

Judith Evans

Berlin, den 16. 12. 61

Dear Roswitha,

How are you ? I hope very well and not too busy. We have had a very nice time today at the Free University. Ingrid, your friend, met us with Peter another law student and a short while later another student whose name I can't pronounce took us on a guided tour. We spent about two hours afterwards in the law students dining room discussing law and 'the situation' !

I hope I did not worry you with my last letter. I was rather mixed up as you probably guessed. Your reply was very much "just what the doctor ordered". It made me get down to work here with a good will. So far I don't think any of us have written to newspapers but I have made a contact with a view of another camp nearer the centre of Berlin. It was with Pastor Weckerling of Free University and is very active in the peace movement also his wife. We talked for a long time this evening and he seems really interested. I stressed the fact that SCI usually does practical work and he agrees though he also is wondering if we could not do social work according to our abilities, with the added possibility of being able to teach non-violence (as individuals) both within the scope of our work and in our free time — ~~which he thinks should be larger~~ (I crossed this out in case you think we're feeling lazy again !). I said I'de talk it over with the group, write to you and then if all is well we will meet again with perhaps Irmgard Schuchardt (the Quaker lady who has made most of our contacts for us) and Bob Starbruck, an American Quaker who with his wife has many contacts in East Berlin — he may even be able to get us social work there. What do you think about all this ?

Have enclosed a 'report'. I would be lovely to have some copies as last time. Saves many hours writing — but makes more for you, perhaps you won't have time.

When will our new team members be coming ? We're looking forward to seeing them and Fräulein Böhme our Hausmutter is wondering how many rooms will be needed etc.

I've been thinking very much about what one has the right to expect of a volunteer in an SCI camp or even ask (as a leader or headsister). As you will see by the report I have learned that one can't ask or expect very much as the aims of SCI are so wide but I do think that the quality of a volunteer's character or rather his determination to be so is very important in any SCI-project and particularly in this one where our whole witness to mutual co-operation, peace and order has to be strong enough to be seen and felt for our presence here to be any use at all apart from our actual practical work.

I really think this should be made know to every would-be volunteer to this project and also the following to save the growing pains we had to suffer.

It helps to know at least a little German,

to find out as much as possible about the history of Germany and Berlin at least from 1945 A.D. on (there is little time for study here),

to realise that quite a bit of our work here is to make a deeper contact with the patients (the social welfare worker here has said this is where the need for us is). At the beginning, especially if one has little or no German, one can feel useless, though there is a good deal of practical work and more when one begins to be able to see without asking, the thing that need doing.

to learn something about the latest moves for positive peace making e. g. committee of 100 (Schools for Non-violence) and the preparatory work of the World Peace Brigade. They both willingly send information, in German too.

It seems a long time since we saw you, so much has happened. It has been very full time, altogether. It's good to be here.

Since last Thursday we've been having our meal in our common room. It has proved all we had hoped for. Now we can talk and discuss and make plans. It was a strain even to hear the person opposite in the Speisesaal but I am glad we tried it for two months to show willing. Everyone was very helpful and understanding about the need to change. Now we really feel much more at home.

Talking of 'at homes'. We have made Friday night the night when anyone in the Stift (and friends) who would like to come know they will find us in. Last night we were nineteen. Sometimes we talk together, sometimes sing but it's getting a regular meeting place — we were told there wasn't one before. Every house kept rather to itself and it's a good time.

It was very nice to see the young boy and girl from your Hamburg group (Gesa and Michael (. I'm sorry I just forgot their names, but greetings to them and to you.

Much joy for Christmas

Judith

PS.

Talking about Pastor Weckerling's proposal roused a lot of discussion about whether SCI should keep solely to doing practical work, — I think most thought it should, some thought it should aim at a good mixture, I think it should be ready to adapt itself to a situation. Anyway they would like to talk it over with Pastor Weckerling and we wonder what you think.