

REPORT

SABBATICAL LEAVE FOR FALL SEMESTER 1962-63

by

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REPORT OF SABBATICAL - FALL SEMESTER 1962-63

I. ASSIGNMENT

Having been granted a one-semester sabbatical leave from my college on the basis of having been accepted by the Brethren Service Commission (Church of the Brethren) to spend several months of volunteer service in Europe, the following assignments were made:

1. Attend a Peace Seminar in Warsaw, Poland.
2. Visit the Brethren Colleges Junior Year Abroad
3. Visit and interview high school Exchange Students
4. Visit all BSC projects and personnel in Europe.

At the conclusion of five months in Europe, it is my purpose to share some of my experiences, observations and recommendations in this report. I would first of all express appreciation to all those persons in positions of leadership and responsibility who made it possible for me to undertake this visitation and who gave me much valuable assistance. I made contact with some 150 persons connected with BSC work and the students. This provides a rather wide base from which to make observations.

II. PEACE SEMINAR

The three weeks in Poland provided my first opportunity to meet and observe people of another culture. I soon discovered that I needed more background and this led me to do some reading in European history and cultural background of the Polish people.

This seminar, planned cooperatively by the Polish Student Assn. and Brethren Service, agreed upon the theme, "Peace, Coexistence, and Disarmament". The participants were 22 Americans, 8 Poles, 3 Dutch, 2 Russians and one from Hong Kong (who was studying in England). All were supposed to speak English, but this was not the case. We were disappointed that so few came to represent the communist policy.

We were housed at the International Student Hotel and meetings were held in the Politechnik just two blocks away. We ate well at the hotel and were given much time and opportunity to travel around the city as well as bus trips to several places out of Warsaw, particularly to Krakow and to visit the former concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau, now used as a museum.

Dr. Eldon Burke, history professor at Manchester College, Indiana was the leader of our group and cooperated well with their leaders. The fact that we were able to have the seminar in this country was in itself significant and encouraging. I did not feel that too much was accomplished in the formal sessions, as it seemed more of a chance for their party leaders to explain their views to us rather than an open seeking together for means of understanding and solving international problems. More was accomplished informally by mingling with the many youth from many nations who stayed at the hotel in their travels. There was discussion, folk singing, attending opera, movies, etc. with much opportunity for real friendships to be formed.

Observations: It would seem preferable to have another seminar outside of the city of Warsaw, hence fewer interruptions. I think participants should all understand English, should have a required list of reading before coming so as to have a better background, and that a better understanding between sponsoring agencies be worked out in advance in regard to purpose and procedures to be followed. It was, however, a worthwhile venture in international understanding.

III. INTERIM -- PERSONAL

During the month of September I became a tourist and visited places of interest in nine countries, observing the beauties of nature, attending several operas, visiting many famous museums, cathedrals, historical shrines, etc. This, I believe, added much to my personal knowledge and artistic appreciation.

IV. BRETHERN COLLEGES JUNIOR YEAR ABROAD

For the first time this year, students from the six Church of the Brethren Colleges in the U. S. are spending the year at Phillips University in the historic city of Marburg, Germany. It was my privilege to spend a week there with the 26 students and their director, Dr. Wm. Willoughby of Bridgewater College, Virginia and his family. A room was provided for me, and I was invited in the homes of many of the students who had rooms or small apartments in the homes of local residents. The students are in language study and will soon join the classes at the University. They have been well selected, and required to have some understanding of the German language. They seem very enthusiastic about the opportunity of learning about another culture and are determined to take advantages to make friends.

There is some doubt whether they will really be able to accomplish very much in the German university in competition with German students in subject matter, but even so, the personal experiences and growth of the students in social and cultural experiences will make the project worth the effort.

Observation: I am in sympathy with the purposes of this project and believe that it should be continued and strengthened. The relationship between Dr. Willoughby and some of the German professors is good and it is certain to grow in time.

V. AUSTRIA

My three and one-half weeks in Austria provided a variety of experiences. The first weekend was spent with the BSC retreat for all the workers in Austria, held in the mountains at Seewiesen. This was an opportunity for Dr. Naylor, European Director, to bring new ideas before the group and allow for expressions and discussions. I was invited to participate by teaching a class on Sunday morning. It was an opportunity for me to learn to know most of the 15 young men who are spending two years in volunteer service.

While at Hinterbrühl (some 10 miles south of Vienna and near the famous Vienna Woods) I met several of the leaders of the Protestant church in Austria who cooperate in sponsoring the work project there. Our men are engaged in rebuilding an old luxury hotel into a home for

senior citizens. I think this is a worthy project, but it is unfortunate that so many Americans are working together with so few Austrians. I understand there are plans to correct this imbalance, which I favor. There is much effort to plan meaningful contacts with the local community, such as youth groups, athletics, attending church and visiting over weekend with local families. This is resisted by some, but the ones who participate seem to appreciate it. I had many talks with these fellows trying to listen sympathetically to their reactions, and possibly make a suggestion now and then in counseling.

