

Federal and State Action

What government is doing—federal, state, and local—and what more it should do to assure the new generation protection and opportunity.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT

WARTIME JUVENILE DELINQUENCY registers our failure to meet the needs of children and youth. This failure is so serious that not only local communities but state and federal governments must each play an important role in assuring for every new generation that fair chance in life which is the essence of democracy.

Such delinquency is largely a result of serious breakdown in family security and parental guidance—but also in safeguards and services, public and private. Services to children and youth are primarily functions of the *local community*.

The *state*, under our form of government, has legal powers to provide such safeguards as may be necessary to protect all children and to intervene in behalf of children lacking adequate parental care. Moreover, it can stimulate and further community programs and carry on such direct services as it can best provide.

Efforts of the *federal* government are directed primarily toward encouraging and reinforcing states and communities.

This is not as cumbersome a system as it sounds. To the contrary, it has proved a flexible working scheme especially suitable under a republican form of government—so long as there is initiative at the local level, and concern at state and federal capitals that discharges itself in responsible action.

The connecting link—or rather the stimulating current that makes it a going concern nationally—is the system of grants-in-aid by the federal government, and also by the states in growing numbers, through which our united resources are brought to bear at points of need. A great crisis not only reveals the gaps and weaknesses in such a decentralized system—but can be the means for setting it going in high, especially if public concern is roused generally.

Evidence and Urgency

THAT IS CLEARLY THE CASE IN THE outcropping of juvenile delinquency in wartime. The front pages of newspapers in every part of the country are not exactly mute testimony to its liveness. Our federal Children's Bureau studies in ten characteristic American centers bore witness not merely to the breakdown of ordinary provisions, but to mounting local feeling. What was done methodically in fact gathering, gave place to an ex-

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traordinary, countrywide, and all but spontaneous outpouring of evidence and urgency at the hearings in Washington last November, before a Senate committee under the chairmanship of Senator Claude Pepper of Florida.*

It will again be necessary for the friends of American childhood to make their weight felt in constructive legislation, for added provision for grants to states is needed if the country is to face and meet its wartime responsibilities for the welfare of children.

First, the public assistance provisions of the Social Security Act should be strengthened so as to reach more children and provide more adequate benefits. Such a move would be an important preventive of juvenile delinquency.

Second, the foundation of services already laid under Title V of the Social Security Act, for children in need of care, protection, and training, whether or not living in families suffering from economic need, should be extended to all areas of the country as soon as possible, and broadened in scope.

Third, federal participation in financing care for children of employed mothers should be put on a grant-in-aid basis, and should help to support a broad range of services, including information and advice for mothers, nursery schools and extended school programs, day care centers, and foster home care.

It is a charge on those of us who have studied the situation and followed the steps to date to share with others our convictions as to the caliber and urgency of the legislation called for. Action should be taken *this* year, for the needs of children cannot wait.

Federal grants-in-aid, with their stand-

ards and incentives, have demonstrated their worth during the last thirty years in integrating a national program with the range of state and community services; in stimulating citizen participation; and in encouraging state and local responsibility for administering soundly and sharing in the cost. No other form of federal financing is so well adapted to achieve these ends.

Nonetheless, in spite of these advances, we know that inadequate federal provisions for developing services for the children of working mothers are directly related to the increase in juvenile delinquency. In a long range sense, our failure to provide federal assistance to states for general educational purposes is part of the same picture—assistance that would assure real schooling for every child in the country. A specific factor contributing to juvenile delinquency has been the War Production Board's policy, under the pressure of military needs, with respect to the allocation of material to construct additional classrooms in communities where population has mushroomed under war conditions. This policy has required 200 percent use of school buildings, which means severe overcrowding, half-day sessions, or both.

Expansion of educational guidance, mental hygiene service, and visiting teacher work is indicated. Medical social service in public health and hospital care programs should be generally available. All these services have an important relation to the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency.

