FOREIGN SERVICE BULLETIN

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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Friends' Centers Around the World

Quaker International Centers in Europe were established as early as 1925, at the close of the emergency relief work following the First World War. The English Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee contributed personnel and funds to the Centers that opened in Berlin, Frankfurt, Paris, Vienna, Geneva, Warsaw and Moscow (although the two latter were closed in a few years), and the national groups of Friends which grew up in the various countries carried a large share of the work and interest. From 1925 until the beginning of the next decade, the Centers were primarily concerned with student clubs and meetings for worship, and served as a headquarters for Friends and others visiting in Europe.

Refuge for the Troubled

With Hitler's rise to power the Centers immediately became a haven for persons suffering from persecution who came first to inquire what they could do, and later to make arrangements to leave the country. They were passed on from the Berlin Center to Paris, or to Amsterdam and Copenhagen where emergency Bureaus were opened. A temporary office was established in Rome, and another in Lisbon, which became almost the only exit from Europe. Centers in Europe sent displaced persons to the Committees in England and America. A majority of the names which now appear on the AFSC Individual Services records are those of people who brought their problems to Centers in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, Amsterdam and Copenhagen.

In 1939, British personnel was forced to withdraw from the Centers, but Americans stayed on until 1941. When it was no longer possible to send financial support from either country, local groups, except in Vienna, were able to carry on during the entire period of the war. In spite of bombing and occupation the Centers remained open at least part-time, to assist persons in trouble, to hold meetings for worship and business, and to carry on relief programs for prisoners of war and others.

With the close of the war, the renewal of communication and travel has made possible closer contacts with these Centers. Both British and American Friends have visited them in recent months, and Emma Cadbury, for fourteen years the AFSC representative in the Vienna Center, will return to Austria for a visit this summer. Mary Chapney, who was AFSC representative in Amsterdam in 1940 and 1941, has returned to Holland this summer for a visit. Two American Friends have been at the Paris Center since the autumn of 1945.

In the Far East

Centers have also been established in Asia, the first at Shanghai in 1939. American and British members of the staff were interned in 1943 but the work continued under the devoted leadership of Chinese and European refugees. Arrival of the Friends Ambulance Unit in Calcutta in 1942 soon resulted in the establishment of a Center there, and another has opened in New Delhi under the leadership of an Indian Friend. A Center in Tokyo was opened shortly before the war with Japan, and under extraordinary difficulties the little group of Japanese Friends tried to carry on some relief work as well as meetings for worship.

A new Center will open in Kingston, Jamaica, in September under the direction of Jamaican, British and American Friends. This is the first Center in which the American Friends Board of Missions joins with the Friends Service Council and AFSC.

A Visit for Consultation

Although it is impossible to separate the work of the Centers from the urgent immediate needs in surrounding areas, it is important to give attention to long term responsibility for meeting the spiritual needs of individuals seeking guidance. Centers can play an important role in the rehabilitation program, but without adequate consultation with the national Friends concerned, British and American Friends do not feel ready to make decisions about the future work. Elizabeth Page, therefore, as AFSC staff member administering Centers, has left for four months in England and Europe, making visits to all the Centers in that part of the world, while Anna Brinton and Paul Sturge, in their tour of the Orient, endeavor to visit those in the Far East.

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MESSAGE FROM HUNGARY

Conditions in Hungary are critical. A one-trillion pengoe note issued in June would have been worth about $200,000,000,000 before the war, and is now valued at thirty-five cents. The agricultural areas are devastated and the capital, Budapest, is one of the most completely destroyed cities in Europe. Hungary has no medical supplies, has had no milk for the past two years, little meat and no fat. Bread is made of corn meal and the staple diet is potatoes when they are available. The country's producing capacity is twenty-five per cent of that in 1938, yet seventy per cent of this reduced output is shipped into other countries as reparations.

Quaker relief in Hungary may soon be a reality. Twenty-five tons of used clothing are ready for immediate shipment, and arrangements are being made to send men and supplies by the end of July. The general relief program to be initiated in Budapest will provide supplementary feeding of about 600 calories each per day to approximately 10,000 adolescents and some teachers.

