

CARE packages

It was not long after the end of the war that my parents somehow managed to make contact again with the Texas real estate salesman turned wildcatter and oil millionaire for whom my father had found an oil field or two. I do not know who started the communication, but my parents surely must have been planning for the future as the reality of the loss for Germany became a certainty.

Shortly thereafter help from America commonly known as CARE packages began to arrive. Each package was about twenty pounds or so, containing such things as flour, sugar, shortening, powdered milk, some chocolate, some kind of nuts and raisins, and soap and such things. A package would arrive every week or two. Looking back, it is amazing that after Germany having disastrously lost a war, that the electricity never went off, and apparently the mail was still running, and nobody was running around and stealing and robbing even though there was no police or a government at that. Apparently it had been just that kind of lawlessness after World War I that had allowed Hitler to rise to power in the first place.

The following from the web including careusa.org:

History of CARE International

CARE International was first formed in America in 1945 and the aftermath of World War II. Known then as The Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (now "Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, Inc."),

CARE began by sending food aid and basic supplies in the form of 'CARE packages'. The packages contained food and other basics - goods that were either heavily rationed or impossible to get hold of in war-torn Europe.

The first CARE packages were U.S. Army surplus '10-in-one' food packages intended to provide one meal for 10 soldiers during the planned invasion of Japan. Ten dollars bought a CARE package and guaranteed that the addressee would receive it within four months. The first packages included the following:

- One pound of beef in broth
- One pound of steak and kidneys
- 8 ounces of liver loaf
- 8 ounces of corned beef
- 12 ounces of luncheon loaf (like Spam)
- 8 ounces of bacon
- 2 pounds of margarine
- One pound of lard
- One pound of fruit preserves
- One pound of honey
- One pound of raisins
- One pound of chocolate
- 2 pounds of sugar
- 8 ounces of egg powder
- 2 pounds of whole-milk powder
- 2 pounds of coffee

I have since learned that just after World War II there was a strong push in both America and in Europe to keep Germany in the stone age. But wiser thoughts prevailed upon both Italy and France teetering on the brink of going communist, resulting ultimately in the Marshall Plan under President Truman to rebuild all of Europe. So perhaps Germany, more than anybody else except perhaps Japan, benefited, at least initially, from the Cold War.

Anyhow we greatly benefited from the CARE packages. There were, however, others that also received packages. We of course knew who was sending ours. In the case of another family it was explained to us that they were receiving theirs from some Baptist in America, and that the Baptists were the rich ones in America. So much so for rumors when one does not even know anything about Baptists, American churches, or anything else about America. Germany was of course only Lutheran, in the north, and Catholic in the south, just about evenly split, and with no other church.