

SERVAS PEACEBUILDERS

Minutes of the International Conference held

July 8th - 12th, 1965, Wien, Austria.

Present: Austria, Kurt Schmid, France, Joseph Girard, U.S.A., Reva King, Switzerland, Bernhard Vögeli, International Co-ordination, Pat Knowles.

Reports from Japan, Africa, Canada, Norway, Holland, Germany, England, Italy.

Visitors included members of the Austrian Committee, prospective travellers from Austria and India and hosts from Wien and Wels.

Although so few countries were able to send delegates, the reports and correspondence received from almost all the other countries were a great encouragement and indication of the interest which is growing in Servas now and the information received gave us much material for discussion and stimulus for action; especially in East/West relations on which the emphasis of the Conference was focussed.

Austria leads to National Reports
next section.

Africa Barbara Aquah continues to give substantial help to travellers one of whom reports being given a list of hosts and many personal contacts. Barbara herself reports a trip which she made in Africa which will be printed in the Broadsheet. She works closely with Hodie Edwards who takes responsibility during her absence.

As these activities are concentrated in Western Africa, it was requested that we seek a representative in South Africa, perhaps through UNESCO contacts try to get help in Central and East Africa through Kenyan Quakers. Joseph Girard offered help in following up his contacts and forming new ones in North Africa. Albert Schweitzer has expressed interest in our work.

Canada This branch has an outstanding Host List and is already sending carefully selected travellers abroad. Louise Murphy, who has now taken over the work, is seeking new contacts, who should develop committee proceedings and organisation.

Holland Arthur Sietsma reports a good, up-to-date list and a general enthusiasm to receive and recruit more travellers. There are now developments in Benelux. He offered the suggestion that travellers should contact him personally in Eindhoven for advice in planning their trips. We felt that this was a valuable suggestion which could be even more helpful if a committee representative could be found at a point where travellers enter the country, e.g. Amsterdam.

France Here Servas continues to develop rapidly with many more hosts and travellers. A French committee has now been set up with a Secretary-Monique Chantrelle (see list)-in Paris. Joseph Girard will now act as President/Advisor. Some hosts in France have very specialised interests and they plan to provide an additional list of people who can cater for a wider range of travellers.

Sweden Ulla Berglin has continued to carry responsibility as far as possible and even to send out travellers while seeking alternative help. We hope that her recent new contacts with Finns and Esperantists will further develop and that we can offer help through Austria and Switzerland, and through former travellers.

Bernhard Vogel on 31.3.65. Servas will work through the Swiss Student Travel Association where he is authorised to use facilities to interview and accept travellers at their Office. This has already resulted in a dramatic expansion in the number of travellers sent out and the next steps are a revision of the host list and more publicity through the Student Travel Organisations brochure, in which we hope that countries seeking travellers will be enlisted. Bernhard himself is primarily concerned with co-operation between S.T.O.s and Servas. He himself is not a pacifist or a member of any peace organisation. It was hoped that Toni Ottenburg would retain some responsibility for Servas in Switzerland and would help to build a committee which would develop other aspects of Servas and give a direction to policy.

Japan Masuo Amano has created a large expansion in the Japanese Host List and an even greater one in the flow of Travellers sent to Europe and the U.S. An increasing number manage to stay and make a Work-Study trip. We also welcome friends passing for short visits for we feel the value of any contact with cultures so different but so desirous of meeting and understanding others. Travellers to Japan have increased, too. It is essential when groups arrive, especially on the same day, that we ask the Japanese committee to take the major part in arranging their visits.

U.S.A. Reva King reported continued expansion of its Host-traveller system with full utilisation of its committees and a marked increase of travellers sent by other countries. Other important developments have been the securing of office facilities, growth in the use of Area Representatives, progress in Latin-American contacts, reallocation of committee responsibilities to provide stimulation from new leadership and enriched program activities including meetings with representatives from other organisations, public meetings, special "At Home" evenings for foreigners residing in New York and the innovation of an "American to Americans Americans" pilot project.

Latin-America A short but useful list has been compiled and circulated. U.S. will continue to help with development

India The Indian Secretary, Harivalabh Parikh and the Indian Open Doors are still eager to receive travellers, although conditions have made it increasingly difficult for many travellers to leave. Students already abroad are being recruited and in fact, during the Conference, two Indian enquirers decided to travel with Servas and openings in Kerala and Madras are promised. We hope a Servas group, an amateur film team traveling there can bring back material for future publicity.

