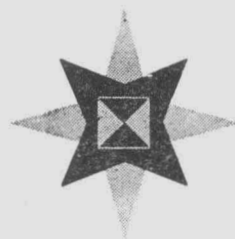


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AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Erholungsheime in Austria

by COMFORT CARY and MELVIN LUERSON

A dozen Quaker workers are distributing supplementary food and clothing to children, old people and young apprentices in Vienna and in four villages of Southeastern Austria. They are also providing counseling services for individuals and materials for small industries. One of their most satisfying programs consists of providing food, transport and recreational supplies for boys and girls in Rest Homes.

Groups of undernourished boys and girls are selected each month by medical examination for a holiday in one of seven Erholungsheime, or Rest Homes, sponsored by the Trade Union groups for young apprentices. Those at least ten pounds underweight are recommended for the vacation. Since these Homes can accommodate less than four hundred young people at a time, and there are twenty thousand registered in the trade workers' training schools, this present program can benefit only about five thousand a year. Three of the homes are in the Russian Zone, two in the British and two in the American. During this winter the Trade Unions hope to open three more, and one, near Zell am See, will be able to take care of about three hundred and fifty young people.

A Steiermark Inn

The Rest Home in Steiermark is in a mountainous country. It was once an inn, though occupied by the S. S. during the war, and sits on a high hill overlooking a valley. Lovely trees protect it.

There are fifty-six girls in this Home. Their program is very flexible, and they are free to do as they choose except during the two hours after lunch which are for rest. At this time they may not read or write letters, but rest on their beds or, as last summer, out in the open field facing the house. Morning activities usually include a hike for those fortunate enough to own a suitable pair of shoes. During the summer a truck patch kept the Home supplied with vegetables, and the girls helped preserve food for the winter.

There has been a lack of play equipment and there still is a dearth of good reading material. Many of the available books are blacklisted and few are being printed at the present time. Most of the girls are avid readers and long for good books. The few at the Home have been read and reread until they are falling apart.

But the most serious lacks are clothing and shoes. Many of them have but one pair of shoes and do not feel that they can use these on hikes because they must be saved carefully for the more important task of getting to and from work. The girls fortunate enough to own hiking shoes have been most generous in loaning them to others, but even so many have not been able to participate in the more exciting activities of the Erholungsheime. The Service Committee has been able to send clothing and shoes to this home as well as to all the others.

It was a pleasure to see the girls at the Steiermark Home. They were obviously having a wonderful time and many of them were able to say proudly that they felt much better and had gained weight. Many reported that they had put on four or five kilos, up to twenty-five pounds.

One Soccer Ball

The Tamsweg Home is completely different in physical appearance from the one at Steiermark. It is in the American Zone and is also surrounded by mountains, but is actually a barracks camp.

The program at Tamsweg also lays emphasis on a free schedule. When members of the Unit first visited Tamsweg last summer, the Home was the proud possessor of one soccer ball. Because it was the only ball, the boys decided that they would not kick it but would use it as a volleyball. Considering how much these boys love soccer, it was quite a sacrifice on their part to make such a decision. Most of the morning we spent at Tamsweg was devoted to a wild and strenuous game of volleyball. This game is so popular that one boy who had had a temperature of 102 degrees the night before sneaked out to play. The boys who were not playing were lying in the sun, reading or painting. Several showed promise of becoming excellent artists, and the walls of many of the barracks were decorated with their paintings.

The problems in Tamsweg are much the same as those at the Steiermark Home. They lack reading material, clothing, shoes and recreational equipment.

A Month is Not Enough

Quaker participation in these Homes has increased. Besides providing supplementary food, we have been able to furnish transportation by making our trucks available and by getting gasoline to operate the truck and bus which the Homes own. And not long ago we located about four tons of recreation equipment including skis, all sorts of balls, twelve phonographs, chess sets, modeling clay, and more than four hundred pairs of shoes. The tragedy is that a month is not sufficient time in which to rebuild these children to the point at which they will not slip back to their previous level. But having seen the effect from the standpoint of morale, we are convinced that all we have put into the Rest Home project and all we hope to continue to put into it, is well spent.

