

Editorials

Comment

Views

The Omaha Guide

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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Care Of Our Future Generation

Katherine F. Lenroot, who last week celebrated her 10th anniversary as chief of the Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, has compiled some statistics on the need for care of children by local, State and Federal health authorities. Miss Lenroot reported:

Three million babies were born in 1943, sustaining the all-time high birth record set in 1942. And the nation has approximately 40,000,000 boys and girls under 16 years of age.

In the years approximating those in which Social Security funds have been available for maternal and child-health services, the maternal mortality rate in this country has been reduced over one-half, or from 59 deaths per 10,000 live births in 1934 to 26 deaths (per 10,000) in 1942. In the same period, the infant deaths per 1,000 live births were reduced to 40.4 in 1942.

The record, however, is not all good, for it represents a great unevenness in immortality by sections of the country and by race. As for the latter, the mortality rate for Negro mothers is two and one-half times that for the whites. In 1942, sixteen states had rates under 20 maternal deaths for 10,000 live births, but five had rates above 40, the highest being 53.2 in South Carolina. The rate is closely related to care or lack of care given mothers in pregnancy and childbirth.

Fifty percent of the deaths of mothers in childbirth, it is estimated, might have been prevented had the mothers had proper care, and many of the babies might have been saved had adequate medical and hospital care been available. The size of the problem confronting this nation is getting good maternity and infant care to all mothers and all babies is indicated in following summary:

More than 200,000 babies are born annually without a doctor in attendance. There is only one certified obstetrician to 2,000 registered births. Obviously those obstetricians cannot handle the actual service to all these patients. Even from the standpoint of consultation their number is insufficient because of their concentration. These specialists for the most part are in the larger metropolitan areas.

In 1942, approximately three-fourths of the rural counties were still without maternity-clinic centers.

Only 16 States provide a special consultant nurse in maternal and child health on the state agency staff. Every state health department should have at least one nurse responsible for developing adequate nursing services in hospitals and in homes. Every city or county having a population of 100,000 persons should include a consultant nurse in maternal and child-health services on the staff of the official health agency.

Forty-eight thousand additional public-health nurses are needed if adequate service is to be given to all, especially to mothers and children. There should be one public-health nurse to every 2,000 of

the population.

Fifty thousand new maternity beds are required to meet the need for hospital facilities for mothers.

In 1940 there were about 25,000 midwives in the United States, most of them untrained. There are only about 175 trained nurse midwives in the country and the school capacity for training them is only 40 per year. Yet thousands of women during their child's delivery are almost wholly dependent upon midwives.

Further evidence for the need for a larger national child-care program is given in the statistics on growing children.—

More than 8 million children under 21 years of age in this country suffer physical handicaps.

Ten million have defective vision. Two million have impaired hearing, 17,000 of that number being deaf.

Close to a million have congenital syphilis. A half million have orthopedic or plastic conditions.

Four hundred thousand have tuberculosis.

Nearly half a million children have been or are being affected by rheumatic fever. Many die and many more are being made ill for many months or develop a permanent disability of the heart. Rheumatic fever is chiefly a disease of poverty.

It is estimated that three-fourths of all school children have dental defects.

"To cope with the child-care problem," Miss Lenroot said, "our post-war policy should include clarification of the contributions made by women as mothers and as breadwinners, and of the responsibilities of schools and social welfare agencies for meeting child-care needs. For children whose mothers are employed, a broad and coordinated program of community services is essential, with necessary guidance and supervision from state agencies. These services should be planned through community wide committees in which schools, social agencies, industry, organized labor and the lay public are represented. There should be clarification of the educational functions of the school and the social service functions of welfare departments and other social agencies.

"Finally, there is urgent need for an immediate and widespread expansion of health and medical facilities to care for children. The groundwork for health and physical fitness must be laid through a program that begins with pre-natal care for the mother and extends through all the stages of infancy, childhood, and adolescence. Money invested in a comprehensive program that would assure access to health services and medical care to all, and in a nutritional program that would be directed toward an adequate level of nutrition for all children and youth, would contribute more to physical fitness and national preparedness than any other one action."

appeals were made to the workers; a sense of job security was developed; opportunities for upgrading and advancement were presented; prejudice was combated with an abundance of pleasant common sense; employer and employees talked it out; management took a firm but not coercive stand; and honest effort was made to 'sell' the plan. As each move was made, the white workers were consulted, and every practical effort was made to foresee the difficult spots and to make adjustments in advance. Today Negro women are employed as hopper feeders, car tenders, strippers, drawing-frame tenders and doffers, as well as cleaners and roving haulers. What about results? The number of white workers lost was negligible; turnover and absenteeism have decreased; production is up to schedule; and that plant has no 'labor shortage problem.'" (Richmond Times Dispatch, Nov. 24, 1944. Reprinted from the Southern Frontier, Atlanta).

