

SERVAS

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

First Half-year 1982

No. 16



SERVAS INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

It is announced with much regret that in late December, 1981, Graham Thomas resigned as President due to extreme pressure of work and family commitments. This was a sad loss to the membership, who will want to wish him well and to thank him most sincerely for all he has done as President for *Servas* and world peace. He remains Secretary of *Servas* Great Britain. Donald Fawcett of Los Angeles, our Vice-President, is Acting President until the next elections at the 1983 International Conference. We all hope he will enjoy this challenging and rewarding task.

The piece that follows was culled from "The Friend" by our International General Secretary, Barbara Whitehead, herself a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers) and one who knows Africa and Africans well. Readers may find it enlightening to reflect on these paragraphs after reading the letter from Davis Masifa, *Servas* Secretary in Uganda, published in S.I.N. No. 15. We are indebted to "The Friend" for printing and to the author for writing this graphic reminder of the eternally fascinating diversities and similarities which create the multifarious variations on the theme of humankind and which both divide and unite us.

Rosalind Schama

We all live
under the same sky,
but we don't all have
the same horizon.

Konrad Adenauer

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US

Roger Naumann of Nailsworth Meeting, who contributed this article to "The Friend" of 3rd July, 1981, is OXFAM's representative in Uganda.

Living and working in an alien society and culture, one is continually brought up against the practical implications of the belief that there is a part of God in every person. If one interpretation of this is that all people have something good in common, then surely this must be evident between everybody, regardless of race and nationality.

There is no doubt that there are certain basic attributes which all people have in common, like laughter, tears, anger and joy. But how and when these are expressed appears to be conditioned by culture and background. It is easy for us to extend this belief in common goodness and common attributes, in such a way that we assume certain reactions of other people in particular circumstances. We are then very disappointed, and even begin to question the basic belief, when we do not receive these reactions. Thus, across a cultural divide, we find people laughing when we expect them to show sorrow or embarrassment; we find a sort of patience and accept 0 - 6740 Landau (al.ance, when we would tend to be getting annoyed and want something done right away ...

In the field in which we are working, here in Uganda, we encounter this problem of the unexpected reaction most commonly in the whole question of gratitude. For various reasons, mainly related to the fact that we happen to be materially better off than most of those around us, and because we are involved in the "aid business", we are often in the position of being asked to give. As Europeans, we expect to be asked in a particular way and take it for granted

that the giver is thanked - that is, that "gratitude" is shown. Here, on the surface, our experience is rather different. In most cases, if people come to the door to ask for something, they will stand there for a long time, some formal greetings will pass, and what seems like a demand is put: "You will take me to Kampala when you go?" Or "I need to bury my brother, you will give me forty shillings?" And afterwards, though undoubtedly people are glad to have gone to Kampala or to have had the money if this proves possible, there is no obvious show of thanks.

Here in Africa, we have been brought more and more to the view that giving is something which must be done by people who happen to be in a position to give, and it is perfectly acceptable for people to put demands on them; it is the luck of the draw whether one gets anything from it. In practical terms, the giver may be rewarded at some later date by the receiver, but does not experience *any* emotional thanks at the time. From the receiver's point of view, the important thing is to get as much as possible out of the giver when contact is made: if a driver can take you so far, you get him to take you all the way; if you have been given some *very* scarce soap, you ask for some equally scarce sugar and salt as well. I am not sure whether this is simply part of a homespun philosophy of natural justice, with rewards for the giver in an undefined future, or whether it is more a matter of practicality - making hay while the sun shines.

The interesting thing is that in a sense the obverse is also true. If the potential giver refuses to give, and is sufficiently adamant in his refusal, the asker may persist, but eventually gives up, and there appears to be little or no sense of bitterness or resentment as a result. It is just your luck if you happen to be in the right place with the right people at the right time. If you are not, then better luck next time.

In highlighting these differences in approach to situations arising between people, I am not saying that there are no bridges and that there can be no understanding; but such points in common

are quite elusive and one must expect to be disappointed at times. Because we believe that there is a part of God in every person, we must not assume the same sort of reactions and ways of showing emotion as we ourselves would show. The common good in everyone is only perceived through a filter conditioned by such factors as culture, race, sex, class and so on. The common element can always be found, but it is not always immediately obvious, nor should we give up searching for it.