An Errand for God's Fools

by ELIZABETH PAGE

Elizabeth Page is the secretary in charge of International Friends Centers abroad, which are jointly sponsored with the British Friends Service Council. She has just returned from a five months' trip to eleven countries where she consulted with Friends and those interested in the Centers' program. The following article, pointing out general policies being laid for these Centers, will be followed by a second article in February presenting pictures of the specific program now under way.

Only one of God's Fools would have had such an idea. But Carl Heath after the First World War dreamed of covering the tension spots of the world with Embassies of good will manned by Quakers, whose united demonstration of international understanding was to affect the leadership of the times. Actually only in Berlin and Paris during the early years and later at Geneva, the capital of the League of Nations, was there even an approach to the original pattern. Elsewhere Friends Centers were more or less local offices interlocked by the pressure of events in the common task of caring for refugees. At their best they made themselves felt in problems at their doors. At their worst they were dull, uninteresting and, it would seem, unimportant. But when the war which had overwhelmed them receded, they were still there. Like-minded people had joined with Friends in keeping them alive.

Questions Out of Ruin and Suffering

This in itself would seem to indicate that there is something in Carl Heath's idea which may be valid in this changed time. Added to this are the questions coming out of the ruin and suffering around the world. In Holland a sensitive mother watching her children asks: "What can we do with our hate?" In France we are told they are saying: "What sort of animal is man? Is he capable of progress at all?" In a German meeting of Friends: "How can we recapture a burning faith that is creative, not destructive?" From Scandinavia: "What is the meaning of this mounting evil? Have we an answer to it?" And from a Lutheran bishop in China: "Why do Friends waste their time running missions when they might be doing what none of the rest of us can do, providing a non-denominational religious experience based on silence which passes all barriers of faith or creed?"

A Channel of Common Search

There are no easy answers to such questions as these, and no one individual or group can hope to find them. They call for a united effort by all who feel the need of finding answers. We believe that the Friends International Center can be a channel of this common search. Learning from the experience at Geneva, we believe that the new Embassy Center can be even more useful today. We would like to send teams of highly qualified and deeply concerned people, some of them committed to at least five years of service, to the cities with world-wide connections. We hope they could work out a contribution to in-

ternational understanding solidly based on needs in the community as well as those of the international group.

Remembering the work of the smaller Centers we can see such teams at work with more modest programs in cities at the heart of a region as is Berlin or Vienna. We see them setting up temporary meeting places like the one which functioned so well at the time of the Saar Plebiscite. And the plan includes sending individual staff members to National Friends Centers which ask for help with some task which involves an international situation.

These next steps must not be taken by us, or by American and British Friends alone. There has already been consultation with European and Asiatic Friends; staffs must now be drawn from the qualified, regardless of nationality. They must work in closest cooperation with the many like-minded groups in the communities where Centers are located. And funds must be provided to bring some of them here when their term of service is ending to share with us what they have learned.

An Overwhelming Need

General lines of policy are still being drawn, and details of program will always rest largely with staff in the field; but this much is clear. There is an overwhelming need for a service of international reconciliation, for a positive demonstration of man's worth and fundamental unity, firmly based on a religious experience that reaches across barriers of race and creed. We have seen this religious experience at work in Friends Centers this year, and such knowledge is a challenge. Dare we be fools enough to accept it? The early Quakers were such fools. Almost as great fools as eleven unlettered fishermen and peasants who set out "to overcome the world." We have the same Matchless Leader, we know the might of the forces our insignificant action might unloose. Dare we refuse to be fools?

* * *

NEWS FROM CHINA

A Quaker medical team with seven thousand pounds of equipment was flown into Yen-an, China, in December, to initiate a program in Communist territory. The team, truly international, consists of doctors from England and New Zealand, an American nurse, a Canadian laboratory technician, a British X-ray technician, and two Chinese Assistants.

Le Chambon, Island of Peace

by JOSEPH HOWELL

Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, a community in south central France, is a center of French spiritual life and international gatherings. Le Collège Cévenol, founded by two Protestant ministers with twenty-eight pupils in 1938, now numbers 350 of fourteen nationalities. The provision of adequate housing to keep the school open concerned leaders in France. Contributions by a number of groups and individuals were used to purchase barracks in Sweden. Young people of several countries helped erect these barracks last summer under the leadership of Joseph Howell who represented the Congregational Christian Service Committee and the American Friends Service Committee.