ward the destruction of labor itself. Another resolution calls for a permanent Fair Employment Practice Committee, which would carry into the post-war period a machinery and technique which, without using compulsion, has materially reduced discriminations in economic opportunity. The A. F. of L. will honor itself and serve democracy by adopting this resolution and thers designed to protect America against the poison of fascist ideas." (Chicago Sun, November 25, 1944).

Employment

"A number of recent news stories tell of the acute shortage of workers for Southern textile mills. Government officials have stated that plants are behind on production, that thousands of workers are needed, and that house-to-house recruiting will be done. . . . One source has been virtually untouched by industrial employment—Negro women. . . . It is being done—and successfully. A number of the largest textile plants in the South have been employing Negro women as machine operators for many months. One plant which employs more than 5,000 people is over 40 percent operated by Negroes, predominantly Negro women. . . . Recognizing that most human beings will accept changes if they understand why and if they feel they are getting a square deal, management paved the way solidly for the introduction of Negro women machine operators. Department by department, it educated its supervisory and then its general personnel. Patriotic

Labor

"An alert democratic consciousness is indicated in the resolution at the A. F. of L. Convention in New Orleans advocating congressional measures to attack racial discrimination and reduce its causes but the Marient resolution, asking criminal penalties for 'organized' discrimination, is probably neither practical nor desirable. . . . The Marient resolution, however, correctly warns that labor unions in Europe learned, when it was too late, that organized race hatred may become an 'opening wedge to-

Poll Tax

Leaders of both factions of the Republican party, and the anti-organization Democrats in Virginia have called for repeal of the state poll tax. "Since the poll tax is going to be eliminated in a few years anyway, it seems only sensible to perform the operation now, when the machinery for doing so is about to be set up. . . . The policies of the Republican party on the national scene impress us as distinctly reactionary, but in Virginia they are in some respects a-

head of those offered by the Democrats. The poll tax is a case in point. The GOP has been calling formally for its repeal at successive State conventions over a period of a good many years. The dominant Democratic organizations, on the other hand, has been taking just the opposite tack over a long period. A few of its leaders have recently spoken out for repeal, but the great bulk have remained silent." Richmond Times Dispatch, Nov. 25, 1944).

"Cotton Ed" Smith

"In the passing of Sen. 'Cotton Ed' Smith of South Carolina was the passing of a tradition. That is, symbolically, for the Smith tradition still lives here and there in the South. . . . In him was the development into almost the epitome of a type of demagoguery seen most often in the South, though not peculiar to it. This is the demagogue for the predominant economic and financial interests, who is able to sell his doctrine to enough of the masses by a picturesque personality, a gift for the homely simile and story, and with a slug here and there of prejudice, usually at the expense of the 'Yankee' or the 'nigger.' The last was laid on more heavily if he

was pressed hard politically."—(Philadelphia Record, Nov. 20, 1944. Column by Thomas L. Stokes).

"Such publications as 'Time' and others, in Northern states, which occasionally intimated that the late Senator Smith was brutish in his disposition toward the colored people, will not observe that six colored men were the active pallbearers at his funeral. It can be safely said that no man was habitually kinder to the colored people than was Ellison D. Smith, notwithstanding the attacks made upon him by the Thurgood Marshalls."—(Charleston News and Courier, Nov. 22, 1944).

Armed Forces

"These Negroes who refused to load the munition ships following the Port Chicago disaster were plainly overcome by fear. They were not per se mutineers except to the extent that their fear overcame whatever responsibility they had. Considering then that fear and failure to do a duty because of it cannot be encouraged in wartime, we still believe

that the sentences imposed on these men were altogether too severe. We do not believe that the honor of the United States Navy or the reputation of the United States Navy as a fighting, fearless force, would have been impaired by sentences ranging from one-half to one-third of those given." (San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 22, 1944.)

