

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

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22 Aug 46

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Copy for Willy

Dear Derek,

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Vale David :

Yesterday, David handed things over to me and today I'm trying to get things straightened out in my own mind. I notice with a feeling of alarm that there are some points outstanding in your letters which do not yet seem to have been dealt with, so here goes

Your visit :

John H. and I talked things over after he rang you up the other night, and we decided that the best time to come out would be about the end of November, when you would have time to visit the teams before attending the Team-Leaders' conference which will fall due about the beginning of December. These conference to give a most revealing and adequate picture of the situation all over the British Zone, as no doubt John will tell you when he comes back.

Willy's visit :

It would be excellent if Willy could come out in the middle of October, as we hope to have the conference of elected IVSP-ers from each week on each scheme about then; to thrash out some sort of IVSP German Branch (Hannover is the most likely place). It might not be a good idea to have Willy in at the actual conference, but there could be perhaps a second session where he could give a short talk.

As for the machinery for bringing you both out, I shall ask Miss Roberts privately about it at the earliest opportunity. I noted your quotation of Miss Shipton's comments, and the need for a speedy start with the negotiations.

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Erich Mohr :

Corder Catchpool's remarks (copy of which you sent) more or less the impression we got. I think that he has done a good job of work in revising the (or should I say "adapting the") Swiss S.C.I. Constitution to fit the branch that may grow up in Germany. Certainly it will be something to go on, at the conference in October, and if accepted there, or modified there, an immediate document to put into the C.C.G. for recognition of the movement.

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Schemes :

John and I have been round all four now. My insular Berlin mind had not really thought of them seriously before, but with each successive camp I was more and more convinced of their value, and encouraged by their obvious success. Each one presented different difficulties and there could scarcely have been more variety in the type of work done, in the conditions under which the scheme were living (canvas - to refugee camp), and people taking part (15 year-olds to middle-aged refugee woman helping at Rendsburg). But in every place the result was the same; a warm friendly family atmosphere; everyone wanting to help the other folk and not so much himself and anxious to know as much of the world outside, and the problems and possibilities from which they had been cut off and from which they are still cut off so deplorably.

Had a long chat with Robert Rayne today (Adult Education - C.C.G. at Bünde - as you know - ex-IVSP); there is no doubt that he realises the value of the schemes, especially in view of the unlikelihood of any exchange of students for some time to come, and any contact by Germans with the other countries for even longer. He thought, looking ahead, that if BRC did become really sticky about letting out short-termers, or about supporting a team whose function was solely IVSP work, that C.C.G. would bring them out. This is an advantage, as people of other nationalities (he thought) could come out too at a time when ordinary civilians would not be allowed into the country. But the snag is IVSP would have to pay for them - fares, upkeep, &c. In the long run it does seem important to have a new organisation - CBSRA, for instance, independent of BRC - with a contract with the army as advantageous as the BRC one, and that would free from the trammels of BRC on one side, and of financial burden on the other. There's no harm in wishing for the moon . . . and anyhow I think that all this helps to get the alternatives in the picture clear in our minds.

Tomorrow, there is an Advisory Officers' meeting at Vlotho, at which some of these points may be raised, and if anything fresh arises, I will write again.

Teams :

109 moving to Schleswig (town - I think . . . tho' that is in the hands of Fl.Lt. Neal (also ex-IVSP), Welfare Officer for that area - - it makes you think that the whole of Germany is run by the IVSP -) about Sept 1st.

150 moving to Duisburg about same date.

143 slackening off in Berlin with the closing down of the refugee camps.

That's all from now. All the best,

Basil