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Dear Roswitha,

thank you for your note and your interest. I'm sure we can send a note to your friend, at least from East Berlin. We shall be crossing over again Saturday when we go to meet a group of young men studying to be deacons. At the same time we hope to visit the Soviet-German Friendship Society and such places which some have seen and some not. We have a considerable amount of literature from the East government and hope to get some from the West, also in English although there is plenty of propaganda for the Western point of view in the press and ordinary conversation. I myself visited the Amerika-Haus exhibition in 'die Mauer' and found it much less lavish than the corresponding one in the East. In general, so far, we seem to find both positive and negative propaganda in the East in contrast to largely negative propaganda here, leaving the accomplishments of the West to speak for themselves. However, there is always the implicit assumption that the lack of freedom in the East is balanced by the presence of freedom in the West. To a large extent it is true, but the lecture we had the other evening here shed an interesting light on that. Herr Behr, who is high school teacher, told us that the West German government — long before the wall was erected — had forbidden any students of the West from making group visits, at least, to any part of the East for fear they would be converted ! And he, as an employee of the government in the Free West is forbidden from riding on the S-Bahn — surely one of the things one would expect to be within the purview of the individual in a free society !

Our approach to understanding of the political situation here is making reasonable progress considering the shortness of our free time and the unfortunately long distance from us to the centre of the city. Fortunately we are able to meet many people right here in the Stift who are concerned with the problems, both those who come from the East and those who have friends there — we hear some rather terrifying stories of the punishment handed out to people who used to study or work in the West and now are detained in the East.

Of more immediate concern to us is the developing structure of our own community. Fritz Konnu has been a terrific problem above and beyond the natural problem of the situation. His determination not to take full part in the life of the camp is illustrated by his angry reaction to the birth celebrations planned for him this morning. He left angrily after breakfast and when the girls said it would at least please us if he'd stay, he said that our wishes were of no importance. Today's scene does have various explanations, but it is all too typical of Fritz, even to the tremendous inconvenience for the rest of us. In the course of the morning we collectively devoted at least ten hours of our free day trying to straighten out this particular mess. I must add that we had some success — Fritz is normally affable; likes his work and is liked by nearly everybody here, but he hasn't the least conception of the SCI spirit of adaptability; reconciliation with the situation and with the other campers. To explain all that has happened would take pages. Let it suffice to say that I am glad he thinks three weeks constitute a month's service and that he will return to Paris the 30th. I hope you have understood his letter and that he is right that you can send him the money he wants.

I might add that a healthy feature of that situation is the spontaneity with which practically every member of the group has taken it upon himself to approach Fritz privately and try to make him feel more at ease, either by specific conversation or by general friendliness. It is to Fritz's discredit that this attention is one thing that bothers him. We've all tried to make allowance for cultural differences in ways of thinking and acting, but I wasn't avoid thinking that Fritz is being unnecessarily stupid.

The next problem which must be reported is more easily solved. Elisabeth has been sick in bed since Saturday, now six days. It has followed a curious course, getting worse rather than better yesterday. The doctor seems to think it has something to do with tonsils and at least four more days in bed will be required . . .

Judy Zemel arrived on Sunday and has quickly fitted in as a good sort of group member. We're glad to have her.

Both Verena and Elisabeth have been helping with German lessons but they have rather lapsed. People are so tired and there is so much to do in the short time (three hours at noon — most days — including lunch; and three hours in the evening is all we have on working days. Two days off this week as special treat; today walking in enchanting Grunewald and Saturday in the East, but one has the impression of very short or very crowded free time). Also our degree of advancement are so different that group study is awkward. We get a lot of practise on the stations. Verena translates excellently on formal occasions such as the illustrated lecture from Frau Westerhaus on the history of the Stift.

Fridays are open house with over a dozen attending last week. Feeling so much a part of the Stift and the various circles of community within it helps to account for the lack of esprit de corps within the workcamp itself. It will improve gradually.

Most of us did indeed take part in the youth demonstration against the wall although we were worried before and after by the negative approach of the sponsors. Can there possibly have been 40.000 to 60.000 participants as variously reported ?