Vienna Woods

by CARLETON MABEE

Carleton Mabee, one of eight AFSC workers in Austria, is responsible for relief work in Berndorf and the supervision of social programs in Vienna. This account is of an interim experience during March when an emergency feeding and clothing program for the Volksdeutsche in the Displaced Persons Camps was carried on until Catholic Caritas supplies were again available for their relief.

Through Caritas representatives, with whom we have been associated in distributing AFSC clothing to the Volksdeutsche camp in Vienna, we arranged to take eighty children for an outing on International Labor Day on May first. We stopped at two old school buildings, now Volksdeutsche camps, to pick them up. In these buildings men, women and children sleep together in the same rooms. We saw children playing in the yard with deflated rubber balls and iron hoops, and two-year-olds pulling strings of AFSC sardine cans tied together. When we began to load our children into the trucks, the idea caught on, and we ended up with 126 children on only two trucks.

In a likely looking village not far beyond the city limits we asked a young fellow in the street where there might be a good picnic grounds. He seemed to understand our need at once, climbed on the truck, guided us to a Bauerhof and asked if we could park our trucks. The farmer and his family did not seem at all alarmed when 126 children poured over their yard, and even brought out glasses to help them drink at the pump. Of course, one glass was broken in the process, but even that did not seem to bother them much. They just laughed, admitted they liked cigarettes, and took some. One might guess they were meek from having been pushed around so long, but genuine friendliness was there, too.

Our guide walked with us through a deep linden and pine wood, up a hill. Near the top we found a lake, open fields, and more cool woods. Our guide quickly disappeared before we could give him the usual thank offering of cigarettes.

The three Caritas Sisters who had accompanied the children led in folk singing, but the children from Jugoslavia didn't know the same songs as the children from Czechoslovakia, and vice versa; and we Americans found we didn't know any of their songs at all, and wished we had been exposed to more international folk music as part of our preparation for coming here.

Follow the Leader

At first we were at a loss as to just what our role was in this outing, besides providing the trucks, but gradually we found that these children, tired as many seemed, responded well to a chance to play. They taught us some games, and we showed them Follow the Leader. They caught on fast, and kept on too long. When the one of us who was leading was ready to quit, he put his head on his hand to indicate he was tired. But instead of breaking up the game, all the children put their heads on their hands and the game went on. We found the children on the whole more ready to follow directions, as in forming circles for games or lines for races, than children we know in America.

The Sisters prepared a meal for the children, their second and last meal of the day. We helped a little with the serving but the children did most of it themselves, quietly and efficiently, with little exuberance. At each place was one cup of milk, one sardine and cracker sandwich, one zwieback, two cookies, and four lumps of sugar. Later in the afternoon as a special treat they had another cup of milk and a few raisins. We were able to contribute a little candy, too, given to us for that purpose by a Jewish lady who works in the office of the Welfare Branch, U. S. Army.

There were all kinds of incidents during the day we would like to remember. There was the discovery that the flowers we had picked so profusely were garlic. There was the moment when one child screamed "Hase!" and the whole crowd strained in the direction indicated. Few actually saw the rabbit, but the excitement was as satisfying as if we all had. And there was the final hullabaloo when we were lined up to go down hill again and the count of children came out persistently at 127, one more than we had brought from Vienna.

Our trucks, decorated with Wienerwald twigs in the traditional festive manner, finally returned to the camps. By this time we were satisfied that the children were much less afraid of our bad German, and through healthy play had become more naturally noisy. But as we went to our U. S. Army mess for supper, we remembered that our new friends, hungry as they were, would not have another meal waiting for them.

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BUILDING IN ITALY

"There is something intensely moving in these little towns which are coming to life again . . . one feels as though there were a spiritual divide, and that the tide had at last turned from the hopelessness of stagnation to hope of life, and that as important as the houses they had helped rebuild were the friendships and international understanding which were the imponderables which went with rebuilding."

—A Journalist's comments on AFSC and FAU work in Italy Quoted from the New York Herald Tribune.

Windows on France

Services for French civilians and for foreigners, both refugees and prisoners of war, are being provided by Quaker workers in France whose observations in the following letters are deeply significant.

Sacrament

When I see tired women standing in line for hours for a loaf of bread or a little fish, when I see thin and subdued children continue to lose weight for the lack of even a small amount of milk, when I see family life wearing down and breaking because of an irritable father and an exhausted mother, I think I begin to understand the sacramental qualities of food and drink.