England Connie Thorpe has completely revised the host lists this month, while being responsible for general development of the work with helpers in the Birmingham area. In London, Pat Knowles, with the help of another group of contacts mainly in student circles has been developing co-operation with British Universities Student Travel Association and N.American club, which are sending students to U.S. and Japan this year, a number of whom will use the travel system. We continue to receive many travellers.

Germany Jean Naves, our Correspondent cannot continue for health reasons, but we hope that Kurt Schmid can speak to the German Quaker Yearly Meeting to enlist help and feel that many returned travellers, esp. for the U.S. should be willing to build up some Organisation there. Denmark is also now without a secretary, but again we hope to help through similar contacts and student travel organisations.

Austria. Kurt Schmid, the Secretary, has a functioning Committee who have met to review policy and to assist him in current projects. Meeting with hosts have been arranged during the year. Some Servas publicity was given by the Austrian and German television. Contacts with the Easter March resulted in the recruitment of members of C.N.D. as Servas travellers. Dr Jungk has promised to lead a Volk High School group and Kurt will include some Servas people. Other organisations concerned with Servas are Sonnenberg, the Esperantists and other organisations who are working for peace and international understanding.

A significant new development has been the initiation of East/West projects, consisting mainly of collaboration with groups in the field of Adult Education visiting Wien, who came from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. They were offered hospitality with Servas hosts with a good response. Hosts visiting during the Conference also expressed appreciation of this scheme. ON

East/West Relations and Servas.

The Conference decided that our primary concern in 1965-6 should be the development of co-operation with some Eastern European countries, in particular Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Jugo-Slavia and the U.S.S.R.

We are aware that in embarking on this project we must associate with people of all opinions, who must have full opportunity for discussion. As individuals, the standard requirements of a traveller, i.e personal integrity and a willingness to accept a learning relationship in ordinary family conditions, must of course be fulfilled.

This development is initially provisional and a final decision about details of co-operation cannot be completed until we have specific experiences to consider. It must always be clearly stated that Servas is a non-Governmental, non-Affiliated organisation. Eastern representatives should be invited as observers to the 1966 Conference.

Servas delegates to Kurt Schmid, the Austrian Secretary, responsibility for initiating negotiations and embarking on these provisional projects. The Conference asked Kurt to proceed in this matter immediately with its full support. Your opinion is required -in writing, please- by October 1st, 1965.

Note A small Servas delegation consisting of Kurt Schmid, Joseph Girard and Pat Knowles was able to visit a new contact in Bratislava on 14.7.65 and feel hopeful that this will lead to further developments.

Authorisation of Minutes of Conference

It seemed that many of the matters we have discussed needed very specific recording. The National reports, ^{above} the statement on East/West Relations above, and other starred + material was carefully minuted in the Conference and/or checked and written after discussion between Kurt, Reva and Pat at the end.

Reports.cont.

Norway Julie Kjelsaas continues as a very efficient and helpful correspondent while wishing to recruit workers with more opportunities to develop Servas work. Again, we hope to be able to assist development with some of the means previously mentioned.

1. International Decision-making Responsibility

Beginning with the 1966 Conference, it is proposed that the Conference shall have the power and the responsibility for making decisions. This Proposal must be ratified in writing by 10.1.1st October 1965 and submitted to the International Co-ordinator by the Committees or representatives responsible for Servas in their respective countries.

11. The Calendar year shall the Unit for Servas Administration, i.e. the end of the year for assessment of statistics, closing of financial accounts etc. shall be December 31st.

111 Finance Funds for International expenses have continued a problem since members have had to meet most costs from their personal resources. (The international Co-ordinator has receives some help from the British Committee supplemented by small contributions from U.S.) Broadsheet are not a real source of income.

Therefore, National Branches are asked to set aside an agreed % of not less than 10% of list fees or the equivalent for use in International co-ordination expenses and development. In 1965-6. At least 50% shall be used for East-West Development and the major remaining portion shall be used to help to form committees in new countries.

Travellers payments shall continue to be received by the committee handling the application. Income shall be based on the calendar year and contributions shall be sent to Pat Knowles, the present Co-ordinator or her successor.

There shall be a balance sheet for International funds which shall be reported in the Newsletter and officially audited.

1V. "Screening" A! Use of referees is still considered important in s by several countries. However, in recognising the decreased risk involved for travellers recommended by other organisations, the use of referees can also be subject to the judgement flexibility and discretion of the approving committees.

B. In emergency referral of travellers applicat ions to another national secretar for for interview or confirmation, it is requested that the referring secretary attempt to secure referances and notify the prospective interviewer of results.

