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THE FOREIGN SERVICE PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

This issue of the Marine Bull Pen is devoted to a presentation of the Foreign Service Program of the American Friends Service Committee. The descriptions of the various relief projects are condensations of material in the current AFSC Foreign Service Bulletin; the introductory statement of the motivation and purpose of this work was prepared by the AFSC Personnel Committee.

"The American Friends Service Committee is not primarily a social service organization. It is an agency through which members of the Society of Friends and likeminded persons carry into action their deepest religious convictions and insights. Friends feel an inner necessity to minister humbly to the suffering of their fellows, convinced that there is in every human being something of the Divine. Through relief service we are able to express our sense of responsibility for and our sense of unity with our fellow human beings. We feel that we need to bring food, clothing, and shelter to those in distress, but far more important than even such vital material assistance is the opportunity to share the burden of suffering of another, to aid him recover his sense of self-respect and integrity, and to help restore a faith in love and goodwill through a practical demonstration of human sympathy and brotherhood."

AUSTRIA: The eight AFSC representatives now in Austria have started their program with supplementary feeding for undernourished teen-age youth in apprentice homes, rest homes and high schools in and about Vienna, and the provision of clothing and cod-liver oil for distribution through established agencies, meanwhile exploring possibilities for community activities and youth training in hand skills. A community program of singing, dancing and discussion, followed by refreshments is now carried on three days a week for adults, young teen-agers, and older adolescents. More recently a food distribution program has been started in the town of Berndorf, south of Vienna.

GERMANY: The AFSC has been supplying about 375 of the 2000 tons per month of relief supplies which CRALOG is allowed to ship into the American zone of Germany. Staff workers and supplies are being sent to the British zone in cooperation with Friends Relief Service of London. Relief for the French zone is now in the planning stage, negotiations indicating a combined program similar to the pattern of operation in the American zone. Although Germany, like other European countries, is suffering from dangerous shortages of the bare necessities of life, German Friends point out the even greater need for a work of re-education, social reconstruction and reconciliation.

NORWAY: The AFSC is joining in an international work project for the reconstruction of a war-devastated area in Norway's far northern Province of Finmark. Here houses, barns, roads and bridges were thoroughly destroyed. This summer's building will concentrate on rough construction -- foundations, walls and roofs -- leaving interior

finishing to the winter with the hope that electrification will then be far enough advanced to make operations possible.

HUNGARY: Permission has been granted for an AFSC representative to visit Hungary in June to make arrangements for an AFSC relief mission there. Twenty five tons of clothing are ready for shipment.

POLAND: There are now three principle Quaker projects in Poland, operated jointly by the AFSC and Friends Relief Service of London. The first got into actual operation in May in the district of Kozienice in northeastern Kielce province. Its main task is feeding a supplementary ration of about 250 calories per day to approximately 5000 children under seven. It also distributes clothing, aids local welfare agencies and helps combat scabies. A second project similar to this will begin in the Olsztyn district where war-devastation is also widespread. The third project enlists the aid of the Quaker Transport Unit in the government's rural reconstruction program. It will begin in June in Kielce province, with eight trucks and ten drivers and mechanics. The work will consist of hauling cement, lime and logs from rail centers and forests to building sites. By the end of July, fourteen persons from the AFSC and fifteen from Friends Relief Service will be in these Quaker projects.

QUAKER TRANSPORT UNIT: Emergency transport has become an important relief service in many countries. There are now twenty workers in the field, and fourteen others under appointment. Although emergency relief work must often take precedence, one important aim of the transport unit is to aid in community rebuilding projects. In consultation with French authorities, a Quaker Transport team began early in April to assist the citizens of St. Nazaire, on the Brittany coast, in the first work of reconstructing their community. A unit of eight men, including one British FAU member and two French associates, is moving household furniture for families whose homes were damaged and who have been crowded in with other households until barracks could be built to accommodate them. One of the first tasks was hauling sand for the filters of the St. Nazaire water system. Other work has included furniture and clothing haulage for the Ministry of Prisoners, Deportees and Refugees; transportation of food for the French Red Cross and barracks for the de-mining service, and the pleasant task of carrying children to country places for vacations.

FINLAND: The AFSC relief program in Finland has been under way for about eight months, with a staff of six in Finnish Lapland and one person in Stockholm who purchases and ships supplies to the north. The field staff, working from barracks in Rovaniemi and Kemijarvi, began their work by visiting approximately 300 schools in Lapland, encouraging and assisting local committees and teachers to reopen their school feeding program. In the May food deliveries 268 schools were reached in 22 communes, and a total of approximately 26,000 children were given a supplementary meal a day. Into this feeding program the project has sent large supplies of milk, pork, sugar and margarine purchased in Sweden and Denmark. Plans have been made for two international work camp projects in Lapland during July and August. Students from Finnish schools and universities and the American staff, making a total group of fifty or sixty, will volunteer their services in a farm work and reconstruction program. One project is assisting to rebuild a school in a community where 70 children, who have had no school since 1939, would otherwise continue to be without a school until the fall of 1947.

ITALY: In April 1945, the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Ambulance Unit began a reconstruction project in Chieti Province, one of the badly devastated areas of Italy. At that time Italian villagers, their homes in ruins,

were depressed by the hopelessness of procuring by ox-cart, or carrying on their backs, building materials which were often thirty to sixty miles distant. With the free transport service, individual initiative was stimulated in clearing debris and rebuilding homes. Special efforts were made to restore school buildings and to transport school furniture and supplies. This work, begun on a small scale, caught the attention of UNRRA and the Italian Government as well as of private relief groups. With their aid, the project has now been enlarged to keep five units busy. Two are in Chieti province; a third is at Carrara, north of Pisa; others are at Scauri and Frosinone, in the area south of Rome. By April 1946, the AFSC had supplied twenty-four staff members for the expanded project. These workers made up half of the total personnel.

