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# WARTIME DELINQUENCY<sup>1</sup>

Eleanor T. Glueck<sup>2</sup>

## *Introduction*

Although some attention has been directed to the effects of total war on the nature and increase in juvenile delinquency in war-torn England, we have not yet thought much about the possible results of our own war involvements on the juvenile crime situation in the United States. The war has brought with it so many and such varied problems to divert our attention from matters which have previously been of daily concern, that we have not marshalled our thinking on the probable ramifications of the juvenile crime problem resulting from a war economy.

There will be increased opportunities for the commission of crime, bootlegging in automobile tires and gasoline, for example, and in other priority materials. This war will see a diversion of the usual rackets of pre-war days into strange new types of illicit activities and no doubt many persons will become involved in them who did not participate in similar activities previously because the temptations and opportunities will be greater; and that part of the public who wink an eye at shady practices will demand such sources for illicit priority materials, thereby encouraging a flourishing "black market." But my interest is rather in focusing attention on the problem of *juvenile crime* as it is affected by total war. If we can learn any lessons from the English experience in the first year of war before community resources were mustered toward juvenile crime control, it would seem evident that a marked increase may be expected in our own rate of juvenile delinquency.

## *Evidences of Increasing Juvenile Delinquency in the United States*

In fact we are already experiencing such an increase although the evidence is by no means conclusive. There are still those among us who believe that "it cannot happen here" and are blinding themselves to the signs of the times. Already, for example, we see an increase in commitments to the state correctional schools of Massachusetts. In February, 1942, there were two and a third times as many boys committed to one of these schools for boys<sup>3</sup> as in the same month in 1941; and in the same month one and a half times as many

<sup>1</sup> Address before Annual Meeting of the Boston League of Women Voters, April 28, 1942.

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<sup>3</sup> Industrial School for Boys, Shirley, Massachusetts.

boys were committed to another of these schools;<sup>4</sup> and a little over twice as many girls were committed.<sup>5</sup> Other evidences of increasing delinquency are reflected in some recent findings concerning runaways made by the Travelers Aid Society of Boston who report that there were twice as many runaways in January and February, 1942, as in the corresponding month a year ago; while in March, 1942, there were three times the number of runaways as in the corresponding month of 1941. The judge of a juvenile court reports an increase in juvenile delinquents as reflected in the growing number of boys placed on probation from 219 in January, 1941, to 258 in April, 1942,<sup>6</sup> and a disciplinary day school reports a rise in cases being referred to the school for truancy.<sup>7</sup>

These are, of course, only straws in the wind but they are confirmed by evidence coming in from other states. For example, an increase in crimes among boys in the Felony Court in New York City has been noted recently and the Magistrate (Morris Rothenberg) has commented that, "There seems to be a crime wave among young boys. Last week a number of youthful defendants in court were charged with serious crimes. Some of these boys have been in the Children's Court. This is not just accidental. A serious investigation should be made by the police."<sup>8</sup> From Los Angeles comes a report that:

"numerous Los Angeles high school boys today are committing acts of violence against fellow students and adults to an extent never reached heretofore. Many more criminal complaints are being filed against offenders. The juvenile delinquency trend under wartime conditions is becoming more and more pronounced."<sup>9</sup>

Recently the United States Children's Bureau, in preparation for the meeting of the Commission on Children in Wartime, made a comparison of juvenile court statistics for 30 courts located in various parts of the United States, comparing these with statistics of the previous year. An increase in juvenile delinquency cases was reported by 22 courts and a decrease by 8 courts. In the 22 courts that reported an increase, the percent ranged from 2 to 110; in 11 of these the increase was 20% or more. Although it is probable that there are other explanations for these apparent increases than wartime pressures, it nevertheless must be accepted as a significant fact that other possible explanations would not possibly account for all the increase.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Lyman School for Boys, Westboro, Massachusetts.

<sup>5</sup> Lancaster Industrial School for Girls.

<sup>6</sup> Roxbury, Massachusetts Juvenile Court.

<sup>7</sup> Boston Disciplinary Day School.

<sup>8</sup> New York Times, April 5, 1942.

<sup>9</sup> This statement was made by Mr. Alfred A. Blanchard, Supervisor of Boys Welfare Centers for the Los Angeles City School system and Chairman of the Board of Education's Alertness to Delinquency Committee (from Los Angeles paper, March 9, 1942.)

<sup>10</sup> Information contained in a letter from Miss Elsa Castendyck, Director, Child Guidance Division, Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C., May 7, 1942.

