



This is our story





A Nazi death trench - the children we are looking after saw that too.

The story of the children from Lidice. The official information reads as follows:

In 1942 all the men from Lidice, in Bohemia, were shot by the Germans, the women were taken away to concentration camps, and the children, of which there were about 100, were deported from Bohemia to Germany and other parts of Europe, to be brought up in the Nazi spirit. While the Nazis still occupied the Czech lands nine of these Lidice children returned, and were placed under German supervision in Prague. The other children disappeared without trace in Poland, Germany, Denmark and France. It was ascertained that in autumn 1944 some of these children were somewhere near Lesno in Poland, where members of the SS and the Gestapo were selling them for 50—100 Marks to the local German population. Other children were "adopted" by German families, and were given new documents and new names. By now these children speak only German. The Czechoslovak authorities are doing everything that is humanly possible to trace these children's origin and return them to their mothers, so far as they are alive and physically and mentally healthy. The Czechoslovak Government is not only looking after the upbringing of these children who will probably always be known as Lidice children, but has to care for thousands and thousands of other orphans.

Jiří B. lived before the war with his family in Prague. At the time of the occupation (1939) he was 8 years old. Jewish children were not allowed to attend the schools and therefore Jiří, when he had passed through the elementary school, learnt at home or, with other boys who were in the same position, in circles, as they were called, where they got the desired but forbidden education. In 1942 the whole family was sent to the fortress of Terezín (in Bohemia), where they lived for about a year; the members of the family were separated, but nevertheless kept in daily contact with each other. After a year the whole family was deported to the concentration camp in Bürkenau. Jiří describes this camp in detail. The various sections of the camp, the quarantine section, the section for men, for women, the disinfection and delousing section, were divided from each other with barbed wire; then there was the most horrible section, where there were the gas chambers and the crematorium, which Jiří often used to see smoking, and he knew, what that meant. Half a year after their arrival in the camp the transport of people who came before Jiří, which amounted to 5,000 people, was taken off to the crematorium and liquidated, as the Germans called it. From then on the members of Jiří's transport knew what was awaiting them, and they counted the days to the end of the six months period which stood between them and their fate. Just before this time has elapsed the situation was rather changed. The Germans needed manpower and therefore they did not send everybody to the gas chambers, but only the weaker people, the old and the children. Those who were physically capable were sent to labour camps. Jiří's mother and older sister were included in one of these labour transports. Jiří stayed in the camp with

The children who survived - all of them orphans.





Children soon get over the horrors of concentration camps. Their bodies accept food, but mentally the children are uprooted and nothing can take the place of a mother's care.

his father, who was very ill. A few more horrible weeks of waiting went by, and then the camp leader decided that a further 60 older boys should be put into the labour transport. Jiří was amongst them. His father, who perhaps did not realise what it meant, tried to persuade Jiří to leave the transport and to stay with him. Jiří refused. For the whole three weeks that he spent with his father afterwards, he could not look him in the eyes. Then he was taken with the others to the men's camp. There they noticed one day that the crematorium was working again, and then they heard lorries driving round it loaded with unfortunates, screaming in agony before the entrance to the gas chamber. The boys knew that their own families were amongst them, their brothers and sisters and relations, but none of them cried.

Jiří lived through several other labour camps, he suffered the worst evil of evacuation before the liberating armies, and for three days before his liberation he lived on only a handful of decayed potato peel. At that time he weighed 35 kg. After the liberation of Czechoslovakia Jiří was placed in a convalescent home of the Regional National Committee in a castle near Benešov, in Bohemia, and here, under expert medical supervision, he recovered so much that he now weighs 65 kg. In the convalescent home there is an expert teacher for boys and girls who suffered in the same way, and Jirka is learning diligently. His teachers are confident that he will become a worthy member of human society.