I am happy to say that in response to Davis Masifa's appeal I received a generous donation from Leon Ben-simon of French *Servas*, which I forwarded to Lydia Jones, our Coordinator for Africa so that she could ensure that it reached Davis. I hope that other members may have also contributed care of Lydia, as that is the best route for us to use where African matters are concerned.

Rosalind Schama

Members will be delighted to learn that our Italian Sponsor, Danilo Dolci has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Doubtless many will want to support this nomination by a letter to the Chairman of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee, Oslo, Norway.

Further information about his life and work may be obtained from

*Peace Secretary, Reva King,
268 West 12th St.,
New York, N. Y. 10014, U.S.A.*

Summer in Denmark

There will be a Manniche Course for International Understanding this summer at the International People's College, Elsinore, Denmark, which was founded by Dr. Peter Manniche, our Danish Sponsor who died just over a year ago. The theme is "Cultural Differences - do they Hinder or Promote Progress?" and the Course will run from 25th July to 6th August. A group of thirty teachers from Wisconsin, USA will participate and *Servas* Denmark has

donated a scholarship for a Third World student. They feel that this is a course worthy of support by *Servas* members. For full details write to:

The Secretary,
*International People's College,
Elsinore, Denmark.*

HOSPITALITY

For some years the Italian Open Door List has contained pages about hospitality for longer periods than the traditional 2 to 3 days.

This form of hospitality is offered in exchange for various kinds of tasks, such as a few hours of language tuition, help in the home or on the land and baby-sitting, or by reciprocal hospitality, or by making a financial contribution for food.

The offer is based on the need that many feel to prolong the contacts they make without over-exploiting the Open Door principle. Travellers may thus acquire a better and deeper knowledge of a people and their country without feeling parasitic. Many Italian travellers often seek similar opportunities abroad.

For further information and contacts write to:

*SERVAS Italy,
c/o Uslenghi,
Via Ragazzi del '99 n. 2,
28100 Novara, Italy.*

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

To the person at whom it is pointing no weapon looks defensive. In company with our two children we have just returned from six weeks travelling on both sides of the 'Iron Curtain' across Europe. We are used, of course, to hearing of the Soviet menace, and this was a primary concern of our *Servas* hosts in Nurnberg, living as they did close to the frontier. But once on the other side, first in Hungary and later in Roumania and Bulgaria, it was remarkable how the fear remained the same. The statements issuing from London and Washington in the past two years sound awfully bellicose in Budapest and Sophia. The sense of encirclement is even greater there. And of course there is the unspoken fear of the Soviet Union at their backs. As one Eastern European *Servas* host put it to us - they could only stray so far from the Moscow view "because that is from where the wind blows".

We have to conclude, from this trip and an earlier visit to the Soviet Union, that a build-up of arms will not bring increased security to Western Europe. It merely heightens tension among the designated enemy. And that prompts a tighter internal grip so that consumer spending and social services can be cut

back in order to finance even greater spending on what they too sadly call 'defence'. In Poland, and now in Roumania too, they have found the burden almost too much to bear. And instability in these countries will lead to war.

We will wait for ever if we wait on all countries to disarm together - or at least we will wait until it is too late. It is our own governments we must pressure to give a lead, to lessen tension and thereby enable others to follow.

Yours sincerely,
*Christopher and Patricia Johnso
Servas hosts, 115, Bayswater Road, West
jesmond,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England.
13th September, 1981.*

To S.I.N.

I would like to share some of my experiences as a *Servas* traveller with other *Servas* hosts and travellers.

I left the continent of America after twenty-six months of travelling in the South, the Centre and the North. My first hosts were Bob and Dod Hill of Baraboo, Wisconsin, and they made me feel and understand right off what *Servas* is all about. Having a couple of travellers from New Zealand didn't change the warm feeling; on the contrary, they showed me their farm, and while working and helping them we talked and exchanged ideas and thoughts.

After that, I hitch-hiked and visited more hosts on my way. With some of them one felt immediately at home, whereas with others it took some time, but all were nice and open-minded people. In Rapid City I stayed with Don and Nancy Michlitsch - a nice experience. There I saw a baseball game for blind people with a ball that bleeps so that one hears where the ball is. I played with a mask over my eyes. This game was invented by Don so that he and his blind friends can play.

I will go on to tell about the good experiences I shared with various hosts, and I should like to thank them all.