I wish there were some way to describe the food situation so that it could mean something, for it has never been worse than at this moment. The ration of meat has been two and one-half pounds of a very inferior canned product for the last four weeks, and in Normandy, a dairy country, less than two pounds of butter for the month. Every morning before six there are long queues of women waiting at different shops for bread, fish, pork, vegetables. The bread is dark, ugly, and difficult to digest, with very little wheat in it, yet there is not enough to go around, and only the early ones get their ration. Fish is very rare and very expensive.

There are no potatoes at all, and only a tiny ration of macaroni as a substitute. There are new vegetables, to be sure, but at impossible prices. For four cabbages, four heads of lettuce, one cauliflower, two pounds of new peas, four bunches of carrots, and two pounds of turnips, enough for six for three days, we paid 550 francs last week, and the average workingman gets from four to five thousand francs a month.

Consequently there have been food riots. At first it was only disorderly queues, and angry women breaking bakery windows. Then it was talk in the streets, on the trams, at the table, during work. Now it is demonstrations, and there are angry signs everywhere. Housewives become revolutionists for enough food to feed their children, but there is no food to give them.

—From a letter by Harvey Buchanan, Le Havre.

No Dramatic Stories

I have no dramatic stories to relate but I want to say that I have felt a very real appreciation every day for the loving care which has gone into the preparation of the clothing I handle here in Paris.

We Americans need to share in the suffering of the rest of the world so that we may realize, at least in a small way, to what extent this second world war has devastated humanity. As long as any one of us is well clothed and fed it is all too easy to overlook this devastation, even while living right in the midst of it.

Perhaps the women in America who give up things which they know might still be of good service to themselves can realize what it must be like to have no warm underclothes, no decent dress to wear, no solid shoes to cover one's feet. The surprising thing is to find a young woman, not yet thirty, from a well-to-do home, who has been through five years of torture in concentration camps, whose only desire is to share anything she has with those who have less.

—From a letter by Elizabeth A. Morris, Paris.

Moving Day

After equipping ourselves with warm socks, sweaters, heavy shoes, and a lunch of sardines and French bread, we climbed into one of the trucks and lumbered down the narrow roads of Le Pouliguen. We were on our way to move Mme. R. from the dingy cottage she had been fortunate enough to find when evacuated from St. Nazaire by the Germans, to the new housing project in the town.

Beyond La Baule we headed out the waterfront road. It follows the curve of the bay with the beautiful clean beach on the right stretching for almost five miles, and on the left the utter destruction that is St. Nazaire—piles of stone, hunks of iron-reinforced cement walls put between the houses by the Germans to repel beach landings, X-shaped anti-tank paraphernalia which looked like giant editions of the jackstones we used to play with. It takes but a few hours to adjust to seeing nothing except debris, but much longer to get even a bit of comprehension of the havoc caused in individual lives.

After an hour we found the small town where Mme. R. and her family had found refuge. Tables, baskets of dishes and clothing, chairs, mattresses, a sewing machine were lined up in front of the small cottage. The big but light pieces went first, then the heavy kitchen stove, the odd pieces, mattresses, animals, bicycle. Mme. R. had about thirty rabbits crowded into one small cage. When I protested that they would be smothered, she beamed, "Well, if they die, we'll eat them." Everything was finally loaded on, we thought. In the very rear of the truck were five chickens with their legs tied together, the rabbits, a table on which sat the grandfather, a small boy and his dog. Then we reached the interesting stage when every member of the family jumped off, darted back into the house, brought out something, squinted at the load and asked, "Do you think . . .?" and we thought and stuffed it in somewhere.

At last we were off, Mme. R. in the cab clutching a vase and six eggs in her pocket, highly pleased with her place of honor, the rest of us perched on pieces of furniture. The small dark cottage with thatched roof and neat garden were left behind, and soon we reached St. Nazaire and the row of pink stucco houses. There we left our friends in front of their new home, surrounded by their possessions.

—From a letter by Lois Plumb, St. Nazaire.

International Crossroads

By MARGARET JONES

Margaret Jones, AFSC representative in Geneva and Vienna before 1941, returned to Europe in November 1945, to investigate relief needs in Vienna and to renew contact with Swiss Friends.

