

*Abschrift des Sekretariats :*

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I intended to write a detailed letter in regard to the question put forward by you in behalf of the Berlin-camp. But I just could not find the time to do it and as I am already late I hasten to tell you a few points I regard as particular important.

1. I agree with those friends who believe that a camp in Berlin should be a work and study camp. I go even further : I think that a camp that is only a normal work camp is not justified in the present situation of Berlin as it would not give sufficient time for the volunteers to come to a better understanding of the particular situation. This would mean that instead of working for international understanding we would contribute to create among the volunteers a major misunderstanding and had feeling towards "the East".
2. I want to stress out once more what Chris and I already said during the IC meeting at Marly : such a camp is only justified if the volunteers will have contact with official people in the east-sector of the town in order to enable them to hear the reasons which have brought forward to the decision of raising "the wall". One can make up his mind and come to an understanding of the present situation only if one knows how both sides feel and think.
3. I do not feel that "personal contacts" with people in the eastern sector can be sufficient for this aim. If I am right there were about 3.000 East-Berliners working in the West-sectors. Each of these who had great financial advantage from earning west-money and spending for food and rent in the eastern sector will, as well as their families be naturally closed to any arguments put forward by those who considered the wall as a necessity to protect the interests of the DDR. What about our volunteers meeting "the man in the street" hoping to get new arguments. Can they judge why a person is adverse to what has been decided by the DDR ? Or must we think that there cannot be any argument what so ever on their side which is worthwhile to listen to ? But as SCI members we cannot accept such way of thinking.
4. This idea of lodging in a home for East-German refugees seems to me to be a very unhappy one ! This would indeed qualify SCI in the eyes of all DDR authorities which could be interested in an approach for better understanding — and you know that steps have been made with a youth representative at the Forum — in a very negative way. And it cannot certainly be compared with SCI's participation in the work with Tibetan refugees which is of quite a different nature.

I thank you for sending me the reports about the Berlin camp. They were very interesting . . .