I even visited my *Servas* hosts in San Diego twice. The first time was in August 1979 when I visited Susan McCarthy and Velma Block, and from there hitched on to the East Coast. A year and a half later, when I came back to the USA from Latin America, I stayed again at the same friendly *Servas* home in San Diego.

In Argentina I visited two hosts. I must suggest to anyone who goes there that they visit Roberto and Nora Medic in Esquel. I was their first and only visitor since they joined *Servas*. It's hard to get there, but it's a beautiful place and they are wonderful people.

My Chilean hosts were fantastic -

wonderful couple among those wonderful Chilean people.

I must mention Ruth Tichauer in Bolivia and her remarkable work with the Indians. I was fortunate to have the chance to help a little with her project and get to see it at first-hand. Stories about her work would take more than one issue of S.I.N.

When I was in Oregon, USA, Jay and Louise Ballman told me about their friend Esconcirco Medina in Ecuador. He was an exchange student and lived with them. So when I was in Ecuador a couple of months later I got in touch with him and told him about *Servas*. He was very interested and joined us and is the first *Servas* host in Ecuador. I hope many more Ecuadorean people will join him and us in *Servas*.

In Santiago, Chile, I met Sam and Vicky Lery, who were on their way to Israel, so I hope I'll meet them at home.

In a few places I also met travellers who were not staying with *Servas* hosts. In Boulder, Colorado, in a bar I talked to two German travellers, Sammy Stiirzl and Karl Heinz Hermann, and discovered that they too were *Servas* members. That, of course, was a good reason to celebrate! In Peru eight months later I talked to a Dane in a museum, and very shortly we discovered we were both with *Servas*. What a small world and what a big *Servas*! In Ecuador I met an Israeli couple who were also travelling under the *Servas* banner.

I hope that my experiences can be shared with others. *Servas* made it a great trip for me! Thank you -

Dany Bar, Hashalom 13,
Hod Hasharon 45 209, Israel.

Dear Editor,

I am a very active member of *Servas* International and attended its Conference in Baroda December, 1980/January, 1981.

I have my own houses in New Delhi and Simla, the latter being a very beautiful hill station in the Himalayas and the summer capital of India. My wife and I are very happy when any member of *Servas* comes to stay with us and friends from many parts of the world have already visited us.

I am a retired Publications Officer, Government of India, and the founder Director of Intercontinental Association of Friends and Pen Friends. My fervent desire is to establish a museum of children's toys from all over the globe. In this connection, any correspondence should be addressed to me at Rajmaya Estate, Simla 171004 (H.P.), India.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

G. C. Sharma, M.A., J.D.,
B.101/2, East of Kailash,
New Delhi 110065, India.

As Editor, I receive many comments, both complimentary and adverse, concerning the content of our Newsletter. It occurred to me that members would appreciate reading some of these to see how they compare with their own views and also to give them an idea of the problems of editing a news sheet, however small! Whether one edits a great internationally famed newspaper or a small one like ours, the editor must accept both brickbats and bouquets and carry on the task irrespective of praise or blame. So there follow a few extracts from letters I have received on this subject.

Rosalind Schama

I shall appreciate it if the magazine contains something about the peace efforts of its members so that our approach is objective. It is not your fault if you are not getting news of that type. Harivallabh Parikh (Bhai),
Regional Coordinator for South Asia.

I receive regularly a copy of the *Servas* International News and am happy to say that it is a very useful and well-produced bulletin.

Mr. G. C. Sharma, New Delhi.

Congratulations! The two issues you have edited are really nice!
Emilia Boikliev, Budapest.

We all get such a lot of pleasure out of your news. We are so far away, it's like a view of another world, and I hope disturbs our notorious complacency!
Yvonne Brown, Secretary,
Servas New Zealand.

S.I.N. 15 is naturally much appreciated by me. (It carried an article by her. Ed.) ... In addition to their internal problem of too many mailings to their members do they (officers) perchance want more travel reports that encompass more of Europe and the rest of the Globe?

Reva King, Peace Secretary & former
President of *Servas* International.

Issues 13 & 14 had little copy, apart from extensive coverage of the Conference in India, that I found of general interest for *Servas* Members... I agree with Antonie that we (i.e. countries with several hundred hosts) can't afford to send S.I.N. to hosts except with circulars. I believe those who send out circulars will usually do it twice a year. Some apparently don't send anything. We send circulars to hosts in Denmark in November and in March, the latter with the new Host List. Of course it is not a great burden for countries who have few hosts to distribute S.I.N.