Le Chambon is peaceful. There are few cars even in the center of town, so that you see students in groups standing in the streets and talking, when they have time to be downtown. You meet boys seeking the meaning of life through poetry which they have written and are reading to each other. On the edges of town you see yoked oxen plowing slowly. You see old peasants reaping wheat with cradle-scythes. As you come to Chambon down country roads you see gray stone houses with red tile roofs and evergreen-covered slopes and long rolling pastures. Chambon's peace is a peace in people's hearts. You feel it after church, when no one is in a hurry. You feel it in homes, at long family dinners. You feel it in the little railroad station. You feel it in the bakeries and in the garages and in the groceries.

Peace Follows Suffering

Peace often follows suffering. And the people of Chambon have suffered. As Huguenots, they were persecuted in the sixteenth century. They point out, today, farmhouses where men were martyred for what they believed. As protectors of Jewish refugees in this war, almost every family risked death. Psychologically, the people have suffered humiliation from the German occupation and devastation of their land.

So they are quiet when Americans speak of love and understanding and relief for Germans. They believe in love, and they believe in its expression in relief. But with a smile which sometimes cannot express itself in words, they wonder how we can ever know what they have suffered.

However deeply American Friends seek to share their peace of mind and heart in central Europe, there are people in Chambon who can give a deeper meaning and importance to that concern. And there is a religious courtesy in living, even briefly, with people who, starting with a position very nearly that of Friends' toward war, know for their part now that God's will for Germany is a will expressed in justice as well as in love.

Community of Hope

The people and their pastors, the school faculty and their director, form together a community of

hope. They share with several hundred students each year a living and growing spirit and community. For eight years the school improvised without buildings or equipment. Help to Chambon strengthens this continuing, creative will to help themselves. One hundred and fifty volunteer students and friends of the school last summer worked so enthusiastically on a sunny, sloping hillside that a new campus with four new buildings faces the quiet winter horizon of mountains.

One may ask if it is fair to build a school in France when so many people in other parts of Europe are suffering from the basic lack of food and clothing. One answer would be that the school intends to bring one-third of its students from families or communities in Europe—not in France—which the war has destroyed. Another answer would be from the Bible. Men, Jesus said after his first temptation, do not live by bread alone. Without indigenous, religious leadership in France and in Europe, men may turn again into stone the bread that we are sending.

The meaning of Chambon is that it is a community of people who will be sharing their spirit throughout France and Europe long after present relief needs are met. And it is a community of people whose friendly thoughtfulness can give European perspective to relief workers going into central Europe.

* * *

THANK YOU FROM GERMANY

"Today all the girls will have a fine soup with peas and pork, delicate pieces, which German children never got all the years ago. Yesterday they had a sweet soup and wonderful breakfast with cheese or ham.

"We say 'many thanks' with brilliant eyes and cheeks which will be more thick in the next time."

A grateful schoolgirl
Doris Fischer.

Winter in Poland

by IRWIN ABRAMS

In November 1946, Irwin Abrams visited the three Anglo-American relief teams in Poland. Two of them are distributing supplementary food and a third is hauling building materials for village reconstruction. The following report is adapted from Irwin Abrams' Journal.

The transport team at Gora lives most simply in an old rebuilt German barracks on a hill overlooking the Vistula. Gora has no electricity, and the boys use kerosene lamps. The tables and benches have been made from scrap lumber and boxes. Even before breakfast is over, people begin coming in asking for rides. Once assured of one, they will wait for hours.

Transport Work from Gora

The thirteen mile trip from Gora to the quarry at Janowiec and Lucimia takes about forty-five minutes. The roads are full of pot holes, chuck holes, treacherous mud. They have slippery banks, in some places are nothing more than sand tracks, and the narrow bridges across streams are made of logs with only a few inches of clearance on each side. Along this road, where the battle was stabilized for months, we passed bunkers, holes in the ground where people live during the long hard winter.

