

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

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Relief Section 109,
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21st April 1946

DLS / 11

Dear Derek,

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John Harvey :

I was very pleased to learn from Michael Rowntree that John would be out here later on and hoped to see the Units before he starts lecturing.

Viscount Montgomery :

(Note the progression in the headings). IVSP was personally presented to the great man on Thursday, and he was pleased to say that he was all for Peace (the last word of the title having registered) and that some people thought that war was the most difficult operation but that it wasn't half so difficult as organising peace; sentiments with which I found myself in agreement, happily. We had previously been treated to a speech of a quarter of an hour in plenary session which was the most hopeless speech I have ever heard. It was bad in taste, in construction, in matter, in style, in ideas and in delivery. I do not believe that an orator is necessarily an able man, nor in the converse, but Monty's speech made me wonder how able he is.

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Pastor Mensching :

I intend to go to the Easter Monday meeting tomorrow. His Youth Peace Week which I mentioned some time ago is to take place during Whit Week at Bad Pyrmont, and I hope also to be there at least part of the time. He has IVSP on the agenda for both. I suppose there's no chance of somebody from England with knowledge of Pierre being out here at that time who could lead a session on IVSP - this was Pastor M's suggestion. In any case, would you let me have as soon as possible, please, any literature besides the Pick & Shovel, Charle's Letter, the recent Pamphlet on Pierre and the Bulletin, which gives details of Pierre's life and the development of the movement.

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German IVSP Branch :

Your comments noted. My own view has always been that we should get on with services before we consider trying to set up a permanent organisation; the Berlin circumstances are a little exceptional, but now the application for permission to set up an organisation is in abeyance for the following reason : When I spoke to Major Andrews on Thursday I asked about this matter. He seemed a little resistant, and I said that I thought it was not important for us at this stage to be able to have a Mil.Gov-authorized association, since for one thing I can get in touch with all our contacts when necessary, and I said that if he thought that it might cause difficulty we should not just now proceed with this formal application. He asked us not to because it might cause questions to be asked which would muck up the practical side of the negotiations which are particularly delicate. Accordingly I have asked Basil to suspend all negotiations on this line in Berlin.

I fully agree about making sure the right people are at the top of the movement before we give it its push off. I am interested to know that no one in England knew of the Berlin group: I had gathered that although it was based on Pierre's ideas it was not connected with the movement in other countries, and my immediate impression when Erich Mohr told me about it at Friedland was that it was somewhat parochial. That may have been entirely a mistaken judgement, but I am not entirely happy about Erich. I have not discussed him yet with Basil, and I have only met him that once, and it is more than possible that this first impression is not sound; but at Friedland he gave the lads some particulars about Berlin and then answered some questions and I could see he was not satisfying them although I could not pick up all the German. Ramsay told me subsequently that the German lads had received the impression that he would not say what he really thought and was a "coward". This cannot be accepted just like that - he may just have put things in a Quakerly fashion which was outside their line of thought, but their comment was that "he wasn't an IVSPer".

I'll see what Basil thinks. Ernst and Anni are pretty sound, I think. (You can of course discuss this with Basil next week.)

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Yours

David