from Civilian Public Service, are members, representing the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service.

On December 6, the State and War Departments and the President's War Relief Control Board agreed to extend permission to the American Council to name such a mission to investigate conditions in Germany and report on practical ways in which the agencies could help. On December 7, the Council's sub-committee on Germany nominated six members for the mission, including three who were already in Europe—Joseph Buttinger of International Rescue and Relief, Stewart Hermann of the World Council of Churches, and Father James Hoban of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. A seventh member was to be named jointly by the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, to represent the labor groups.

James Flint of the Congregational Service Committee, Gilbert White and James Read were flown to Germany, where accounts of their work indicate that the delegation has completed its tour of the American zone and discussions with military authorities there. Visits are being paid to the French and British zones. Actual plans for relief operations have to be cleared by the military government of the area before being considered in detail for approval by the State and War Departments. Meanwhile, no agency is licensed to collect money for Germany, although plans are going forward for a central office to represent all agencies licensed to operate in Germany, and key personnel are being recruited.

\* \* \*

## A New European Transport Unit

One great need in Europe is to get supplies from the point at which they may be available, either in the country itself or from abroad, to the people who are suffering for lack of them. Communications and transport were wiped out in many areas. Those which were saved or built anew followed military needs for the most part. As efforts get under way to rebuild the normal transportation systems, the main lines come first, then the smaller connecting ones in rural areas. Emergency transportation service has

been one of the important relief activities for civilians as the war ended and the inevitable work of rebuilding began.

In the last week of January three men left the AFSC offices in Philadelphia to pioneer in a new transport service, European rather than national in scope. Workers in the project—drivers, mechanics, organizers—are going first to France, where relief transport has been going forward for some time, in order to get the "feel" of the problem. From there they will go on to other parts of Europe as needs and opportunities open. Fifteen trucks are already available.

Winslow Ames, former Civilian Public Service camp director, heads the Unit. This work in western and central Europe, he says, will resemble in some ways the transport program already at work in Italy, though the projects are not tied together administratively. Sailing with him were George Loveland and Leigh Morrell, while eight to ten others are preparing to follow.

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## Children's Shoe Shop

*This account was written by one of the pupils of a Friends' school. Her appearance, with a classmate, before the January meeting of the American Friends Service Committee to tell the story in person, was one of the highlights of the meeting.*

Our section of the Fifth Grade has a Shoe Shop. We decided on this drive in the early part of the fall for the people of Europe.

We sent notices around to other classes of the Lower School, telling them of our project and asking them for shoes. In a very short time shoes of all kinds were coming in.

We voted to use our class dues for the repairs. These dues, along with one contribution, amounted to \$7.40. We decided to use \$5 of the dues for mending, and the rest for shoelaces and polish.

We found a shoemaker that would mend our shoes at a reduced price since we were sending them overseas. He has sent \$56 worth of shoes to Europe himself.

Later more contributions were made, so then we had \$32. When next we went to the shoemaker, we told him we thought he should raise the bill on our shoes since we had more money. We had 255 pairs of shoes and out of that, 35 pairs had to be mended.

On the 30th of November, two boys and our teacher went to the American Friends Service Committee storeroom. They saw how the cartons of clothing were gotten ready for overseas.

We appreciate the cooperation of the American Friends Service Committee in sending our shoes to those who need them in the other parts of the world.

## Human Needs in Poland

During the time that Douglas V. Steere was investigating relief needs in Finland, he was able to spend the first ten days of October 1945 in Poland, traveling with Frederick J. Tritton, a representative of the British Friends Service Council. After four days in Warsaw, they traveled by jeep in southern and southwestern Poland.

Douglas Steere's report is divided into ten sections describing the food, clothing, social conditions, health, etc., as he found them. Although food for sale seemed plentiful in the larger cities, the sign of plenty was deceptive for prices were too high on the open market for the ordinary person to purchase. Butter at 280 zloty per kilo—over a dollar—would take more than a week's wage to buy, and bread at 27 zloty might take half a day's wage.

### Obstacles to Agriculture

"The war, with two armies having swept over Poland and preyed on her for so long, has reduced the horses to thirty per cent of what they once were. Cattle have generally been reduced to about thirty-five per cent of the former number . . . This reduction of horsepower in Poland means that agriculture is immobilized or returned almost to a hand level . . . I often saw men and women harnessed to carts . . . The war delayed planting and seed was short last spring. Large numbers of the peasants themselves are living under such difficult conditions as to wear them down and reduce their working capacity . . . Poland, a potentially surplus country in agricultural commodities, can scarcely feed her own people this winter on a very low standard."

### Serious Toll on Health

The report continues on this discouraging note. Clothing is completely inadequate, in some cases non-existent. Shoes are among the most needed items. Insufficient clothing, food and shelter take their serious toll on health. "The war has pulled the Poles down to a level of disease and weakness quite unknown to such a strong, productive race of people." Although Douglas Steere could not find any completely accurate statistics for tuberculosis, he believed it safe to estimate that it had increased at least 400 per cent as a result of the war and that it was still increasing. Hospital and sanatoria buildings are in existence but they have no equipment and thus cannot be used. Typhus, both intestinal and spotted, is a serious danger. The former type was practically in epidemic form and the latter was expected to be epidemic by the late winter. Typhoid, diphtheria and venereal disease are rife. Infant mortality is very high, and the vitality of young and old is seriously impaired. Douglas Steere visited Poland before the winter weather had started, and the prospects for survival were meager. "The combination of malnutrition and exposure will be more than the weaker ones can stand."

