

Calif. State Council ...

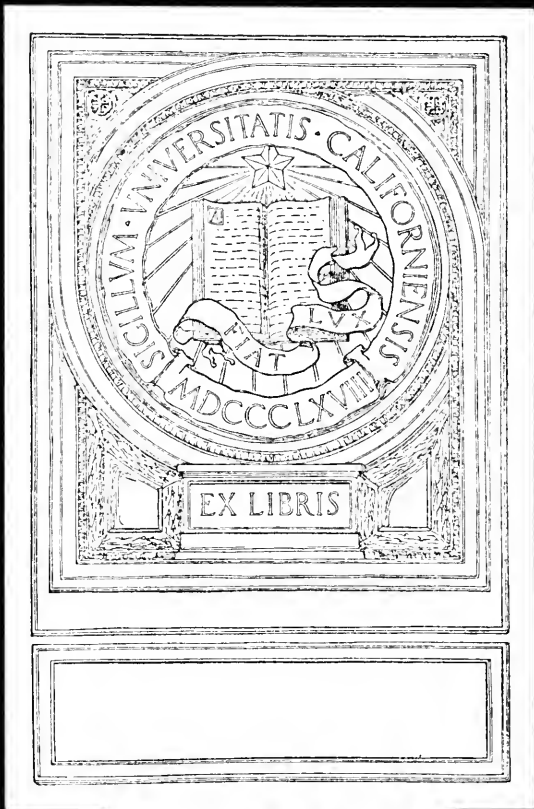
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RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

GIFT
MAY 25 1927

Women's Committee
of the
State Council of Defense
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California



Headquarters
719 South Hill Street
Los Angeles

December, 1918

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WOMEN'S COMMITTEE OF THE STATE COUNCIL OF DEFENSE OF CALIFORNIA

SUGGESTIONS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

The Women's Committee of the State Council of Defense of California was organized at the direction of the National Government, in order that machinery might be provided to convey to the women of the State instructions and messages from Federal Agencies, indicating the manner in which the women of the State could help the Government in the crisis created by the war. In addition to this machinery for special campaigns, the Women's Committee has dealt constantly with social welfare problems intensified by the war.

As the work has gone on from day to day, carried out by the various Departments under which the Committee's work was programmed at Washington, the Committee have come to certain conclusions about the problems which confront the State of California, as definitely and distinctly in times of peace as in time of war.

It has been possible, through these various departments, to carry on education throughout the State with regard to these problems and it is hoped that, in making plans for reconstruction, the suggestions embodied here, formulated after the study of a year and a half of conditions in California, may be included.

The Committee offers them, believing that they are constructive for all time and are in line with the progressive development and permanent welfare of the State.

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Industrial conditions in California were not so disturbed as in some other States during the war period, and it was not necessary to call into unusual occupations as many women as the war industries demanded in other localities. However, there have been women filling men's places in industrial, commercial and professional positions. There has been a demand that these women should be required to retire from these positions, leaving them free for the returning soldiers.

1. Wherever women are retained in the positions they now hold, the Women's Committee of the State Council of Defense of California believes that if they can fill the positions satisfactorily, they should be given a similar wage to that which a man would receive in the same position, thus safeguarding industry against unfair competition by under-bidding.

2. The Eight-hour law should be rigidly enforced:
3. There should be an extension of the minimum wage to embrace all classes of women in industry and a sufficient number of inspectors employed to enforce the law.

In all considerations of women in industry, they must be considered as part of a conservation program, for they are the mothers of future citizens and on their health and welfare depend the future strength of the State.

In order to safeguard the conditions for women, we urge that:

1. A woman be appointed to the State Labor Bureau.
2. A more equitable distribution of the employees of the Labor Bureau in its service throughout the State.
3. A woman be named as Assistant-Director of Women's work on the United States Employment Service, according to Federal provision.