Birgitte Damsgaard, Secretary, *Servas*
Denmark.

I enjoy getting the Newsletter, which I must congratulate you on.

A me Hansen, Area Coordinator,
Glencoe, Canada.

Congratulations for "Serves News"!

Luigi Uslenghi,
Secretary,
Italy.

Denise Waech (Treasurer & Asst. Sec. *Servas* International) and Antonie Fried (Coordinator for Europe & the Near East) have both written more than once expressing the opinion that S.I.N. should be devoted to hosts' reactions to their guests and *vice versa* and they both feel that two issues per annum are sufficient on financial grounds.

Graham Thomas (Secretary Great Britain and until recently President of *Servas* International) has found S.I.N. 13, 14 and 15 to his liking and our International Secretary, Barbara Whitehead has not registered any objections to the issues.



An open air discussion among the olive trees in a garden near Sorrento.

National Meeting

Brilliant sunlight on the superb Bay of Naples greeted Italian members and friends attending the Second National Meeting of *Servas* at Seiano di Vico Equense last autumn. The first was held in a monastery in the Camaldoli Forest in Tuscany two years ago.

About fifty participants had gathered from all over Italy, and they were joined by Janine Hall of *Servas*, France, who is the *Servas* observer at the United Nations in Geneva. She contributed outstandingly to the success of the gathering, having brought along audio-visual material and publications on disarmament issued by the UN, as well as a message from Kurt Waldheim's daughter, specially recorded for the meeting.

In her message Miss Waldheim, whose field at the UN is in fact disarmament, stressed the priority given to this issue by the UN, and she pointed out the importance of the next Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament, which is to be held in May or June, 1982. Miss Waldheim said that one of the most interesting de-

velopments of the first Session in 1978 was how it had stirred up world public opinion.

What can a non-governmental organization like *Servas* do? Miss Waldheim told us that it can help to enlighten public opinion and bring about greater awareness. One of the main tasks of the Disarmament Centre in Geneva is to make information readily available. In the closing part of her message Miss Waldheim stated that the UN will carry on its work, for although the results may not always live up to expectations, it is far better than making no effort at all to stop the lunatic arms race. She appealed to us to help the UN in preparing for the Second Special Session and asked for suggestions as to how this help might be given.

In his address the National Secretary, Luigi Uslenghi highlighted an aspect of public involvement in the peace campaign which is complementary to international politics. He spoke of a more personal commitment in one's daily life. It is the ordinary, everyday acts like writing a letter, throwing open one's home, or making friends with someone far away that can create a new outlook and can gradually change the world. Did not Amnesty International's strength spring from piles of letters, which had helped thousands of persons to be set free and made for more sensitive, better informed public opinion?

Luigi went on to say, "We did not join *Servas* because it is a delightful private club, but because we feel that a simple gesture or an encounter may be the means of paving the way to real peace."

After viewing two films on disarmament, members participated in a debate, which they were obliged to keep within strict bounds due to the limited time at their disposal. This sometimes lively debate revealed strikingly different points of view on the subject of peace in general and on disarmament in particular and outlined the role *Servas* could play in this field. These different attitudes reflect various reasons for becoming a member of our group and are in themselves a good thing, when not the result of a superficial approach. They are in keeping with the very essence of *Servas* as a means of getting to know others.

The meeting was brought to a close with an open air discussion on the solution of organizational problems that are encountered, held under centuries-old olive trees of the Sorrento Peninsula.

"DOING" BERLIN IN TWO DAYS

How does one spend a normal weekend? One relaxes, enjoys oneself, goes to town, has guests in, watches TV a little. In actual fact, a weekend isn't very long - before you know where you are, it's over.

I was therefore somewhat surprised when I heard about our German "friendship" hosts' invitation to a weekend get-together in Berlin. Wouldn't it be too harassing and would it really be worthwhile putting up with the long, tedious train journey? The idea seemed a little crazy, just crazy enough for me to decide to take part.

Now - after the trip - I feel a little ashamed that I could think the way I did. The trip was an unforgettable experience, which I would be willing to do all over again.

Unfortunately, we were only eight Danes (plus two-year-old Heidi) who shared in that wonderful experience. As I am a relatively new member of *Servas* and have never met other Danish hosts before, I was rather excited about meeting my fellow-passengers. I expected a positive experience (hosts should, in my opinion, be open, talkative, and have a sense of humour) and I must admit that my expectations were fully realized. The normally tedious journey on Friday night was an exciting experience. Yes indeed, right from the start we were in for a successful trip.