A Seven-Point Program

THERE IS NEED, BEYOND ALL PERADVENTURE, for the immediate expansion of children's services through state and local public welfare departments, partly financed under Title V of the Social Security Act. Some 400 counties or other local areas, of which about 70 are war-affected, now have such services. These reach directly about 40,000 children each year, approximately 40 percent of them living in their own homes. Other counties have child welfare workers paid wholly from state or local funds. As part of this program, twelve states this year have made special provision for the study and prevention of juvenile delinquency, and eleven states have special state con-

* As this issue goes to press these hearings are being resumed in Washington.

sultants in juvenile delinquency problems, or special workers assigned to state training schools for delinquent children.

A broadened program of federal aid permitting the expansion of state and local services for children, which will reach every county and town in the United States, should include:

1. Individual guidance for maladjusted children, developed in cooperation with police, courts, schools, and other community agencies.

2. Assistance to coordinating and planning bodies.

3. Advisory service in relating recreational and leisure time programs to individual needs.

4. Cooperation with state labor departments and other state and local agencies in the supervision and protection of employed youth, particularly in the amusement and refreshment industries.

5. Operation in areas where they are not now available, of facilities for temporary care of children, chiefly through boarding homes.

6. Cooperation with state and local training schools and other institutions in the rehabilitation of minors found to be delinquent or in need of public protection and care.

7. Assistance in developing resources to train personnel for child welfare work and for children's services in police departments.

Team Play at Washington

THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WAR Services is the federal coordinating agency for wartime efforts affecting the health and welfare of all civilians. Under its auspices, information has been assembled concerning the work of each federal agency dealing with juvenile delinquency or seeking to safeguard youth, and concerning the problems and programs of individual communities. Staff conferences and special committees in Washington and in the regional offices explore trends and developments. Close contact is maintained between agencies serving children and those concerned with housing, manpower, agriculture, public works, military service, and with nationwide private organizations.

Cooperation calls for direct inter-agency action, and is stimulated by a general coordinating program of this sort. Genuine progress in such cooperation has been achieved during the war, though much remains to be accomplished. One of the suggestions made at the recent hearings before the Senate committee was that a new coordinating body be set up to deal especially with delinquency. In the opinion of the writer, such new machinery is not needed. Rather, the work of existing

agencies and of the Office of Community War Services should be strengthened and more amply financed.

To help crystallize opinion and policy, a Commission on Children in Wartime was set up by the Children's Bureau in the spring of 1942. This commission adopted a Children's Charter and has worked out suggestions for state and local action. Through the Commission and through advisory committees and special conferences, the programs and policies of the federal government and cooperating state agencies are brought into close relation with the activities of nationwide private organizations that in turn influence state and local programs.

The Role of the States

A STATE'S PART IN DEALING WITH DELINQUENCY is inherent in its responsibility to safeguard the rights of children and to provide opportunities for their health and education, their welfare and pursuit of happiness. The chief state agencies concerned are the departments of health, education, labor, and public welfare. There are few state agencies for recreation, though as a wartime measure many states have set up recreation committees.

The states have major responsibility for providing legal safeguards for children. For long, they have undertaken the care and treatment of children who cannot receive specialized care in local areas—such as the blind, the deaf, the mentally deficient. All states have accepted responsibility for delinquent children and provide training schools for them. But in many instances these institutions need to be modernized and integrated more closely with state and community welfare and educational services. State institutions for the mentally deficient should be part of comprehensive statewide programs which include provisions not only for care and training but for supervision of those in the community whose handicaps and behavior may be a threat to others—especially to juveniles.

State agencies also develop standards, and give advisory service to child-caring institutions, agencies, boarding homes, and other types of activities which bear on juvenile delinquency, and are subject in some measure to state supervision. These state services should be greatly strengthened.

