

CONFIDENTIAL.

REPORT OF WORK IN INTERNATIONAL WORK CAMPS - GERMANY  
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At the suggestion of I.V.S.P., and with the approval of F.R.S., I spent 5 weeks as an Educational Visitor in the following camps:

July 23 - 25, Duisburg, "Maria in der Drucht"	(I.F.D.F. Camp)
July 25 afternoon, Oberhausen, "Zementwerk"	(I.F.D.F. Camp)
July 29 - Aug. 2, Freiburg, "Neue Chirurgische Klinik"	(I.F.D.F. Camp)
Aug. 3 - Aug. 7, Goslar, "Hildesheim"	(F.R.S. Camp)
Aug. 8 - Aug. 13, Torfhaus	(Youth Hostel Association Camp)
Aug. 14 - Aug. 18, Hannover-Langenhagen,	(I.F.D.F. Camp)
Aug. 19, Alfeld	(Youth Hostel Association Camp)
Aug. 20 - Aug. 26, Berlin "Technische Universität"	(F.R.S. Camp)

I had planned to help in the Aachen Camp, Aug. 28 to Sept. 2, but illness prevented.

In each camp, I worked part time on the project, with the work-campers. I usually took a rest in the afternoon, and was ready to help with folk dancing, singing, or discussions in the evening, or on the week-end. For talks, I spoke of methods of non-violence and positive good-will, as I had seen them in India, and in America, (with the Negro and Japanese problems, and the C.O.s). I often used my Indian sari of ring-silk, to illustrate the point that no one country has the best of everything; that every land and culture has something better, and that we can admire and learn from them.

There was a variety of opportunities to help, - in some camps almost no singing was done **Berlin** only sang jazz or modern music, in others no folk dancing was possible **Torfhaus** and **Duisburg** while I was there), in another the chance to share experiences in other lands was delayed until my last day in camp **Berlin**. (It seemed better to be able to give this early in the visit, that further individual conservation could follow on it.) But in each camp, some opportunity came for sharing news from America and India, and to help in the social life of the camp, as well as the work.

The camps varied in their work projects and in the living conditions. The most thrilling work project was at **Freiburg** where a children's hospital was being re-built, next to one of the buildings still left standing, (being the one of the 7 buildings not to be destroyed, and incidentally, half of the erection expense being a gift from the Quakers after the last war). The **Duisburg** project of making a garden for a Catholic Children's Home, was also vital, as the children were ever present to remind one that it was for them the work was being done. The young priest was also often present and showed interest and appreciation. The **Oberhausen** project of building a children's playground was also vital, with the people whom it would help living right besides the project **Hildesheim** was unsatisfactory as the projects were scattered, not well-planned so that sometimes idle hours were spent waiting for word about what to do next, and one time work done in levelling ground had to be undone and the hole dug again to plant the tree, as had been arranged. This was a short-time, youth-camp, and satisfactory provision for a project and its supervision was not made. One of the projects was cleaning the weeds off the sports ground, which did not seem like a very great need, compared to the other needs for help in these days.

The projects in the Youth Hostel Camps were the building of youth hostels, which was a good project. But here the work seemed to take precedence over the training and growth of the young people doing it.

At **Alfeld** the camp leader was gone all day on the day we visited, trying to get cement. The young people in the camp said he was seldom with them in the camp, because of having to get materials. Towels were brought to the camp by the head of the Youth Hostel Association for Hanover, which he said he had bought with sugar. It is to be expected that supplies and energy will be used for the building and equipping of the Hostel, when this is the primary motive, but at the expense of the good of the young people. It is strongly recommended that IVSP and AFSC and FRS either give leadership in such work camps next year, or not have the name associated only, and give food and transport. In the **Torfhaus** camp, I felt our help was helping promote fear, unhealthy attitudes, distrust, rather than to build up an attitude of joy in work, growth of personalities, international understanding. I am sure that those who give, expect their gifts to be used for constructive growth, and unless we can help with leadership, it would be better not to give supplies.

Living conditions varied from very primitive to rather comfortable. The air-raid shelter beds **Berlin** were short and hard, and the camp was not quiet, - several times those who had been out in the East Zone getting vegetables came back in the midnight or very early morning hours, and awoke the camp. At **Duisburg** the necessity for all sleeping in one barrack, and cooking breakfast in the barrack meant short hours of sleep for those who are aroused by noise. The hours of work when I visited were nine hours the day, - the camp being awakened at 4:30 when the cook was awakened. There was not enough energy left for swimming or discussions. The toilet was not sanitary. The beds were wonderfully comfortable! The food was good, part from the Caritas kitchen.

At **Oberhausen**, small rooms made it more restful, and a common room was very useful. At the time I visited the group had too many young men, and older women, but this adjusted itself later. The foreign leadership did not seem to drive the members to work as the German leaders tended to do in other camps. A splendid program of education was arranged. Food was all cooked in the camp kitchen, and excellent.

**Freiburg** had very comfortable beds, but was cursed with the feathers that kept coming through the covers, and the dust that was tracked in. Wet gunny sacks at the entrance could have helped the housekeepers who tried to keep floors clean. The excellent shower baths were a blessing. Elizabeth and the kitchen helpers turned out the best meals I had in any of the camps. The campers took turns for the most part in outside and inside work, except a few who preferred to stay in the house. Townspeople also volunteered here to help with work, and bringing fruit etc. for the camp. The interest of the doctor helped make the work seem worth while, too. The spirit of this camp was extra fine.