After the "documentation terror" in East Germany (what a set-up!), we finally reached West Berlin on Saturday morning. Here we were met by some of the hosts, who stood on the platform with flowers - fortunately these were artificial as they had waited for us for more than two hours!

We were then driven home to our respective hosts with whom we spent the day. Some of us used the time to "discover" Berlin (the Museum at "Checkpoint Charlie" is really worth a visit), while others felt the need to take to their beds.

Well now, the truth must be admitted, in the evening when we held a get-together with the rest of the hosts from Berlin and Hamburg, one regretted somewhat that one hadn't had a wink of sleep. However, despite our weariness we had an enjoyable evening. There was a lot of talking (my goodness, how difficult it is to speak German!), and Frau Fuchs, at whose home we all met,

EMERGE FROM PREHISTORY ...



can certainly be fully satisfied with the arrangements.

It struck me how different we all were - but just how nice that is in itself. Imagine if *Servas* was parry-politically or religiously influenced! That get-together certainly showed the variety of opinion there is in *Servas*; there is room for all peace-loving people, regardless of age, social status, religious background or political opinion.

On Sunday our hosts took us on a sightseeing tour of the city. Together we went around and saw something of "what one should see" and, of course, more besides. Naturally it was no normal tourist trip - it was more of a stroll, enjoying the sunshine and one another and talking a lot, when suddenly - it seemed as though quite by chance - one came across "die Gedachtneskirche", "der Zoo", "das Reichstagsgebäude", "Brandtenberger Tor", etc. At one and the same time both pleasant and exciting.

At 4 o'clock we went our various ways with our respective hosts and spent a pleasant evening. A few of us saw something quite outside the ordinary sightseeing when we entered Potsdamer Strasse, which had just been given new signposts: "Rattay Strasse", in memory of a young man, Klaus Rattay, killed in a demonstration the day before when the police attacked the squatters in a nearby building. There many hundreds of people were holding a "wake", and the street was covered with flowers and slogans. We were right at the centre of the events that had been in the headlines, not only in Berlin but also in the Danish papers.

We left by the 10.0 pm train for home, and we could look back on a wonderful weekend. I certainly feel richer by the experience. I must admit it is really hard to take the night train home and go directly to work, but that shouldn't put anyone off. Given another such opportunity, I would do it all over again!

Mogensjeppeesen,
Servas, Denmark

Martin Niemoller - A PROFILE

One of West Germany's two *Servas* Sponsors, Rev. Martin Niemoller, celebrated his 90th birthday on 14th January. A number of interesting interviews were given by this well-known pacifist to mark this occasion, and *Servas* members will be interested in his views.

Before relating parts of one interview, it would be appropriate to give some background information on Mr. Niemoller. During World War I he commanded a submarine, then turned his back on the military and began to study

theology in 1919. Ordained in 1924, he went on to lead several Protestant Church organizations and was foremost in the ranks of those who openly opposed the country's new racist and militaristic regime. A confrontation with Hitler in 1934 cost Mr. Niemoller his post as a church leader, but he continued to preach against the new nationalism until his arrest in 1937. He spent the years 1938 to 1945 in a concentration camp. More recently, Mr. Niemoller was President of the World Council of Churches. He has also been active as head of the German section of the International Association of Conscientious Objectors.

During the January interviews Mr. Niemoller was asked if he could explain why the Peace Movement has grown so enormously in recent years. He said that there are two points - the real danger of a nuclear war and the strange politics of the big powers. The Warsaw Pact countries on one side and the NATO member states on the other are being steered by the super powers into a catastrophe.

Asked to compare the new Peace Movement with that of the 1950's, Mr. Niemoller said that the old one was an affair of intellectuals. "It's good that this is no longer the case," he said. The Peace Movement today has become larger, even though it is not supported by the bigger organizations. Today, the fact that the collective survival is threatened, means that we have a completely new situation for most people.

Speaking about his early life, Mr. Niemoller said that although there were conflicts, it was never a question of the survival of humanity; it was an individual concern. The situation now is much more serious than either World War I or World War II. There are many indications that the Peace Movement fights, not only for peace, but also for a better, cleaner environment and against nuclear power plants. It is a great hope.

