

# The Common Welfare

## Migrants Are Still Americans

THE Anti-Migrant Law which California used during the drought years to check the migration of dust bowl refugees, has been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States (see page 358). In the first opinion written by Mr. Justice Byrnes, the court invalidated the law as exceeding the police powers of California, and as a violation of the "commerce clause" of the Constitution. Justices Jackson, Black, Douglas, and Murphy, concurring, based their conclusions on broader grounds, and held that the right to move freely across state lines is a right protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. ("No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.") To check the free movement of the impoverished, Mr. Justice Douglas, speaking also for Justices Black and Murphy, argued, "would prevent a citizen because he was poor from seeking new horizons in other states. The result would be a substantial dilution of the rights of national citizenship."

Mr. Justice Jackson stated, "The migrations of a human being . . . do not fit easily into my notions as to what is commerce." He added: "We should say now, and in no uncertain terms, that a man's mere property status, without more, cannot be used by a state to test, qualify, or limit his rights as a citizen of the United States. 'Indigence' in itself is neither a source of rights nor a basis for denying them. The mere state of being without funds is a neutral fact—constitutionally an irrelevance, like race, creed, or color."

Recommendations for national action to meet some of the problems of today's migrants who seek, not refuge from drought, but jobs in defense industry, are put forward in its first interim report by the Tolan Committee. These include: improvement and federalizing of the public employment service, which the committee finds wholly inadequate to current needs; end of discrimination in placement and training of Negroes, and Americans born abroad, or first or second generation descendants of immigrants; broader distribution of defense contracts, and maximum use of subcontracting; the addition of a general assistance category to the Social Security Act.

## 1862—Martha P. Falconer—1941

ONE of the great women of American social work died late last month at East Aurora, N. Y., where she had lived several quiet years in richly earned retirement.

It was Martha Falconer who demonstrated to a skeptical public the usefulness of decent humane treatment as a means of rehabilitating girls and women confined in penal institutions and restoring them to normal ways of life. Her philosophy and methods seem simple enough now that they are established practice in progressive institutions everywhere, but they were revolutionary in 1906 when she became superintendent of the grim old House of Refuge in the heart of Philadelphia. Not content with reforming the routines within the institution she presently reformed the institution itself, taking it from its city-bound confines to a

country setting where outdoor work and life added their healing qualities to the process of moral and spiritual restoration. This was Sleighton Farms to which came penologists and students from all over the country to observe and later to emulate.

Mrs. Falconer's wisdom and experience were sought for many purposes. During the World War, for example, she directed protective services for girls in training camp communities; later she helped organize Protestant agencies caring for children into what became the New York Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. But of all the activities of her rich, adventurous, and useful life, what she did at Sleighton Farms remains her true monument. The candle she lighted there cast a long bright beam. The reach of her personality was expressed in the final lines of the citation of Elmira College in conferring on her the honorary degree of M.A. ". . . [her] philosophy of confidence in humanity, rigid self discipline, and faith in abiding spiritual values have inspired many men and women to work for greater social justice."

## High Cost of Veterans

WHILE a new American army is being licked into shape, an old one refuses to surrender. Pending in the Senate at this time are two bills, already passed by the House, to provide a whole new system of benefits for ex-soldiers. The "veterans' lobby," it scarcely need be added, is on the job.

One of these bills, HR 4845, ostensibly increases existing pensions to disabled veterans. Actually it would pay \$40 a month to all veterans "in need," disabled or not, after the age of sixty-five. The Veterans Administration estimates that by 1962 this would run to \$520,464,000 a year, and that its ultimate total would come to some \$5,000,000,000.

The other bill pending, HR 4, sets up a plan by which widows, children, and dependent parents of deceased veterans would receive pensions ranging from \$20 to \$56 a month whether or not the veteran's death was related to war service. The cost of this scheme is difficult to estimate, since children yet unborn would benefit from it, but conservative estimates put the figure at about \$1,000,000,000 annually by 1960. The Veterans Administration, the Bureau of the Budget, and the President are on record as opposing both measures.

In the past twenty years cash benefits to World War veterans and their dependents have totaled about \$8,000,000,000. This country could, or at least it did, afford a war; it can, or at least it is, affording defense. But can it afford veterans?

## Alcohol and Alcoholics

AT the recent meeting of the Research Council on Problems of Alcohol, medical men, scientists, industrialists, labor spokesmen, social workers, insurance executives, penologists, and interested laymen were brought abreast of the interesting social and biological inquiries the council has undertaken. Although alcohol is one of the most ancient

discoveries of mankind, it remains a good deal of a mystery. The council, formed four years ago, represents an objective approach to the problem, in terms of the individual, the family, industry, and society.

