

# SERVAS

## PEACE-BUILDERS

the Broadsheet

Spring 1966.

"....with every true friendship we build more firmly the foundations on which the peace of the world rests. Thought by thought and act by act., with every breath we build the kingdom of non-violence that is the true home of the spirit of man."

M. K .Gandhi .

Greetings to our Hosts, our Travelers and our friends  
This year, Servas is concentrating on East-West development and we are looking forward to full co-operation with you all.

Since the War, contact with Eastern Europe has been limited to official delegations and a few carefully selected individuals. But recently there have been signs that the position is easing. Tourists are being encouraged to visit these countries and an increasing number of people are visiting us. These are usually ern;mbers of delegations, people on educational tours or courses as individuals. In the U.S. and in England, groups of young people from the U.S.S.R. stayed in the homes of young Quakers and members of educational groups have recently stayed with hosts in Austria.

At the 1966 Conference, Kurt Schmid, our Austrian Secretary, was appointed East/West Secretary to develop these new possibilities. A television program from Vienna on Servas had been seen behind the "iron curtain" and not only had educational groups visited Austria, but Kurt himself had taken parties on educational tours to Czechoslovakia, another via Prague and a third to East Germany.

Negotiations are now going on to reach some kind of basis for co operation and we hope that this can be formulated at the Easter Conference to which representatives from these countries have been invited. It seems that we shall have to

negotiate with official organizations to make contacts possible and to get authorized travelers and hosts. Can we get lists of hosts for these countries and on what terms? How can travelers be found and how authorized to use the system? How can we overcome currency restrictions? (Some countries insist that all payments are made to agencies in that country, to cover transport and accommodation, and no currency can be brought out.)

These, then, are some of the problems we hope to begin to solve at Easter and we hope to have more news about them in our next issue. In the meantime, let us know if you have any special interest in these travelers. Your National Secretary will be pleased to have your comments, advice and offers of help, as a guide, a planner of educational tours, offers of extended periods of hospitality. The prospects for the Future are exciting.

Meanwhile "The East" means Asia too - the far East-or what do you call it in your own country??? Happily Servas is now flourishing in Japan and India - but there are other countries too, where War and Famine rage and we stand helplessly by. What can we do there? Can we as peacebuilders even begin to help in the fearful famine in India - it would seem heartless to arrive as tourists. Our friends in U.S. may often fool, engaged as many of them are as individuals in action over Viet Nam, that many of our activities seem trivial beside the main task. It is only with the thought in mind that in some small way Servas may be a bridge between East and West that they send a delegate to the Conference.

We feel sincerely that Servas can be worth while in this way - but we need your help and co-operation. Please let us hear from you all. Your ideas, your activities. your experiences with Servas. An article would be marvelous, but if you dont feel "literary" - well, just write.

National Secretary  
Connie Thorpe,  
15,Valerie Grove  
Birmingham 22 A

The Broadsheet  
Ed.Pat Knowles  
495 Jockey Rd  
Sutton Goldfield,  
Warks, England.

Is there any pressing problem of international relationships in your own country In many big cities all over the world overseas students and Immigrants workers are lone,y and isolated. They are often disillusioned at the unfriendliness they meet, although this. may be covered up by a gay manner, the linking up with fellow-countrymen only, the gradual withdrawal from us and from the attempt to penetrate into our world.

# News of Branches

From India writes our Secretary, Harivalabh Parikh, who is engaged, in village development work and also works very closely with Vinoba Bhave: "As you know, we are very busy with many tasks. As far as India is concerned, our population is 440 million and we have many problems. Peace cannot be established in an unstable situation and being a peace worker, I am spending all my energy in making a foundation for peace. When I am doing the work here, I always remember in my mind that I am not alone. You are all with me hope to be a bridge between East and West. I feel that we are not very active in a world which is progressing and regressing all the time at rocket speed our speed is like the elephants'. We are a very small group, yet our ideas are bigger than the body of an elephant".

Harivalabh goes on to stress the need for a continued efforts to exchange ideas on peacebuilding. "If we want to be a link between the efforts of Peacebuilders, then we must have contacts with our peace organizations. We have to tell this to our travelers too. When any newcomer wanted to join the Gandhian movement, Gandhiji gave him a simple program - "Go and visit the institutions which are working in several parts of the country "and after visiting these places, he himself starts a feeling of oneness with the movement."

