

# INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

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CIVIL SERVICE  
VOLONTAIRE  
INTERNATIONAL  
INTERNATIONALER  
FREIWILLIGER  
ZIVILDIENST



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS :

~~34, BROADWAY~~

LONDON S.W.1

11a, ST. ANDREW'S ROAD

TELEPHONE ~~WHITEHALL 1461~~

LONDON E. 13

Tel. ALBert Dock 16 20

19 Nov 46

I.V.S.P. HQ 5 British Red Cross,  
(Civilian Relief), B. A. O. R.

Dear Derek,

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## Winter Schemes

I am therefore getting as much of the organisation of the schemes done as possible before I leave on Nov 29th morning. Sonia and Barry are both keeping an eye on things in Schleswig area, and Eric is doing the same in the Duisburg area.

Everything depends very much on how many volunteers come from other countries. Unfortunately I have not heard from any of them yet in spite of a reminder sent out on Nov 9th.

The German 'branch' of the 'IFF' have left the organisational details for these camps to me (I keep them very closely informed) and their part is to select the volunteers. That is the broad plan, but in fact there is no such definite distinction. They are looking forward very much to undertaking the Easter and Summer camps, when we can help supply the foreign volunteers, once again (looking ahead) that is the broad plan, nothing water-tight.

Schleswig team will have wood, tools to cut it with, transport to take it to the island of Amrum (even more in need of fuel than Sylt); only the accommodation has yet to be fixed, and I'm quite hopeful about this.

Duisburg has accommodation fixed and equipment; only a decision on which of the suggested pieces of work, has to be made - allotments for miners of the town; ditto for a children's hospital (smaller and possible to complete in ten days) .... but 'allotments' in frosty January ??? .... fuel-cutting for the Old people's home in which the vols will be housed - difficulty of storage there - things disappear so easily in Germany; and as wet-weather work, repairing tents for next summer youth camps for Duisburg.

I think, on reflection, that it is a good plan to aim at two camps, as it will give an opportunity for about 18 German volunteers to take part. The demands from all sides to join in these camps is so tremendous that the extra risk and work involved in trying to get them both going is well worth it ... if only we can get these folk from the other countries.

Looking at things from the blackest possible side: three people definitely from England as agreed over phone. Then, surely, if Willy was allowed to come to Germany before, he will be allowed to come again without much bother; I can't for the life of me think what can hold up the Belgian and Dutch volunteers, for there are lots of their soldiers here in Germany; and as a last resort, we can always call on two or three people from the teams - Phyllis Imhof, certainly. That gives us about ten anyway.

I must mention here that both Stan Slee and Margaret Hickson would like very much to spend ten days of their 6-months' leave on the schemes. Would you have any objection? I think that both of them would be most valuable assets.

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Help!

I can't see quite how your suggestion could be implemented; if someone from Switzerland could stay on when he or she comes over to Germany for the Winter scheme to help organise the Easter and Summer schemes. As I see it, the German branch, as I said on page one are prepared to try and organise these themselves. Indeed I think that they will succeed; but they do need a fulltime (or very nearly fulltime - in view of the frightful travelling conditions and the painfully slow process of getting any official body to do anything) organiser. Now the present chairman of the working committee that was set up at Hannover, Heinrich Carstens is a possible candidate. Before he joined up, he had to in '43, he was a solicitor with an independent business of his own. Then he was taken prisoner in Normandy, and spent two years in the US in a PW camp. He returned this April. He is very much inspired to devote his whole energies to youth work. His business has crumbled away to nothing, but he does not want to start it again, as he feels that he would be better employed to do a really constructive job of work, as he feels IVSP, for instance to be. Meanwhile he is living on his savings - he and his English wife, and their 13 & 15 year old daughters; supplementing these savings with an occasional broadcast talk on the radio.

My point was, and it was only a passing thought, that if we might be prepared to pay a Swiss (for example - as you suggested) his pocket-money to help me organise the summer schemes, would it perhaps not be even better to support Heinrich, and to allow him to spend nearly all his time on IVSP work. Otherwise he intends to get a job with Mil Gov, and this will mean that he will have not free time either to work on schemes or even to organise them, or even to attend meetings of the working committee.

I have not mentioned a word of this to him, himself. But I do think that he is a very fine man, and just the right man for the job. He has also a very keen sense of the one-ness of the four zones, that I am afraid, I for one am often guilty of forgetting, ... so, over to you ... and Willy in this matter.

Working Committee

is meeting for its first full-time session this Saturday (23rd).

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It is very late now, so that's all

Cheerio,  
Yours Aye,

Basil