

Carlotta v. Pavel

Hamburg, den 6. Juli 1962

Roger Briottet
European Secretariat
London, N.W.1.

Dear Roger,

These few lines only just to thank you for your kind letter of the 28th June and to let you know that a few days ago the Hamburg members of our committee met at my home to discuss your questions re your different visits. -

As soon as we shall have all details which we think may be useful for you to have in hands, we shall write a detailed letter and pass it on to the other members of our committee who do not live in or near Hamburg. You then will get all the information by which our committee hopes to help you with the - clearly - not easy task in the so called DDR. -

You certainly will have understood what was very clearly expressed at the Secretaries Meeting as well as at the Annual General Meeting of the German branch namely that since several years and always again the German branch went into discussions and correspondence with officials of the DDR and camps - international ones - were even fixed for the Isle of Rügen for summer 1960 and two days before the camp should start, we received here a most "vague" letter telling us that the DDR could not allow our volunteers to receive the necessary visa. This was frightfully disagreeable as many volunteers already were on their way to Hamburg and we had greatest difficulties to bring them to other camps etc. But that is the way, the DDR teats everyone who intends to bring peaceful or more friendly ideas to the young people. No wonder, if you ever have read the "laws" which are given to the FDJ! They preach nothing but repeatedly hatred and disgust for the "Western capitalists", awful. - Well, it is quite clear that the German branch officially can impossibly do anything at this moment and may in no case contact the DDR officials directly, but we all are very pleased to know that you intend going there and we shall be glad to give you some addresses which we believe could be useful; at Magdeburg is Praeses Kreyssig of the Protestant Church whom you should see. He has his fingers "in several pies" and knows the SCI well and also helped the North-African committee. We'll let you have his address, -

As Roswitha - now in Sweden, married - began to organize the camp on Rügen with the help of personnel (familiar) contacts, we asked her to let you have directly details about that project and the reasons why it failed. So you will see clearly what happened and how things are handled by the DDR authorities.

The wish of the German branch always was and still is that

- 1.) international SCI - groups may be allowed to work in the DDR as far as this work is for the benefit of the population and not for military purposes and
- 2.) that we may also ask young people living in the DDR to come to such camps (we have some friends on the Eastern side of the "wall") and
- 3.) that young people of the DDR come to SCI camps.

You will surely know that SCI services have been running in the Ukraine / Russia with good success what shows the great difference between the DDR and its "Great Mother Russia" as they call the Soviets. -

We also received the letter from Rome telling us about the very deplorable happenings in Calabria. We are in the very disagreeable position to have good volunteers who wished to go to Calabria and some to Marocco. Both services were put off without giving us any reasons or explication, that certainly is no good and we hope that our European Secretary will as soon as possible hurry off to Italy ! Poor Roger . . .

The Italian committee will surely have had sufficient reasons for its step re Pierre Stoppani, but such intern difficulties should not be allowed to interfere with the SCI work, should it ? And if there now are two camps side by side, well, let us see which is the better one of the two, so I feel. At several places SCI works at the side of other organisations or with members of others and that must not necessarily cause confusion. I am sure, your visit there could bring a satisfactory solution. -

We are glad to get Leslie Riley (from Perth / Australia) to help our overworked secretary Alfred Knaus here for some time and it certainly will be greatest pleasure to see you in Hamburg. If possible - could you manage to come here between the 1st August and the 13th ? At that time I could put you up at my home which would be a special pleasure for me. Please try . . . and let us know here when and for how long a time we may expect you. -

As said before, details will follow. -

I wish you all possible success on your trip and am looking forward to seeing you with loads of success !

Yours sincerely

Carlotta v. Pavel
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Copy to
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Secret. Hamburg