

Follow-Up Begins at Home

The 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy was over. Presently its members would be back home where "acceptance on the part of the people" must occur in order to achieve the conference's purpose "to use all we know for all the children." But now the members lingered, reminding each other that the conference was only a beginning of the real work ahead, and asking each other: "Just how do you mean to follow-up back home?"

BENJAMIN GLASSBERG, superintendent, County Department of Public Assistance, Milwaukee, Wis.

TEN YEARS AGO THE PUBLIC WAS NOT prepared for the doctrine put forward by this report. Now, I believe, it is. In these last years we have built up a record of being able to do something about specific conditions and I believe that we will do something with this report. But we will need to think carefully how to implement it in our various communities. In our state we have a year before the legislature meets again in which to get together and plan. I believe that the leadership must come from social workers. All power to other leaders in the campaign, but I suspect that the social workers will be the wheelhorses.

HARRY O. PAGE, commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Public Welfare.

OUR FOLLOW-UP WILL BEGIN AT HOME—with our own staff. We must measure our philosophy, our set-up and our performance and compare them with the goals that the report sets. We must find out exactly where we are in relation to these objectives, and must make them our objectives before we can go out into the state to enlist others.

DR. FELIX UNDERWOOD, state health officer, Jackson, Miss.

I BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE IN MISSISSIPPI both willingness and leadership to form strong state and local committees to follow up this conference, some of it immediately and a lot within five years. In twelve months we have organized the state for infantile paralysis control. Many people thought it couldn't be done, but it was. And we can do this, too. Probably because I am a "health man" I see as first steps an effort to bring up the quantity and quality of health facilities for Negroes.

CHARLES S. JOHNSON, director, department of social science, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn.

THIS REPORT PRESENTS A GENERAL social issue in such a way that its follow-up where minority groups are concerned should not be obscured seriously by racial stereotypes. In urban centers,

child welfare work among these groups is getting through the front lines of resistance. In rural areas, the crisis in agriculture is forcing change, though underneath old prejudices persist. Many intangibles will enter into the acceptance of this report in areas where minorities are a factor. But one positive result should be to give social workers in such areas the courage to institute clear policies and standards of administration and to stand by them.

H. M. CASSIDY, director, School of Social Work, University of California.

SPEAKING IN TERMS OF EDUCATION and not of social action, I should like to see this report made the subject matter of undergraduate courses in colleges and universities, its sections studied one by one with all their ramifications in American life. It might not constitute a quick follow-up but, thinking ten years ahead, I believe that it would prove itself effective.

PAUL T. BEISSER, general secretary, Henry Watson Children's Aid Society, Baltimore, Md.; president, Child Welfare League of America.

WE NEED A PAUL REVERE TO CARRY the import of the White House Conference to every village and town and most especially to the national and local agencies in the field of child welfare. The impact of this report on that field cannot now be estimated, but certainly from now on we of the privately supported agencies must adapt our philosophy, our programs and our finances to this relatively new framework that the report sets up.

CHENEY C. JONES, superintendent, New England Home for Little Wanderers, Boston, Mass.

THE CONFERENCE REPORT IS A PLATFORM and, as such, is useful. But folkways, not platforms, destroy or develop the potentialities of children. And folkways are not determined by platforms but by intelligence and goodwill running through and taking hold of every aspect of community life. Charts can be prepared in Washington, but the course of children in a democracy will be shaped in our neighborhoods and

communities. Now that the White House Conference is over, the scene shifts from Washington to "our town." The fight for the children must be waged where the people are; not just by "us" but by everybody.

EMMA C. PUSCHNER, director, national child welfare division, American Legion, Indianapolis.

OUR FOLLOW-UP WILL BEGIN AT FOUR area conferences to be held in February in different parts of the country. At these meetings we will plan to get the report into every state conference and thence into every county and into every post. The Legion reaches into every community in the country and within a month the message of the White House Conference will be on the Legion wires.

MRS. J. K. PETTENGILL, president, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Washington, D. C.

WE DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE REPORT TO start the follow-up. We began in the issue of the *National Parent-Teacher Magazine* which was on the press while the White House Conference was in session. The report will be a feature of our national convention in May, and will be used by our local groups all over the country. Discussion in local groups is, I believe, the most effective way to gain public understanding of the report and the acceptance necessary to implement it.

IRENE FARNHAM CONRAD, executive secretary, Council of Social Agencies, Houston, Tex.

THE BIGGEST CHILD WELFARE NEED in our city is better homes with more food in them. Our "best people" respond to the needs of children, provided that in helping them some man "who won't work" isn't helped too. We cannot expect these people to agree right off to all the implications of this conference report, but they will agree that children ought to have a better chance, and if we start from there we shall be able to go forward. We mean to make the report a study project of the Council of Social Agencies, drawing in board members, laymen and social workers. It will stretch the horizon for all of us.

