

SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL
Secrétariat International
9, rue Guy de-la-Brosse, PARIS-5
Tél. GOB. 16-62

Rolf Svanberg
c/o Internationella Arbetslag,
Herkulesgatan 22, S T O C K H O L M.

Dear Rolf Svanberg,

Thank you very much indeed for your very interesting report on the camp at Oberhausen. We are always very grateful for such reports, especially when they contain concrete constructive suggestions as to what could be done to improve the camps. The problems involved are very great indeed and only with the help of all those who feel a concern for the work can they be solved. It is important that we do not overlook all the difficulties and that we analyse each problem and try to find the best solution. I wish to comment on some of the points raised by you and would be very grateful if you could answer any question which we think it would be valuable to have some more information on. Your help will be very greatly appreciated.

Plan for work

That the women should also work outside was intentional; we have started this experiment in most of our camps this summer. I think that on the whole this experiment has been a success. We should however always realise that there are certain jobs which are too heavy for women and that generally speaking, the work out-put is smaller. This should however not deter us; the positive factors are probably more important. But I should like to know how this worked out at Oberhausen and whether it created any problems which were not soluble.

Report

I don't think this is important, but I think that our reports on volunteers are not secret, but confidential.

Observations

Thanks for this good paragraph. I should like to know whether the sentence "It is quite a fact ... being the leader of the camp" is a general observation or whether indeed at Oberhausen the camp was discredited through a former officer being the leader. I would also be grateful if you could let us know whether in fact alcohol was consumed at the camp (which is quite against SCI rulings) and whether in fact German war songs, such as 'Wir fahren gegen Engeland' were sung. I can assure you that we all would deplore this and that certainly the German IFDF group itself would feel very concerned about this.

As to your recommendations :

1. We would agree to this and shall certainly do our best always to select the most suitable leaders. We also think that unless we can find such leaders, we should not organise the camps.
2. Again we fully agree. There is no doubt that only if the constructive element in a camp is in the majority can we have a spirit which can have a positive influence with those taking part.
3. Again we agree. I doubt whether we can have a closed unit for such a long period as two months (as is the case in Quaker camps) but we certainly ought to have much more stability in the camp population.
4. Again agreed. The difficulty is finding them and financing this. But perhaps we ought only to have so many camps as the number of foreign volunteers would permit and so that at any time at least 1/3 of the camp inmates are foreign.
5. Agreed wholeheartedly.
6. Certainly. Already this summer some 25 Germans have come abroad to some of our camps. We must however be very careful that the camps they come to are also good camps.
7. We are trying to have some sort of 'training camp for leaders', but probably two months is too long. The best training is having taken part in other camps already.

Amitiés

Willy Begert