

UNION INTERNATIONALE
DE SECOURS AUX ENFANTS



SAVE THE CHILDREN
INTERNATIONAL UNION

Internationale Vereinigung für Kinderhilfe :: Unione Internazionale per la Salvezza dei Bambini :: Unión Internacional di Socorro a los Niños

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15. JUIN 1939

15, RUE LÉVRIER, GENÈVE, le June 11, 1939

Dear Miss Morsier.

Thank you for your letter of the 8 inst. I arrived here safely after a two months hard work applying in every quarter for permission to leave. I actually left Madrid without even a salvoconducto to go to San Sabastian, but as Bendoia of the Auxilio Social said he would telephone to the frontier telling them to let me cross the same as he had previously done for Mr. Arbenz, I thought I might be able to bluff it out. At the frontier they knew nothing, they said, so I had to return to S.S. I saw the British Authorities at the Embassy, also the British Consul, who gave me a letter to the Governor and arranged for an interview with the Governor. On the strength of the adoption papers I had with me for the Largo baby, he stamped my passport and I again left for the frontier. The Officer in charge again wanted to turn me down, but I saw on the table a telegram with Petter on it, and managed to read it and in it, it said I had permission to pass, also at the same time was a card recommending them to allow me to leave but in neither cases could I see the signature so do not know who my helpers were. They still wanted to raise difficulties, but I told them on the strength of those two orders they could not prevent me leaving. I had several very uncomfortable moments latterly because I refused to do the Fascists salute, but I must say they always accepted my excuse that as a foreigner, working neutrally, solely for the welfare of children, I preferred not to enter into any politics either by word or deed. It is extremely difficult to do good work at the moment, everything coming under the control of the Auxilio Social, which would be alright if only these people had some training, but I am afraid Spain is in for a bad time unless some very strong force is brought into power to have some supreme control, as at the moment the Red Cross in at logger heads with the A. Social, and all seem to be at logger heads with the military, and Elange being the stronger body we presume will be the chief. It is very sad that the Authorities will not accept outside help to build up their Public Health organisation that as there is such scope at the moment for excellent work, and very necessitious.

Condition are very bad, as so many men are in prison or concentration camps for no other reason than they were compelled to join the red forces, and the families of these men are starving, no money, no work, no houses, and no cloths.

I am desperately disappointed at conditions since the Nationalists entered, and the general feeling seemed to be when I left that unless some drastic change was made in the near future instead of a white Spain, unofficially it would be more red than before.

To a person that had lived in red Spain before the entrance of Franco the whole thing was a farce. The same people that had been most prominent before with the clenched fist, and were now the most noticable with the raised hand, and they are so disillusioned now they feel like raising both hands together.

Even some of the more prominent supporters are disappointed. I had very good friends in *Frentes Hospitalis*, and they were more than disgusted when *Auxilio Social* compelled them to hand over everything with only two hours notice, and all the work they had done was completely wiped out. As far as my own work is concerned, I had everything up to date, and the complete dossier of your letters to me I left for Miss Byloff with notes about the different cases should she want reference. Beyond the families that wanted their children back there was nothing urgent outstanding and the adopted cases were being looked after by the *Auxilio Social* pending Miss Byloff's arrival. I also passed on a number of my other cases to them as, through the death of the husband, or unemployment in many cases they were destitute, and as the A.S. commandeered all the food supplies of Madrid I felt they should take on as many of the necessitous families as possible. Fortunately for our families the person in charge of the Mothers and Babies section is Miss Matilde Medina the lady you sent a request to when I was away, so if you want anything urgent done before Miss Byloff gets to Madrid write to her, as she has promised to attend to anything the Union wants, and as she is under a personal obligation to me for many things do not hesitate to ask her.

Enclosed you will find complete records of all visits paid, copies of the evacuation records of the children who because of the danger could not be evacuated, Food records from November to April, Receipts and Accounts.

If you would like a more definite statement of the closing work than I have given you I shall be pleased to do whatever you require.

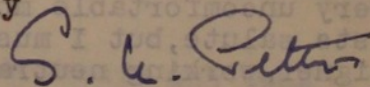
I have enjoyed my work in Spain although at times it has been very trying and exasperating, but it has taught me a lot one way and another and I feel it has been time well spent, my only hope is the Union has been satisfied with my services, in which case I shall be quite happy.

I tried to get you news of Miss Byloff before I left, but nobody seemed quite sure where she was.

I am sorry to hear Mrs Small is not well and hope it is nothing serious.

With kindest regards to you all and very best wishes, and many thanks

Yours very Sincerely



G.M. Petter