

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE BULLETIN

SPRING 1959



A human relations council in Burlington County, N. J. works to expand open occupancy housing and resolve other problems in the area. Four of the members of the organizing group are shown above.

—photo by Alex Morisey

“THEY TOO ARE OUR NEIGHBORS”

✿ About 27 million people, nearly one-sixth of the nation's citizens, are restricted in some degree in their choice of a neighborhood to live in. Among them are Negroes, Orientals, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Jews, and American Indians. These facts come from a three-year study of racial discrimination in housing by the Commission on Race and Housing. This independent group of 17 included leaders in building and banking, as well as major publishers, lawyers, and social scientists. [The findings of more than two dozen research projects carried out under the Commission's direction are summarized in a small booklet, *Where Shall We Live*, published by the University of California Press.]

“Housing is the one commodity on the American market that Negroes and persons belonging to certain other ethnic minorities cannot purchase freely,” the report begins.

The AFSC Community Relations Program is stepping up its efforts to change this pattern of exclusion. The Committee first became involved in the problem during the 1951 crisis in

Cicero, Illinois, when a Negro family moved into a previously all-white community.

That crisis led to the development of the first full-time AFSC housing program in the Chicago office. It was followed by one in Philadelphia and other similar activities in the San Francisco Bay area. In the Des Moines, Cambridge, Pasadena, and Dayton regional offices, growing concern and uneasy consciences are helping new programs get underway.

Brotherhood Emphasized

The motivations which generate the interest in housing through the AFSC were succinctly expressed by a couple who prepared to sell their home in a Philadelphia suburban community. Their open letter to neighbors emphasized their belief in the brotherhood of man as well as their desire to make it possible for a Negro family to enjoy the many advantages the community provided.

They concluded their letter with

continued on page 3

YOUTHS BURN WITH CONCERN TO LEARN

✿ The incredulous young man, just having finished interviews with several Asian representatives, observed, “They asked as many questions as we did!” That was typical of the response of 41 other young people attending an AFSC week-end high school institute on the Colombo Plan.

The institute, held in Seattle, ran concurrently with sessions of the first Colombo Plan conference to meet in the United States. Students interviewed delegates from Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaya, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

A week earlier, countries represented at the conference had been hardly more than geography book names. Face-to-face contact increased appreciation of the individuality of each nation.

Respect For Asia Grows

New-found respect for Asia was focused on minority problems at home. They discussed segregated housing in Seattle, and questions like this emerged: “How can we maintain our respect for Asians in such a way that Seattle will never again persecute the Nisei as it did during the conflict with Japan?”

On the East Coast an AFSC seminar concentrated on the issues of human rights.

“There is an iron curtain in communities all over the U.S. which keeps white people from knowing about the restrictions placed on Negro neighbors.” This comment from a discussion leader evolved from the opinion exchanged by 23 high school students attending a week-long seminar in Washington and at the United Nations.

For firsthand experience of minority problems, the group moved from interviews in Washington with embassy staffs and congressmen, to a work project in New York's East Harlem district. Some wielded paint brushes with Puerto Ricans in their homes and others interviewed neighbors on their attitudes toward the U.N. and disarmament.

continued on page 2



... Lewis Hoskins is in that notable succession ...

Philadelphia, Pa.
March, 1959

Dear Friends,

The resignation of Lewis M. Hoskins, executive secretary of the AFSC, effective February 1, 1959, marks an epoch though not a turning point, in the continuing life of the Committee. He is the third person to give a substantial block of time in this particular position to the work of the Committee, having succeeded Clarence E. Pickett on March 1, 1950, who succeeded Wilbur K. Thomas in 1929. His earlier work with the Committee included, among other assignments, more than three years in relief service in the famous Friends Service Unit in China.

This event reminds us of the extraordinary record of the Committee since its inception in securing for longer or shorter periods many men and women of marked ability who have interrupted their careers to take over an assignment along the pioneer lines which always mark our changing progress. Lewis Hoskins is in that notable succession.

