

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE BULLETIN

FALL 1958

STUDENT CARAVAN PLEADS FOR PEACE

FOUR young people traveling about for a month proclaiming a message of peace to all who will hear, is one description of a peace caravan. Most of the time they succeed in discussing peace peacefully, but occasionally they inject a disquieting note.

A small Baptist congregation listened intently to the message of the two caravan members. The minister followed with a "stormy sermon" which chastised his flock for their apathy about the issue of peace. Several members were disturbed by the sermon and walked out in disgust — or shame.

During the past summer the AFSC sent two teams of students on summer itineraries which permitted them to take a personal message of peace and non-violence to hundreds who heard them in churches, service clubs, civic groups — in fact, wherever they got a chance. One group was in eastern New York and the other in the Baltimore area.

By design the teams are international and interracial in membership, reflecting varied convictions on the issues of peace.

The two teams last summer were a project of the Middle Atlantic regional office of the AFSC. Cooperating local committees helped arrange engagements and hospitality for the caravan. An orientation period preceded the

continued on page 2

Two American Quakers, a Turk and a Yugoslav were in the peace caravan which traveled for a month in New York state.

Oswald Werner



Robert Mertens

Vermont tree farmer discusses local production methods with participants.

AFSC EAST-WEST SEMINAR DRAWS PARTICIPANTS FROM 25 NATIONS

RURAL VERMONT — with a country auction, a carnival on the village green, a horse show, nearby college campuses and summer theater — provided the setting for the AFSC East-West Student Seminar last summer.

For a month 42 students from 25 countries studied "Elements of Peaceful Cooperation in a World of Diversity."

One of the two Russian graduate students at the seminar commented on the friendly but frank exchange of views. "One thing we are learning: it is very important to take seriously your opponent's point of view."

Among the other students brought to the United States for the seminar were two each from Poland and Yugoslavia. Three were from Argentina, Peru and Canada. Eight were American students, and the others were foreign students studying in this country.

The seminar purposes seemed justified in the fervor accompanying the discussions of the problems facing the United Nations. Candid views were exchanged while peeling potatoes or washing dishes.

Mutual friendliness of students from every continent enabled them to live together, learn each other's dances and songs, examine their cultures and philosophies, agree or disagree. Clarification of ideas dispelled stereotypes and generalizations.

The Vermont community had a richness matching the international group.

Its dairy farms interested students from countries seeking to strengthen agricultural production. Leaders in politics, journalism and education invited small groups of students to their homes in the area. Students from Eastern and Western countries accepted invitations to speak in nearby communities.

Students Help Plan

Through committees the participants helped plan study outlines and set up special discussions in cooperation with the week's consultant. Thus, Middle Eastern students helped interpret the Iraq-Lebanon crisis as it burst into the headlines. Day-by-day developments were followed with a quality of responsible concern, and the current news was combined with study topics of the week.

Among special visitors to the seminar were members of the Russian and Polish embassies in Washington. Consultants who spent four or five days with the seminar were leading American professors from the University of California, Williams College, Wesleyan University and Dartmouth College. Others who visited briefly presented topics related to atomic energy, Russian studies and the United Nations.

The program was one of nine international seminars sponsored this year by the AFSC. Other groups met in France, Poland, Yugoslavia, Thailand, India and Japan.



... SECURITY BORN OF CONFIDENCE ...

Philadelphia, Pa.
August, 1958

Dear Friends:

Never has man felt so keenly the awesome pace of social change. Even as one grows accustomed to rapid change and adjustment, an unanticipated burst of speed brings new developments even more radical and breathtaking. Humanity is being called upon to live within a spiraling sputnik.

In such times one instinctively seeks stability. But ancient institutions and organizations are being modified by outside events. Solid ground seems to move like quicksand. Former conceptions and beliefs face attack and erosion.

Where then can we turn for perspective, for insight, for reassurance and stability? Not to man-made institutions and conceptions. Not to beleaguered states and harassed statesmen.

