

THE FAMILY OF LOVE!

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Edited by Maria & the Zs.

REACTIONS TO THE "RNR"

—by Hannah, German National.

"I FELT LIKE WE WERE DROPPING OUT OF THE SYSTEM ALL OVER AGAIN!"

After getting over the first shock and wondering how this one was going to work and starting to think what it really meant, I felt so very, very well cared for by Dad. It really

NEWS —BY YOU!

blew my mind to see how concerned he is with the real state of the flock. It just really makes me want to learn to have the same love and compassion unto others.

I feel sure that this Letter will be a super encouragement to every single little person in each colony, because it was to me. With it, Dad expresses so much faith in the little people, which it seems there has been such a lack of, that it really gave me the feeling of just wanting to go out by faith and just do something to help others!

With this Letter it will be

impossible for us to look to the Chain of Cooperation, which we have been doing much more than just following the Letters. I felt like we were dropping out of the system all over again! I think we had been so accustomed to looking to our leadership and to their sample of how we were supposed to live the Letters, instead of just living the Letters ourselves—trying to live an individual's interpretation of it rather than just doing what it says and really being open and talking about it.

We had gotten so tangled up in respecting others, respecting their opinion and respecting what they thought the Letters said that it had almost turned into fear of men rather than the Lord. So obviously it had been a real hindrance in serving the Lord and winning souls and following Him, really accepting the freedoms that He has given us so as to be able to be happier and freer and getting closer to the Lord and each other and accomplishing more. I feel like we had really gotten away from living by faith and being really radical and free and just traded it in for following another little system that we had set up.

From the things that I've seen in Germany and experienced myself, we were so reluctant to do something different that we always waited for the permission of some leader, or even for some leader to come around and suggest that we follow the Letters. We were so afraid that we could possibly make a mistake, that we just almost didn't do anything along the lines

of FF'ing or helping each other out sexually. I feel so ashamed to say how long Dad has been putting these Letters out and how long we have been so "spiritual" and "waiting on the Lord", trying not to jump the gun, that we've hardly done anything. Whereas I've seen so many people that would have needed it and even situations where I could have done it personally. And being the Ministry secretary, I could also see that in almost every single colony there were people who needed help.

I don't necessarily feel it is all the individual leader's fault, because I know that at least some of them were not exactly trying to be tyrants or very authoritarian, but really do love the Lord and their sheep. Yet it seems they had gotten so caught up in our administrative system, all the little rules and restrictions that we've made, that the whole operation is more or less missing the point. Also the leaders had a tendency to try to just run the whole show themselves instead of really training people.

I think this Letter is going to throw people into a position where they're going to have to rely on the Lord and not just be able to look to their leaders anymore, which in turn is really going to inspire faith in people and bring out good qualities and talents that individuals have which nobody ever thought of. I know in Germany we were not very used to sitting down and discussing problems or listening to people's opinions, but we were so much on a works trip trying to be spiritual and good, that we hardly



FRONT COVER PHOTO CONTEST WINNER—Ben Davidson for photo of Europa, Rose & Ruth in Spain!

ever openly or honestly said our opinions or confessed our needs, which I think this Letter is going to change. TYL!

Possibly giving new people and different people chances to be SCS's or Sprint Center Servants or Visiting Servants will really generally inspire their faith and give them the courage to speak up. Through that, I think a lot of hidden talent should really come out.

"Nationalisation": After my experience in Germany, I have to admit that this Letter is really right on, as there are very few nationals in leadership positions or in positions of any kind of responsibility outside of publications. We do have a few bishops and a few colony Shepherds, but all in all, the foreigners, and especially the Americans, have really been dominant. As Dad said, it's really hard to believe that there are no nationals who could do anything!

I think some of the reasons are probably that a lot of the American leadership has not really had the attitude of taking people into their personal lives as Dad describes in the Letter, like getting married to natives or listening to their counsel, etc.

Personally myself, and I think it's true for quite a few Germans, we have developed such a fear of the stereotype of being hardheaded, dictatorial and authoritarian little Hitlers and like the "rest of the Germans", that now we don't even think we can stand up for what we believe. We're so afraid that it's going to come out wrong, we don't

want to be looked at as "typical Germans". And usually the main thing you hear from anyone in the Family about Germany is pretty negative, "Oh they're so hard" and this, that and the other.

I have to say at this point, though, that some of the American leadership doesn't think that way. Some have been encouraging and really trying to help us and find the potential in Germany.

Also, I think if we could just junk the whole legal association, as Dad suggests in the Letters, and forget all about the "Children of God" and just move into new places, just be called something else, I think it would really help cut down on a lot of work and a lot of energy, nerves and time. I believe that if more people could be trusted with at least being trained in some kind of position of responsibility, that it would really encourage people's faith and bring people out of themselves and get them to forget about the "problems" they used to have, and even give them back their burden for Germany. As it stands now, just about every German national that I know personally just wants to leave the country.

It's hard to do anything if you feel nobody has faith in you, which feeling has resulted through trying to uphold this chain of cooperation, which was so totally incomplete in Germany that it was not even functioning very well. We were so concerned in keeping it up and not letting it fall apart that I think we really missed the point—so busy with administrative work that it took away a lot of time from train-

ing people and helping people to overcome their weaknesses. Instead of taking more time for a person like that, less time was taken. I can see how some would feel like they're no good, sitting in a field colony for years and years on end and doing nothing but litnessing when there were so many other positions they could have had, so many jobs that needed filling.

I think with the "RNR" and "Nationalisation" we're going to be forced to take time to find out where the little people are at and find out what they can really do. Personally, I feel that an area can only go as far as the little people in that area are really willing to go, from their heart.

This Letter has completely changed my attitude towards Germany and it's given me some faith back that we can really do something there. I think if we're going to start living these Letters that things are really going to change. The only other thing I have to say is that I feel very ashamed that we have not done this any earlier, because I feel it's not something new. I feel we've really been failing to do what God has been showing us in Letters years ago. So I really hope and pray that this time we're going to catch on, and I do think we will.

"Colony Rules": As far as colony size and division, I believe this has generally been practised, because it's one of the smallest requirements that we can meet and the easiest one to keep. As far as the new disciples go, I think this has been one of the main points where colonies

have been re-classified. But I think with some more faith in the Germans and Germany, we could improve this a lot. Also, I think that an FF Report and Colony Checklist should be a real blessing in helping everyone to do more along these lines. Another thing on new disciples, I feel that we have not really been following what Dad said about checking out new disciples with the whole colony council. I think too little emphasis has been given to the opinion of the whole council, but rather more to the shepherd. Also I don't think we have been publishing pictures of people that have been put out of the Family for incorrigible bad behaviour.

Also the suggestions Dad makes about marriages: I don't think they've been followed at all. I don't think people feel the freedom to just go into a trial marriage and do it just with the consent of the people involved and with local leadership, but they always wait for consent from higher up. Also I think people have not really been involved in the major colony decisions.

Many colonies do not have mated couples as their shepherds, and I think this has really de-emphasised the family and turned it much rather into just a work team or something. I think when we have mated couples heading each colony that it will really change the atmosphere and spirit of the colony, and therefore also change the way of approaching the public and winning people into our families. I also don't think we've taken Dad's sug-