Experience proves that state aid to local units of government to stimulate, support, and reinforce services to children (supplemented when necessary by federal aid) is the most effective way to safeguard them the country over. Aid to dependent children, assisted by federal and state funds, is now established in nearly all the states. At present, such aid fails to

reach all children needing it, and is usually inadequate in amount. To extend and liberalize this plan, both through federal and state legislation and administrative action, would improve the conditions surrounding the least secure children and thus again help prevent delinquency.

Similarly, we should extend and improve child welfare services for girls and boys who are handicapped in their physical or mental development or in their home, school, and community relationships, or who need foster care. This is possible only with state assistance to the local communities, and that in turn with federal grants-in-aid to the states.

Responsibility for state services to children is usually divided among several state departments. These often function with little interchange of experience or joint planning. Some opportunity to view the needs of children as a whole and to bring specialized departments and agencies into a closer working relationship were afforded by state commissions for the study and revision of children's laws during and after the first World War. State councils were organized in some states after the 1930 White House Conference on Child Health and Protection; and state White House Conference follow-up programs were developed after the 1940 conference. But as a rule these state organizations have lacked resources for essential staff and equipment.

Statewide Coordination

THE WAR SOON EMPHASIZED THE need for more comprehensive and efficient state planning and the new state councils of defense afforded a channel for it. In August 1942, the Children's Bureau's Commission on Children in Wartime suggested "A Program of State Action," and recommended that responsibility for planning, coordination, and leadership be fixed in some representative state group, preferably by a committee or subcommittee of such a state council.

The federal Office of Civilian Defense helped stimulate the formation of these committees which now exist, with broad programs, in at least a third of the states. Some have stirred interest in problems of delinquency and supplied leadership in developing programs of control. Among the states in which active work of this kind is going forward under state defense councils are Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, and Washington.

In Michigan, a Youth Guidance Committee has been appointed by the governor, following a statewide study of delinquency which he initiated. Similar committees have been appointed by the governors of Massachusetts and Oregon. The Kansas

Council for Children, which is a White House Conference follow-up committee, has a section on delinquency, which the governor recently requested to serve as the defense council's committee on children in wartime. But few states have sufficiently staffed these wartime committees, and without staff it has been difficult to go beyond planning and get results. It is important, too, that all state planning for juvenile delinquency control should be developed as part of or closely related to the general planning of the state for its children and youth.

Recruitment and Trained Personnel

THE INNER STRENGTH OF AN AGENCY is as important as its team play with other agencies, and this hangs on staff. Wartime shortage of man and womanpower has naturally affected the personnel needed to handle educational, health, and social welfare programs. This need has been

recognized in the teacher training provisions of the vocational education acts and in bills before Congress providing aid for general elementary and secondary education. Meanwhile, educational leave for professional study has been provided under the public assistance and child welfare programs authorized by the Social Security Act. The United States Public Health Service has taken the lead in training physicians and nurses for public health work.

Although public welfare programs have had to be curtailed in many instances because of lack of trained personnel, proposals for special federal appropriations for training social and recreational workers for wartime needs have still to be adopted.

With the best spirit of team work, the most admirable of human material, our loose jointed scheme of federal, state and local collaboration could

scarcely have functioned before the days of postal systems and railroads, in such complex fields as health, education, and welfare. The system has still a long way to go in coverage and content, but every advance from the telegraph to radio and movies makes its work more feasible.

Spreading the Facts

THE IMPORTANCE OF WIDESPREAD information about the growth and development of the nation's children was recognized more than thirty years ago when Congress created the Children's Bureau. Through many avenues the Bureau has gathered and given out data showing the conditions in which children live, the impact upon them of major emergencies such as depression and war, and the services provided for the health, protection, and well-being of the oncoming generation.

Thus today, information for the Bu-

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These Federal Agencies Serve Children

Their Resources are Available to States and Local Communities

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR: CHILDREN'S BUREAU, Katharine F. Lenroot, *Chief*

Provides suggestions, outlines, and standards for use by committees in general planning for children, and in dealing with problems of child care, youth employment and juvenile delinquency. Has regional consultants who work with state agencies. Also specialists in child health, child labor, recreation, juvenile delinquency, child placement, and care of unmarried mothers.

