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To American Association of Social Workers ,  
130, East 22nd Street ,  
New York , N.Y.

Praha, I.12.1947.

Dear Mr. Anderson ,

it must be a year or more since I last wrote you . That does not mean that our International Secretariat has been idle. On the contrary , I have carried on a large correspondence with other countries in need of help or advice from the Secretariat . In the summer of 1946 we had a visit from a large group of French and Belgian social workers , and I can assure you my hands were pretty full for the time . The pity is that I can work as secretary only in my spare time - which is very , very limited. Since I am a teacher in the State School of Social and Health Work in Prague, I am free only at week-ends for work in the Secretariat .

This lack of time is deplorable but common here ; much worse is the political atmosphere . There is incessant conflict between East and West , together with the pressure exerted on us by the Trade Unions: The main object of the Trade Unions being to destroy all professional organisations which are not organised within the Trade Union. In consequence , the Czechoslovak Association of Social Workers is kept stagnant . Yet , work of such importance as ours should surely be encouraged , not murdered , as it is here. Our position touched rock-bottom last September when a delegation projected a visit to the Netherlands to participate in the International Preparatory Conference of Social Work. The Czechoslovakian Ministry of Social Welfare advised all its departments to refuse us letters of recommendation as regards both the Passport Authorities and the National Bank . Few days before the Conference was due to begin , the situation for us seemed hopeless and it was discussed in the government . I was informed by the Head of the Exchange-department of the National Bank that this interdiction on the part of the Ministry of Social Welfare was the result not of exchange-difficulties but of political antagonism . It was only at the very last moment that we were able to get our papers in order and start for the Netherlands.



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Accordingly, it was out of the question for us to invite all our members to come to the Hague to discuss the position of the I.P.S.S.W. However, we managed to arrange one meeting, the result of which is described in the minutes enclosed, in French and English; both should be read.

The discussion concerned:

- 1/ The necessity of creating a central Association of Social Workers in every country / as in U.S.A., Czechoslovakia etc / and of organising an International Committee at the Head.
- 2/ The reorganisation of the I.P.S.S.W.
- 3/ The Arrangements for the exchange of social workers.

In the course of this discussion it was clear that the trained social worker had a deep interest in these questions and was convinced of the advisability of supporting the efforts of the I.P.S.S.W. The Secretariat must be reorganised into a strong international association able to deal with all questions affecting our work.

The next meeting is fixed for Atlantic City during the International Conference of Social Work because our symbiosis with this organisation is very close.

Unfortunately, there is practically no possibility of our getting to the U.S.A. We lack dollars, everywhere in Europe, so that there is no likelihood of England, Czechoslovakia, Luxembourg, France, Italy etc being represented at the Atlantic City Conference. Mrs. Knight has said that the American Association of Social Workers has the intention of inviting some foreign colleagues over for the meeting. The idea is most generous and we highly appreciate it. I cannot tell you how much, in this part of Europe, we long to come over to the U.S.A. to see your country, your methods of work, your great progress in the social field of work. Yet, we should have to beg you to be so generous as to supply us not only with board and lodging but with the fare as well, and even with pocket money! To confess how poverty stricken we are at the moment is painful for me, and the saddest chapter of my writing. If Mrs. Knight is right and you intend to invite some delegates from Europe, I would beg you to choose through the medium of the Central Associations of Trained Social Workers, such as they are, to do the necessary for the



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in every country one or two / not more/ of the most highly qualified and experienced social workers, and supply them with the means necessary for the journey. <sup>it</sup> This, of course, for you to do as you think best. I venture to give you this modest advice on behalf of poverty-stricken Europe.

And the difficulty is not only financial. There is the problem of the passport and the visas. We shall hope that, if any of us are invited from here, we shall be helped by Mr. Milton Fried, the social-service attaché at the American Embassy, Prague. As yet, we have had no contact with him but we are glad he is here and hope to get in touch with him very soon.

Mr. Mevin A. Glaser of the American Red Cross, Washington, kindly called on me at the Hague. We have a long talk and I am grateful for his advice.

Properly trained social workers are growing in numbers everywhere, although, as is clear at every international conference, non-trained people have the chief influence. Yet the future is ours, and it is our hope and determination to remove all obstacles creating a profession composed of cultured, highly intelligent, efficient and capable members.

Yours very truly

JUDr B. Myšáková-Prokešová

P.S. I am forwarding you 7 enclosures as sent to all present at the Hague meeting.