

I. V. S. P.

Hannover Conference

Oct 26 - Oct 27

R E P O R T

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Chairman : - Willy Begert, International Secretary of the Service Civil International (IVSP), Switzerland

Among Those Present :

Control Commission Germany	- Padre H.O.Bale, Education Branch, Zonal HQ, Bünde - Major Prior, Regional Education Officer, Hannover - Hannover Region Officer for Religious Affairs
British Red Cross (Civilian Relief) Germany	- Miss R.Roberts, HQ 5 - Basil Eastland, IVSP Advisory Officer, HQ 5 - 10 members of IVSP Relief Teams
Swiss IVSP	- Max and Violet Beguin, (Relief Section of Saarbrücken)
German Delegates	- 34, elected, one each week from the five Summer Schemes, and one from Frankfurt
German Guests	- 18 people keenly interested in the ideas of International Voluntary Service for Peace

Conference Room : - Birkenhof, Stephansstift, Hannover

Sessions:

the Zone area.	Sat. Oct 26th	3 to 5 pm	Report on Summer Scheme
		5 to 7 pm	Discussions of problems arising out of the report
		8 pm	"Friedland" film. Talk on IVSP
	Sun. Oct 27th	7.30 to 9.30 am	Future work and organisation
		9.30 to 11 am	Break for representatives from each quarter of to discuss and elect representatives for their
		11 to 1 pm	Future Organisation
		2 pm	First meeting of Working Committee

Distribution List :

C.C.G. Education Branch, Zonal HQ	Fredsvenners, Norway
- Padre H.O.Bale	Fredsvenners, Denmark
- Col.Andrews	Internationelle Arbetslag, Sweden
- Robert Rayne	Service Civil International, Switzerland
Regional Education Officers:	S.C.V.I., France
- Hannover	S.C.V.I., Belgium
- Münster	I.J.N., Holland
Col. Cornell, Rendsburg	A.F.S.C. Paris - Irwin Abrams
Lt. John Goodland, Hamburg	- Steve Cary
Capt. Ramage, Kiel	CRALOG - Miss Welles, Berlin
OMGUS - Hayes-Beall, Educ.Branch.	International Secretariat, S.C.I., Switzerland
G.M.F. - M.le Commandant Moreau,	IVSP - Foreign Service Office,
London	
Education Baden-Baden	- Home Service Office, London
British Red Cross, HQ 5	- Relief Sections 109, 143, 150
COBSRA Office, London	- Chairman, Leeds
Advisory Officers, FRS; SA; SCF	

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(A)

IT WAS RESOLVED AND UNANIMOUSLY AGREED DURING THE COURSE OF THE CONFERENCE :

- 1) to aim at a loose organisation for the whole of Germany
- 2) to apply in the first instance to the Allied Control Authority for recognition of the organisation.
- 3) to apply then to the Control Commission of each Zone individually for recognition of the organisation.
- 4) to form a Working Committee responsible for organising future schemes.
- 5) to recognise Regional Groups : Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein;
 Göttingen (including Hannover);
 Cologne (North Rhine, Westphalia);
 Berlin;
 Frankfurt, which should represent the American Zone at
 the moment.
- 6) to elect from among the representatives coming from each of these areas two members from each area to sit on the Working Committee; and two British persons, the latter appointed by the British IVSP.
- 7) Agreed further that HEINRICH CARSTENS, be chairman of the Committee.
- 8) that Regional Groups while carrying out small local projects, should forward suggestions to the Working Committee for full-time schemes.
- 9) that the Working Committee decide which full-time schemes to undertake, and should decide who should lead such schemes.
- 10) that the name of the organisation should be :
 "INTERNATIONALER FREIWILLIGER DIENST FÜR DEN FRIEDEN"
 shortened to "IFF" when necessary.
- 11) to accept the Statutes of the Swiss branch of the Service Civil International (IVSP) with minor alterations.
- 12) to delay accepting specifically German Statutes until the spring of next year when the International Statutes, applicable to all branches of the Service Civil International would be available.
- 13) to avoid misunderstandings and mis-statements, no publication about IVSP or IFF should be made without the consent of the Working Committee.
- 14) that two German IFF members should attend the next meeting of the International Committee of the Service Civil International.
- 15) that a General Meeting of IFF members be called in Apr '47, to review the position.