Asked what could hinder the Peace Movement most, the Pastor replied that the battle is with the idea of what constitutes progress. This important idea will decide the destiny of humanity. Up to today we have thought that progress was the perfection of technical knowledge. If it could be called "progress", we did it. This way of thinking is the basic idea of military research and the arms race. He believes that, in reality, real progress has nothing to do with the idea of technical knowledge. There is no progress without a goal, and there are no goals left. Everything now is turning in circles, and this type of so-called "progress" destroys our environment.

As a pastor, Mr. Niemoller has continually told people that to pray simply

isn't enough; they must take an active part in working for the good of all mankind. Taking an active part in the struggle for peace is something we in *Servas* should all be doing.

Arne Hansen, Area Coordinator, Servas Canada.

WHO'S THE TERRORIST?

Letter to the Editor of *The Guardian*, 14.10.81.
Sir,

Is there among your readers some philosopher, ecclesiastic, or politician who can help me to get to grips with the following problem? To what extent, or in what degree, is the person who makes, orders, pays for, aims or fires a Trident nuclear missile better or worse than those who make, order, pay for, place, or set off a nail-bomb in central London?

*William Harnett,
King's Lynn.*

SOME SERVAS NEW ZEALAND ACTIVITIES

Most provinces hold annual get-togethers and in 1981 Auckland hosted over one hundred hosts; Wellington seventy; South Island fifty to sixty and at Wanganui I hosted a semi-live-in meeting at the Quaker Community Centre, which was thoroughly enjoyed by eighty hosts and their families. We now have 400 hosts, and in the remote rural areas they really need more travellers. *Servas* is their only contact with other countries. We are so small, and of course, have to plan even our 1,200 mile trip to our nearest neighbour. I'm sure this is why we are so hospitable and friendly. We also must be affluent in spite of terrible unemployment and vast economic problems, because so far (up to early Dec. '81) I have approved over one hundred travellers.

Our Peace Secretary, Nora Tibble of Auckland, presented a very comprehensive and interesting Report at our Wanganui meeting, with particular emphasis on the nuclear threat, both in Europe and here in the Pacific, where we are so close to the disastrous results of France's nuclear testing at Mururoa Atoll. Many hosts appreciate the opportunities for discussion with travellers, but a number are too shy and lack confidence. Perhaps they will gain more positive attitudes when they travel *Servas*.

*Yvonne Brown,
Secretary,
Servas, New Zealand.*

For Non Members; What is SERVAS about anyway?

"With every true friendship we build more firmly the foundation on which the peace of the whole world rests." - M. K. Gandhi.

Servas is an international co-operative system of travellers and volunteer hosts, established to help build world peace, good will, and understanding by providing opportunities for contacts between persons of different cultures and backgrounds.

Hosts (mostly individuals and families, plus some community groups) provide information about themselves for listing in a national host directory. Approved *Servas* travellers choose the hosts they wish to write to, or telephone, about possible visits (usually two nights) to share life in the hosts' homes and communities.

Servas charges travellers a small fee. No money changes hands between travellers and hosts. (Ideas, we hope, pass freely between them.)

Servas is non-profit, interracial, and interfaith. It has consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organization with ECOSOC in the United Nations.

Reflections the role Servas

My philosophical problem is complicated. My impression is that many travellers come more to see cities than their hosts. Travellers who are really interested in people, who are committed to peace movements seem to stay at home. They must find that one needs in the first instance to establish good relationships at home. For this one needs much time, certainly more than a day or two.

On the other hand, travelling is expensive, especially if one travels far, as *Servas* travellers often do. I have been confronted with underdevelopment in Zaire, and I sometimes feel ashamed of our luxurious life, compared with that in the greater part of the world. I can only travel for pleasure if at least three times the cost is given to development project in the Third World. For me and most *Servas* members travelling is done for pleasure.

There follows an extract from something I read in the Globetrotters Club Newsletter for January/February 1980 a report of a trip to India. "I was light years away from Mother Teresa's attitude - every soul sent by God to be cared for with love and dignity - yet I would continue to drive lorryloads of goods to the docks because I hated waste in our

community while there was want in

another. The same applied to my airline ticket; although it was the cheapest going, I knew that in the style of the OXFAM advert it would provide X number of people with Y number of hookworm pills or whatever. This must always be the conflict in the mind of the conscientious traveller; if anyone has come up with a good put-down, I would like to hear it."