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY

Paul V. McNutt, *Administrator*

OFFICE OF EDUCATION, John W. Studebaker, *Commissioner of Education*

Advises about school problems, including program adjustment, clinical procedure for handling children's behavior problems, methods of instruction for people with special needs. Serves day, residential, and training schools for juvenile delinquents.

SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD: Bureau of Public Assistance, Jane M. Hoey, *Director*

Concerned with the problem of maintaining normal family life for children deprived of parental support—especially for the approximately 800,000 children living with parents or relatives who can receive cash payments under the aid to dependent children provisions of the Social Security Act. Regional staff assists states in developing their provisions for such children.

U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE, Thomas Parran, *Surgeon General*

Gives technical and financial assistance to state and local health departments in meeting community health problems.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WAR SERVICES, Mark A. McCloskey, *Director*

Is the federal coordinating agency for wartime problems affecting the health and welfare of the civilian population, including children. Under its auspices, information has been assembled concerning the work of each of the federal government agencies concerned with juvenile delinquency and safeguards for youth.

OCWS—RECREATION DIVISION, Sherwood Gates, *Director*

Through seventy field representatives advises communities on meeting recreation needs through best use of facilities, services, funds, and training of leaders. Provides exchange of experience through bulletins and pamphlets. Assists communities in securing federal funds in war impact areas where local resources are not sufficient.

OCWS—SOCIAL PROTECTION DIVISION, Eliot Ness, *Director*

Assists local communities through a field staff of forty people in repressing prostitution and preventing sexual promiscuity. Works in close cooperation with army, navy, health officers, law enforcement officers, and other interested groups.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, Francis Biddle, *Attorney General*

Concerned with crime prevention. Through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, protects local communities from the depredations of federal law violators and from individuals or groups who seek to disrupt the war effort.

UNITED STATES COURTS—U. S. PROBATION SYSTEM, Richard A. Chappell, *Chief*

Investigates social background and advises courts on the treatment of youthful offenders coming before the federal courts.

WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION, Paul V. McNutt, *Chairman*

Cooperates with the federal Children's Bureau and the Office of Education in developing standards for part time school and work programs. Through the U. S. Employment Service makes contacts with employers to determine job requirements and examine working conditions offered.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY, D. S. Myer, *Director*

Responsible for the relocation, maintenance and supervision of persons removed from designated areas in the interest of national security.

Summarized from a forthcoming publication, "Citizens of Tomorrow, A Wartime Challenge to Community Action." Office of Community War Services, Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C.

Here in Washington

By Rilla Schroeder

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S TROUBLES WITH THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS HAD TO come to a head sometime, and the tax bill became a ripe occasion. Those who felt the President's veto message an insult to Congress are matched by those who felt the emasculated bill itself was an affront to the American people.

Senator Barkley and others spoke as though the President had no right to veto a tax bill. Admittedly it was unusual, but there is nothing in the Constitution making a revenue measure sacrosanct. If the President did not like the bill it was his right and duty to say so, in language that would get his reasons across to the public—the vast majority of whom had never read the bill.

Take his most controversial phrase in the light of the "freezing" of the Social Security tax at its present low level. When, for heaven's sake, are we to find so likely a time as this to raise that tax to the point where reserves might be built up to carry the weight of the insurance program as provided by the original legislation? Congress intended the tax to be raised sometime, and this would seem to be the ideal spot. The failure of this Congress to act can have only one explanation, and the President seems to have put his finger on it in making clear that this easing of the tax burden was not in the interest of the "needy."

In attacking the veto message, neither Senator Barkley nor anyone else has attempted to make more than a weak defense of the bill itself.

THE THOMAS BILL ON VETERANS education is on the Senate calendar and should come up for a vote in the near future. Senator Thomas is waiting for the opportune moment. On the House side, hearings are under way on the Barden bill which is similar although not identical to the Thomas measure. The passage of both is practically a certainty. The differences will be ironed out in conference.