FRANCE: Services for French civilians and for foreigners, both refugees and Axis prisoners of war, are provided in France. French, British and American Quakers are associated in this work through the international consultative committee, Secours Quaker International. Large scale food and clothing distributions are continuing through June 30 when the emphasis will shift to rehabilitation services. A community center will be maintained at Camp Herbert Tareyton, three miles from LeHayre, where nine hundred LeHayre families who lost their homes in the Allied bombardment are being resettled. Other community centers, primarily for refugee families, will be maintained at Toulouse, Montauban and Perpignan, with individual services for refugees who are not cared for by other committees. Visits to prisoner of war camps in the Toulouse area continue.

HOLLAND: This year the AFSC equipped and helped to maintain four Dutch members of a Friends Relief Service team working in the Betuwe district of Holland where the land had been flooded by fresh water. Clothing is still being sent to Amsterdam for distribution by the Quaker bureau there. A delegate from the AFSC sailed in June to join the Amsterdam Center Staff.

INDIA: AFSC work in India began as emergency relief in the Bengal famine and floods of 1944. In cooperation with the British Friends Ambulance Unit food canteens were set up for mothers and children, and drugs to combat disease were widely distributed following the famine. The emergency program in Bengal closed in April 1946, when the Unit planned to devote all its effort to long-term rehabilitation projects. The long-term work gives much emphasis to cooperative projects. However, a new and terrible famine, this time in southern India, has made it imperative to set up new emergency plans, leaving only a skeleton organization in Bengal to carry on the long-term work. The AFSC has provided nine members of the Friends Service Unit in India; Friends Service Council of London has sent fourteen and is sending three more for special emergency service. One member is now in Delhi advising the government on relief plans. In Madras the unit will oversee the distribution of 1500 tons of powdered milk purchased with funds supplied by the national government.

CHINA: The wartime relief work of the Friends Ambulance Unit featured hauling medical supplies from port of entry to distribution points, and also actual medical work, largely with the Chinese Army under the Chinese Red Cross. This dual program, organized to meet emergency needs, is now giving place to a more unified activity. The Convoy has transferred its headquarters from Chungking to Chengchow, Honan Province, in the center of a devastated area. Here medical and mechanical skills are being pooled in community effort. Mechanics who formerly cared for trucks are working on heating, lighting and water systems for various hospitals in Honan. Gutted and abandoned mission hospitals at Changchow and Changteh have been re-opened for care of civilian patients. Refugees from the flood areas of eastern Honan are aided by Unit members in arranging jobs. In connection with a great project for the

control of the Yellow River, which is being undertaken by the government with the assistance of UNRRA, staff members are organizing the work of drainage and road building by flood refugees in order to expedite their return to their homes. The Unit also works to combat kala-azar, a dangerous disease whose incidence throughout Honan has been greatly aggravated by war conditions. Six truckloads of food and medical supplies were recently dispatched, at the request of both sides, for impartial distribution in the area of Yungnien in Hopei Province, where the city had been held for some months by Central Government forces surrounded by Communist armies. This action followed an exploratory trip by seven Unit members.

JAPAN: In April 1946, military authorities approved monthly relief shipments to Japan and Korea of 2000 tons and 500 tons respectively by the American Council of Voluntary Agencies. Two representatives of the new special agency LARA (Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia), including Esther Rhoads of the AFSC, are proceeding to Tokyo to survey needs and arrange for distribution.

INDIVIDUAL SERVICES UNIT: Whenever a worker in one of the foreign areas seeks to secure for an individual some service that needs to be performed in the western hemisphere, or whenever a person in this country requests a service to be performed for an individual in one of the foreign areas, the request is handled by the Individual Services Unit. Such services include migration advice, location of missing relatives, welfare services, information on communication possibilities with various countries, and responses to a wide variety of miscellaneous requests. The Unit also provides services for refugees in the United States, including hospitality, orientation, job placement and counseling.

GIFTS-IN-KIND: Shipments of clothing for the first quarter of 1946, amounting to 321 tons, have outstripped the 1945 total, and yet the needs for clothing have by no means been met. Recently large shipments have gone to Finland, France, Austria, Germany, Poland and Holland. One ton went to Jugoslavia. The gifts-in-kind program has now been expanded to handle some other products besides clothing.

CARE -- INDIVIDUAL PACKAGE SERVICE: The AFSC is one of twenty four relief agencies which constitute CARE (Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe). CARE has arranged for the purchase of food packages each containing over 40,000 calories from government surplus stocks for shipments to individuals abroad on behalf of individuals in America.

SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP: A program has been undertaken in conjunction with the Overseas School Committee of Boston, for establishing friendly contacts between American schools and schools abroad. AFSC representatives since the beginning of April have visited about fifty French schools. Seven "affiliations" have actually been established between American and French schools. Representatives will continue to visit during the summer in Holland and Italy as well as in France.

FRIENDS CENTERS: Quaker Centers established as early as 1925 in seven European cities became havens of refuge during the war. Centers in Shanghai, Calcutta and Tokyo, opened just as war broke out, also continued under great difficulties. Centers are open at present in Berlin, Paris and Geneva. Centers in Vienna, Warsaw, Frankfurt and Moscow are closed. AFSC representatives are visiting the centers in both Europe and Asia this summer to consult with Friends in the various countries as to how the AFSC can assist in the future development of Center programs.