

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

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27 Nov 46

IVSP Advisory Officer, (Civilian Relief),
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B. A. O. R. - Germany

Pierre Martin
Sec. S.C.V.I.,
Quartier Brack,
Rue de Brou,
CHATEAUDUN, Eure et Loire.

Dear Pierre,

Thank you so much for your letter of 22 Nov 46.

I am glad that you are able to travel to Germany this week, and hope that your negotiations with the French Military Government authorities in the French Zone will make it possible to run a scheme in that zone in February, as you so much wish. Since you will probably therefore not be in Chateaudun nor yet in the Paris office, I am sending a copy of this letter to you or Camille at the Paris address, as I feel it to be very important.

I am very pleased that you are ready to come to our January scheme, as I cannot tell you how vitally important I believe these two short schemes to be. Our German friends have taken a great deal of care to choose 18 of the very best volunteers they have, and we must be able to supply the right international element to give these 18 folk the experience they so much need.

That is why I want to urge you to make every effort possible to come to Duisburg on Jan 1st. For I feel that if we fail in these schemes to bring in the international element and give them contact with countries outside Germany, we shall have missed one of the biggest chances that S.C.I. ever had.

Therefore I do want to urge you to go ahead with as great a sense of the urgency of the situation as possible getting your military entry permit (if the one which you have got to enter the French Zone is not valid for the British Zone) and to get the permit for the other volunteer. I will reply immediately if you need a specific invitation for your second volunteer, although I believe that the invitations which I sent in October should be sufficient.

It will certainly be all right to send a girl as the second volunteer. Unfortunately, there are only places for 4 girls, but there is still one vacancy.

I am sorry that you have so little money in SCVI; but I can quite easily understand that. The question of fares is, I realise, very acute. But you are lucky in France in that the Government do pay your fares in France, so you will be able to travel free to the frontier. If you and the second volunteer come by way of Liege and Aix-la-Chappelle, Cologne and Duisburg, the question of fares can be solved. I am asking the Friends Relief Service team in A-la-C to try and get you on the military train. If that fails, I think that in view of the extreme importance of these winter schemes the British branch of the IVSP might be prepared to pay the fares which would amount to about £ 1.10/- for the return journey for two persons.

Plans are now well in hand for both schemes. Both will last ten days; Jan 1st to Jan 12th; both will have 18 volunteers - 9 German and 9 from other nations. The DUISBURG scheme will be clearing up the garden of a children's hospital, to make a vegetable garden; and if the ground is frozen - cutting wood-fuel for the old people's home in which the volunteers will be living; in wet weather, the volunteers will be repairing tents for next year's youth camps for the Duisburg youth. The SCHLESWIG scheme will be cutting wood-fuel for the many refugees, women and children on the tree-less island of AMRUM, just south of the Danish frontier. Free transport will be available between Duisburg and Schleswig, and it may be that one of you will be asked to serve there. In any case you have to report to the IVSP, Duisburg, 13 Neckarstraße, not later than Jan 1st 47.

You will be interested that a member of the Friends Relief Service in their team in Dortmund (number 4), Maurice Ginst, will be serving on the schemes. He is a Frenchman.

I would like to emphasise once again the necessity of making speedy preparations for getting the papers of your second volunteer, and your own papers if they are not yet complete, as soon as possible. You can imagine how very important it is that you should be able to come.

Finally, I do hope that you can bring your food and working clothes, as both are so very difficult to get in Germany, as you know.

Very best wishes, and I sincerely hope to see you soon,

Basil Eastland