We must recognize that change is in the nature of the universe. Constructive forces bring needed changes in human society: greater justice, increased security, peace. As individuals and organizations concerned with human welfare we must ally ourselves with these efforts. Our assistance is needed to bring the changes in line with our goals and values.

In Little Rock, vital topics are discussed in AFSC youth seminars. Peace, justice, transition, are considered by group members from various backgrounds and races.

In Salisbury, Rhodesia, a Quaker worker counsels with persons from widely differing viewpoints on the problems they confront in a society in transition. What will be the result — positive steps toward a multi-racial society or a hardening of social stratifications?

An AFSC representative sent to discover projects to aid Arab refugees was caught up in revolution and violence and called for direct relief measures. Aid was offered in ways designed to bridge chasms of bitterness and misunderstanding. For out of turmoil must be found lessons of growth and reconciliation.

The quiet, persistent efforts of Quaker technicians in India are fashioned to help villagers adapt to change. New water resources can revolutionize patterns of progressive farmers.

In these and other AFSC programs we seek to help people "hold fast that which is good" and with careful discrimination to reject the transient and tangential. At the same time we seek to help others discern the character and pattern of the vital changes going on that are of Divine ordering and to relate creatively to them.

And we pray that our efforts may be such that foster the true security born of confidence and faith in Divine guidance.

Yours sincerely,

Lewis M. Hookins Executive Secretary

AFSC STARTS NEW RUSSIAN EXCHANGE

THREE medical scientists — an internist, a pediatrician and a physiologist — recently undertook one-month visits in the Soviet Union in a new exchange program sponsored by the AFSC. The Friends Medical Society is cooperating in the plan.

The project was started at the invitation of VOKS (Union of Soviet Societies for Cultural Relations with

Foreign Countries) and with the cooperation of the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

The exchange continues a series of contacts with the people of the Soviet Union made by members of the Society of Friends over a long period of years. In 1955 a delegation of six American Quakers visited the Soviet Union on behalf of the AFSC.

An invitation has been extended for three Russian professional leaders to spend a month in the United States during the next six months.

STUDENT CARAVAN

continued from page 1

travels, and the project ended with participation in an institute on international relations.

Danisa Markovic of Belgrade, Yugoslavia was a member of the caravan in New York. She wanted peace, not as a pacifist, but as one who had known "what war is" from childhood experiences. She is studying for a master's degree in English and American literature at the University of Oklahoma. Previously she studied three years in the United States and returned home to get a diploma at the University of Belgrade. Her mother, a native of the United States, encouraged her to study here.

Yugoslav Wanted Peace

The opportunity to join the caravan came to the Yugoslav student through an international club at the university. She joined without much knowledge of the AFSC or the project.

"I felt I would like to take part as long as it was about peace. I want peace. I want us to get to know each other — to get out of our shells," she said.

While the caravan went about pleading for non-violence their listeners did not always reply in like manner. Danisa wondered about their success after one engagement. "Those men tore us to pieces — in discussion. And they roared singing that song. We were nearly crying," she said.

Other students in the caravans were from Sweden, Turkey, Iran and the U.S. Eight American colleges and universities were represented in the two teams.

While the students all wanted peace, an experience at civic club luncheons tended to emphasize their varied backgrounds. What could a Yugoslav and a Turk do when confronted with the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States? The acceptable solution for the New York caravan was this statement: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United People of the world, all races, one nation, indivisible with liberty, justice and peace for all."