(B)

REPORT ON SUMMER SCHEMES AND DISCUSSIONS ARISING

Introduction

The chairman, Willy Begert, International Secretary of the Service Civil International (IVSP), brought greetings from the branches of SCI in other countries who were much encouraged by the success of the German summer Work Schemes. He revealed that the difficulties experienced at the German schemes were by no means unknown in all the other lands, and while regretting that volunteers from these other lands had not been able to join the German summer schemes, he anticipated an early opening-up of the possibility of a two-way exchange of volunteers between these countries and Germany.

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The Report

was presented by the IVSP Advisory Officer, British Red Cross Commission, Germany, and was translated by a German friend.

General

The summer schemes were held in Rendsburg, Twisteden (Dutch border country), Meschede (N.E. Ruhr area), Berlin and Hamburg. On an average they lasted 7 weeks, in Aug and Sep 46, and 55

different German persons along with 4 British persons took part in each scheme. The average age was 24. No more than 24 persons were on any scheme at one time. 43% of the volunteers were students; 24% workers; 24% scholars; 19% refugees.

Work

The conference agreed that it was less liable to lead to injustice if community projects were undertaken, rather than work for distressed individuals. The importance of constructive work was stressed, although rebuilding was scarcely practicable, in other lands, re-building was in the hands of constructors, and in any case it was better to avoid skilled work in order to make the best use of the unskilled labour which IVSP aimed at providing; and to avoid working with paid workers who tended to resent voluntary workers, and to expect them to maintain the traditional pace. Work both for and by disabled people was suggested, the former to aid them physically, and the latter to help them psychologically, when they found they could work alongside able men. Work had to be undertaken that would otherwise be left undone.

It was awkward to have German volunteers on foreign schemes all the time that German PW were still in captivity in those lands.

Work for Women Volunteers

Admitting the need for getting away from the purely cooking and housework duties and what was called the "Arbeitsdienst" prejudice against women working on equal terms with men, it was felt that women should not do work that was too heavy as it was not only injurious, but also uneconomic; either the women would endeavour to work as hard as the men, or the men would feel impelled to slacken their pace. Men and women should be together on the same piece work; and it was possible to find suitable work of a lighter nature, other than purely social work; the former was so much more in demand at the present moment in Germany. Special camps for women were definitely not recommended. It was felt better not to ask any fixed rule as to the proportion of men to women in schemes.

Food

In answer to criticisms that it was unfair, and tended to attract people for the wrong motive for volunteers to get more food than the ordinary ration, it was stated that no promise for extra food had been made, and that in any case, most volunteers were doing hard work that they ordinarily were not used to, and they were doing it in addition to their studies etc. It was claimed to be one of the benefits of community life to tend to get more, and more variety, of food. Extra food was vital if the way towards worthwhile discussions was to be opened up. Idealism just would not answer the needs of the body on this point.

It was suggested that the high standard of quality of the work done, was undoubtedly helped by adequate food on the schemes. A suggestion that German rations should be consumed, but that hours of work should be curtailed in order to leave time for spiritual discussions was rejected.

Billets

It was pointed out how impossible it would be for IFF to obtain any accommodation for schemes in future without the assistance of British personnel.

Equipment

This argument was also applied to equipment, though it was in part countered by the fact that much had been done at two of the summer schemes without outside support.

Visitors

This provoked no discussion; visitors of all sorts seemed to be welcome on the summer schemes.

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Social life

This side was claimed to be as important as the work itself, it was a very successful way of revealing the deeper aids of people and one of lasting value. It was noted that good leaders were needed for a successful social life in a scheme. The good result obtained in the summer schemes showed that planned discussions could be very successful, and contact with the local people by providing concerts, etc, could be very fruitful, particularly in spreading the ideas. Suggestions that working-hours should be

cut down in order to give more time for social life, were rejected on the grounds that it was necessary to keep to a professional standard of work, otherwise, people would not take the workers seriously.