Living conditions in **Hildesheim** were hardly adequate. Sleeping on the ground was very uncomfortable for a long period of time. Meals were cooked in the Jugendherberge kitchen, together with those for the 250 children staying in the camp, and they were often very late, and sometimes not well cooked. The breakfast usually consisted of half a cup of diluted milk, and smeared bread. The bread was often smeared with a bit of condensed milk. Though Quaker food was used to supplement, the food was still poor. Living in the midst of the crowd of children was tiring, dusty, and made conversation almost impossible. Often the work camp group had to do more than their share of peeling of potatoes or other preparations, especially on the day when the new camp of children came in, and until they became organized. The question of whether some of the campers would keep the pay given by the city for the work done, brought in a very different atmosphere, and an unhealthy one, - to what one finds in a completely voluntary camp where individuals do not take pay, but if funds are available, vote them for some charitable purpose.

**Langenhagen** was overcrowded; the girls had to sleep crowded into the same room where the cooking was done, so there was no chance to rest there. The boys kept coming in to help with Kitchen Duty, somewhat to the embarrassment of girls who were trying to dress, or put bathing suits, or wash. The Team in Hanover did not seem to be giving very much support to the leaders of the camp with transportation or help on program. It would have been helpful if more interest could have been shown.

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The food was unusually good, being what the hospital gave plus supplementary food from Quaker supplies. There was a fine spirit in the camp, a good mixture of young and old, men and women; and the

leader worked out on the project. The relations between the old peoples' home staff and the work campers was good. The lake for swimming was a treat!

**Berlin** had too many, - 75. Some of these were architecture students from Berlin doing their practical training. There was danger that this was the main motive for joining the camp. The leaders were in the office, - and often time the workers, during work hours, - discussing or planning for another such camp. The work was divided into so many small projects outside, there was a feeling that one was not missed if not on the job. Berlin members often went home immediately after work at 4 PM, or during hours off. This broke into the feeling of community. Working in the kitchen did not offer opportunity for conversation, because of the more of washing, shredding, peeling machines going on. Several campers complained that there was not enough food for heavy workers. There was a good mixture of foreign students, and girls worked with boys on some of the projects. Boys also helped on kitchen duty. The hot showers were a great help, even though the hours for boys and the hours for girls were not always kept, which caused friction. It is difficult not to be led into too many other interests in a big city like Berlin, and probably some come to the camp partly to see relatives and friends in Berlin

#### Bulletin Boards

These were best arranged in **Langenhagen, Oberhausen, Berlin, Freiburg**. They were entirely lacking in the Youth Hostel Camps.

#### Song Books

The international "Work and Sing" songbooks are very helpful in many camps. **Aalfeld**, only one was available, as the camp leader kept the others locked up and was away so much, they were not available when wanted. The necessity of returning the books at the end of the summer made some leaders overly cautious, - with the counting each time the books were handed out or returned, to beware that all were accounted for. It is very much hoped that next summer each camper may be allowed to buy his own book.

#### Discussions and Excursions

The educational program was especially high power in **Berlin**, so much so that there was something going on almost all the time, and some of the young people said they felt driven by it, - they needed very much to sometime have a bit of time alone, or for themselves. **Oberhausen** seemed to have very good discussions. Visitors were given a hearty welcome and a chance to share with the campers. **Freiburg** was also enriched by visitors who were well used, and by both recreational and educational trips.

#### Foreign visitors

The Youth Hostel Association had expected the British Youth Hostel Association to send representatives to work with them, and these were to bring their own rations. So when Danish, American or Dutch visited the camp, and did not bring rations with them, an objection was made. The fact that a good deal of food from America, Denmark and Switzerland, and the British Red Cross had been put into the camps was not satisfactory, as this was considered just an "extra ration" for the campers, to be added to the German rations bought on the German ration cards, and the foreign rations brought by the foreigners. Surely another year, this matter of food for foreign visitors should be made very clear, before the camps begin. It might be that such supplementary food should be given in lieu of rations for foreigners, if foreigners can't bring rations. Or an attempt might be made through C.C.G. to get army rations for such foreign visitors in all the camps. (It was done for example in the **Berlin** Camp, for Danish, Dutch etc.) It is doubtful whether the Youth Hostel Association should be sent I.V.S.P. or F.R.S. foreign or German young people next year.

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It might be better for them to get the Youth Hostel Association representatives from other lands to work with them instead. Since the ideals of the Voluntary Work Camps, for international understanding, growth of persons through working together, having a chance to discuss and think together, interest in pacifism and constructive goodwill etc. do not seem to be paramount in the leaders of the Youth Hostel

Association, but since I.V.S.P. and Quaker help is often interpreted as only "propaganda", - it would seem better to give help where more than just the material help is acceptable.

The appreciation expressed by many campers for the opportunity to meet with visitors from other lands is almost overwhelming. Wrote one boy from Duisburg "It is wonderful to be here, - more wonderful than I expected. I thought we had to travel to meet people of other lands, and I knew we could not travel. But this is almost as good. I feel now that I have friends - good friends I've made here - in many lands now. It is the greatest experience of my life." A young couple from the East Zone who have only been together during the last six months of their 5 years of married life as the man was a P.O.W. in America said: "This is a second honeymoon for us - really our first one, as we had just two days off when we were married. It is like a trip abroad to come to the camp here in Langenhagen, and to have a chance to meet here with Swiss, Danish, English, American, Dutch people. It seems like a different world from that we have come from and back to which we go. It is a good world, and we are so grateful for these two weeks of freedom and stimulation, for work and recreation, for friendship and joy here."

I am grateful for the opportunity I have had, to do physical work, to meet so splendid young people, from many lands. I believe in Volunteer Work Camps. Many have here found the joy of service, of community living, of wider horizons.

Lucille Day