Faith In Themselves

"A company of Negroes (sic) of New York city has purchased a valuable estate in Putnam county and will use it as a country club. . . . These Negroes (sic) who are to have a country club are not seeking association with white people and are presenting an exceptional example of the ability of members of their race to go forward 'on their own.' If there be evidence of comparative weakness of the American Negroes (sic) it is made plain by incessant murmur-

ing that they are not taken into political and other societies of white people, nourished and promoted by them. . . . Since the Negroes (sic) were emancipated they have failed, by reason of constant effort to get themselves adopted by the former master race to make the progress that Japanese in the United States would have made. The New York projectors of a country club have faith in themselves."—from Charleston News and Courier, Nov. 24, 1944.

Lynching

"Tennessee observed Thanksgiving Day with a lynching. . . . The boy who was lynched first came to the attention of the Nashville juvenile court at the age of 9. Thereafter, he was involved in at least six offenses, ranging from housebreaking to stabbing. But the men who cut short his career were not the authority to sit in judgement or to execute a sentence upon him. By taking the law into their own hands, they were not rendering justice—they were not even setting up a deterrent—Gov. Cooper has posted a large reward for the identification of these terrorists, but they are probably not in great

danger of ever being tried or convicted. But that is not the only disturbing aspect of this affair. What is here revealed is shocking incompetence in the earlier treatment of the lynchers' victim. He was evidently a psychopathic criminal. This Pikeville business has its lesson for other states, Alabama included, in which juvenile courts have become routing agencies without adequate facilities for working out their problems."—(Birmingham Age-Herald, Nov. 25, 1944.) faith in themselves

Electoral College

"Obviously, the electoral-college system, under present conditions, is a potential agency for foiling the will of the majority. . . . Certainly it would appear to be part of wisdom to reform it. While this (the Guffey-Celler amendment pending in Congress is opposed by Southern Senators, the fact is that it actually would have the effect of reducing the influence of such large, often doubtful States as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and California and proportionately would increase the influence of Southern States where the majority is always substantial. The Southern Democrat's opposition is probably based on the fear that a prorata system would provide an incentive for the Republicans to invade the South in search of a fraction of the electoral vote. A method of reform however, which would apparently give a much better balance to the electoral-college vote, and which might not meet with concerted congressional opposition, is that which was in effect in the early days of the Republic up to the time of Jackson and Van Buren. This is the system of choosing electors by congressional district, each district to chose its own elector and to

vote on the two from the State-at-large. This system was proposed by Jefferson and by Jackson, but did not become national law. —(Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 20, 1944. Signed by Malcolm W. Bayley).

Outlining the history of the electoral college the Advertiser asks why not abolish the college and elect the president by direct popular vote. "This change would deprive the larger states of some of their unjustified influence, it would prevent the future election of a president by a minority of the voters, and it would stimulate parties to campaign harder in the 'Solid South'. . . . If the direct method of election were used, it would become desirable for candidates to seek every possible vote in the State. This new situation would make the South and some of the Western states more influential within their respective parties, and it would give the South a bargaining power in national Democratic affairs that it does not have now."—Birmingham Age Herald, November 20, 1944).

Freedom of Religion by Ruth Taylor

Which of the Four Freedoms means the most to you?

Freedom of Religion is to most people the greatest freedom because without it the others are valueless.

Freedom of Religion is not just the privilege to go to the church of one's choice, to bring one's children up in the teachings of one's fathers. It is the only true freedom of the spirit, because when freedom of religion is taken away, the mind is fettered.

All real freedoms stem from freedom of the mind, from freedom of faith. Without freedom of religion, there is no liberty. The shackles of one master have simply been exchanged for those of another.

Freedom of one religion means freedom of all religions. If we enjoy freedom of religion, we must respect the religious beliefs of others who do not share our faith.

True religion, by whatever creed it acclaims itself, knows no barriers of nationality, race or class. Its covenant is the brotherhood of all mankind. If a man hates another because of his creed he is deny-

ing the fundamental faith of all monotheistic religions, that all men are the sons of God.

We can respect another's religion without losing our own distinctive faith. As Father Ross so aptly said, "In all things religious we Protestants, Catholics, Jews, can be separated as the fingers of a man's outstretched hand. In all things civic and American we can be as united as a man's clenched fist." We may differ in the path we may take to God, we may be strong in our belief in the rightness of our way—but we will see to it that our neighbor has the same right to choose his path that we have to choose ours.

Freedom of religion is more than freedom of ritual. We are all of us children of one Father and we have a duty toward our brothers. We share a common faith in God—let us put that faith into action by bringing to our fellow men justice and righteousness, freedom and security, an equal opportunity and an equal chance. Only in this way can we keep our souls as well as our bodies free, and ensure the permanence of our freedom.

Save Your Money--Buy Bonds!