At the quarry, high up on the hill, workers were dislodging the rocks and sending them rolling down the side. Others were moving the rocks from where they landed to where other workers stacked them, and the final move was into the truck. The men were working without gloves. They blew on their hands and swung their arms about their bodies to keep warm. They cut themselves on the jagged edges of rocks, but kept on working. The men who were loading the rocks onto the trucks were those whose homes were being rebuilt. Often, when the trucks have been loaded, they invite the team members to eat with them. Some have accepted, and in this way and in working with them have found a real fellowship.

Children at Janowiec

While the trucks took their loads of rocks and children to Lucimia, where the houses were being rebuilt, Stephen Cary and I walked about the town

and looked up the local priest. He was portly and jovial, and told us in German about the local disasters and needs. "Three hundred school children with two rooms and one teacher, imagine that!" he would say. We stopped at the school with him, and the youngsters popped up and sang him a song. "Nothing," he kept booming out as he puffed up and down stairs, "they have nothing at all." They were thin, undernourished, nervous, and their school room was bare and unheated. There were few school materials, nothing to play with. Their great game was to jump on and off our moving trucks, and one boy was injured recently when he slipped and was run over. One thinks what a shipload of rubber balls could

THE RETURN HOME

As we toured through the region of deserted villages in Poland, where the Olsztyn team makes a trip on Fridays, we picked up a man in an old German uniform. He told us he was on his way home from France. He was a member of a little colony of Russians whose ancestors had left Russia generations ago in search of religious freedom. When Hitler was scraping the bottom of the manpower barrel, this man, near fifty, was called up. He had been captured by the French in the Black Forest in 1944. For three years he had not seen his wife or daughter. The French had finally released him and he had come as far as Olsztyn by train. The last forty miles he had come by foot and by any conveyance on which he could get a ride. His eyes were shining at the prospect of a reunion with his family. He told his story without bitterness, rather with detachment. Our way took us past the front door of his home, and we waited a bit to make sure all was well. As he got out of the car, a young girl ran out of a neighboring house, threw her arms around him, and said slowly, "Father, you have really come home?" His wife followed her daughter out. I asked Stanislaw to drive on. This belonged to them alone.

—IRWIN ABRAMS' JOURNAL.

mean to European children.

Distribution from Kozienice

We sat in the back of the truck on the bumpy road from Gora to Kozienice. Two ladies and an orphan girl travelled with us. The child was pale and emaciated and very unhappy. I could not get her to smile even when I looked up the words in the dictionary so I could tell her she was pretty. It is estimated that over one and a half million children lost their parents here during the war years.

We reached the Kozienice billet in time for supper. The team is housed in the remaining wing of a shooting box, built several hundred years ago for the Polish king. Breakfast is at six thirty, but the trucks are loaded before then and start their rounds at seven. Sometimes it is seven or eight in the evening before they return.

One morning we helped at the warehouse, moving barrels of milk, opening boxes, mixing cocoa, laying out allocations for the distribution centers. In the afternoon we helped write the food cards for

ten thousand children made up from lists from local authorities.

The day we went on the rounds started the night before when one of the trucks failed to return. We sent a rescue party after it and went to bed. Next morning neither truck had returned, and one of the two remaining trucks was also gone. Setting out as another rescue party, we found two of them mired in the mud. The boys had worked most of the night trying to dig them out, and had finally gone on to Gora for help. When we arrived we found only the two deserted trucks, left with the thought that anyone who could move them could have them. Leaving two men to try to dig them out, the rest of us returned to see how the girls would cope with this crisis.

And cope with it they did. We loaded the remaining truck in no time, and before nine o'clock, two hours late, had unloaded at the first distribution center. After unloading at the second center, we went on by foot to another town where a clinic was to be set up for children under three selected from those receiving supplementary food.

Witness in Olsztyn

The work in Olsztyn is a real witness to the Quaker principle of helping those in need without

discrimination. The children being fed are Polish and German, and include the Mazure and Varmiake, Slavic groups which have become Germanized over the years.

We helped unload supplies at Czerwonka and helped lay them out for distribution. We arranged the quantities of milk, margarine and rolled oats, each in its separate stack. Rats share the warehouse here, and the sacks of oats must be weighed just before being loaded because the rats often reduce the weight considerably. Then there is the problem of margarine. The handlers in the warehouse laid the tins on their sides so that they became bent and it was difficult to get the contents out. Then the team had a shortage of can-openers and those at hand were fragile things. Finally, the margarine had to be divided up at the centers, for the mothers came from scattered places and were too poor to own adequate knives.