In 1965, 36 Servas travelers found hospitality with Indian hosts. Moreover, he has established contacts with the SANE group of America and last July, 18 members of that group enjoyed the hospital hospitality of Servas hosts. Contacts have also been made with Canadian students' three of whom worked with Harivalabh and 20 of them visited his ashram and other hosts. He has also direct contact with the Indian peace brigade, "Shanti Sena" whose representative Narayan Desai has been visiting Europe. "Being a very poor country, I have nothing to record about travelers abroad. Only six students have been accepted by us." We are happy to add, however that manner more Indian students already traveling abroad have been accepted in those countries and have not missed that opportunity to visit Open Doors.

In closing, Harivalabh invites us to hold our next conference in Rangpur. "You have only to reach Bombay and I will arrange to carry you all to my place {his ashram) from there. I hope You will enjoy the mangoes and many other fresh fruits. Bring you bathing suits - we have a very nice river.

"Jai - Jagat Harivalabh"

We hope that should any of our readers visit India, or have friends who are considering this, they will visit Rangpur and not only enjoy a pleasant country refuge, but an informative and challenging experiment in the reform and improvement of Village life.

In the U.S.A. Area committees have been formed to recruit and deal with an ever-increasing number of travelers. During the past year there have been over 200 of them, mostly contacted among overseas students already in the U.S. and there are now about five Open Doors. Other activities include continued co-operation with International Student Service. Regular "AT HOMES" are the responsibility of Retired Professionals, Theatre benefits have been held for fundraising and publicity undertaken included letters to the public press, publicity to Industries, hospitals, etc. with adult foreign trainees and a Television program was arranged by the New England Committee. New Contacts are being made with the Citizens Exchange Corps which seeks Peace through understanding by working towards full normal cultural exchange between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R." It is a non-political organization which runs an exchange program "in the interests of survival and lasting peace" aiming to exchange groups representing a cross-section of the population, initially for 3 week visits. One other new scheme was the first National Conference, held in December 1965 We hope their activities will give branches some ideas for future plans.

In Austria WHEN THE International Conference was held last year, the Viennese hosts were invited to meet the delegates for a social and information evening. There we heard the tape of the television program mentioned earlier. In it Kurt had the opportunity to give a short but concise account of the aims of Servas and to interview a Japanese traveler. Later we saw slides of Servas activities and a fascinating series of studies by our French Chairman an artistic and talented photographer. We are hopeful That Kurts contacts in educational circles will produce contacts in Eastern countries.

After the Conference a number of the delegates visited Bratislava where they spent an interesting day with a new Czech contact and the evening in his family. Subsequently this young man visited England for a professional conference and was able to spend three weeks afterwards visiting Open Doors and seeing some-of life there. He was especially interested in public health and in all aspects of youth work.

In England during the last year, the Student Travel Organization has been very co-operative. Of a student travel flight to Japan via U.S.S.R. 12 members elected to use Servas, The Japanese hosts rose magnificently to the challenge of a large party all arriving on the same day. Contacts rallied to help, even offering improvised accommodation, which was much appreciated when it was realized what a high store-the Japanese set on exemplary, formal hospitality. The party then split up, some having professional contacts, others gratefully accepting further Servas Hospitality One party, who had come to Japan for Hiroshima Day set off there taking other Interested members. They saw the new city which had been built on the site of the old and saw something of the problems of the victims of delayed radioactivity and the social problems of the new city.

Returning to England, they were anxious to meet, see each others slides and exchange experiences. There have been further meetings and we hope that this group will also help us with committee work and to initiate this year's travelers to Japan. This time it is planned to spread the total number of, travelers over several groups on different flights and thus relieve the pressure on Hosts. They will also spend their first night in the International students Hostel. Travelers have stressed the astonishing hospitality of the Japanese. In places, where there are no Servas hosts, there are also often pleasant small inns and Japanese Youth Hostels (Japanese and also European style) are clean and adequate.