Why do we continue with *Servas*? Less for talking and learning; more to help people to travel abroad. In Africa we so often received hospitality from people who could not understand us, who could not talk to us. They slept on the ground and gave us the only bed. We learned that we have to help each other as much as we can. Is it not significant that Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize for helping as much as she could the most forgotten people? By giving away everything - all material property, and even her lifetime?

The standard traveller is not the same as he/she used to be. This I have heard from "old-timers" in the movement. Even the founder, Bob Lutweiler, has withdrawn as a host, and his suggestion to divide *Servas* into two groups - the globe-trotters and the peace workers - looks serious to me. Maybe most of the peace-minded people stay at home, or at least they don't rush to Brussels and Bruges. Hosts living in the Belgian countryside did not have a single visitor last year and we in the towns had only twenty.

*Joe Verwimp,
Secretary,
Servas, Belgium.*

The United Nations Support Group - Recommendations to Members

Disarmament

1. Promote and participate in developing Information Centres about Disarmament around the world.
2. Publicize the June, 1982 UN Special Session on Disarmament.
3. Encourage attendance at the Special Session.
4. Try to submit meaningful papers for the Special Session - needed as soon as possible. (Address them to

*Reva King,
Peace Secretary,*

*268 West 12th St., New York City, N.Y.
10014 USA.)*

World Development

1. Keep in touch with Development issues.

2. Study in depth specific programmes and policies.
3. When possible and desirable promote action with other Non-governmental Organizations in relation to the United Nations system.

Aging

1. Encourage *Servas* travellers to study and discuss developments regarding the aging in various countries.
2. Help improve attitudes between youth and the aging through attempts to understand their differences and also recognize areas of mutual concern.
3. Help older people keep up with technical fields by encouraging young people in various parts of the world (including the Third World) to correspond with their older counterparts.
4. Prepare and publish profiles describing older people, including *Servas* members.
5. Alert members to the 1982 World Assembly on Aging.

N.B. Our representative at the UN Committee on the Aging is Henrietta Lund, who is 85 years old.

Servas International Activities with the United Nations - 1981/

It is difficult to report briefly on our extensive involvement at UN Headquarters in Geneva and New York and the initial work of our new representatives in Vienna. Describing what the U.N. does for *Servas* must be considered in the broad concepts of our common goals - international understanding, peace, human rights, development, our spirit of international *mutual* service, and our other *Servas* aims. These are the bases on which *Servas International* was granted Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN. Composed of government representatives from most countries of the world but lacking the authority of a world government, the UN needs the political will of its member governments and citizens to achieve adequate inter-national cooperation and assure survival of our world.

Although many people may criticize the UN for its slow progress towards our goals, we know that all efforts depend on a network of constructive communica-

tion and that the UN is our best present resource for meeting with other international peace organizations whose rep-

resentatives compose the various NGO Committees.

DISARMAMENT is our priority in both Geneva and New York, with preparations for the 7th June to 9th July Special Session on Disarmament requiring major attention.

We still need material from you that may enhance public awareness of the issues concerning disarmament. Also, anyone who will attend this Special Session should make arrangements for *Servas* hosting *as soon as possible*.

In Geneva our *Servas* Representative, Janine Hall, has received encouragement and help of all kinds, which she has used in arranging challenging community programme discussions on Disarmament and Peace. (See special report on Janine's work.)

Related to Disarmament is UNISPACE, of which our *Servas* representative is Secretary and has worked actively towards the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes to aid and benefit life on earth, in addition to monitoring the UNISPACE II Conference in Vienna for August, 1982. We hope our Vienna *Servas* delegate can represent us at this Conference. If any other European *Servas* members are knowledgeable and interested in this Conference, will they please contact us through the European Regional Coordinator, Antonie Fried.

DEVELOPMENT. The 1980/81 *Servas* Conference Presidential address highlighted the importance for *Servas* of the Brandt Commission Report "North-South, a Programme for Survival". At the NGO Development Committee, global international negotiations have been the major focus. You undoubtedly know reasons why there has been so little progress. At the NGO discussion on CANCUN, the latest UN Conference dealing with global international negotiations, our *Servas* representative was shocked to find, in answer to his question, that the role of transnational corporations representing private interests in the third or fourth world was totally ignored at CANCUN. He asks that all *Servas* members carefully study all related facts and have the courage of their convictions to speak up before it is too late.

