

REPORT

on Meeting held in Oberpräsidium, Münster, on Tuesday 18th June 1946
between representatives of IVSP, Control Commission Education Branch, and interested Germans

Present :

Mr. D.L. Sainty (I.V.S.P. - in the Chair)

Messrs. R.E. Rayne and John L. Hume (Education Branch, CCG)

Frau Carlotta v. Pavel, Frau Anneliese Ehrhardt, and

Herren Narten, Dr. Hans Koch, Dr. Otto Koch, Steckel, Bother, Resing, Thielemann,

Dr. Michaltscheff, Prof. Foerste, Boden, Köttker, and Frege.

Dr. Otto Koch, who had made arrangements for the conference, gave a general introduction in greeting those who had come. He referred to the serious state of the country and its effect on young people especially, and claimed as the general opinion that without the occupation conditions would be completely chaotic and no one, least of all those in positions of responsibility, would be safe. In these circumstances he welcomed any opportunity of helping in measures to give young people a new ideal and a new hope, and particularly urged that now was the time to try to teach them a new spirit of international relationships and that the finest result that could be hoped for was that they should become, as we say in English, "peacemakers".

Mr. Sainty then outlined the purpose of the conference, which was

- (1) to describe proposals which had been made to the Control Commission for experimental work camps
for young people,
- (2) to give information about the first experiment at Friedland,
- (3) to discuss possible camps in the British Zone this summer,
- (4) to obtain information about the possibility of getting suitable volunteers and the best time for the camps, and
- (5) to report on the recommendations of an International Conference of IVSP in Switzerland as to the founding of a German Branch.

(1) Proposals were put some weeks ago to the Education Branch of the Control Commission, in which it was suggested that the International Voluntary Service for Peace should organise during the months of August and September up to six "schemes" on which 20 - 25 young people would do some simple work, such as clearance of rubble in damaged areas, camp maintenance work in refugee camps, agricultural work, repair of youth hostels, and live together for a period of two or three weeks. A leader for each "scheme" would be provided by IVSP from Relief Sections already working in Germany, and two or three other members would be British. Possibly Swiss or Swedish people working with other Relief Sections might be able to take part, and perhaps a few Displaced Persons might be found willing to volunteer. The others would be German young peoples. Permission had been asked for this, and it was now awaited. The idea behind the proposals was that in such a scheme young people could get to know each other particularly well, and that in working and living and discussing together some of the contact with the outside world which German young people were missing could be given, mutual understanding would be developed, and a basis on a small scale for peaceful relations established.

(2) Herr Frege gave a short description of the scheme which took place in the Flüchtlingslager at Friedland, south of Göttingen, during the month of March of this year, when students from Göttingen University worked with three members of an IVSP Relief Section for periods of one to three weeks each. He emphasised that the outstanding feature of the scheme for the students had been the social and intellectual contacts with the British people with whom they lived and worked. It was later stressed by Frau Ehrhardt in discussion that a work scheme which was only work would not have the same value, and that the time outside the eight hours' working day was an essential part of the scheme.

(3) Five possible camps had been in view :

1. Geldern; a woodcutting camp, on which some older boys (16 - 19) from school would take part along with others, in producing fuel for the people in Geldern (old people, institutions, etc.) who could not get their own, and which the town could not provide without voluntary labour.
2. Hamburg; clearance and repair for a Children's Home.
3. Poggenhagen; maintenance work in a refugee camp. Word had just been received, however, that there was a possibility that this camp would be closed shortly, and this project was dropped.
4. Meschede; clearance and repair in a badly damaged small town. (Note, 6/7/46: now changed to river works for prevention of flood damage.
5. Münster; clearance and reconstruction at the University, possibly. Two other possibilities were put forward -
6. Hannover; clearance for a youth club and erection of a hut.
7. Rendsburg; fuel (turf) cutting for refugees.

Consideration of these and what had previously been said led to discussion on

- (a) the class of volunteers expected;
- (b) the possibilities of interesting large numbers of young people at once through the Press and the Radio;
- (c) the difficulties of youth work generally and the necessity of materials in order to do anything on a large scale;
- (d) the economic impossibility for working people to come on voluntary schemes without compensation for loss wages.

The conference agreed with comments on these points which were, that University students had been approached first because the opportunity had been there, but that it was the intention to get as many as possible who were not students, from working-class and other walks of life, to volunteer; the students themselves had suggested this. The ideal was to bring together different nationalities, classes, and opinions of all sorts. The seriousness of the situation was not lost upon any one, and there was a dilemma : either something on very large scale had to be done at once, which would perhaps attract the majority of German youth but would have other dangers, or a sound idea had to be patiently got over in a small way at the beginning and encouraged to develop on its own. The last of these points depends for its ultimate solution on official recognition of such schemes and the release of people from their work for the purpose of doing this work perhaps with continuance of pay or part of it. In the meantime, some young people will be prepared to make it a holiday scheme.

It was then agreed that the proposed schemes should be supported, and Mr. Sainty said the personnel difficulties were greater now than had been expected, but that IVSP would undertake five schemes. The five were agreed to be Geldern, Meschede, Hamburg, and two of the following three given above, the two to be chosen by Mr. Sainty within the next fortnight when he had been able to visit the places.