Geneva, Switzerland, is rapidly becoming an international crossroads again. The International Labor Organization will return to its original headquarters there, the United Nations Organization is planning to make some use of the old League of Nations building, and the World Council of Churches, with more than sixty persons now in its staff, will open a school in the autumn for the lay leaders of Europe. Several organizations, including the World YWCA and YMCA, are expanding their programs throughout liberated Europe and are holding important conferences in Geneva, of delegates from the various countries.

English and American Friends, in cooperation with the Swiss Friends, are already beginning to explore the next step in regard to the Friends Center which has been temporarily closed. An Interim Working Committee is carrying on the correspondence through the summer, and it is hoped that some English and American Friends will be visiting among the Swiss group to discuss with them what new directions a truly international Center can take in this new era. How closely should a research and information service be integrated into a new Center program? How closely should the Swiss group work with any international secretariat? Should the emphasis be on work for students? How much leadership should such a Center give to Swiss international and peace groups? These are the key questions being considered.

It has always been emphasized that much of the program of the Center should develop around the personnel of the secretariat. Those who are imaginative and practical, aware of the current trends of history, and who speak French fluently will have an opportunity to mold a Center in Switzerland which can have far-reaching importance.

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Spiritual Calories

By CANDLER LAZENBY

Candler Lazenby, who has just left the German Desk of the AFSC Foreign Service Section, has given a great deal of attention to the intellectual and spiritual needs of Germany as reflected from the occupied zones

In the ravaged countries of the world, and especially in Central Europe where books have been destroyed both by official order and in bombing raids, there is an urgent need to fill the spiritual vacuum of twelve years. People, bread-hungry, are also aware of a deeper necessity, and stand in long lines in front of rental libraries. A German civilian voices this awareness in a letter, "We want to report that the hunger for good literature interpreting English, American, Russian and French cultures and civilizations is almost as great as the hunger for food."

For some time the AFSC has been considering ways to meet the urgent requests from devastated countries for reading material of all kinds. At a time when all available relief funds are being used to purchase life-sustaining food and medicine, the necessary quantities of literature cannot and should not be purchased, but an attempt will be made to collect and ship reading material for Central Europe through channels the AFSC or its representatives abroad may devise.

An appeal is being made at present for books in German. Some very fine ones have been received and sent to Germany, and more will be sent as soon as possible. Books in English, especially those representing the best in American and English thought and literature since 1933 are equally welcome.

Magazines are in great demand, and the AFSC warehouse at Twenty-third and Arch Streets in Philadelphia will accept for stock-piling and classification complete files and miscellaneous numbers in good condition of such periodicals as the *National Geographic, The Christian Century,* and *The Atlantic Monthly.*

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A Deep Silence

From a letter by Anni Halle in Berlin, where she lives as one of a family of six who consistently refused to take part in Nazi activities, and who have volunteered to help rebuild what Germany devastated.

There is much being written about the young people, their passive attitude, their lack of political interest, their muteness. It seems to me if the young people are to be helped this muteness must be transformed into a deep silence, into a listening to the manifold powers which activate our inner and outer life, so as to gain strength for positive action. We all must strive to understand what it means for a young person to be estranged from nature for years, to be conscious not of azure skies and sailing clouds, but of air raid shelters, and to know night only as darkness filled with lurking terrors.

How I wish that we could regain the comforting certainty that we are a part of a great universe, that we could know moments free from all earthly heaviness, that our cramped and dulled hearts could again sense the vibrations reaching from soul to soul which grow from love, friendship or even fleeting contact with a stranger.

Lapp Village

By WILLIAM FREDRICKSON

William Fredrickson, AFSC worker in Finland, was one of a group that visited several Lapp villages in the far north of Lapland to inspect conditions and distribute vitamins.

Our trip to a small Lapp village started from Enontekio, where we were supplied with Lapp reindeer boots stuffed with straw, leggings of many colored bands, fine reindeer coats, and leather breeches. Tucked under warm blankets in one-man reindeer sleds we started off down the road, having been told practically nothing about the art of steering. The one rein hangs on the left side of the reindeer in normal driving, but to turn, it seems that you toss the rein to whichever side is desired, pull the head around until the beast can see you, wave to that side, swat him with the rein and yell with all the vigor and originality available.