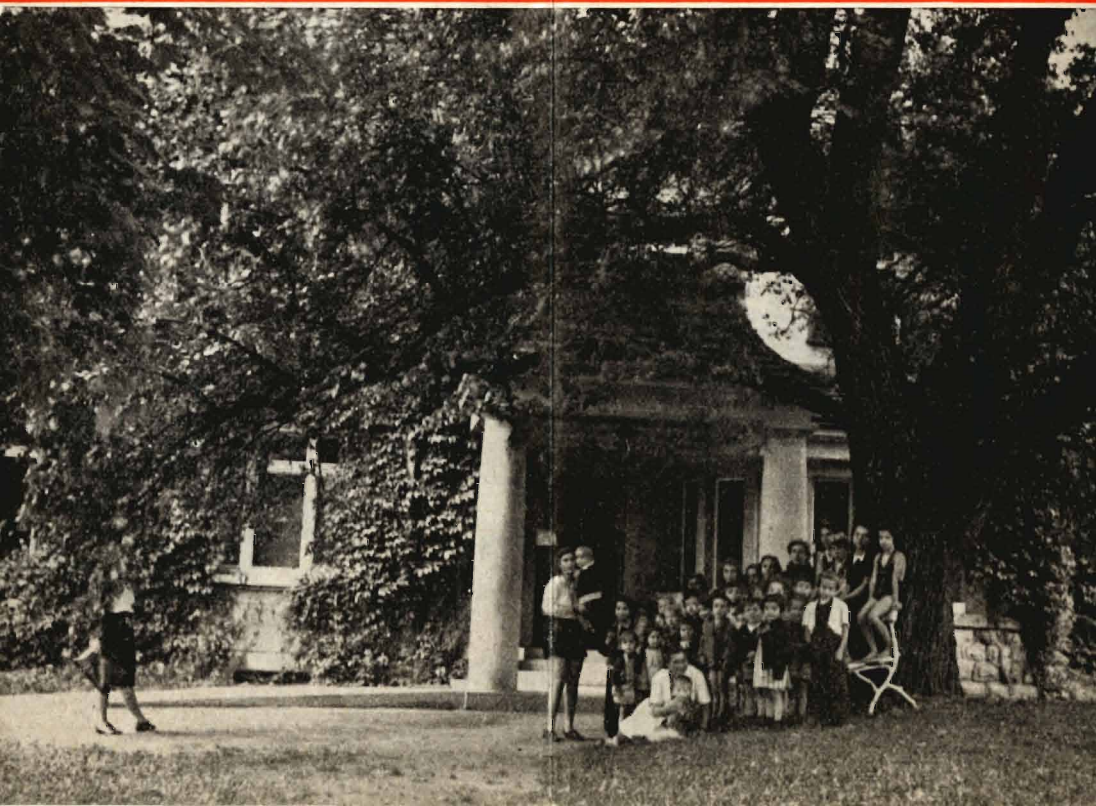
Not only good nourishment is necessary for these destitute children, not only clothes, shoes, toys, instruction, drugs, vitamins, etc., but also (and perhaps first of all) personal attention, love and family surroundings, which these orphans thirst for. On our side the children receive this to the fullest extent. The Czechoslovak Government will, of course, look also after the material good of most of these children, though the post-war conditions make this task immensely difficult. Therefore we want to do everything to draw your attention to their fate, and we expect you to help us.

Besides this duty the Czechoslovak authorities have also taken on themselves the task of the care of foreign children. Miss M. Nathan, the representative of UNRRA, who has been sent from London to organise the transport of these children from Czechoslovakia says — we quote from her report:

"I found that there were some 300 non-Czech children in Czechoslovakia who were eligible for this scheme. About 240 of these children are Poles and the remainder German and Austrian. These children had arrived in Czechoslovakia since the liberation and had been cared for by the government pending other arrangements of a more permanent nature.

All the children received four times the normal rations while they were being looked after at Terezín, and at the other homes established in the vicinity of Prague. Special hospital arrangements were made and every sick child was receiving good care. At Terezín many of the people who had looked after the children under the Germans had stayed on to carry on with their good work and, in addition, a large number of Czech repatriates—doctors, nurses and social workers—had been sent to Terezín to assist in the work of liberation and recuperation. It was gratifying to see how well a large number of children had recovered in two short months following the liberation."

The Czechoslovak Government has housed the children in beautiful surroundings. They are being cared for, but it is a tremendous task. Help is needed.





WE URGENTLY NEED

vitamins



children's soap



fruit juices



„We must love our children more, not with words but with deeds, to care more for them and live more with them.“

— T. G. MASARYK

toys

To make them happy and healthy

clothes and shoes



bed linen





Look at these children's faces; they recently returned from concentration camps. They have grown fatter, they are dressed well, but in their eyes you can read all the horrors they have gone through. We want to make up to them for all that has happened

All information obtainable at: