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18th January 1967

Lutz Caspers (and Alfred Knaus), IZD.
Germany

Dear Lutz and Alfred,

This letter is to catch up on the DDR (I never answered Lutz's letter of November last) and other relevant East-West stuff. First DDR old questions :

1. The seminar for vols. to DDR was satisfactory but not excellent last year, because division of responsibility between ES and German branch was not clear. Would the German branch do everything in 1967, using ES assistance if required and keeping the ES informed ?
2. In view of the expanded East-West programme in other places, I have doubts about proposing two camps in the DDR in 1967, especially as the most popular idea for the second camp was social service, which calls for very careful preparation, leadership and selected volunteers. What is your view ? If you are keen, it could be proposed to FDJ for this year : if not, we could tell them we are interested in having the camp this year in a place where links with a social institution could be made, preparatory to a social service project in 1968. I do think it important not to let our work in the DDR become too routine - one camp a year - it should develop. Alternative ways of developing activities involve getting more DDR vols. to Austria or CSSR, and if you are not keen on expanding the number of camps in the DDR I shall concentrate on the alternative. I do not think the number of vols. required for camps is the main problem : the general enthusiasm for EW and increasing publicity should improve recruitment considerably this year.
3. Regarding Hans-Ulrich, I thought FDJ would have written direct to him. They wrote me (I got the letter about the day the camp started) saying : "Zu Ihrer Frage des Besuchs eines Ehepaars in Hornhausen möchten wir Ihnen mitteilen, daß wir wegen der umfangreichen Aktivitäten der Freien Deutschen Jugend in den kommenden Monaten keine Möglichkeit zur Realisierung sehen." It is difficult to know if this is exactly and completely the attitude they had to the visit. We could certainly try again this year, earlier, making clear that there would be no question of increasing FDJ's work, and that all that is needed is a visa so that a visit can be made to the camp, with food and accommodation for a couple of days.

4. Other points in the November letter. The Five Year's Plan and its execution. Where precise aims were given, I should guess 50 % have been achieved, but the IS probably keeps a closer eye on comparing aims and achievements. To be frank, I think the plan was just a mixture of guesses about what would happen plus some wishes (or statements of intention) about what should happen. Its value is psychological as much as practical - except that it did make a basis for detailed formulation of plans, immediate and longer-term, for each country, which are useful for their own sakes and for fundraising. Perhaps the German Committee could discuss what it considers still most important and relevant in the Plan, and make sure attention is given to certain points or aspects of the Plan at national level and at ICMs ?

Bulgaria. The camp in 1966 could be described as the action of a peasant army (don't tell the Bulgarians !). But although it was bad in the usual way for brigades, there is great hope that the Bulgarians will be flexible. Last year was their first camp : soon after, they joined the Coordination Committee and have sent the top-man to its meetings, who listens and learns seriously, although he is not young and does not find it easy to appreciate the different concept of vol. service which he finds on our side. I think next year we can have a small camp, if we want. In the meantime, we should cooperate by sending a small number of volunteers, pressing them to send some to our camps and training courses, and taking every opportunity to talk in a friendly way at meetings (for example, I completed their application form for membership of CoCo, explaining the questions and suggesting the answers : they respond well to such gestures).

Now to return to present developments :

Poland. Tyrluk is here in London and I told him of the contents of the letter to him from Alfred. He would obviously like to go to your meeting, and it depends only on high policy decisions which may or may not permit him to do so. I visited Warsaw two weeks ago and repeated several times your position, which everyone knew before, and although I cannot say they showed enthusiasm. I can say they are not rigid and will cooperate if top policy allows.

CSSR. Alfred will know very well what is happening. Developments since he left are : CSM has been informed officially that there are SCI-friends, some older than the upper age limit for CSM membership, who wish to undertake some activities in the CSSR : CSM's reaction was to say they would see what cooperation was possible. The SCI-friends are having a 3 or 4 day camp at Easter and expect a visit from a member of the IC. Because they speak German more than other languages, and because Germany is not so far, I think Lutz would be a good person (the IS would have to agree, as this was ICM discussion business). They would pay travel costs and other costs in the CSSR if necessary. Lutz please let me know if you could go, and also if / when you could go to the DDR.

All the best,

Janet Goodricke
European Secretary
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