About twenty-five kilometers from Enontekio we came upon blackened timbers topped by bare chimneys which had once been a tiny isolated village of eight houses. Between the ruins two or three new houses had been built, and we stopped by one of them to rest the reindeer and went inside to visit the family.

The man was short, brown-skinned, with close-cropped black hair and high cheek bones, his wife short and round. Their daughter was skillfully shaving wood with her knife to build a fire for coffee, which was soon to provide us with traditional Lapp hospitality. We talked about Lapland, economic conditions, the German occupation and retreat, and learned that they had lost about half their reindeer in the scorching of the earth. Five families had returned to the village. They raised a few potatoes, but had to dig them up early to save them from frost. Fish from the nearby lake had once been an important food, but most of the fishing equipment had been lost. Reindeer meat and bread completed their diet.

Outside again, our guide tossed a chunk of frozen moss into each sled for feeding the reindeer at the end of the journey, and we went on our way. The trail wound into some hills, and suddenly several dogs ran toward us with a noisy welcome. On top of a hill, almost invisible because it blended so well with the surroundings, was the first tent of the village. About twenty feet in diameter, it was made of heavy cloth stretched on poles. Smoke was escaping from an opening at the top where the poles were tied together.

Ten people, including five children, lived in the tent, and all were dressed in the colorful Lapp costumes of red, blue, yellow and green. The men lounged comfortably on heaps of furs around the outer edges away from the smoke, while the women worked around the fire that burned in the center. It was surprisingly light inside, the floor made of twigs was quite dry in spite of snow drifting in, and all of the household equipment lay in heaps around the outer rim of the tent or hung from poles.

The Health Sister opened up a vitamin carton and asked if anyone knew what vitamins were. No one did, so she showed them the white pills and explained that they were very good for the children and tasted like candy. She gave each child three for the day and told the mothers to see that they got three and only three every day.

When we had visited several other tents and returned to the first one for coffee, we found the women preparing a meal for us. They sliced thin strips of reindeer from the chunk which had been hanging from the tent pole and fried it in big blobs of butter. When asked if they always did that, they replied that they didn't always have visitors from America. A disk of unraised bread, a chunk of butter and a knife were set out and we were invited to eat. It tasted very good, but we realized that this limited diet was responsible for the fact that most Lapp children have rickets.

The people in this small Lapp village are known as Enontekio Lapps, who live in tents instead of houses as do those farther east. They live a nomad life with a culture based on reindeer. We asked one of the men how long they had live in this place. His answer was, "For some time." And when we wondered how long they would stay, he replied, "As long as the reindeer food lasts." Because of the nomadic life and long distances from established towns, the children rarely get to schools, and in normal times are visited only occasionally by travelling teachers. This means they seldom benefit from the school feeding program.

Leaving our new friends we started back through the woods, dashing down an almost invisible trail which wound through sparse scrubby trees, across wind-swept lakes, and over what would be marsh land in summer.

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SKY ISLAND

Sky Island, since 1939 a vacation hostel for refugees and new Americans, entered upon a new service this summer. As a reception hostel, it opened its doors June first to some of the displaced persons coming to this country from Germany under the President's Directive of December 1945.

The first boatload of 867 arrived on May 20th. About 100 of these people are under the care of the American Christian Committee for Refugees, which is working with the Church World Service. The Christian Committee cares for people on a non-sectarian basis, and accommodates forty to fifty at a time at Sky Island. The guests are selected by the Christian Committee, which shares expenses with the AFSC.

Unloading in Poland

By DAVID RICHIE

From a letter by David Richie, AFSC worker who arrived in Poland in May with the first shipment of clothing to be distributed by the Quaker Team in Kozienice.

We have just had ample evidence of what badly paid longshoremen do when driven to it by hunger, by previous training under German occupation and by bitterness over the likelihood that seventy-five per cent of UNRRA supplies will be taken farther east. They are paid 120-150 zloty per day with no "legal" extras, barely enough for four pounds of bread. And they tell me that lard is 550 and sugar 300 zlotys per kilo (about two pounds). It is little wonder that they continuously open cartons and cans and stuff their mouths with marmalade, lard, or cheese and their pockets and inner linings with anything movable wrapped in paper. Flagrant and universal theft goes on while dozens of armed soldiers turn their backs.

