

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

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FOREIGN SERVICE SECTION

News from Germany

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THE THREE WISHES

A teacher asked a class of ten year old girls to write a composition making three wishes. The school is in Berlin-Dahlem. Here is what the children wrote:

Ruth wrote:

"My first wish is for a nice warm wintercoat for I feel the cold easily. My second wish is that I receive a pair of nice warm boots. And the last wish is that I receive a ski suit so that I can go skating and skiing. I should look forward to this winter if I had these things, but as it is I would rather stay at home and hope that the summer will come again quickly so that I can play in the garden with my dolls."

Gesine wrote:

"My first wish is that there will be enough to eat again soon. My mother has often told me about former times and how much there was to eat then. My two older cousins of 18 and 19 told me that they had a nice dollhouse and had also cooked for their dolls. My second wish is that we should return to Saxony in the mountains. The Russians are there now. They threw us out of our house. There we had a villa, a sanatorium and a country house. The Russians have taken all this away now. My third wish is that I shall pass through the secondary school. I want to go to a school for cooking. I like cooking very much."

Brigitte wrote:

"I have three different wishes, but they will not be fulfilled while everything is so difficult to get now. First I want more clothes to put on. First of all I need dresses. Longsleeved and shortsleeved. But clothes are very difficult to get now. My second wish is that I have a little brother but mother says no. She says when he grows older he could be very mischievous and wild. My last wish is that mother doesn't work so hard because she is never finished."

Karen wrote:

"I have three big wishes. The first one is that my father will come back soon because then everything will be better. When the head of the family is not there then everything is wrong. 'Oh, I wish I had a bicycle.' I don't know how many hundreds of times I sigh that sentence to myself. How terrible the times are when one cannot buy anything. Thirdly I wish to have an older brother, but that unfortunately, is impossible, because I am the oldest one. He would climb trees with me. He would help me to gather acorns and perhaps sometimes we could make practical jokes together. An older brother is always worth a lot. But I still have many wishes, which would not go on a cow's hide. For instance, a compass, a book that I can never finish reading - and still other things."

Christiane wrote:

"First I wish that my father will come back soon, because it was always very nice with him. Every Sunday when he was free, then we looked for mushrooms together or we had little trips. But now he is a Russian prisoner. My second wish is that I soon learn to swim, but I haven't yet learned this year. My mother had registered

me for a swimming course in the holidays. But they were soon over and that was a pity. My third wish is that I shall get wool with which to knit. I always enjoy knitting. I hope these wishes will become true."

Hinze wrote:

"I have three wishes that should be fulfilled. The first wish is: that my parents and the whole family remain in good health, especially my parents. The second wish: that there soon will be more to eat and that we will soon get a new government. And also there will be new textiles and that they will not cost so much - that is the most important thing. The third wish is that the poor soldiers will soon come back from captivity. Then it will be better and there will be more to eat. For when the soldiers come back they surely would work. And later new houses will be built from the rubble of Berlin. I hope also that as my father has his motorcar that everything will be better. I hope that when things are better it will be easy to get benzine for my father's motorcar and also that it will not cost so much. Many women don't know their husbands again because they look so miserable. Many are so tired and hungry, that when they have been two or three days at home - they die and then the women have nothing left. Now my three wishes are written down."

Karin wrote:

"If I had three wishes the first would be that my father should come back. Then we could earn more and it would be better at home. And the second wish would be that our family be happy all the time and never hungry. And the third wish that I would like is to have a bicycle of my own, so that I do not need mother's."

Eva wrote:

"I don't want to remain in the new school nor to sit by the worst pupil. If my second wish came true it would be much better and easier. The second wish is that there will be better times again, so that Germany will not look so depressed and miserable. My third wish is that infantile paralysis will not spread over Germany."

Monika wrote:

"I have three big wishes that will only come true in time. The first: that our house will be completed again. My father is already busily mending the cracks but last winter we had a waterburst. The water flowed from the attic to the groundfloor. Because of that the walls were very badly marked. My second wish is: that my girl friend will come back to Berlin. She now lives in Potsdam and I have to go so far to see her. Before she used to live next door and we played together. My third and last wish is that I get a pair of boots. In winter I always get snow into my shoes. One pair already hurts me so much that I always get blisters when I wear them."

Jutta wrote:

"I have three wishes but they are hard to make come true. The first wish is the hardest, because I would like to have a bicycle. I can already ride one, but I cannot practice and I would like to do so very much. For the second wish I would like to get some new shoes. A pair of leather sandals, a pair of nice shoes and a pair of boots and a pair of houseshoes, but I don't know where to get them. As the last wish I would like my babydoll and all it's things back. Then when I finish all my school work I can play with her. Now the Poles are playing with her and I will never see her again."

Sabine wrote:

"My first wish is that Daddy could come home for then everything would be better and the family would be together and Daddy could earn some money. My second wish is

that there will soon be more to eat and we will not need to be hungry any more because that is awful. My third wish is that I'll soon get a shoe ration coupon. I have already made out an application in school and I hope that I will soon get a coupon. I have only one pair of wooden sandals, one of which is so kaput that I can't run in them any more. I have borrowed a pair of shoes which I now wear, but which I must give back soon. The friend from whom I have borrowed them hasn't many shoes either."

Fredericke wrote:

"I have a great wish which, however, is very hard to fulfill now. My wish is for a bicycle for I like bicycles very much. Then I could do my mother's errands with the bicycle, but now I always have to take mother's bicycle and she doesn't like it. Also, I could go on trips with my sister to Lichterfeld-West on Deanstalt. With a bicycle it always goes fast. When we go on the street-car it takes a long time. Unfortunately I cannot swim but next year I will certainly learn. My second wish would be for a great sack with bon-bons and filled chocolates. Then I could really have all I wanted. Then I would wish for a little house in our garden. There I would have a little living room, bedroom and a cooking corner. On the window I would have a neat little window box. About the house I would plant beautiful flowers. Here I would live alone with my dolls and play with them and cook for them. It is too bad that we cannot get cocoa, milk and sugar because if I had them, I would cook the most wonderful food and bake cookies for my dolls."

Anna wrote:

"My first wish is that I could go back to my home once again (East Prussia). However, it must be just like it was before. In the garden there must be many flowers and the fruit trees must hang full of fruit like they did before. Also there must be no strange soldiers there. Then I could play there again. My second wish is that my brother will come home soon; that my oldest brother will not be any longer in prison (Russian Prisoner of War); and that from the other brother we could have some news to tell us that he is alive. My third wish is that I have a big, beautiful doll with a carriage like the one I had at home. Then after I had done my homework, I could play with my doll."

And here is what the Teacher wrote to us:

"The enclosed pages are the work of our lowest form, girls of 10 years who have only just come to our school from the elementary school.

"They were asked to write down their three greatest wishes -- and these are some of the originals with all their mistakes uncorrected.

"It might be interesting for people abroad to read these naive, uninfluenced thoughts -- for they did not know that I was going to collect, let alone send them away. I did not know myself, until I had read them. Then I thought that perhaps these poorly written pages showed better than anything I might say, what fills these children's minds: the wish that their fathers and brothers should return, their longing for shoes and dolls and clothes, their wish that they and others might have enough to eat again, the homesickness of the little evacuees.

"I don't think any comment is necessary.

"Can you imagine that it is heartbreaking for us teachers to read this and not to be able to help?"

Send your children's used clothing to the American Friends Service Committee Warehouse at 23rd and Arch Streets, Philadelphia, Pa. They will be shipped directly to children in Central Europe.