

From :

D.L.Sainty, Senior Representative in Germany of the International Voluntary Service for Peace
Advisory Officer to H.Q.5, British Red Cross Commission (Civilian Relief), B.A.O.R.

To :

Cdt. Pechoux, Departement d'Education, Commission de Controle de l'Allemagne, Berlin

Distribution :

4 Copies to Cdt. Pechoux
Willy Begert
Derek Edwards

SUBJECT : International Work Schemes to include German Youth.

1.

The International Voluntary Service for Peace is the British Branch of Service Civil International, whose headquarters are in Zürich, and which has had teams of volunteers working during this summer in France, at St.Madrier, Raon l'Etape, Lacoume, etc., with the co-operation of the French Government.

2.

In the British Zone, teams of the I.V.S.P. have been working along with other societies under the British Red Cross Civilian Relief organisation.

3.

In the course of their work, the I.V.S.P. have found a considerable interest among young German people in the ideas of I.V.S.P. In brief, these ideas are :

- (1) Volunteers who wish to help to create international co-operation and understanding are called together to help a community which has suffered because of some calamity – war, flood, avalanche, etc.
- (2) They undertake simple, unskilled manual work, taking care not to accept work which could be done by available paid labour.
- (3) The volunteers come from different countries and environments and may be of all creeds and opinions without distinction. They all live and work under the same conditions, but a leader known to the Committee of I.V.S.P. is chosen to be responsible for the service.
- (4) The conditions are simple, and the volunteers are asked to subscribe to an undertaking to help the other members in the matters of discipline and work to create a high standard and to contribute to the effort at mutual understanding.
- (5) By living and working together in this way, it is believed that a useful contribution is made towards learning the conditions of good citizenship, understanding other peoples, and laying a sound foundation for peaceful relations.

4.

Proposals that I.V.S.P. should organise a few such working schemes in the British Zone in the summer of 1946 were accepted by the Education Branch and confirmed by the Control Office for the British Zone. These schemes will take place in August and September.

5.

The British Educational authorities consider that this experiment may develop into an independent German Branch of the international movement, which may have useful educational results among the youth of the country. From the point of view of the German youth, this attempt to work out an idealism in practical terms provides the constructive aim which many of them are looking for.

6.

The British Element of the Control Commission is prepared to consider the development of I.V.S.P. in Germany on a fuller and independent scale when it has received reports on the experimental schemes which are about to commence. It is envisaged that perhaps next year a sufficiently trustworthy and sound nucleus of young people will have gathered, through the experience of the schemes, to constitute an independent Branch which could be recognised by the British authorities and by the International Committee of the I.V.S.P.

7.

We have several contacts with people in the French and other Zones who are also keenly interested in the idea. It is obviously too late to think of running similar experimental schemes this year in the other Zones; but it is hoped that it will be possible for one or two young people from the other zones to join one or other of the schemes in the British Zone. It would be good from the point of view of the international movement and also from the point of view of the youth in this country if the possibilities of getting together in an effort of this kind were restored.

8.

I should be grateful if the French authorities were to interest themselves in this and to agree to consider development of the movement in their Zone also – which would mean co-operation between the young people of the various Zones – after receipt of reports on the experimental schemes in the British Zone.

9.

Further information will be readily supplied on request.

David L. Sainty

Note to para. 4 above :

The working schemes will include both British and German personnel. The British will be drawn from

Relief Sections and from extra personnel brought out to the sections from England. It is also possible that a few other nationalities may be able to take part; possibly even Displaced Persons. All people working on the schemes will work and live on the same terms.