The project at the International Rescue Committee Children's Home seems to me a very worthy one. We provide fellows to help with recreation, crafts and dormitory supervision for these children who are brought in from communist countries and who are without homes.

I visited one of our workers at Gallneukirchen, near Linz, who is working in this large home for retarded children. It is sponsored by the Protestant church, and receive very little from the government.

I visited and interviewed 26 Exchange Students in Austria--this is in the total report at the end.

VI. GERMANY

In West Germany I visited 19 volunteer workers in 12 different projects. Two were in language school and one had just completed her service. My headquarters were at Kassel at the home of McKinley Coffman, the director for German projects. As I was traveling by train, and was alone most of the time, I found it took longer to find the people and places and make necessary arrangements, but I had a wider variety of experiences this way.

Places visited were: West Berlin-Johannesstift, a hospital and home for old people and retarded children; Nachbatschtsheim- a hospital, Bremen-Lesum, a children's home and hospital, Hildesheim - a neighborhood settlement house; Hamburg-Youth Director in church; Buckeborg-Freundschaftsheim, a friendship house where peace seminars are held for people from all countries, Bielefeld-Home for refugees from communist countries; Recklingshausen-the Jugendpfarrant is a dormitory for young men working in the mines; Gossner Mission at Mainz is a home for young men who are industrial workers. Also to Hanau to visit a girl who works with factory girls.

In all of these places I talked with the volunteers, stayed all night with most of them and in general discussed their experiences, their attitudes and their suggestions.

In Cloppenburg, I attended a weekend retreat for all the workers in Germany. This was an opportunity to share with each other, to get inspiration from visiting leaders and rethink their purposes for being there in these projects and how to make the best contribution under trying circumstances in many cases.

In Germany I interviewed 36 Exchange students. See later report.

VII GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

I visited the office in Geneva three times during the period and enjoyed the hospitality of the Naylor family. The purposes of visits were to receive initial instructions, to attend a meeting of the directors of all the European projects and to prepare my reports which are to be presented to the Geneva office, the training office at New Windsor, Md., the church office at Elgin, Illinois and to Mt. San Antonio College.

While in Geneva I visited the offices of the World Council of Churches several times, attended a meeting of the wives of all the directors from many countries, visited the headquarters for the United Nations Committees and counsels, besides taking a few sightseeing trips.

VIII SARDINIA

My plans to visit the unit workers at Sardinia met with complications. I had met Ellis Shenk, the Director, in Geneva and arranged to spend Christmas with them. However, neither of us foresaw the unusual traffic crowds preceeding the Christmas weekend, and both their family and I were delayed in meeting the arrangements. I did arrive at Simaxis a day late and went to their house, but found they had not yet arrived, so not knowing what had happened I had to leave and missed them.

IX INTERIM - PERSONAL

Again I took advantage of some extra days and some time on my railroad pass and made a trip to Spain and Portugal, visiting a former BSC worker who is now in the U.S. Embassy in Madrid. I also enjoyed a few days in Athens and surrounding countryside, seeing such places as: The University of Athens, the Acropolis, the museums, Olympic stadium, Mt. Parnassus, place of Mycenae civilization 14th Century B.S. and a restored outdoor theater at Epidavros.

X. CONCLUSIONS

Realizing that my visitation of BSC projects and personnel was very brief and that I do not have the background for understanding many of the situations, I hesitate to draw conclusions. However, I do venture a few that are entirely personal and of course unofficial.

1. Because of the newer emphasis in Brethren Service in Europe (working more with the churches there instead of the relief work done formerly) a more mature, stable person is needed. Quite a number of those on project now would not qualify. There are too many with their own personal problems to make the contribution I think they should.
 - a. Many are too young and immature. They should be college graduates for most of the projects, or have some outstanding skill that is needed.
 - b. It is difficult to apply idealism in routine jobs, so they tend to become unhappy and critical.
2. I would recommend fewer volunteers in Europe if that is necessary to get more highly motivated and more specialized training.
3. We need a re-study of long-term goals in European service. While much good work is being done, it should be constantly evaluated.

SUMMARY OF STUDENT EXCHANGE VISITATION

In order to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the high school student exchange program carried on by Brethren Service for many years I visited and interviewed 60 of these students who had returned to their homes. It was difficult to find most of them because of recent changes in address, but was very worthwhile and interesting to me, as I was able to visit in many homes and contact several at their places of work. There was almost unanimous expression of appreciation for the opportunity of spending the year in the U.S. Many also expressed appreciation that someone had come to see them after so long a time.

Number visited: men - 30 women - 30 Total - 60

<u>Year in U.S.</u>	1949 - 1	1953 - 3	1957 - 10
	1950 - 3	1954 - 7	1958 - 3
	1951 - 10	1955 - 3	1959 - 2
	1952 - 5	1956 - 7	1960 - 2
			1961 - 4

<u>Age of students:</u>	16 - 26	19 - 1
	17 - 20	20 - 1
	18 - 12	

Religious affiliation of homes in which they lived: this varied a great deal. Twelve different denominations represented; only about half of them lived in Church of the Brethren homes.