He has given unstintingly of himself to a job that

is in its nature very demanding of time, versatility, and dedication. Those who have shared in any way the operation of the Committee realize that its peculiarly exciting and idealistic character are a partial compensation for sacrifice. But the work of the executive secretary is nevertheless also particularly exacting, and the gratitude of the Committee and of all its well-wishers is appropriately recorded.

His associates in every relationship extend to him their best wishes for his future career, as he returns to the academic world from which he came to the staff in 1945. His example, and we hope his experience, will be an important contribution to the continuing life of the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Henry J. Cadbury

Chairman

Three Soviet scientists met the press at AFSC's Davis House in Washington to describe their month in the United States. The AFSC had arranged separate itineraries to match their professional interests—astrophysics, automation, and heart surgery. Last August three Quaker medical scientists visited Russia, initiating the exchange.

—photo by United Press International



YOUTHS LEARN

continued from page 1

At the last session, participants discussed action on what they had learned. Many insights came from the relationships which developed during the seminar. They provided answers to questions like this: What does it mean to be afraid—to be Negro—alone in an alien society? To those who never knew, the comments of Negro participants were eloquent testimony.

There grew from such discussions individual decisions to fight discrimination back home by trying to break down the terrible iron curtain of silence.

During the present school year more than a dozen seminars and week-end institutes for high school and college-age young people are being conducted by five regional offices of the AFSC. The 10-year-old program helps participants come face to face with real-life problems.

Students attending the AFSC high school institute on the Colombo Plan in Seattle, question members of the Viet-Namense delegation.

—photo by The Seattle Times

Quaker Visitors Report On Africa

AFSC attention has been called recently to opportunities for service in Africa by Quaker visitors to the continent. Among them were Lewis M. Hoskins and Louis Schneider, who traveled extensively in Africa in the past few months.

Lewis Hoskins, who resigned effective February 1, as executive secretary of the AFSC, went to Africa in his capacity as vice-chairman of the United States-South Africa Leader Exchange Program. He also visited Quaker work in other countries of Africa and represented the Friends World Committee for Consultation as an official observer at the initial meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Louis Schneider, AFSC foreign service secretary, visited Africa while on a world tour to consult with Quaker workers and study future program needs.

Lewis Hoskins said the Quaker International Affairs Representatives located in strategic posts about the world can have a "reconciling function among diverse communities during a period of political and intellectual ferment."

Reports from both men cite the work of this nature being done by George and Eleanor Loft in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, and Philip and Myrtle Radley, British Friends in Capetown. Other opportunities for similar work by Friends exist in both Nairobi, Kenya, and Accra, Ghana.

Other possible developments can include work camps and various technical assistance projects.

Summer Projects

AFSC summer projects for 1959 will include experimental programs in race relations and service to the mentally ill. The Service Committee is sponsoring a pilot project in

milieu therapy at Ypsilanti, Michigan, and plans projects in the South to promote voter registration, merit employment, and tutoring for students facing desegregated schools next fall.

These projects are in addition to the regular summer program of work camps in the United States, Mexico, and abroad; Institutional Service Units; Internes in Industry; and Internes in Community Service. Requests for information should be addressed to: Personnel Department, AFSC, 20 South 12th Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa., or the nearest regional office.

New Publications

FRIENDLY THINGS TO DO—Both spring and summer packets are available at 25 cents each. The packets contain service projects and resource materials for holidays, festivals, and special events which help children get acquainted with friends here and in other lands. Two slide sets are available. *Water Means Life*, is based on the AFSC Barpali, India, community development project. The other set is, *Our Gifts go Round the World*. Rental charge: 50 cents each.

1958 ANNUAL REPORT—also published in a four-page condensed version.

QUAKER WAY OF LIFE—fourth revised edition of the book by William Wistar Comfort. Includes a new guide to Quaker reading. 75 cents.

MEXICO—a folder describing service opportunities in Mexico for young people.

SEMINARS—programs in Washington and at the United Nations for college students during the current school year.

OUR NEIGHBORS

continued from page 1

this affirmation: "Yes, we are sensitive to your needs and worries, but we have to be sensitive to the needs and desires of the individuals who have suffered unjust restrictions over many years and who right now cannot freely look for housing on the same basis as we do. They too are our neighbors."