CHILD WELFARE

The necessity for consideration of "Child Welfare" has been amply demonstrated during the period of the war, by the large number of men who were rejected for military service because of physical defects, most of which could have been remedied in childhood. The Program of "The Children's Year" Committee has made possible the education of large numbers of people throughout the State in this subject.

The work of "The Children's Year" Committee should be continued and made permanent by:

1. A well-equipped Child Hygiene Bureau under the State Board of Health.
2. Public Health Nurses established in every County of the State.
3. The establishment of Children's Health Centers where the weighing and measuring of children, the guidance of their diet, and advice to the mothers can be carried on steadily and permanently throughout the year.
4. Under the University of California there should be a College of "Home Economics" to give education and training in home-making and the care of children. There should also be complete courses for teachers in order to furnish practical teaching for the Public Schools. These courses should include training in hygienic living and diet as well as thrift and economy in household matters; education for motherhood should be provided by extension courses and lectures.

Child Labor:

1. An earnest effort should be made to take out of labor and industry, the children who, on account of war conditions,

have gone into work. These children should be returned to their schools to complete their education and training, in order that they may take a better place in the world. This would release their jobs for adult workers.

2. Legislation regarding raising the age of children in street trades should be passed. At present, the children in California may enter into street trades at the age of 10. This age should be raised to 14, and no child should be allowed to sell papers, or other merchandise, on the streets, without a license and badge from the School Department. This is done in the State and City of New York and could be done in California.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Tuberculosis:

There should be:

1. Increased provision made for taking care of tuberculosis, not only among the returning soldiers, but in the civil population of California. The epidemic of Influenza, with its accompanying pneumonia, will, undoubtedly, be productive of many cases of tuberculosis, which, added to the already large number in California, is bound seriously to affect the prosperity and welfare of the State. Every County should have free provision for the care of the tubercular, if the disease is to be controlled and finally eradicated from this State.)

Under the State Board of Health:

There should be:

1. A Bureau for venereal diseases which would be a continuation of the work of the Military Welfare Commission which has been in existence during the period of the war, as a part of a National policy. Probably every effort will be made by commercialized vice to restore red light districts and wide-open vice conditions.
2. Free clinics for education and treatment.
3. Supervision of men and women suffering from these social diseases, to continue the work which has been begun during the war period.

EDUCATION

The Federal Board of Vocational Education proposes to rehabilitate the men injured in the war. As a reflex and a side issue of such education, it would be beneficial to the State of California if those injured in industry (which number annually far exceeds the number of injured soldiers), could also be given an opportunity to

learn a trade or occupation to take the place of the one to which they cannot return after accident.

1. Normal and Technical Schools, also a large number of High Schools and Junior Colleges, should be prepared to furnish education for returning soldiers who have previously had no skilled occupation, in order that they may become efficient in a trade or profession to improve their prospects.
2. Agricultural education in High and Normal Schools and Colleges should be developed and freely afforded to returning soldiers. In the event of the development of idle lands, they cannot be used to their full extent for the benefit of the soldiers unless these men have some understanding of scientific cultivation of land.
3. There should be compulsory education of illiterates, both children and adults.
4. Home and School Gardens should be maintained and encouraged.
5. Young people under 21 should be registered that they may be located and their educational status ascertained. (There is no census of the school population of the State.)
6. Provision should be made by which the child who takes out a permit to work under the age for which the school authorities are legally responsible for him, could be followed up. There is now no adequate provision for keeping in touch with a child who has been granted a work permit and knowing his physical and mental progress from that time on, no follow-up work and no advice from educational authorities.
7. A re-organization of the educational curriculum should be made in order that the training the children receive in the schools may be more practical.
8. Both boys and girls should be equipped and trained for some skilled occupation. A Pre-nursing course, covering the scientific study which would lead to six months' credit in accredited schools of Nursing, is recommended, to be added to the High School curriculum, wherever possible.
9. Vocational education should be developed to the full extent under the Smith-Lever and Smith-Hughes Laws, for the benefit of both girls and boys.
10. The development of Continuation Schools should be hastened during the reconstruction period, for the children and youths who cannot return to School: these should be provided in a way to afford real educational advancement. Legislation is needed to push the further development of Continuation and part-time schools.
11. There should be a systematic education in patriotic citizenship, in American history and in American institutions and ideals.

