

ABSCHRIFT (BERICHT VON J. GOODRICKE)

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REPORT ON VISIT TO EAST GERMANY (F.D.J.) 18. - 21. 3. 64

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I met Mr. Werner Rümpel (Secretary of the Department of International Relations of the F.D.J.), and found him ready to discuss all the points I wanted to raise. At the end of our meeting we agreed a new text (communiqué), attached.

Volunteers and Project

F.D.J. will accept West German volunteers without hesitation, but is unable to accept West Berlin volunteers until a general agreement is reached with the West Berlin authorities. They are also willing in principle to send volunteers to West Germany. They are ready to send volunteers to Austrian SCI camps, and to other countries if visas can be obtained.

FDJ agreed to shorten the cultural trip to 2 days with all volunteers participating (and making a visit to Buchenwald concentration camp entirely optional), plus a short tour of Berlin for all volunteers going to Berlin on their way home (i. e. SCI vols. plus any East Germans living in or near Berlin).

The project is within the framework of a large construction programme for a new town near Halle, and vols. will work with East Germans on the foundation of the roads, three schools, and blocks of flats. No buildings will be completed before the volunteers leave, but they will be fully informed of the overall plan and how their work contributes to the whole programme.

Volunteers will assist skilled building workers using mechanized equipment, as it would be entirely uneconomical for them to do pick and shovel work (see note below). There will, however, be ample opportunity for strong and energetic vols. to do heavy work if they want to do.

Volunteers will live in a teacher's training college. FDJ is ready to receive an SCI representative shortly before the camp begins to discuss practical details, or at any other time for that matter.

Notes :

1. FDJ still sees the main purpose of the camp as being for international friendship amongst young people, and although the workcamp will do practical and economical work it could still easily be interpreted as merely a gesture of goodwill from a group of foreign youngsters working with the FDJ volunteers in support of the East German economy. However, at top level (Rümpel), there is a clear understanding of SCI's aims, and it is up to SCI volunteers to convey these to the FDJ volunteers and the local population, and if possible to a wider public.
2. FDJ is willing to accept a West German leader, and in view of the technical nature of the project and the need to be very articulate about SCI, this might add considerably to the value of the project. (FDJ's reaction to this suggestion was odd - mostly surprise - one person present said that this might cause trouble if such a West German leader were not 'diplomatic', which remark was not translated).
3. The programme could be expanded next year along present lines, or smaller groups of SCI volunteers or even individuals could be integrated into the FDJ workcamp programme, but the time is probably not ripe for that, bearing in mind the size of FDJ camps.
4. It is perhaps unfortunate that a military training ground is just across the road from the grounds of the Training College.

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 LTV's. Mr. Rümpel needs to be convinced by Klos . . . he is not really thinking along the right lines . . . very interested in CoCo developments.

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Abschrift :  
 Bertram Schröter  
 29. März 1964