This morning we went down to where they had been unloading mail all night and found they had uncovered about one hundred of our bales. Four of them had been cut open, but only one had had anything pulled out. We sewed them up and stood guard until the men stopped working that level of the hold and covered them over.

But unfortunately the men found a way to get below decks to the AFSC clothes before they finished unloading the upper level, and before we started keeping a very close watch. Plenty of havoc was wrought, but relatively little actually permanently disappeared. This morning one man was caught while wearing at least fifty articles of clothing, including two women's coats and two men's. We immediately started a much closer watch and it was very tense for awhile, but then first in one hold and then in the other I ventured a few words to one man, "Twardy brudny robot"—"hard, dirty work"—and soon the whole gang was gathered around for a most stuttering account of what the Quakers hoped to do at Kozienice. The whole atmosphere changed, and three times hidden clothing was voluntarily returned. In fact, they worked so well that when the big job was done in the fourth hatch, without anything further stolen, I gratefully dealt out two big chocolate bars. This was not, however, until after another most tense interpretation period when the shifts changed.

This has been an exhausting and yet thrilling day, including both the horrid job of policing starving thieves and also the most satisfying sense of the "triumph of the spirit" in the end.

With the CNRRA in Honan

By KAY H. BEACH

Kay H. Beach, AFSC member of the FAU, has been loaned to the CNRRA (Chinese National Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) as agricultural specialist in Honan. This account is of his first trip into Communist areas.

Thirteen of us left Kaifeng by train for Sinsiang as the starting point of CNRRA's first relief activity in Communist areas of Honan. Our convoy consisted of nine trucks newly arrived for the Chinese National Transport to use in work on the Yellow River dykes, loaned for this job.

As we drove along behind the front I noticed that there wasn't as much unplanted land as I had expected from the dreary reports, and most of the crops looked good, except that the rains were increasing the amount of wheat rust which may cut the yield twenty per cent or more. There is nothing to do about it except to plant resistant strains, and at present these are non-existent. China formerly had a well-developed cereal-breeding program with test plots in many places, but this was largely destroyed in the past nine years.

We carried with us 1,000 bags of flour, 10 bales of clothes, two million Chinese dollars for seed and fertilizer grants to farmers, a box of Red Cross bandages and a box of drugs for each district.

At each distribution point the flour was dumped from CNRRA bags into the people's own containers —bags, baskets, bowls or even the coats off their backs. There was always a certain amount that stuck to the bags, and eventually sifted to the floor where someone would sweep it up. People wouldn't be interested in a half and half mixture of dirt and flour if they weren't in real need.

Before each distribution we explained that the flour was of two grades, but both nutritious, and we were sorry they could not all get white; that many nations cooperated with UNRRA, and the contributors were of many religions, races, and political groups, making it essential to distribute the materials on the basis of need without discrimination.

Because the clothing varied in quality and condition we used a lottery system of distribution after sorting the bales. If lucky, those who drew might get a heavy overcoat in good condition, if unlucky only a few pieces of worn-out rayon undies.

At Anyang we found there was a battle in the neighborhood and we could not get permission to enter another Communist area. We returned to Kaifeng, and are hoping the flareup doesn't end as a conflagration.

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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE
20 SOUTH TWELFTH STREET
PHILADELPHIA 7, PA.

Pattern of International Cooperation

Quaker relief today approaches its international and democratic ideals to a greater extent than at any time in the past. The work in China is an instance of successful cooperation between different nationalities and organizations. During the past five years the China Convoy has maintained a strength of more than one hundred men and women, drawn from five different countries and representing at least three distinct races. Two major and two minor committees in different lands have been jointly responsible for the work, with funds provided by three countries, and in one case by a belligerent government. The workers themselves in China have had a large measure of autonomy, and have developed democratic working conditions which have given to individuals much freedom in contributing to the cooperative enterprises.

The basic goodwill between the workers and the home committees has made possible outstanding work in spite of unwieldy international arrangements, and it is a testimony to the confidence of governments and public agencies in the integrity of pacifists that this Quaker work might be permitted and financed with such generosity. Herein is a pattern of true international cooperation; may it be enlarged in many lands.

—JOHN F. RICH.