Ways and means should be devised to continue the community interest and community service which has been developed during the war by the Nation's problems. One of the methods which is receiving increasing recognition is that of Community Singing. The power of song to encourage and cheer the boys has been recognized; it can perform the same mission for the whole people if properly organized and directed. The time calls for Community Choruses and some way should be devised to organize them throughout the State.

AMERICANIZATION

We are deeply interested in Americanization and recommend as basic to the assimilation of the immigrant now here and to come:

First:

- a. Opportunity to settle on the land with proper State assistance in choosing and securing that land, and with additional assistance from the County Farm Advisor in the farming methods necessary in a new country.
- b. Industrial justice in wages, hours and sanitary surroundings, and safety conditions in shops and camps.
- c. Proper housing.

Second:

Educational Opportunity:

- a. In schools and libraries.
- b. In shops, manufactories and camps.
- c. In homes and neighborhood centers.

This educational opportunity should recognize the helplessness of adults who do not know our language and prepare them for practical life. This will require a new educational scheme, new hours, and above all, new and practical methods; all of which requires knowledge of the psychology of the immigrant.

Unless the basic recommendations (First, A. B. C.), are met, there will be failure in assimilation, as it is impossible to secure loyalty and love of country in people who are social discontents. No amount of English education will overcome un-American conditions offered by employers. American standards in industry are the swiftest possible Americanizers.

The Women's Committee is especially interested in the Americanization of the homes of California and for that reason recommends that all possible effort be made to reach the foreign-speaking women.

- a. In their homes by home teachers.
- b. In groups in schools, clubs, libraries, neighborhood centers for general education and by Community singing and pageants.

SOCIAL AGENCIES

Dependent Children:

The law now permits the State to contribute to the support of needy children to the amount of \$6.25 per month for a child with one parent living, and \$8.33 for an orphan. The County may supplement this by an equal amount.

The majority of children being cared for by Counties of the State are paid for at a maximum rate of \$11.00.

So far as the so-called Mother's pension—State aid to children in the care of their own mothers—is concerned, the State allowance is inadequate. California is not being fair to her own needy little children or to the institutions, agencies and homes engaged in their care, and she will not be doing them justice until State and County face their obligations and increase the allowance to at least \$15.00 a month per child.

Institutional Care for Children:

There are many children in the State sadly in need of institutional care, for whom no provision is made. We believe there should be:

1. Preventorium for children of tuberculous tendencies.
2. Colonies for the actively tuberculous.
3. Hospital schools for crippled children.
4. Homes for mentally defective and homes affording good care for limited numbers of adolescents presenting special problems. Some of this work could be done by existing institutions.
5. Better-balanced diet in children's institutions. Through cooperative buying by different children's institutions, economy could be effected which would make possible a better and more generous diet for the children. There should not be rigid economy and retrenchment in this direction. The State of California is responsible for the children in institutions and it should appreciate its responsibility that these children, at least, should be adequately fed.
6. Recreational equipment for institutions. There is often inadequate space for play, with no apparatus and no direction. Play is a constructive force in the development of children and it is especially necessary in the restricted life of the institutional child.

The County is the logical unit for the consideration of local social problems. We believe there should be in each County:

1. An unpaid County Welfare Department, employing paid, trained workers to handle all public relief and welfare problems.
2. Under the County Welfare department, the development of the boarding out system of standardized foster homes for children in co-operation with Juvenile Courts and private charities.