C. Bio-data forms from the U.S. are acceptable when required by the co-operating organisation and when completed on the reverse by the traveller. However, L.I.s are still preferred for all other travellers.

V. Distribution of Host Lists In endorsing approval on L.I.s note should be included of lists given and those still required.

VI. Travellers. The vast majority of travellers have been well selected and briefed. Because of a very fdw past experiences, we feel that the Secretary in a country where a traveller commits a very grave offence has the r@sponsibility to remove all lists and to cancel the L.I. (if possible after consultation with other committee members or nearby hosts) He should immediately contact the Secretary in the country of orignal approval and notify all other secretaries concerned himself. In this period of rapid expansion, caution is important and should be maintained.

Administration
cont.

Responsibilities of International
Co-ordination +

1. Making of a 1/4ly Newsletter and contact with national branches.
2. Correspondence involving interpretation of Servas and international enquiries regarding points of administration.
3. Contacts with other International bodies.
4. Collaboration with responsible committees in the development of new committees.

Pat Knowles was urged to continue as International Co-ordinator and agreed pro tem under the following conditions

1. That work for the coming year be outlined by the Conference
2. That Newsletters should be composed of material submitted by committees in quotable, identifiable form at given times.
3. That Committees had full autonomy and responsibility for direct communication on matters of emergency or bi-lateral concern.
4. That the following matters were understood to be inappropriate for action by I.C.
 - a. Policy Decisions
 - b. Cancellation of Traveller Approvals
 - c. Complaints between Committees.
5. That the Conference approves the principal of a Working Group to whom any matter of international concern or other controversial correspondence could be referred.

Pat has already a number of active contacts in London and hopes that one of them, an active peace worker can act as Assistant International Co-ordinator and ultimately assume responsibility.

VIII Reports. In order to help travellers to submit required final reports to approving committee, report forms should be attached to the list, giving hosts visited, corrections and also preferably comments and evaluation of their personal travel experiences.

IX. New Lists Most people favoured the retaining on the list who did not answer circulars as many of these are subsequently found to be active. ++ This should be clearly indicated however, and briefing and interviewing should present a realistic position and an awareness that hosts may have moved or not be at home, especially if they themselves have not checked by letter. Tel. numbers of hosts or neighbours should be included whenever possible.

XII Briefing Travellers. It can also be stressed that Outlying hosts particularly welcome guests and that city hosts are more pressed. We can indicate that a Servas traveller is not a privileged guest expecting to receive formal hospitality but has the special privilege of being accepted almost like a member of the family into the family situation with all the advantages and disadvantages which this involves. On the other hand, where relationships are more formal as part of the cultural pattern, we must be sensitive to the hosts reactions and anticipations, while working towards this "Family" acceptance as our ultimate goal.

XI. Recruiting Travellers as Hosts and also as Helpers is stressed.

X. Lists Length of Stay While hosts are free to choose, we should like to stress the need for longer periods with one host and the raising of the 2-day-minimum to 3 wherever possible.

++ We should use postal facilities for return of "dead" mail rather than requesting mail to be forwarded.

Co-operation with Student Travel Organisations

As a result of successful co-operations with S.T.A. in U.S., Switzerland and England, committees in every country are asked to find possibilities of closer co-operation with Student Travel Associations - national branches and associated organisations - in recruiting travellers and hosts, while retaining the responsibility for their final approval.

Notes During the Conference Kurt Schmid made contacts with the Austrian Association ÖKISTA who also promised to work closely with Servas on the organisational and administrative side, thus leaving him free to concentrate on development projects.

Further contacts in Italy, Norway, Benelux and Canada especially are recommended, Details, addresses and information about the International Student Host list will be included in the next Newsletter.

The Publication "Study Abroad" gives a comprehensive list of possibilities for students and can be obtained from

UNESCO
Place de Fontenay,
Paris 7e

Contact with other Organisations

The various branches commented on their contacts - see reports - and we ask you to tell us about progress and new contacts for the Newsletter. Others mentioned -

International Ham Hops. Contacts through radio amateurs.
I.Y.H.A. Always useful as a supplement especially in countries such as Italy.

Person to Person organisations vary from an evening's hospitality to family stays, e.g. "Experiment in International Living".

I.F.L. and other international social groups offer free and friendly contacts.

Other Matters Arising

The Conference discussed many other small organisational and administrative points. It seems best to try to correlate these and to circulate with the Newsletter.

Many thanks to the Hosts, the Secretaries, Correspondants and all the workers who make "SERVAS" possible.

Next Conference Easter 1966
details in next Newsletter

Pat Knowles e.h.

Wien, 16.7.1965