The Common Welfare

The Security of the Child

UPON the security of the family depends the security of the child—this was the strand that held together all discussions of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy. Less than a week after the conference adjourned, the WPA division of research released a statistical reminder of the thousands of families in this country living in nerve-wracking insecurity if not in want. The report is based on interviews in twenty-three cities with 138,000 of the 775,000 WPA workers dismissed last summer because they had been on the rolls for eighteen months or longer. The results show that by November less than 13 percent had secured private employment—no more than the usual 100,000 a month who regularly leave WPA for private industry.

Well over half the dismissed workers had returned to WPA or direct relief. Nearly 55 percent of those "lucky" enough to find private jobs were making less than their former WPA wage. The average weekly earnings of all those with private employment was \$17.22. One fifth were making under \$10 a week. A study of the average income of all the dismissed—employed and unemployed—with the exception of those returned to WPA, showed an average weekly income of \$8.23. In ten cities the average income was less than \$5. In Jacksonville, Fla., it was \$2.50.

Though 28 percent of the dismissed were reported to be on "local relief," in several of the cities—usually in the South—this consisted only of federal surplus commodities. In Birmingham, Ala., 60 percent of all the "furloughed" workers were totally dependent on surplus commodities. In Omaha, Nebr., the surplus commodities reported as the sole source of income for 16 percent of the dismissed workers included only flour, apples and onions.

While the White House Conference has been formulating its high standards for children in this country and while the WPA division of research has been putting together its picture of conditions as they are, indications have been growing that Congress is again about to wield the economy axe. If it falls on the work relief program it may crack the very foundation of any effort to save the nation's children in and for democracy.

Organized Investors

TAKING a leaf from the experience of miners, bankers, carpenters, retailers, and so on, a group of investors have formed a union to protect their own interests. The need for such a union has been urged by William O. Douglas, former head of the SEC, now a U.S. Supreme Court Justice, by Roger Babson, and other special students of finance, who have pointed out that the average stockholder or purchaser of insurance puts his money into enterprises of which he knows little or nothing, that the information offered him often is vague and incomplete, and that he has practically no voice in the company's affairs.

Sponsors of the American Investors Union, Inc., a non-profit membership organization set up under the laws of New York, include A. A. Berle, Jr., last chamberlain of the City of New York; Evans Clark, director of the Twentieth Century Fund; Prof. Paul H. Douglas, of the Uni-

versity of Chicago; Herbert W. Elliston, financial editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*; E. C. Lindeman of the New York School of Social Work; Paul Blanshard, former commissioner of accounts, New York City; Judge Robert W. Kenny of Los Angeles; Professors Milton Handler and Goodwin Watson of Columbia University. Bernard J. Reis, certified public accountant, is executive director, with headquarters at 10 East 40 Street, New York.

The new organization announces a four-fold program: first, safeguard the present security holdings of members through analysis of annual reports and financial statements of companies in which members have a stake, and study of such corporate steps as dissolution and merger propositions, change in management, and so on. Second: guidance of members in purchase or rejection of new securities or savings plans through analysis and evaluation of the voluminous technical reports which must be filed with the SEC covering every new securities issue. Third: representation for security holders on boards of directors, where that is desirable, and as proxy for members in stockholders' meetings. Fourth: vigilance in the field of legislation, to protect the investors' interests. As rapidly as possible, the A.I.U., which has a modest membership fee of \$3 a year, will build up a staff of legal, economic and accounting experts "who will have obligations toward no one but the membership."

The Dies Committee

ONE of the ablest studies of the work of the Dies Committee to date is that made for the American Civil Liberties Union by a special committee of the board of that organization, headed by Raymond L. Wise, a former Assistant U.S. Attorney in New York City. The report, made public by the Union in mid-January, is based on analysis of the 4200-page printed record, and a review of the press comment on this much publicized investigation.

The Civil Liberties group finds that the Dies Committee has brought together "information which is important and to which the American people are entitled" as to "movements in the United States which are inimical to democracy." Further, as a result of the Dies investigation, "citizens will scrutinize more carefully the activities and purposes of groups which they join or to which they lend their names or sponsorship."

But over against these pluses, the report finds that the Dies Committee record includes a long list of minuses—among them, the misuse of its power to grind political axes; public condemnation of persons and organizations before they had a chance to be heard; acceptance of testimony consisting of "guess, hazard, unsupported information"; broadcasting of charges "which would be slanderous except for the probable congressional immunity." In short, "in its efforts to expose the enemies of democracy it [the committee] has frequently resorted to methods which endanger the democratic process." These glaring faults of the Dies investigation this report lays to "the distorted, unfortunate and most unusual procedure adopted by the committee in the conduct of its hearings."

The Civil Liberties report recommended the discontinuance of the Dies Committee, and suggested the continu-