Developments in England this year include further co-operation with British Universities Student Travel Association. This year's parties to Japan will be smaller and will not arrive all together and put too great a strain on hosts. We hope too, to take a leaf out of the U.S. book and do much more recruiting of travelers here. There are many people coming to this country for the first time who are not making contacts with English people; these naturally, if with some disappointment, turn to little groups of their own countrymen for company and support and may even, ironically enough, be considered unfriendly in their turn because of this. Students spring immediately to mind, but there are other groups, for example nurses and technicians, in our midst, as well as a vast number of other workers who have come here from the Colonies, These too, are people we should like to meet. Perhaps they will not wish to go traveling around but would like to have friendly contacts in the towns where they work. We hope to contact more of them this year.

A large number of our travelers, as usual, come to and from the U.S. Most of our travelers here were put in touch with Servas by a lecturer at one of the London University Colleges who earlier had used Servas himself there. Again a reunion of last years travellers at this college proved a launching point for this years scheme.

Meanwhile, work of publicity and recruitment is going on, and recently a London Committee has been set up to deal with local enquiries and meetings. We should like to stress, however, that the best way of recruiting travellers is through personal contacts.

In Benelux another new list has been produced and the Secretary has been working on a study program. He is anxious that many more travellers visit Holland, a very peace-orientated branch and would specially welcome those with interest in work-camps.

In France a committee has at last been formed and we are hopeful of new developments.

Denmark too, has a new Secretary so that we can hope for new developments and a good list there too. In Sweden Christopher Cowley, an active peaceworker who traveled in Japan last year, has volunteered to help to form a committee. Ulla berglin is on her way to England at the moment. Perhaps our friends the Szabo's (Albert and Rakel) in Finland after a years stay in Japan, can help us. They too plan to come to England in July.

# SERVAS - PEACEBUILDERS

"Servas seeks to link together the individuals and small groups all over the world who are working for a society based on creative vocation, non-violence and universal social responsibility.

....They include Folk High Schools, neighborhood centre, ashrams and communities but the majority are, families and individuals of varied backgrounds. Travellers may be those who travel merely to make friendly international contacts, those who have some specific, vocational interests or political interests which prompt study. or those who, already working for peace, wish to exchange ideas or work with other Peacebuilders."

The above was an attempt made several years ago to state the philosophy behind Servas Peacebuilders, already embodied in its title. These are the principles on which we have recruited our hosts and though for many of our travelers Servas may be just a way of meeting people in other countries hope that through meeting our hosts they will get some impression of these ideas.

"Creative vocation" does not refer specifically to artistic creativity to us it means work which is satisfying to the worker and which makes some positive contribution to others. In modern society, much work which is well paid can be valueless or even detrimental to the community. It may not be easy, but it is possible to break away from this way of living and find greater satisfaction and fulfilment in socially creative work.

"Non Violence" may be an attractive word but will the philosophy of non-violence stand up to literal interpretation in day-to-day contacts? That happens when the idea is applied to personal relationships, to industry, education, to community living, to problems in the wider community, in the world? These are some of the questions that some of our hosts and helpers are trying to answer. Belief in these principles is what prompts many of us to work for Servas.

"Social Responsibility" can be the attitude, of any individual any setting. Routine jobs can be seen as community duties. Meeting and working with people means a constant possibility of valuable friendships and often unforeseen personal responsibilities. Awareness of the facts of international affairs and a sensitive imagination lead inevitably to some kind of personal involvement, expressed in various ways ,from personal protest to political action.

PK/UK

## THE HOMER LANE SOCIETY -

A group with such aims in mind started the Homer Lane Society. A number of them had lived together earlier in a community house. They had a wide variety of skills between them and they knew each other well enough to confirm that they wished to work together to put into practice the ideas in which they believed. Most of them had been active in various branches of the peace movement: they wanted to test non-violence in their daily lives, their attitude to each other, the way a community should be organized, their relationship with people who came to them with various motives and needs. They thus became increasingly aware of social problems and the subsequent experience of the members of the group - in work-camps, in residential childcare, in adventure playgrounds and other practical spheres - served to deepen their convictions and knowledge,

About this time, a biography of Home Lane, the founder of the little Commonwealth, was written by W. David Wills, himself firmly convinced of the value of non-violence and love in work with disturbed children. A Trust was formed and a house in the Cotswolds purchased for a residential school for maladjusted children. The principal is a teacher who worked with David Wills at Bodenham Manor and is experienced with difficult and delinquent children and the team has been slowly joined by others, teachers, a child care officer and a secretary who plays an active part in the life of the school.

