

FROM BILBAO TO BEACH HOUSE

BASQUE REFUGEE CHILDREN ARRIVE

WORTHING WISHES THEM "BIENVENIDOS"

When all your worldly goods, apart from the clothes you stand in, are wrapped in a handkerchief, you clutch the bundle tightly.

That was how the 60 children from the Basque country arrived at Beach House Worthing on Friday evening, each clutching a parcel of treasured goods, just as much as could be got away in leaving a war-afflicted area.

Marshaled in two groups beside the Southdown bus which had brought them from Southampton, they were watched by a crowd of about 200 who had waited over two hours to give them a welcome.

Ten minutes later they were divided up into the dormitories of their new home, and little heads were being scratched over picture postcards of beach House park, to be sent to Spain that night by the steamer *Habana* which brought them to England nearly a week ago.

WELCOMED BY MAYORESS

A more than formal welcome was extended to the children by the Mayoress for she is the chairman of the local committee responsible for the centre at Beach House. She pointed out that as Mayoress, she represented a much larger number who wished to say "bienvenidos".

Then there was a plain wholesome meal at which both the Mayor and the Mayoress were present, and, finally, preparations for bed.

The next morning the children had their first experience of the tennis court enclosure as a playground. The sun still shone for them, and if they had managed to pick up a word or two of English, they had yet to learn the meaning of "English weather".

The subject of the strife around Bilbao is best avoided among the children, but it keeps cropping up, however much you try to keep away from it. "Junkers," said one little boy, showing a Worthing Gazette reporter a cigarette card picture of an aeroplane. "Boom, boom," he added, and it was not necessary to know Spanish to read a story into that.

THREE WEEKS QUARANTINE

The children will, of course, have to stay in Beach House for a precautionary period of quarantine. This will last three weeks and during that time, their exercises will be taken in the tennis court enclosure. Another home will be found for them on July 12th in order to allow time to prepare for the opening of the international Friendship centre at Beach House on July 24th.

Local tradesmen have responded readily to the appeal for support. The dairymen have agreed among themselves to provide eight gallons of milk a day; the Worthing and West Sussex Grocers' Association will give a minimum of two guineas' worth of groceries a week; and the Bakers' Association are supplying all the bread at less than the cost of making it.

Weekly collections are being made among the employees of Worthing firms, and members of local churches and associations and a large number of people have offered their services on a rota of helpers at Beach House.

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