Speakers at the meeting generally agreed that drinking is on the increase among women, that facilities for the treatment of alcoholism are inadequate, that education and law enforcement must be improved. But practically no data yet exist on the effect upon drinking habits of improved diet, housing, recreation, and environment generally, or on the effect of drinking upon the accident rate in industry. As the investigations of the council proceed, the public may expect, for the first time, factual unemotional bases for education concerning alcohol and its control.

## Harlem and Crime

IT has taken a "crime wave" in Harlem, New York's largest Negro section, to arouse a lethargic and indifferent public to an awareness of the living conditions which the racial prejudices of this democracy have forced upon a segment of its people. Horrified by the fact that the perpetrators of the several incidents which have made up the recent "wave" are little more than children, few of them over the age of sixteen, the public seems at last to be shocked into realization of what results its own neglect can produce. After the first scared cry for "more policemen," came more reasoned suggestions for an increase in the number of play and recreational facilities, some talk of better housing. But it is doubtful whether playgrounds or houses can vanquish the negation that makes a young person turn to crime. Something deeper than physical environment is involved. Pearl S. Buck, well-known novelist, crystalized it recently in a letter to *The New York Times* when she suggested that Harlem is only symptomatic of conditions throughout the country:

It would be impossible for any accumulation of social welfare work to solve the situation which produces crime in Harlem. . . . Young colored men and women today are giving up hope of justice or security in their own country. When this hopelessness reaches down to certain strata in any society, outbreaks of crime are inevitable.

Discriminated against by employers, labor unions, landlords, the army and navy of their own country, often even by school teachers and welfare agencies, it is not to be wondered at that many Negroes are beginning to despair of earning a place in American democracy. Says Henry W. Pope, executive secretary of the West Harlem Council of Social Agencies: "The mood of Harlem today or its behavior pattern is a reflection of a deep social maladjustment. The correction called for is a deep, major operation. No minor operation will do."

## Too Many Cooks

SINCE the outbreak of the war in 1939, 700 agencies with thousands of branches and associations throughout the country have sprung up to gather funds for the aid of war victims. These are in addition to permanent agencies such as the American Red Cross and the American Friends Service Committee, which have foreign relief as part of their functions. Altogether these agencies, old and new, have raised \$90,000,000—a notable achievement, but one unfortunately accompanied by the waste of much duplicated effort. Last spring the President appointed a Com-

mittee on War Relief Agencies, made up of Joseph E. Davies, Charles P. Taft, and Frederick P. Keppel, to recommend measures for the better coordination of effort. In its recently issued interim report the committee observes rather plaintively that "while some of the major difficulties have been ironed out . . . many problems remain, particularly in the British relief field . . . ."

As a major proposal the committee recommends that the licenses of all foreign relief agencies now registered with the Department of State be revoked as of a specified date and that new ones be issued "only when it appears to be in the public interest, and upon submission of satisfactory proof by the applicants that they are in a position to transmit the relief." However, this move would not touch "agencies soliciting for the benefit of China, Finland, Switzerland, the USSR, and other technically non-belligerent countries (as of the date of this report)" which are not required to register with the Department of State. As a "matter of voluntary cooperation in the public interest," the committee suggests that these agencies supply it with monthly information corresponding to that required by the Department of State from registered agencies. Other recommendations of the committee bear consideration: that welfare activities for each major foreign country should be coordinated through some central advisory body; that a central intelligence service for all war relief activities be maintained to gather and keep up to date factual data as to relief requirements, resources, and facilities.

## Casualty

THE Institute for Propaganda Analysis becomes a war casualty, with the announcement that publication of its monthly bulletin will be suspended "for the duration." The institute, an educational organization devoted to developing "a popular understanding of the methods of propagandists," was established by the late Edward A. Filene in 1937. At a meeting of its board on February 27, 1941, it was decided that if the United States became involved in hostilities, a reexamination of program would become necessary. Two days after President Roosevelt's statement that the country is in the "shooting stage," the board met to weigh the possibilities open to it. It decided upon suspension. The organization will maintain its corporate structure, planning when peace comes to resume its activities. Prof. Kirtley F. Mather of Harvard, president of the institute, in announcing the board's decision stated:

Public opinion during a war crisis necessarily concentrates on helping the nation in every way possible to prosecute its major effort. At such a time, it is not practical to attempt dispassionate analysis of the steps being taken to impress the country with the seriousness of the crisis. . . . As patriotic Americans, the directors and administering staff of the institute could not see their work appear to be interfering with a major effort to which the country has set its hand.

In its four years of work, the institute has made a distinctive contribution to current thought and understanding. Its materials have been widely used by teachers, editorial writers, discussion groups, workers' education classes. It has helped make clear the methods of propaganda as a tool of popular leadership. And, as institute publications often have pointed out, it is only through such understanding that the harmful aspects of propaganda can be defeated, and its constructive possibilities used to direct and unify democratic action.