New Publications

DO YOU HAVE THE TIME?—A Description of AFSC programs for high school students. (Folder)

QUAKER SERVICE OVERSEAS (8 page folder)

IN THE MINDS OF MEN—Five Quaker programs in international understanding. (Folder)

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE AFSC (12 page booklet)

44 INDIAN VILLAGES ASSISTED THROUGH AFSC PILOT PROJECTS

BY MATT THOMSON

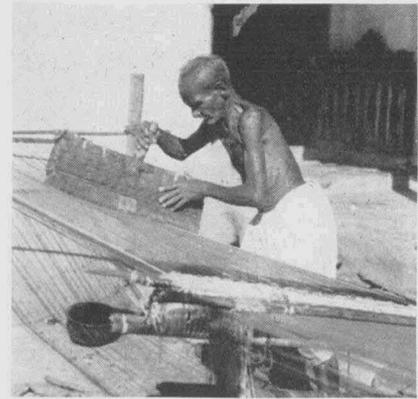
EDITOR'S NOTE: Matt Thomson was for two years director of Barpali Village Service in the State of Orissa, India. He is now executive secretary of AFSC's Dayton regional office.

IT is a particularly thrilling experience to have been a member of a voluntary organization working on a pilot project for 44 of the 500,000 villages marked for government assistance in India.

Freedom to experiment is one of the advantages of Barpali Village Service, now in the seventh year of a ten-year project. American Friends Service Committee staff have worked along with British, Canadian and German personnel, side by side with Indian villagers in a self-help program on the local level.

Take the matter of safe drinking water. We knew that the Government of India recognized the need and had schemes for selected areas. (In 1956 alone, more than two million people in India died of water-borne disease and millions of others suffered from diarrhea, dysentery, cholera and typhoid.) Our team, helped by an excellent suggestion from one of the village elders, developed a covered well and a pump with a wooden handle that could easily be repaired by a village carpenter. The total cost of such a pump well, serving 250 or more people, comes to \$60 plus digging, which is normally done by the villagers.

To awaken the people to the vital necessity of clean water, village workers, in cooperation with the Quaker team, used various audio-visual



Photos by Ted Conant

Well rings (photo left) are used in building a covered well and pump for a Barpali Village. A weaver (photo right) makes material which will be sold through a new cooperative.

aids, seminars for representative villagers, group and personal discussion. The result: 4 pump wells in 1954, 13 in 1955, 28 in 1956, and 77 in 1957. Our voluntary agency provided personnel to do the extension work, but villagers paid for the materials. More important, they are learning to make the necessary repairs, and the Indian Community Development officials are sending men for training to install wells throughout the State of Orissa during the next well-digging season.

Acceptance of water-seal-type latrines is meeting with more resistance, but audio-visual techniques are being used to educate the people. A film strip, developed by AFSC in cooperation with the United States International Cooperation Administration and the Indian Community Development Blocks (Services), is being shown to interested groups. The kind of latrines needed can be made by technically-

trained villagers for about one dollar.

Westerners in India have failed to realize that economic and technical development is a long, slow process. Often it is two steps forward and one backward, and both voluntary and government organizations may be guilty of impatience. The slowness of two cooperatives with which we worked in accepting responsibility illustrates this point.

Cooperatives Are Formed

In the case of the weavers' cooperative, our team member, an outstanding Indian civil servant on leave to work in this development program, stressed over and over two points: (1) the responsibility of elected committees to approve the goods woven before selling them and (2) the importance of weavers' putting money into the cooperative itself before accepting government grants. Now the group has grown slowly and the amount of sales has increased from 2,000 to 6,000 rupees a month, with outlets in Calcutta, New Delhi, Madras and Bombay, as well as the United States. A dyeing and merchandising center is being built.

The cobblers' cooperative is providing a testing ground for efficiency in the use of a bone digester to provide fertilizer. The cobblers were organized by Barpali Village Service in 1955 and have learned to use successfully the crushed bones of cows their skin for leather. Now they are able to sell tons of commercially produced fertilizer.

A further type of contribution open to a voluntary organization such as

continued on page 4

MORE JOBS—AND OTHER RESULTS

The AFSC has been working for a decade to broaden job opportunities for minorities. Staff workers in cities, both North and South, enlist the aid of interested community leaders.

Persuasive and educational methods result in new job openings. But the AFSC sometimes reaps other benefits.

