

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

REPORTS on Camps in Germany

BERLIN-SCHWANENWERDER

Alan Chalk :

On the whole quite satisfactory. Was impressed by the emphasis on trying to make the camp an indivisible whole with a strong spirit of friendship. Dave Ritchie inspired them in this effort. I cannot say that we succeeded ... owing to changing of personal however, considering the difficulties I think we managed quite well. The three factors which prevented it being an ideal camp were too many people, changing population, and varying ages. The last was responsible for some stormy housemeetings and some tension. The only thing he found disappointing was the Silent Meeting. Something lacking in it, probably due to inexperience - the meetings have usually consisted of heavy silences. "Taken as a whole I have very much enjoyed this camp."

Wynford Jones :

The camp was not entirely satisfactory. There was lassitude at work and lack of co-ordination between leader and responsible technicians, which wasted time. Some of the volunteers, especially the girls, are probably too young. There was unfortunate contact with large groups of unemployed young people who are paid by the authorities for helping with the work. They thought at first that IZD was taking work away from them; also, they did little work and hang around all day which has a depressing effect on us.

Barclay Sampson :

Comments on the lack of discipline compared with a British camp, but thinks that it was due largely to inexperience on the part of a young but exceedingly nice leader. We all respected him very much. A real lack was a timetable - foreign volunteers have to keep asking when to do things.

Enid Barkas :

This project which was found by the Berlin IZD group, did not appear to us, to be an ideal one. Although it was no doubt a useful piece of work, we regretted not working on a more urgently needed project. The work tended often to be and it needed much self discipline on the part of all of us to keep to punctuality, and to put the best into the work. Although we often felt dissatisfied with our work, the Berlin authorities seemed extremely pleased with the results, and grateful for the co-operation of the IZD in their job

. . . Apart from the criticism of the actual project, the work camp was well worth while. I think it was justified through the very fact of taking place in Berlin at the present time. Some of the German members came from the East Zone or East Sector of Berlin, and everyone benefited tremendously by getting to know first hand of their life and of the many difficulties with which they have to contend.

. . . To me the camp seemed particularly stimulating as it consisted of such a variety of different people. All professions were represented (students in the minority, actors, teachers, lawyers, several builders and other apprentices). Only two or three of us shared the Quaker faith, but especially for this there was great interest. We had many opportunities for silent worship, asked for by non Quaker members, and discussions on religious questions. Many denominations were represented, and also a wide range in ages (18 - 55 years!).

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