# The Social Front

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## Welfare and Defense

LOCAL public welfare agencies in nearly every state have assumed responsibility for dependency investigations for the Selective Service System, according to recent information gathered by the regional research consultants of the Bureau of Public Assistance of the Social Security Board. In thirty-seven of thirty-nine states reporting, the public welfare agencies give service to the draft boards; in thirty-one, these services are provided locally in accordance with policies and procedures agreed upon by the state public welfare agency and the state selective service headquarters; in six, they are rendered without any state agreement. In nearly all instances it is understood that the public welfare agencies are to be used only when "absolutely necessary to assist the draft board on doubtful matters of dependency." In twenty-four of the states with statewide agreements and in five without such agreements, the welfare agencies investigate all requests referred to them by the selective service board. In the other states, investigations are restricted to cases known to the agencies.

Though the public agencies are making the bulk of the dependency investigations, a recent survey conducted by the Family Welfare Association of America showed many private agencies also cooperating with selective service boards. Over sixty private agencies reported that they had made investigations for the boards, with responsibility ranging from the assumption of every investigation needed in the city in question to the acceptance of an occasional referral in a "problem" situation.

**Theater**—Camp Shows, Inc., a non-profit organization to provide entertainment in army camps and naval stations, was incorporated last month and affiliated with the USO in response to a request of the War and Navy Departments. The new organization, headed by Eddie Dowling, noted actor and producer, will be financed by the USO. Its purpose is "to produce, maintain, and conduct in all its branches, theatrical, musical, operatic, moving picture, and other entertainment . . . for the entertainment of persons in all branches of United States service at induction centers, training camps, air and naval bases, airports, stations, forts, military hospitals, and any and all military and naval centers." The

shows will be routed from New York on a circuit tour of the military establishments. Leading figures of radio, stage, and screen have agreed to cooperate in the venture.

**The Red Cross**—Last month the American Red Cross announced plans for the purchase of \$140,000 worth of recreation equipment for the use of American service men in Alaska and the North Atlantic bases. The list includes motion picture projectors, phonographs and records, pool tables, lamps, writing tables, and clubroom furniture. Forty Red Cross staff members stationed with the armed forces at insular bases in the Atlantic and Pacific are carrying on the same type of Red Cross program conducted in domestic army and navy posts. . . . In order to evaluate its work with the armed forces the ARC recently set up a committee of prominent lay persons to survey the services in relation to what the organization is doing now and what modifications or additions might be made for improvement. Heading the committee is Raymond B. Fosdick, president of the Rockefeller Foundation.

**The USO**—By the first of last month the United Service Organizations, Inc., with its financial resources swelled to \$15,000,000, had operations under way in 160 towns and cities in thirty-nine states. Over 750 staff members were at work in 224 clubs and 180 other units, most of them in rented locations. At the same time, 167 of the 216 clubhouses which are to be ready by February 1 were under construction, many of them near completion. The plan is to continue operations in 280 of the rented quarters, even after the government-built clubhouses are finished, so that eventually there will be a total of 496 units with 1,644 workers carrying on USO activities. Most recent addition to the USO funds was a check for more than \$900,000 representing the proceeds of a campaign conducted in over 10,000 motion picture theaters throughout the country.

**Books**—A National Defense Book Campaign to furnish books for service men and the merchant marine is soon to be conducted throughout the country under the sponsorship of the American Library Association, the American Red Cross,

and the United Service Organizations. The books will be collected in libraries and schools throughout the country. It is hoped in this way to gather from five to ten million volumes to supplement the library services provided by the government. The campaign is to be financed by the Red Cross and the USO. . . . Eight libraries of the American Merchant Marine Library Association were lost with the recent sinking of four American merchant ships in the Battle of the Atlantic. In addition to replacing these books the AMMLA is undertaking to equip seamen's libraries in the fourteen new ships being constructed under the Maritime Commission's shipbuilding program.

**Material**—Responding to an evident need for the correlation of data on defense, the Buffalo Council of Social Agencies has published "Channels of Defense," by Victor Einach, a manual for the use of social agency executives, social workers, teachers, students. Here is one answer to the prayers of those who seek some guide through the maze of organizations "for defense" which has sprung up in the last year and a half. The *raison d'être* and the interrelationships of the various facets of the Office of Emergency Management, of state and local defense councils, of the defense operations of private social agencies are all set down in ABC order, followed by several chapters on the social problems with which these organizations have to grapple—labor migration, family problems, health, nutrition, recreation, housing. Price \$1 from the council, 70 West Chippewa Street, Buffalo.

## Concerning Children

CONCERN over the plight of children whose family situation has been affected by the defense program prompted the U. S. Children's Bureau recently to hold a planning conference of representatives of various local, state, and national social agencies. Most urgent problem in the view of the conference was the question of day care of children of working mothers, concerning which the representatives adopted a statement of principles. Among the many points in the statement were: it is now more than ever a public responsibility to provide appropriate care of children while mothers are at work; community plans should include as many forms of day care as required to meet needs of chil-