The conversion and decoration of the house and the building of class-rooms was a major undertaking and was assisted by a whole series of work-camps - I.V.S, Quakers and ad hoc groups of friends and volunteers who worked at weekends and in longer term and international camps in 1965. The school began to take pupils in September and aims to cater for that proportion of maladjusted children who need care in a residential setting which is actively therapeutic. It is hoped to take children from nine years old until school leaving age, and when necessary, a small number of working children. In addition to the nucleus of staff working directly with the children, there will be adults who pursue their own occupations but contribute socially and economically by living there, and forming relationships with the children.

In such a community, personal relationships can be used positively & a system of shared responsibility will remove the punitive element from the group and the need for the adult always to appear in an authoritarian role. At the same time, education will be planned to meet individual needs and there will be opportunities for creative achievement. Good care of animals, including poultry and a pony, will be the responsibility of a group helped by staff.

It is hoped that these children will be eventually rehabilitated into their own or substitute families and close contact will be maintained with parents. Some children will also benefit more by being educated in outside schools.

Members of the team are prepared to commit themselves very personally to this work and some of them will be prepared to plough back a proportion of their income in order to see their ideas and aims realized. Subscribing members receive periodic news of the development of the school. This group of people seemed to be so near in thinking to our own aims that we asked them to become an Open Door for Servas. It would obviously not be fair to use the school just for overnight accommodation but travelers with a specific interest can obtain the address from the British Secretary, not from the list. Readers interested, however, can write to -

New Barnes School, Church Lane, Toddington, Glos.

# The Caritas

YOUTH WELFARE HOME - Vienna

From the welter of material about delinquency, one has the feeling that no one theory is capable of solving the problem. Through scientific research we can learn much about abnormal character development. But it is when a problem youth, leaving an institution, has to face life in the community as his own master that the real test comes.

In the "Caritas" Home, it has been found that each individual has his own private road to rehabilitation and can only be helped on a personal, individual basis. Getting to know a boy through living with him, seeing how he reveals his personality through his work, helping him to find where his own strengths lie and to realize his worth as a human being, not creating an oasis where he can hide behind his weakness. They need to be helped to work by their own volition: the adults role needs to be one of continuing patience, for these problems are deep and longstanding.

The present age may have solved the problems of poverty, but the problems of our youth are social and personal. There is still a need for such a hostel as this - not for boys from normal family backgrounds or those who can take part normally in everyday life, but boys who have not had the opportunity to grow up in and cannot form normal relations, who cannot take advantage of the many opportunities which are offered to them. They come to us from prisons, reform or approved schools. They have moral, religious and social problems to face - and financial ones as well. The transitional stage from "closed" institutions to normal life between 17-21 is a difficult one and our chief aim is to make each one independent as soon as possible.

The home is a modern one, accommodating 60. The boys sleep 4 to a room. It is an "open" Home. Its members have already served their penalties and in most cases come of their own free will. Jobs for them are arranged and the boys pay for their room and board and are helped to plan their budgets to build up a stock of clothing of their own. Hours of work are relatively short in Austria and leisure presents a special problem - we try to make our program of activities as attractive as possible by encouraging them to take up sports and hobbies, join in discussions find personal interests. There is a library here they can read books and magazines.

Although started by the Catholic Church, the hostel is inter-confessional and completely without national and political prejudice. Any youth in need can be helped. Some admitted have committed no offence but are simply homeless or vagrant. Some are bored, 'spoiled' boys from well-to-do families who have turned to crime from too little or too much parental attention. In addition, we like to have about ten so-called 'positive' boys students and skilled workers who help to exert an influence on their more 'negative' comrades, without any direct power or authority.

-To be continued-

to be

## Travellers on the Way

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At present in Denmark is Miss Radha Bhatt from Rangpur, a friend and helper of our Indian Secretary. She is studying at the Folk High School in Roekilde, but hopes to travel in Europe before she returns.