All this is noted because there are those who regard relief work as dramatic and exciting. Relief work in Poland is changing flats, getting stuck in mud, moving boxes in warehouses, writing thousands of names on cards and doing interminable paper work. It is chasing rats, opening tins, cutting margarine. It is waiting for motor parts that never come, plenty of waiting.



Pictures from Japan

At meeting for worship one Sunday, I looked out the window and watched women washing sweet potatoes and laying them out to dry in the sun on the concrete steps that are all that is left of the Friends' Meeting House. Sweet potatoes keep better that way, and sweet potatoes were just about all they had to eat. A man was squatting on his heels scrubbing the rust off a square of old iron, to use it to patch the shack he is building out of scraps. In the street women were doing their washing in wooden tubs. They could get water from the main there. It was cold, and they had no soap.

The devastation from the incendiary bombs covers acres and miles. People have cleaned up the debris very well, and have planted little vegetable patches among the piles of stone and the remains of stone foundations and the rusted piles of twisted iron and tin. Little shacks built out of wood, if people are lucky, or of old iron and tin, are going up everywhere. There will be no way to keep them warm this winter, for fuel is scarce and there is no charcoal ration. Some people are living in their old air raid shelters, which are no more than holes in the ground.

Transportation is hard. The street cars and charcoal busses are small, infrequent and crowded to the roof. People hang onto the outside. One wet cold night I saw an old woman hanging onto a car with her clogs dangling from her bare feet and the rain

pouring down on her tragic, upturned face. Even with the crowding, not all the people waiting for a car can get on when it comes. The car and bus stops always have long lines of weary, drooping, shabby people waiting to get on. Many of them carry heavy rucksacks filled with their ration of potatoes, or with firewood they have found in the country.

Though the rice crop is good, and there will be a ration of rice for the first time in months, food is still scarce and very expensive. Many people are selling their clothes to buy food. Those who have been burned out and have nothing to sell are doubly unfortunate. There has been no sugar ration in four or five years. Last summer the U. S. Army released some canned foods, including jam, for the Japanese to buy, and it was greatly appreciated, and no doubt a life-saver to thousands of people. But aside from that they have to depend on the natural sweetness in such foods as sweet potatoes and squash. A few sweets can be bought, but they are prohibitively expensive. A box of eight cakes, not very sweet, costs 69 yen, \$4.60 at the official exchange. Recently it was announced that all children between four and fourteen are to have a candy ration during the last two weeks of November, but all that means is that they may buy one yen's worth, or almost seven cents, of candy.

—From Elizabeth Gray Vining, Assistant Publicity Secretary of the Service Committee this past year, now in Tokyo where she is tutoring the Crown Prince of Japan.

Hungary, Land of Contrasts

by L. RALSTON THOMAS and ARTHUR G. BILLINGS

The first Quaker Mission to Hungary finally reached Budapest early in December. Arthur Billings, member of the Quaker unit in Vienna, was able to enter the country and make arrangements for the billeting of the team before they arrived. He saw Hungary in contrast to Austria. L. Ralston Thomas is Head of the Hungarian Mission.

The general situation in Hungary is much more difficult to understand than that in Austria, for the contrasts are more striking. The destruction in Budapest seems to have been much greater. All the bridges over the Danube were blown up, and block after block of buildings was destroyed. On the other hand, reconstruction, both public and private, seem to be more advanced in Budapest than in Vienna. Hungary, unlike Austria, was not divided into four occupation zones, and building materials available in one part of the country may be shipped to another part without the process of obtaining permissions. Transport is, of course, a serious problem.

In the stores and markets of Vienna, food, clothing and shoes are strictly rationed. The only goods available ration-free are books and luxury items such as wood carvings, antiques, and paintings. In Budapest, bread, sugar and milk seem to be the only rationed foods. The stores have an abundance of beef, pork, mutton, poultry, butter, cheese, potatoes, pumpkins and squash. And in clothing stores one finds an assortment of dresses, suits and shoes. However, this abundance is for the most part only apparent. While money wages have been more or less stabilized at the 1938 level, the prices of most agricultural products are almost three times as high as in 1938, and those of industrial products are from four to six times as high.