A trust officer had helped integrate the staff of the bank where he was employed. He had observed the work of the AFSC and was impressed with its results. In the preparation of a colleague's will he learned that the man had a Quaker background. Aware of this, he suggested a bequest to the American Friends Service Committee.

Thus a man who had never given to the AFSC in his lifetime provided for it to receive \$5,657.33 which will be used to support its race relations work.

QUAKER COMMITTEES ISSUE APPEAL FOR NEW POLICIES IN MIDDLE EAST

QUAKER groups, troubled by the crisis in the Middle East, issued two public statements following the dispatch of western troops to the area.

The AFSC joined with the Canadian Friends Service Committee and the Friends Peace Committee, London, in a statement sent to delegations of the 81 member states of the United Nations and to the U.N. Secretariat.

In that statement the Quaker organizations called for "a fundamental review of basic policies" in the Middle East and expressed regret that the United States and Great Britain had sent military forces into the area without consultation with any organ of the United Nations.

The hope was expressed that all governments would contribute to plans that will bring to the Middle East a

"new era of peace and economic and social opportunity."

The second statement was issued by the AFSC for distribution in the United States and to help stimulate discussion on the Middle East. A copy was sent to President Eisenhower.

The AFSC urged the United States to withdraw all forces from Lebanon immediately. This action and the enlargement of the United Nations Observation Group were suggested as the first steps toward peace and stability in the area.

Lebanon Gets Relief

QUAKER relief work in Lebanon, launched in mid-summer, is providing supplementary food rations on both sides of the conflict.

The AFSC and Friends Service Council, London, answered a request from Quaker workers who made on-the-spot investigation of the needs. The program is conducted in cooperation with American, British and Lebanese Friends in the area.

The first three districts helped included a government-controlled area, Marja'youn, and the rebel-held territories of Chouf and Tripoli.

In Marja'youn various Christian groups are cooperating in the Friends' relief distribution.

In Chouf, the director of a local Quaker-related orphanage investigated the need and started the distribution of wheat to needy families. Chouf is south of the Damascus Road and is inhabited principally by the Druses, a religious sect growing out of Islam.

Distribution of Quaker aid in Tripoli

was undertaken at the outset by a young Greek Orthodox priest because it was impossible for foreigners to enter the district.

44 INDIAN VILLAGES

continued from page 3

AFSC is the development of a plan assuring medical care for villagers at a low prepaid cost, plus establishment of a training center for health workers. Such a center sends out trainees who find employment in the government's development program.

It has been rightly said that there is danger in "exporting" knowledge or in serving as consultants only in large cities. However, those of us who have worked in the Barpali Village Service have found ourselves on a two-way street: We have learned a great deal from the Indian culture, from village members of our team as we worked side by side, and from those in government who cooperate so wholeheartedly. Since AFSC has work going on in other countries, the experiences we have gained are in turn passed on to other "pilot" programs.

Finally, it is important that we interpret needs and responsibilities to our own fellow citizens. Is it possible that our people and our government can see the wisdom of sharply reducing the 45 billion dollars now spent on national defense and greatly increasing the 800 million dollars now going to non-military foreign aid? Do we really understand that the greatest role we can play is in the area of human relations?

Kassanaught Sahu, former mayor of Barpali and a long-time AFSC friend, evaluates our program with this simple but comprehensive statement: "We have learned that others care and that we can do many things for ourselves."



Alex Morisey

The Middle East crisis injected a new urgency to discussions of international problems during an AFSC institute held at Pawling, N. Y.

American Friends Service Committee
20 S. 12th St., Philadelphia 7, Pa.

THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, a Quaker organization, attempts to relieve human suffering and to ease tensions between individuals, groups or nations. We believe there is that of God in every man, and that love in action can overcome hatred, prejudice and fear.

Our work is open to anyone regardless of race, religion or nationality. We depend upon your contributions. Checks may be sent to the American Friends Service Committee at any of its offices.

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE

PAID

PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Permit No. 389