On her way back to Japan via Central Europe is Motoko Hati, a commercial artist who spent over a year in England studying the language and finding out about our life in her limited spare time - she worked very hard in a Youth Hostel. Meanwhile, her mother, although speaking only Japanese, maintained their Open Door. Now another young Japanese friend, a young helper of Mr Amano, is studying in London for a year and living as an au-pair girl with a family. Again we hope that she will meet more Servas people before her return.

Earlier last year we were pleased to see Ulf Christensen, one of our earliest Secretaries, from Norway. His main task and interest is in the compilation of an international peace directory.

Last year, Erika Roth was studying in U.S.A and used the Work-Study-Travel system. She expressed a wish to help on her return to Germany and is now busy with other returned travelers forming a committee and resuscitating the branch.

A traveler to England via Paris was a young Czechoslovakian doctor, Bob, who came with a scholarship on a Study Conference. A lively enthusiastic young man with many interests from photography to youth work. In the brief three weeks he was here, he had hardly time to see all he wished of England, our health and recreational facilities, and the whole world of teenage culture of which he had heard. His own comments and photographs were of great interest to his hosts and we are happy to learn that he is working enthusiastically to develop hospitality in his own country. He traveled to the Conference with his father and they were both very helpful in discussing the East/West situation.

Finally, some quotations from a letter sent by a prospective traveler for 1966.

"Despite many long evenings of discussion ...with my fellow students, I would certainly not suggest that my opinions are completely formed, but by continued discussion with people from different backgrounds, one can gain new insight into the problems of the world. It is said that TRAVEL BROADENS THE MIND but I don't suppose for a moment that simply to go to the U.S. to look at the Empire State building or the Niagara Falls, will broaden my mind. I do believe that to meet Servas hosts, people obviously interested in the problems of society, can be of immense value...the very size of the U.S. means that it must exhibit a broad spectrum of the goods and evils of society."

NEWS continued from page 2.

How can we help these Overseas Visitors? Can we make contact with them through extravellers in collages and universities and invite them to travel here? Can we find out about local problems and invite them to our homes? Are we working with such bodies as housing associations and international centres? Can we help with teaching of English? And so on. If you are involved in any interesting work or contact with immigrants, we she would welcome news or an article.

The Commonweal Collection of books is a little known but very worthwhile venture, organized by our friend, David Haggett who has now returned to 1 Columbia Place, Winchcombe St, Cheltenham. The collection consists of works on the social, religious and philosophical aspects of mans life, especially in regard to the creation of a non-violent social order. The Gandhi Memorial Trust gave number of the books published in Inida. These specialized books not easily obtainable elsewhere are available on loan and an Author Index compiled by David is available on request. If you live in the vicinity, you could visit the collection. We are pleased to note how many of the books are the work of Servas sponsors. Here are a few examples: -

Alexander - Consider India

Britain - Testament of Youth, etc.

Del Vasto - From Gandhi to Vinoba (the author is a French host)

R.Gregg - The Power of Non-violence, etc.

Junk - The Children of the Ashes.

Lonsdale - Removing the Causes of War.

Wellock - New Horizons, etc.

We also find a number of books which affected our early thinking, such as -

The Journal of John Woolman

The Wisdom of John Woolman - Reynolds

Saint on the March - H.Tenyson

Ends and Means - Husley

All Things Common - Bishop.

#### SERVAS MEETINGS

The London Group which formed round a neucleus of returned travelers hopes to continue to meet, probably in North London. If you would like to have particulars, please let us know. We hope to arrange other meeting in different parts of the country - can you offer hospitality for an afternoon or part-accommodation for a weekend?

Servas Helpers We should be grateful of you help in various ways. Look at this Broadsheet isn't the typing shocking? Couldn't you write an article as good or better than most? Are you mot engaged in equally interesting activities we should like to hear about? If you are a traveler, will you send a report we can use for publication? If you will give us permission to cut and edit but not alter it, this would save a lot of time.

Can we help you with information and ideas. If you would like to start some activity in the Autumn ,perhaps we can send you material or speakers. We can publicize you activities too. Let us know!!!