

**YOU WERE A BIT OF A DICTATOR ONCE ....**

*The first international work-camp in NW Europe after the war (but with only two nationalities [three if you're a Scottish Nationalist] – British and German) had been organised at Friedland, Kreis Göttingen. Flash-forward to Glasgow, early 1948 – a small re-union. In the course of conversation, and presumably à propos of something which had been said, Finlay, with the hearty laugh which was always breaking out, threw into the pool "You were a bit of a dictator once, Dave!" This was surprising, and I asked what he meant. He reminded me of the team meeting at Bremke in about November 1945 when the team was having its weekly discussion of the work at Friedland Refugee Camp, and the various contacts there. These included Catholic and Lutheran relief agencies, German Red Cross, and a number of students (male, ex-service) from various faculties of Göttingen University, mostly Law, Medicine and Divinity, who were all mucking in to help. [The colloquialism is appropriate - mud was an early feature of the camp]. Ramsay Bramham suggested that there was the possibility of organising a traditional work-camp to erect further Nissen huts which were badly needed to cope with growing numbers of refugees, shortly to be further augmented by "Operation Swallow" - the removal from the parts of eastern Germany handed back to Poland of all Germans living there. There was a long discussion about this, three members of the team opposing the suggestion on perfectly legitimate and reasonable grounds, mainly that that wasn't what we were there for as a Relief Section of COBSRA. As Finlay noted, I as team leader brought the discussion to a sudden stop by saying, according to his recollection, "Well, that's what's going to happen."*

*David Sainty*

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