Present status:

15 married now. This reflects the European practice that for the most part, students finish university before marriage.

35 are still students either at high school or university.

20 are established in the vocation for which they studied.

Of those employed, there are three each in teaching and secretarial work, two each in commerce, nursing, engineering, and one each in government work, architecture, chemistry, law, social work, psychology, M.D., army, farming, and dock worker.

As would be expected, most of them are in the professions or preparing for these fields. All except three continued studying after their return from the U.S.

They are in positions of responsibility where they can make good use of the things they learned while in the U.S.

Problems of adjustment:

Over half said there were no problems; one-third said very little or none at all.

ment About the same number said there were problems of adjustment when they returned to their homes.

What ways have you found to share your experiences at home?

Wrote articles for paper, was editor of school paper, started student government, started school paper, helped find homes for AFS students, helped correct wrong impressions of U.S., showed pictures, a few gave talks at school, but most was just individual contact with family and friends. Many stated they were not asked to give talks, some tried to share experiences at church, but ideas were not appreciated.

Did the experience change your vocational plans?

yes - 18 no - 42

Did it change your church life?

yes - 13 no - 47

Did it change your interest in international affairs?

yes - 46 yes, very much - 9 no - 3

Evaluation of educational experience in U.S.

Most all the students felt that education in Austria and Germany is superior to that in the U.S. Many of them lost ~~of~~ a year of school by the exchange, but did not regret it because of other advantages. Two of them went to college in U.S. after being tested and recommended.

WHAT THEY LIKED ABOUT U.S. SCHOOLS

no class distinction	physical facilities much better
informal contact with teachers	co-education new and enjoyed
friendly atmosphere	more practical subjects
liked class discussions	school is for all the people
better science laboratories	glad to learn of U.S. government.

WHAT THEY CRITICIZED ABOUT US. SCHOOLS

holds bright students back	too easy
too much choice of subjects	testing system not good
standards not high enough	too much outside activity
too few subjects	waste of time but had fun

What are the outstanding contributions of the year in your life?

help to understand people better	developed personality
learn new language and culture	developed individuality
experience in Eng. help get job	chance to travel
learned to appreciate church	practicing democracy
deepen understanding of peace	experience in family living
wonderful friendships formed	developed sense of freedom
gave me self-assurance	deepen religious belief
developed more tolerance	learned about psychology
amazed at the friendliness	hospitality I've never known
more grown up and independent	corrected views about Americans

Many stated that this was the high point of their life and they wouldn't have missed it for anything. Many have kept contact with the foster-families; some have visited; others plan to.

IMPACT OF A VISITATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS AFTER SPENDING A YEAR IN UNITED STATES HIGH SCHOOLS

By Ida Studelsker

Number visited: Men - 30 Women - 30 Total - 60
 Year spent in U.S. Range from 1949 to 1961
 Age when in U.S. 16 to 18 years (except one 19, and one 20)
 Countries represented: Austria, West Germany and Switzerland

AUSTRIADonauitz

Marie Mickl Weiss

St. Pölten

Doris Gasser

Salzburg

Fraudi Esal Rotisch
 Elisabeth Mittermayer

Wien

Helga Lohmann
 Gerda Krois
 Dr. Erwin Kistner
 Dieter Obri
 (Gasser) Feischel

Wien (Vienna)

Brigitte Achberger
 Ingrid Kienbauer
 Lieselotte Schmalz
 Margarete Suchonel
 Dr. Gerda Feischel
 Helga Maly Zimmer
 Rosemarie Nausner
 Margarete Wolfel
 Gottfried Conrad-Hillroth
 Sigfried Golderer
 Achim Ruggle
 Dr. Ingeborg Dosudil
 Brigitte Nietsch
 Dr. Joseph Graf
 Dr. Kurt Oberhuber
 Erna Sedlerer
 Siegmund Roth

SWITZERLANDGeneva

Klara vonLindeiner
 Katherin Hoffman

WEST GERMANYKessel

Brigitte Benedick
 Katherina Pflieger
 Johanna Reinan
 Klaus Weirauche

Berlin

Margarete Claus
 Volker Claus
 Arnd Claus
 Frank Dorfel
 Hartmut Grebe
 Klaus Hühse
 Hans Sodeikat
 Astrid Koendig

Hamburg

Gerrit Brunner
 Weibke Kreitz
 Peter Eriar
 Ingeborg Kolrep
 Angelika Luckas
 Birgitte Rudolph
 Dr. Friedrich Schroeder

Bremen

Hannelore Meldert
 Hans Michaelis
 Hans Hebeck
 Jürgen Sonntag
 Guntar Rubsch

Oldenburg

Ingeborg Wiegmann

Walsbaden

Michael Schulz

Marburg

Gerhard Wolk
 Erica Cellback
 Erica Lanting

Munich

Gudrun Meyer

Munich

Joe Kessler
 Risto Griesang