IN HIS ANNUAL REPORT, SECRETARY of the Interior Ickes announced that his department has blueprinted a vast public works program, much of which could be put into effect within thirty days after demobilization.

The program includes power and irrigation projects which would give work immediately to about 480,000 discharged veterans or ex-war workers and keep them reasonably busy for at least three years. The projects, when completed, would open farm settlement opportunities for 165,000 families.

PAUL V. McNUTT, FEDERAL SECURITY director, has asked Congress to appropriate \$50,000,000 a year to provide school lunches. The request went up to the Hill in a letter accompanying his budget estimates for the Office of Education, and the program, if approved, would be administered by that agency. Federal aid, under the proposal, would be based on the number of school children in the state multiplied by the ratio of children to adults.

SENATOR WAGNER OF NEW YORK IS sponsor of a bill (S. 1721) authorizing an appropriation of \$80,000,000 for school lunches. The funds would be handled by the Department of Agriculture. The bill has gone to the Committee on Agriculture.

THE DIES COMMITTEE HAS ANNOUNCED that it will investigate the CIO's Political Action Committee. Sidney Hillman, chairman of the committee (CIO and not Dies), asks to be excused. His records and books, says Mr. Hillman, are open at any time to the FBI or any properly authorized congressional group but to Mr. Dies, "No."

Mr. Dies, or his men, are muttering that they will take the matter to the House for a decision. Mr. Hillman and his committee are willing.

SENATOR GEORGE HAS REPENTED OF his hasty criticism of the Baruch-Hancock report as by-passing Congress, and he now finds no conflict between it and the recommendations of his own committee. He says that he had not read the report in full when he made his original statement.

However, he feels the report needs legislative support. To meet the need he is co-sponsor of a bill with Senator Murray to give it congressional sanction. The bill follows the recommendations of the George committee report more closely than it does the program outlined by Mr. Baruch and Mr. Hancock, but the two are not irreconcilable.

In line with the recommendations of his advisers, President Roosevelt has named William L. Clayton of the Department of Commerce as surplus war property administrator, and Brigadier General Frank T. Hines of the Veterans Ad-

ministration as director of postwar retraining and reemployment. Both, it is understood at present, are to be policy making rather than operating bodies. Actual operations will continue in the hands of existing agencies.

ACTING SECRETARY OF STATE Stettinius says that the U. S. Government is "reexamining in light of existing circumstances" the possibility of sending food to occupied Europe. His comment followed passage by the Senate of a resolution on the same subject asking that the United States work out a relief system for "all stricken and hungry countries where the need is now the most acute." The resolution is merely advisory.

In the light of Mr. Stettinius' statement, it is assumed that discussions on the matter are being reopened, or continued, with the British government. It has been that government's opposition, chiefly, that has blocked the proposal.

THE WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY has been transferred to the Department of the Interior and the department's chief, Harold L. Ickes, has another troublesome problem to handle. The White House announcement said that the transfer was designed to bring WRA under a cabinet officer and to simplify administration.

DISMISSAL PAY AND HIGH POSTWAR job priorities for war workers has been recommended by Clinton Golden, vice-chairman of the War Manpower Commission. Chairman McNutt of the WMC approves the plan in principle, and his staff is preparing a memorandum.

Mr. Golden believes his plan would be helpful in curbing absenteeism and turnover. He says: "I am informed that absenteeism mounts with every announcement of good news from the fighting front. The workers, believing the end of the war is near, take time off to look for peacetime jobs."

The Golden plan would have to be supplemented by legislation and its chances are poor. Congress under no circumstances would be more generous with the war worker than the veteran, and the mustering-out pay already in effect is far from lavish. Mr. Golden's proposal, however, could be based on a cost-plus arrangement with industry. This has been suggested but has not been given an over-favorable reception.