One matter of particular interest was the return of some nine thousand students to the University

and Technical High School in Warsaw—one-third of the whole student body in Poland. Nearly half of this group were women, and forty per cent of the whole number had been in Germany. They, too, were undernourished, ill clad, and many infected with tuberculosis. Aside from the physical difficulties of health, etc., the universities have often no library and few books. There are no dormitories, so that students live in cellars or wherever they can find some shelter. In spite of these handicaps, the students and their faculties struggle to build up again their educational system.

### Plans in Process

The American and International Red Cross, the Swedish Government and United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration were all making investigations with the expectation of contributing funds, medical supplies, extra feeding. Frederick Tritton and Douglas Steere recommended that a limited program of relief for university students and professors in Warsaw would be one of the most useful services. This might begin with a hostel where a meal would be served, where students could have a central, warm place in which to sit, and where some available clothing could be distributed.

Friends Relief Service has appointed a team of six persons who are expected to reach Poland early in February to inaugurate a program. The Foreign Service Executive Committee has approved the appointment of two AFSC representatives to join the FRS team as soon as possible, and also the expenditure of \$100,000 for food supplies and clothing. When the team reaches Poland the exact nature of the program will be defined, although it is expected to follow along the lines recommended by Douglas Steere and Frederick Tritton. They were deeply impressed by the possibility of working with the village cooperative movement, whose leaders have mapped out a vigorous program for reconstruction and expressed keen interest in learning the methods of Quaker work camps.

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### FAREWELL TO POWELL HOUSE

Powell House, at 130 East 70th Street, New York City, was opened in the spring of 1943 as a center for new Americans. English and French classes, sewing groups, luncheon clubs, opportunities for conversation, fellowship, lectures and discussions on varied topics were part of the program at Powell House.

The building was sold during the latter part of 1945 and the House was vacated on January 2, 1946. The work, however, continues in the International Center, 341 East 17th Street, and in the two Friends' Meeting Houses, 144 East 20th Street and 221 East 15th Street. Individual services such as advice on migration and location are carried on in the AFSC New York office, 241 Lexington Avenue.

## Visitor to the Orient

Anna Cox Brinton, Co-Director of Pendle Hill, Quaker school of religious studies at Wallingford, Pennsylvania, and AFSC Board Member, is leaving in February as Commissioner to the Orient for the Service Committee. She will meet Paul Sturge, General Secretary of the Friends Service Council, London, who left England in January. The purpose of their visit is to evaluate the relief program and to advise on new basic projects. There will be opportunity for first-hand consultation in the field with Friends Ambulance Unit leaders and others associated with Friends' work, in both China and India.

### Transition in India

The AFSC India program was started early in 1944 as a one-year emergency relief project, following the serious flood and famine in Bengal. It was later extended until April 1, 1946. On January 2, the Board of Directors approved a basic continuing Quaker service in India with headquarters in Calcutta, to be carried out in cooperation with the Friends Service Council of London which has twelve people in the field. The service unit includes several Indian members, and it is hoped to increase the present AFSC personnel of eight to twelve.

The group would expect to work entirely on a non-evangelical, non-political basis with Indian organizations under Indian leadership, on projects which would eventually be turned over to indigenous groups. These projects would come under three headings—social service, medical and cooperative developments. One of the English members has been loaned to the Indian Red Cross to set up a health program and there is an urgent need to provide skilled health workers for this program. There is a similar need for skilled craft workers.

This will be a new pattern of work for the AFSC, but one which is felt to be of particular importance just now. During the past two years AFSC workers, in connection with the Friends Ambulance Unit members, have cut across the barriers which formerly existed between oriental and westerner and are, by their presence, helping to build a bridge of understanding between India and the western world.

### Transition in China

The Friends Ambulance Unit China Convoy is changing its emphasis in the rehabilitation period following the end of the war, as its present commitments in former "Free" China close. A large proportion of Unit personnel and efforts will be concentrated in northern Honan province in helping to re-establish medical and health facilities in that badly devastated area, although the entire group

will not be available for several more months. There are immediate commitments with several of the seventeen mission hospitals in the area surrounding Chengchow, only two of which remained in operation the entire war period.

Team Number Sixteen, now stationed at the Southern Baptist Hospital, Chengchow, has opened the facilities to out-patients and a few surgical cases. This is the only hospital in this area which treats civilians. The Unit is committed to work in this hospital for at least a year, allowing the mission board time to replace the medical personnel. Plans have been made to move a team to the Church of Christ in China Hospital at Changte late in February or early in March. These hospitals will require the assistance of medical-mechanics teams for the servicing of X-ray plants and the repair of old equipment that has been stored in the hills. They will need also electric and running water systems set up. The Unit plans to train local personnel to service this equipment, and will train them in the main workshop.

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### FACTS FROM FRANCE

Secours Quaker, the French Friends organization with which British and American Friends are working, has a staff of some three hundred people in seven cities of France—Paris, Le Havre, Caen, Perpignan, Marseille, Toulouse and Montauban. It has a budget of \$60,000 a month together with the supplies and personnel contributed by Friends Relief Service and AFSC. Secours Quaker feeds about twenty thousand people a month, and since the liberation of France in 1945 has distributed 60,000 garments, or enough to clothe between 100,000 and 200,000 people.

The AFSC has contributed \$800,000 in supplies, including 200 tons of clothing, bought in the United States, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain and North Africa. In 1945, over 1,400 letters and a hundred cables were exchanged between Paris and Philadelphia, over a hundred reports were sent from France, and around five hundred five-pound food packages were sent from here to France.

During 1945, the AFSC has had about thirty workers in France, four of whom have been joint appointees with the Congregational Service Committee. It has not been a glamorous job, but one of long, grinding hours of work, as often as not in an unheated office without telephone, typewriter or secretary, or in a dusty clothing storeroom; but the rewards in relation to human needs have been many and rich.

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