

ONE PAIR OF PANTS AND ONE PLATE OF PORRIDGE

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Dear Friend,

The story of the extra food and the working clothes which have found their way to your camp is an interesting one. It involves many people from many different countries, and represents the sum of their goodwill, sacrifice and co-operation, focussed upon our struggling work-camp movement here in Germany. Through their gifts, people from all over the world have shown their eagerness to help to broaden their view, to broaden our view, to construct new friendship and to create in a world of negation and chaos, the spirit of constructive and disciplined living.

The American Friends Service Committee, for example, have contributed more than 1.000 dollars for the work-camp programme in Germany. As you know, this society consists not only of just a small committee in Philadelphia; not even just the many work-campers and relief workers in America and in practically every country of Europe; but their supporters number many thousands in America and these other countries, and each awaits eagerly news of the work which this contribution has made possible. You can be sure that the progress of the work in Germany is of vital and burning interest to all of them - and don't forget, progress of the work in Germany means us - you and me - in our camps - in your camp.

Everyone knew that progress in our work here depended upon food and working-clothes and upon the supply of experienced volunteers from abroad. When the summer programme of camps was planned, an immediate response came from all sides: the American Committee sent us 100 pairs of working-trousers for all the camps; the English Quakers working in Germany sent to Paris to fetch them. The Schweizer Spende in Bern were approached and they very kindly offered to release 500 dollars worth of food to us for our camps. We eagerly excepted, of course, and went along to the Schweizer Spende stores in Freiburg and Duisburg to collect our food - sugar and fat, milk, millet, cocoa, and I don't know what.

We had reason to be very grateful that we did not have to transport the food all the way from Switzerland. And so not one thing was lost through pilfering. And then came the most wonderful gesture of kindness from the Schweizer Spende. We wanted the bill for our food so that we could draw on the American gift of 1.000 dollars, and then purchase some more food in Denmark with the balance. But the Schweizer Spende said that they would pay three-quarters of the cost of the food, and then .... along came the Berner Arbeitsgemeinschaft and offered to pay the other quarter. So I think that we ought all to make contact with these people and tell them how much we appreciate their kindness, and what a difference it will make to the success of our camps.

But not only do the Schweizer Spende and the Berner Gemeinschaft and the American Committee deserve our thanks; also the many individuals both in England, in America and in other countries who have sent us food and clothing-parcels - very often out of their own rations - they deserve the highest praise. Next we must remember with great gratitude the Danish Peace Friends for their ready assistance in purchasing 500 kg of food - sugar, flour, oats and cheese and fish - in Denmark, and for their sacrifice of many rations coupons to answer our needs. And the Swedish Internationella Arbetslag have contributed their share and helped with the transport of the food from the Danish Peace Friends, whilst transport has been the big contribution of the Quaker and IVSP Relief teams inside Germany.

Even comparative strangers have given us a helping hand - for instance, the Congregational Christian Service Committee have released for use in our camps some 500 kg of "Breakfast Cereal" which the Quakers will be bringing from Paris. And, finally, all over Europe, from France to Finland, and in America, the various branches of the International Work-camps movements have chosen and sent to Germany some of their best volunteers - and this has been no easy task, as everyone knows who has tried to get a permit to enter or leave Germany.

And then came the pleasant, though admittedly difficult task of dividing up this food so that all the International work-camps in Germany should benefit according to their size and need. That responsibility of dividing-up has been shared with me by one of the American Quakers. It looks a lot of food, written down on paper, but, believe me, when it came to be divided up between 10 camps it looked very small indeed. But small though it may be, it is valuable, not only as a solid addition to the meagre rations, but also as a messenger of goodwill from the donors to us, and a token of the faith they have in our work ....

And we will show them that that faith has been well placed.

Your sincerely,

Basil Eastland,  
HQ 5 British Red Cross,  
Vlotho / Weser, B.A.O.R.

Addresses which might be useful to the camp:

American Friends Service Committee,

17 rue Notre Dame des Champs,  
Paris 6e, France

Twenty South Twelfth Street  
Philadelphia 7, Pa, U.S.A

Congregational Christian Service Committee

c/o Ogden Hannaford, Quaker International Voluntary Service,  
A.F.S.C., 17 rue Notre Dame des Champs, Paris 6e, France

Berner Arbeitsgemeinschaft

Dr. Hans Lehmann, Tillierstraße 36, Bern, Switzerland

The addresses of the various National Secretaries of the International Work-camp movements can be found in the "Service Civil".