3. County clinics and dispensaries and out-patient work at County Hospitals. Public Health Nurses are especially needed in rural communities where there are no clinics, no milk-stations and no School nurses.
4. State Agricultural and industrial institutions for the care of misdemeanants.
5. A woman's reformatory.
6. Abolition of the system whereby Sheriffs are compensated for providing food, clothing and bedding for County jail prisoners.
7. Psychological clinics in court and education centers; also the establishment of a rural, psychological clinic which could be of a travelling nature.
8. There should be a survey of the feeble-minded made by one of the existing State agencies, to be followed by adequate provision, both custodial and educational, for such numbers of the feeble-minded as the survey shows is necessary. The Pacific Colony should be given a generous appropriation by the coming Legislature in order that the institution may be completed and prompt segregation be made of the feeble-minded.

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

In response to the request contained in the first paragraph of Governor Stephens' letter—viz.—for recommendations along the lines of new constructive work in California, three suggestions have been sent to this Committee from its various County Chairmen:

1. The Iron Canyon Irrigation Project.
2. The impounding and conservation of the waters of the King's River.
3. The Imperial irrigation plan.

All of these have had the sanction of the Federal Government and are in line with the plan of Secretary Lane for reclaiming idle lands for settlement by returned soldiers.

They would not only furnish employment to these men and bring under cultivation thousands of acres—hitherto unused—but would develop much hydro-electric power.

We recommend:

That the Land Settlement Board be empowered to investigate the status of these projects and to suggest a plan whereby the co-operation of the State and Federal Governments may be used for their furtherance under public control.

Distribution of Food Products:

Increased food production brings the problem of its distribution. The operations of the Food Administration have shown the possibility of a National system of rapid and balanced distribution.

We recommend:

That a Committee be appointed to look into National and State marketing systems in order to bring about more direct connection between producer and consumer.

Trade Relations:

We recommend:

That the Chambers of Commerce of the State be asked to formulate a plan for educational propaganda as a basis for the establishment of increased trade relations with Mexico, and a friendly understanding between that country and California.

CONCLUSION

In order to put through a program of social service such as is here outlined, it will not be necessary to create new and expensive machinery, as already there exist in this State agencies created expressly for such purposes: The State Board of Education: State Board of Charities and Corrections: Industrial Welfare Commission: State Labor Bureau: State Board of Health: Commission of Immigration and Housing and the University of California. The achievements and potentialities of these are too little known. There should be greater publicity given to their operations, and the citizens of the State should learn to use them.

The Women's Committee appreciates that social work and social problems have been given greater consideration during the war than ever before in the history of the country. They know that greater progress has been made in the consideration of these problems than could have been hoped for in fifty years in normal times.

This has been largely due to the fact that the putting through of these measures of social reform has been on a "Win the War" basis.—It has been possible because of the intensified community interest aroused and because the Community has taken part where formerly a few social workers were giving their minds and time to this effort for the betterment of conditions.

The suggestions for reconstruction which are presented by the Women's Committee cannot be carried out, and the ends at which the suggestions aim accomplished, without community support and community interest.

A few social workers, specializing in certain lines, cannot accomplish what we have here presented as necessary nor can these suggestions be put into effect immediately.—They mean:

- 1st: Further education on the part of the public as to the need for these social, industrial and economic changes.
- 2nd: Education to convince the citizens that it is a part of patriotic duty for them to share in the problems of peace.

The Women's Committee asks the women in the organizations who have co-operated to make the work of this Committee possible,

to make this program part of the continuing patriotic expression of their organizations. It asks the un-organized women of the State to join in this program and to help continue the solidarity of patriotic effort which has marked the war work of the California women.

We endorse the following from the reconstruction program of the California Federation of Labor:

"We insist that there shall be no curtailment in the progressive and humanitarian work of our State Government. Certain reactionary forces, under the guise of economy, are right now attempting to muddle and becloud this issue. But they must not be permitted to make thrift and economy a slogan for reaction."

It is evident that in order to carry out a program which will endeavor to meet the needs of all the people, women should be placed upon the various commissions and State agencies in sufficient numbers to deal effectively with matters of public policy.

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