(4) Application Forms were awaited, and some would be sent to each of those present. It was asked that suitable young people should be given Application Forms, of which a limited number was being printed, and it was suggested that if this were done, it would in view of the shortage of time amount to much the same thing as the obtaining of references for each volunteer which was normal for instance in England.

The suggested period for the camps, August and September had been fixed with the University vacation in mind. It was agreed that this period would be suitable. Volunteers would be expected to serve for two or three weeks, but if a suitable volunteer was unable to serve for more than one week he might be accepted for that time.

The details of materials and supplies were not gone into as the conference was not a suitable body to consider them and they come under the responsibility of IVSP in any case. It was agreed that those bear one of the proposed schemes would help in the local organisation.

Herr Bother said that people doing unselfish work for a public body could obtain from the Arbeitsamt RM 2 per day, and that this might help considerably in the case of working-men volunteers.

(5) During the proceedings the suggestion was made that it would be good to form a German Branch of IVSP. Mr. Sainty however reported that at the International Conference from which he had just returned this subject had been discussed, and it had been agreed there that in view of the special difficulties in Germany just now and the necessity for proceeding very slowly and steadily and making sure that a firm foundation was laid the formation of a German Branch should not be considered now and could not be recognised by the international body. It was felt that the schemes now proposed would provide a nucleus of young people interested in the idea of IVSP who could during the winter build up a compact society based on actual work done, elect a committee, Chairman and Secretary and perhaps organise schemes on their own next summer. The Göttingen students who had worked at Friedland would however be considered as a local group of IVSP, but all IVSP work in Germany at present would be under the aegis of the British Branch. The formation of an independent Branch should not be hurried. It had also been suggested that while the support, advice and assistance of older friends who had previously worked with IVSP, such as Walter Thielemann, would be invaluable, emphasis should be put on building the movement in Germany on the young people who were now becoming interested in the idea.

Agreement was expressed with the suggestion of the International Conference.

The next steps to be taken were

- (1) Mr. Sainty to decide as soon as possible on the remaining two schemes to be undertaken,
- (2) Local arrangements for all the schemes to be gone ahead with immediately with the help of those present where possible,
- (3) Application Forms, as soon as they arrived, to be sent to those attending this conference.

All were thanked for their attendance, and the meeting closed.

AGENDA for Conference

1. Introduction - Dr.Koch
2. Purpose of Conference - David L. Sainty
 - i. To describe proposals for experimental workcamps, for young people
 - ii. To give information about the first experiment at Friedland.
 - iii. To discuss possible camps in the British Zone this summer :
Proposed camps :
 1. Geldern - Woodcutting
 2. Hamburg - Children's Home
 3. Peggenhagen - Refugee Camp
 4. Meschede - Clearance & Reconstruction
 5. Munster - Do. at University (Added at Conference)
 6. Hannover - Clearance for Youth Club
 7. Rendsburg - Turfcutting
 - iv. To obtain information about possibility of suitable volunteers.
 - v. To report on recommendation of Conference of IVSP in

Switzerland.

3. Proposals for Summer Camps - David L. Sainty
4. Friedland - Joachim Frege
5. Details of Summer Camps - Frau v. Pavel
 - Walter Thielemann
 - David L. Sainty
6. Suitable volunteers : selection & arrangements.
7. Swiss Conference - David L. Sainty

ATTENDERS

at Conference held in Oberpräsidium Münster, on Tuesday 18th June at 9 a.m.

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Address</u> | <u>Nationality</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Boden, Hans | Münster, Education Office | German |
| Bother, ? | Minden, Landratsamt | German |
| * Ehrhardt, Anneliese | Bremke | German |
| * Foerste, Prof. | Münster, Hüfferstraße 67 II | German |
| * Frege, Joachim | Göttingen, Dahlmannstraße 16 | German |
| Hume, John L. | 307 Mil Gov, Westfalia | British |
| Koch, Dr. Hans | Münster, Hindenburgplatz 87 | German |
| Koch, Dr. Otto | Münster, Kreuzstraße 9 / 10 | German |
| Köttker, Heinrich | Münster, Education Office | German |
| Michaltscheff, Dr. | Hamburg, Bornstraße 6 II | Hungarian ? |
| + Narten, Enno | Hannover, Siemensstraße 10 A | German |
| * von Pavel, Carlotta | Hamburg 20, Haynstraße 9 | Swiss |
| * Rayne, R. N. | C. C. G., Bünde | British |
| Resing, Karl Heinz | Hamburg 13, Magdalenenstraße 28 | German |
| * Sainty, David L. | Westbevern | British |
| Steckel, Adolf | Rendsburg, Kanalstraße 20 | German |
| * Thielemann, Walter | Hamburg 13, Jungfrauental 24 | German |

* IVSP member, former or present.

Prof. Foerste served in North Wales (Rhos); first met at this conference.

+ Not a member, but knew Pierre Ceresole in the FOR.

Herr Resing is a journalist on the staff of "Die Welt", circulated in the British Zone as a whole, who has obtained from his editor space in the paper whenever it is wanted for publicity for IVSP.

John Hume is Education Officer in Westfalia.