The moral compulsions which undergird the Committee's housing programs are supported also by the findings of social scientists. After studying the AFSC Community Relations Program for two years a sociologist said, "Housing is such a crucial problem for all minorities that it should not be dropped by any organization in the near future. We recommend that AFSC continue its emphasis on integrated housing, leaving to others the area of better housing for minorities within the framework of residential segregation."

AFSC Approaches

How the AFSC works to "create an open market in which all people can participate according to their choices and ability" is reflected in the variety of AFSC approaches to the problem.

In Chicago's Trumbull Park the AFSC staff helps Negro tenants endure the day-to-day tensions fomented by persons who continue to resist open-occupancy policies in this public housing project.

Meanwhile ways are being explored to meet the community relations challenges to Chicago arising from the extensive commercial and industrial expansion at the terminal point of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

The AFSC helped calm the crisis following the coming of the first Negro family to Levittown, Pa. When the second family moved to the development last summer there were no incidents. An AFSC staff member used community resources to facilitate their adjustment.

A new housing development, being created by the same builder in Burlington County, N. J., helped spark the organization of a human relations council in the area. An AFSC staff member found a core of citizens who started an organization which is still being assisted by the Committee worker.

Work in Santa Clara County, California, has helped minority families move into homes and neighborhoods

continued on page 4



OUR NEIGHBORS

continued from page 3

previously unavailable to them. There has been a close consultative relationship with the staff of the United Auto Workers housing development, where an open-occupancy policy is maintained.

Oftentimes, the AFSC housing programs share experience with other voluntary citizen groups that hold similar ideals. In the Philadelphia area a real estate firm was organized by Quakers and others to help sellers and buyers

trade in an open market. The firm has relied upon the Community Relations Program, as well as the Race Relations Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, for community relations assistance when the first minority group family enters a previously closed neighborhood.

Under other circumstances the program reveals unnoticed patterns of racial exclusion. The rigidity of the pattern was shown in a recent two-month study of the Philadelphia center city area. The study, made available to intergroup and governmental groups, showed a firm unwritten code

which makes most housing unavailable to Negro applicants.

At several points the AFSC programs coincide with suggestions made to intergroup relations organizations by the Commission on Race and Housing. These include assisting minority families to secure homes on an open-occupancy policy, seeking the cooperation of real estate men in this endeavor, counseling residents and public officials in tension areas, persuading community institutions to support equal opportunity in housing, and promoting understanding and support of non-discrimination laws.

NEW PROGRAMS TO HELP IN CUBA, HONG KONG, LEBANON

✿ Funds and material aids will be sent to war-torn Cuba, and a community service program started in the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong by the AFSC. The Committee has



Hundreds of Cuban families are homeless as a result of destruction such as this in the town of Sangua de Tanamo.

—photo by Hiram Hilty

also pledged support to a new Quaker International Center in Beirut.

A \$6,000 appropriation for Cuban relief is being supplemented by shipments of material aids. The money is being used for shipping costs, and for emergency feeding in Oriente Province, and replacing household goods destroyed in the fighting. Plans are also being discussed for construction and repair programs. The first shipment of clothing and bedding exceeded 5,000 pounds.

Nursery School Planned

The program in Hong Kong will probably include a day nursery for children of working mothers, and a vocational training school for teen-age boys and girls. A first-year budget of \$25,500 has been approved for this work which is expected to begin in

September. The decision to undertake the program was based on a study made by AFSC staff members who recently visited Hong Kong.

Many international agencies are trying to alleviate the needs of 800,000 Chinese refugees who have increased the population of the tiny colony by one-fourth. The nursery and vocational school projects are designed to help meet problems arising from mass unemployment in Hong Kong.

In Lebanon, where the AFSC has been engaged in relief work since July, a Quaker International Center has been established. Lebanese Friends have leased an apartment for the new center in Beirut. AFSC and British Friends will contribute funds to support Beirut Friends in the new program. Funds and supplies valued at \$35,000 have been sent to Lebanon by the AFSC in the first seven months of the relief program.

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.