

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Richard Smith, August 9, 1965

Levi T. Pennington

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August 9, 1965.

Richard F. Smith, Refugee and Resettlement,
American Friends Service Committee,
160 North Fifteenth Street,
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania.

Dear Friend:--

Our Newberg Monthly Meeting Refugee Committee yesterday decided to sponsor Mr. and Mrs. Djordje Zivku, and I am enclosing the two copies of the Guarantee of Resettlement, which, as you see, will not contain much of the definite information that would be desirable.

We are undertaking this project with not a little trepidation, with a feeling that the language difficulty is going to be a real problem. Where are we to find anybody who can interpret Serbo/croat to us or English to one whose language is Serbo/croat? And how can we find a job for a man who speaks no English, nor any other language of anybody that we know in this entire area? When the Voss-lers came "away back when" (they were the first family we sponsored) they spoke virtually no English, but we had German friends who met them with us when they reached Portland, and who were ready again and again to go with us and make clear anything that needed clarification. There were three teen-agers in that family, and soon there was no difficulty at all. One of the young men entered the High School knowing very little English, and the next year was on the honor roll. But Mr. Zivku had only four years of common school education, and his wife had only two years; and so far as the case history indicates they have no language knowledge except Serbo/croat. Is there any way that they can learn a bit of English before they come to America?

I am returning the matter you sent concerning the Gurol family, and a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Zivku, which I hope you can get into the Serbo/croat tongue. (I never knew there was such a language until I got this case history.) I suppose, if all has gone as nature intends, that there is a baby in the family by this time.

If you think for any reason that this letter is not what ought to be sent to these prospective proteges of ours, please return the letter with your suggested corrections, and I'll try again.

Sincerely your friend,

Levi T. Pennington,
Chairman Refugee Committee
of Newberg Monthly Meeting.