General Organisation

Thanks were expressed to the British friends who had organised the summer schemes, but the fact that even they had experienced some difficulties did not encourage the conference to think that a purely German branch could succeed in organising schemes by itself. Hearty agreement was expressed with the criticism that there had been too few volunteers from other countries this summer, and this had perhaps tended to make some of the youngest volunteers miss the "international" point of the schemes. It was generally agreed that in the schemes which had a comparatively low percentage of students, approximately equal to the number of refugees and working-people, the spirit was on the whole better. An attempt in Göttingen to get working-class people interested was described, but they had met with many difficulties.

14 days was the agreed minimum period that volunteers should serve on a scheme. 18 was agreed as the minimum age for adult schemes, and 20 for those serving abroad. There should be youth schemes for those under 18. Those going abroad should have served in their own country before going.

It was felt strongly that the act of coming on a voluntary work scheme showed that even if many of the volunteers were ex-army officers they were not imbued with the militaristic spirit. It was claimed that they did not go on IVSP schemes to be re-educated, but rather to serve the high aims of IVSP.

The suggestion that leaders of German schemes in the future should be either non-Germans, or Germans who had served abroad, was accepted when it became clear that no implication that the Germans were inferior was intended, but that it was rather a question of experience. Personal qualities not national qualities were what counted. It was not uncommon for a leader of a scheme in other lands to be some-one from a land other than that in which the scheme took place.

It was agreed that the leader of a scheme should take part in preparing it; and it was reiterated that all classes of German people should be encouraged to come into work schemes.

Expenses

Receipts :

from individuals	RM 1.150
from town authorities	RM 1.400
from Relief Sections	RM 350
from British IVSP	<u>RM 650</u>
	RM 3.550

Expenses :

Rail fares	RM 2.600
Miscellaneous	RM 550
balance in hand	<u>RM 400</u>
	RM 3.550

The heavy travel costs will still have to be met in future schemes. The difficulty of meeting expenses was one which arose acutely in every land and it was decided that, as in other lands, it might be necessary to have a certain number of subscribing members in the German branch of the IVSP. It was left to the working committee to find out what contribution if any, individual members should make.

(C)

REPORT ON WORK IN THE AMERICAN ZONE

Paul Krahé, the leader of a small group of volunteers in Frankfurt, stated that their work had to be done in the spare time of volunteers. There had been no full-time scheme, nor had there been any volunteers from countries other than Germany. In Frankfurt the group had done various jobs including the salvaging and repairing of broken desks from a bombed school. Another small group was working in Bavaria helping to feed 30 refugee children with surplus food obtained from an American mess.

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(D)

FRENCH ZONE

Max Beguin from Saarbrücken thought that there would shortly be a group going in Saarbrücken.

(E)

FUTURE WORK

- 1) Winter Schemes: Basil Eastland outlined two short-time schemes for Jan 1st to Jan 15th, to which volunteers from several foreign lands would be invited to work alongside an equal number of German IFF members. The schemes would be in Schleswig and Duisburg.

- 2) It was possible that one or two German volunteers might be able to go to Switzerland at Easter.
 - 3) Regional Groups would carry out their own local work projects.
 - 4) Propositions for full-time schemes :
 - Enno Narten, Hannover, suggested helping to reconstruct a Youth Hostel at Ludwigstein Castle near Göttingen.
 - Frau von Pavel suggested helping with a children's home at Klappholtal on the island of Sylt; helping to build the Pestalozzi Dorf in Hamburg; woodcutting for a Jewish colony; or building emergency homes for Hamburg students.
 - Agnes Rösler, Dünne, suggested helping to build "clay-houses" perhaps for refugees. She outlined a plan for making much-needed new houses in this way.
 - Frau Rode, Meschede, suggested that the IFF should return to Meschede and assist the town again.
 - Walter Thielemann, Hamburg, suggested a return to work at Köhlbrand next year.
 - Joachim Frege, Göttingen, stated that the Kriegsversehrten Siedlung in Göttingen needed helpers.
 - Berlin representatives emphasised the difficulties of organising schemes there; these were difficulties of which the COG personal present at the conference vowed that they were only too well aware.
- It was suggested that further plans should be submitted to the Working Committee.