Protecting HUMAN rights is basic for the UN and for *Servas*. In addition to the ongoing activities of the NGO Human Rights Committee, in which freedom of religion and Southern Africa have been subjects of major action, we have included the Aging, Youth, and Women as Human Rights issues for *Servas*, based on our concern for *all people*.

THE EVOLUTION OF SERVAS

Serval is evolving, and the pattern our organization is taking may be of great importance for the future. Inspired by the spirit in *which Servas* was founded, I feel that the most vital word that hosts and travellers should bear in mind is TOLERANCE. All the principles required to establish positive relationships should then follow.

In my opinion, this is less and less the case. Travellers carry with them their habits, a language, a culture, but they are not necessarily prepared to accept those of their hosts. They are far more concerned to see Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre. They think that the normal language is English. Of course, I must admit that it is spoken around the world and is useful, but it is also a cultural language, and when *Serval* asks people in some countries to speak English in order to become members, the movement is thereby giving priority to a dominating language. (Does anybody really make such an outrageous demand? Ed.) Where is the tolerance?

Are we all the same, or do we want to compare and understand our differences? To become a *Serval* member

JOIN, DONATE.

Join the several thousand *Servos* hosts and travellers worldwide, whose friendships can perhaps help to hold the fragile world together.

Check one or both of the boxes; enclose a donation if possible, and a long envelope addressed to yourself; and 01 mail the form.

I am not now a member of *Servas*, but I am interested in the organization. Please send me information including the name and address of someone who can tell me more about *Servas* in this part of the world. To help *Servas* in its efforts towards peace and understanding, I enclose a donation.

**Please send International Postal Cou ns
Money Order or Cheque**

to:

**Denise Waech, Treasurer, Servos
International, Cersstr. 23, CH-M8
Zurich, Switzerland**

All editorial &

information enquiries to: Rosalind Schema,
Editor, S.I.N. 9 Partway Lane, Coker Hill,
Yeovil, Somerset, England.

**SERVAS THANKS YOU. PLEASE
P NT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS**

means that things are not always easy, and members should be approved only if their beliefs accord with what we aim to achieve.

If we require hosts to speak foreign languages, we shall be favouring the middle class. Thus we shall soon become a group of white intellectual travellers, all with exactly the same interests and feelings. To be an internationalist seems to me to mean that one is equally interested in all the peoples of the world and their cultures, not that one wants to create uniformity.

The question is 'Are we elitist?' If we are not a 'travel bureau' but a non-violent, inter-racial organization, in a certain way we are. It means that we have a reflective and determined position and that we do not remain passive in the face of world events. Yet in another way we are not. We do not care about members' origins - whether they are poor or rich, coloured or white, male or female, young or old.

I am, personally, much concerned about the so-called Third World. Are we to expect a hut equipped with a bathroom for our cherished evening shower while our hosts suffer from lack of food and water? By the time they get bathrooms they will have moved into 'beautiful' skyscrapers anyway, which

will be considered 'progress'! I feel that the accepted facts of one's own culture should be constantly questioned when one is travelling. *Serval* should give us a wonderful opportunity to deepen our knowledge of the world and our fellow inhabitants.

What I visualize as our main objective is that, together, we continue to develop a friendship movement. The attitude we must adopt to achieve this end is the acceptance of what is offered, including POVERTY. Money has nothing to do with *Serval*. If one has some, one can always send help from one's homeland. In no circumstances must we interfere in the countries we visit, or expect to receive what they haven't got. One's greatest satisfaction should be when a smiling face welcomes one at the open door of a house.

Helene Flottes, Servos Host, Pares.

To have faith in the possibility of love as a social and not only exceptional-individual phenomenon, is a rational faith based on the insight into the very nature of man.

*Erich Fromm, The
Art of Loving*



WORLD CONSTITUTION AND PARLIAMENT

the first session of a Provisional World Parliament is scheduled for Brighton, England from 4 th to 17 th September, 1982. Dr. Max Habicht, the Swiss International Sponsor of Servas, is one of the two Hon. Legal Advisers to the World Constitution and Palrament Association, and Mrs. Helen Tucker, one of our Canadian Sponsors, is a Vice-President. Anyone requiring further information about the organization and the Provisional World Parliament's first session should write to:

*Philip Isely,
Secretary General, WCPA,
1480 Hoyit Street, Suite 31,
Lakewood
Colo. 80215
USA*