A comparison of prices with the average wage indicates that the apparent abundance of food and clothing in the stores is no real index to the present standard of living in Hungary. The most casual glance at the people on the street confirms this impression. On the bridges over the Danube and on nearly all busy street corners there are beggars, many of them wearing tattered army uniforms and the blind groping their way with white canes.

The Streets of Budapest

On the streets of Budapest one gets the impression of activity and variety. Among a moving stream of office and factory workers one may notice a robust peasant woman with a kerchief over her head, carrying a picked goose under her arm and trying without much success to keep its legs folded up. Along the sidewalks one finds every now and then a man roasting chestnuts and squash over a

charcoal fire. There is variety in the clothes people wear. Some are dressed like people in the United States. Others wear the full-skirted overcoats and fez-shaped sheepskin caps seen in Turkey and Russia. Strange as these clothes may be to us, the Quaker uniform also attracts a good deal of attention. People were always edging around to my left side so that they could read the insignia on my cap. Once on the street car an old man strained his eyes for several seconds to read the insignia, then an approving smile dawned on his face and he leaned over to the old lady sitting beside him and said, "Quaker!" Soon the word was being repeated all through the car.

The Team Arrives

L. Ralston Thomas writes in his first report from Budapest: The need here is tremendous. Budapest is a city of contrasts. The shop windows are full of things but wages are so low that only a few people can afford to buy more than the bare necessities. We are told that the average laborer earns about thirty dollars a month, and that does not go around for food, clothes and rent.

We visited a medical school yesterday. The students, about fifty of them, had hoped we might use their place for an office and the basement for a warehouse. They had been up most of the night scrubbing it for us. They live in unheated rooms with broken windows. There are about twenty beds in each room, although some of the students do not have beds. They go to classes in the mornings, study at night, and in the afternoons all of them work cleaning up the place. It was raw and cold while we were there, but they were whistling and singing at their jobs.

The city of Budapest is a great contrast to Vienna and to the cities we saw in Germany. Great progress has been made in cleaning up and much repair work is going on. The people take great pride in what they have been able to do. It is hard going for almost every one, and this winter will be difficult to face.

We hope to start some kind of program as soon as our food and clothing arrive. There is need for warm clothes and shoes as well as for food even in the limited fields in which we shall work.

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RECOVERY IN EUROPE

RECOVERY IN EUROPE, by John Kenneth Galbraith, National Planning Association pamphlet
No. 53, 1946, 35 pages. Available on request from the American Friends Service Committee.

Realizing that "humanitarian relief of suffering in warstricken areas is not sufficient in itself to heal war's spiritual and physical ravages," the Service Committee proposed in May that the National Planning Association undertake to study conditions that hamper recovery in Europe.

Dr. Galbraith, a member of the Association's Committee on International Policy, who recently surveyed conditions in Europe for the State Department, was commissioned to make the study. He proposes a ten-point program for Europe's recovery based on the premise that the state of German economy is a prime factor in determining how and to what extent Continental recovery can be effected.

Fundamentally, he feels, the Continent fears the United States will withdraw its interest in Europe, and competition between the East and West will lead to another war. He proposes that Germany, the most critical area of competition between the two, must come under the inspection of a long-term international security force. Such inspection would "permanently deny to Germany any elements of military power that would be dangerous to any other country or useful to any ally."

Other general proposals are that the United States should extend effective assistance to European countries trying to replenish their material shortages and rebuild their industries, and that there should be a concerted effort to bring Eastern and Western Europe into a "single trading community."

With specific regard to Germany, he proposes that within the "security framework" raw materials be imported into Germany and civilian industries revived; strenuous efforts be made to restore and preserve the unity of Germany; there be a "general reorganization of German finances to dry up the demoralizing surplus of currency"; the Rhineland and Ruhr be kept as a part of the future German state; and the Potsdam and post-Potsdam agreements be maintained while "leaving the door open for further revision."

Dr. Galbraith declares that the withdrawal of United States assistance would be "clear proof that America's interest in Europe is at best impulsive and unreliable and at worst merely a passing expression of the self-protective instincts of a wealthy and essentially selfish community."