(F)

FUTURE ORGANISATION

It was reiterated that the organisation should grow out of the work. A top-heavy organisation was not required. It was suggested that only those who had worked should be allowed to operate the organisation. The chairman regretted the apparent tensions between the volunteers and those older people together with those outside organisations who were sympathetic, but who had not undertaken actual work. In the case of individuals, their experience was invaluable and without the co-operation of kindred organisations in the branches of IVSP in other lands, very little progress could have been made.

The delegates pointed out that hitherto, with the exception of work done by Regional Groups, work had been organised by the British branch of IVSP. It had to be borne in mind that they would not stay indefinitely, and it was essential to form a committee which should take over before next summer.

The delegates divided themselves during an interval into geographical groups. Each group elected one or two representatives who would be members of the suggested committee.

The following committee members were elected :

Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein

- Heinrich Carstens, Hamburg-Blankenese, Caprivistraße 59
- Gudrun Theusner-Stampa, Hamburg 20, Haynstraße 9 bei von Pavel

Göttingen (including Hannover Region)

- Anneliese Ehrhardt, Bremke bei Göttingen
- Hans Temme, Göttingen, Maschmühlenweg 29

Cologne (North Rhine and Westfalia)

- Klaus Balders, Köln-Deutz, Markomannenstraße 16
- Friedrich Lorenz von Coeverden, Neuß / Rhein, Krurstraße 44

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Berlin

- Bruno Fenske, Berlin-Spandau, Staakenerstraße 18
then, later, elected to represent "experience":
- Erich Mohr, Berlin-Zehlendorf, Zinsweilerweg 4

Frankfurt

- Paul Krahé, Frankfurt am Main, Zietenstraße 3 bei Ruhland
was asked to invite the Frankfurt group to elect a member for the Committee.

British Personal

- who were members of the Committee when it met later in the day
- Basil Eastland, IVSP, HQ 5 British Red Cross (Civilian Relief), BAOR - Germany
- Barry Spear, IVSP, Relief Section 109, British Red Cross, BAOR - Germany

Owing to pressure of time this Committee meeting had to be limited to deciding to meet again on Nov 23rd; to signing a copy, adequately amended to meet the requirements of German law, of the Swiss Statutes of the Service Civil International (IVSP) so that, in accordance with the wishes of the conference, they could be submitted for recognition to the Allied Control Authority; and to appoint Anneliese Ehrhardt as secretary and Lorenz van Coeverden as treasurer.

Affiliation to Service Civil International:

The chairman of the conference, speaking as International Secretary of the Service Civil International, thought that the two conditions for the IFF to be affiliated to the SCI would have been fulfilled by the time application for such affiliation came before the International Committee whose next meeting was scheduled for the spring of next year; the IFF would have its own committee with its own chairman and its own statutes, and it would have prepared and run its own schemes.

Statutes

A draft of statutes, based on the Swiss statutes, but with considerable alternations, had been circulated to all delegates before the conference. This draft was rejected. An alternative draft was submitted from the Hamburg group. Shortage of time and copies of this draft demanded that the draft be circulated among IFF members later, and that meanwhile the Swiss statutes be provisionally accepted until the General Meeting of IFF next spring.

(G)

Miscellaneous

1.

It was suggested that an IFF news-letter should be circulated.

2.

Although IFF would rather get members through personal contact, and work, there might be a case for increasing membership by giving talks on IVSP.

3.

In view of the difficulties of international contact at the present moment there might also be a case for correspondence exchanges being arranged through IFF with other countries.

B.Eastland