Here and there also have been reports of increasing truancy and of growing vandalism. Undoubtedly each day will bring new evidence of increasing delinquency.<sup>11</sup>

*English Statistics of Rise in Juvenile Delinquency*

In view of this, a consideration of the increase in wartime delinquency in England should be of much assistance to us in planning for the handling of this situation in our own country. At the end of the first year of war, the English Board of Education reported that the number of children under fourteen convicted of offenses was 41% higher than in the previous year; the increase in the age span 14-17 was 22%. And, in general, it was noted that it was in burglary, looting and thieving that the increase largely expressed itself. Typical wartime offenses are stealing of sandbags, being in unlawful possession of A. R. P. equipment, having a false national identity card, wearing an R. A. F. uniform without authority, stealing of bicycles.<sup>12</sup> It is of importance to note that in the first few months of the war the number of offenders fell below pre-war figures

"at a period when it is very doubtful whether virtue in the young was increasing to the same extent. . . . It is likely that many young people got away with it."<sup>13</sup> . . . "At the beginning of this war as in the war period of 1914-1918, there was a very definite reduction in crime due, no doubt to the application of the whole energies of the people to the job of combating the enemy, a 'standing together' of the mass of the people including many of those who were given to anti-social conduct. Consequently all petty crimes, particularly offenses against the person and against property, inclined to disappear, but this state of affairs did not last for very long and was soon followed by a general settling down on the part of the people to a state of war and a return to what appeared to be, on the surface, a fairly normal kind of life. People accommodated themselves to the changes brought about by the war situation, changes which affected economic conditions, cost of living, working conditions, family life and a variety of other considerations which must have their effect on the criminal picture."<sup>14</sup>

A further study of the English situation reveals not only that there was an increase in the number of juvenile offenders but also in the number of offenses which they committed, which would reflect the fact not only that more youngsters are indulging in criminalistic activities but that their offenses are of a more serious

<sup>11</sup> The writer asks that if any readers of this article have evidence of increasing delinquency in their respective communities, they be good enough to send her brief reports of it, addressed to the Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>12</sup> *The Effect of the War on Adolescent Delinquency* by Reginald A. Pestell, Social Work, published by the Council of the Charity Organisation Society, London, p. 66. October, 1941.

<sup>13</sup> *Delinquency in Wartime* by Eileen Younghusband, Social Work, published by The Council of the Charity Organisation Society, London, October, 1941. p. 55.

<sup>14</sup> Reginald A. Pestell, p. 62.

character and of more frequent occurrence.<sup>15</sup> But the most significant finding from the English experience and one which gives us pause is a fact revealed in a report recently made by the Bristol (England) Child Guidance Clinic to the effect that they have had an increase of 50% in referrals of juvenile delinquents in the years 1940-1941. In analyzing this increase in relation to the intelligence of the offenders, it has been found, most significantly, that delinquency among the children of normal mentality (here defined as those with an I. Q. over 85) showed a *reduction of 23% over the years 1939-1940, but a six-fold increase in delinquency among those of the dull and borderline group (I.Q.70-85).*<sup>16</sup>

"There is at all times a close connection between delinquency and subnormality so that any social upheaval which makes the art of living more difficult inevitably means that a large number of subnormal people, whether parents or children, find themselves unable to perform satisfactorily that complicated series of activities which society expects of them. Hence, an increase in crime amongst the subnormal. . . . Wartime conditions mean less parental control, broken or non-existent schooling, more temptations in streets, shops and shelters. Therefore it is not surprising if there is an increase in delinquency in the subnormal group."<sup>17</sup>

Meager as these statistics are, they nevertheless clearly reflect, first, the fact of increase in juvenile crime and, secondly, an increase in delinquency among *those of subnormal intelligence.*

Already we have seen some indications of the rising tide of juvenile delinquency in our own country. It behooves us, therefore, no longer to avoid consideration of what we may do at least to hold to pre-war levels the crime rate among juveniles.

### *Causes of the Rise of Juvenile Crime in England*

Before we can give intelligent consideration, however, to what might be done in this country to meet the rising tide of juvenile crime, it would be well for us to look into the English situation for some explanation of the causes of the rise which took place there. Apparently a part of the increase can be attributed to the greater opportunities for the commission of crime during blackouts; but a part is also, no doubt, to be charged to the general let-down in disciplinary practices and parental supervision necessitated by the evacuation of children to districts away from their accustomed haunts and by the entry of their elders into defense activities; and a part may be attributed to the general increase in nervous tension and irritability which must necessarily occur in bomb-threatened districts. The separation of families, the absence of male wage earners from the home either in service or in defense industries and

<sup>15</sup> Eileen Younghusband, p. 57.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 58, 59.

even the absorption of women into industry and civilian defense who were formerly 24-hour-a-day mothers must have its effect in an increased toll of delinquency among the children. The insecurities of children are naturally heightened in times of added stress and are bound to find expression, among some at least, in delinquent activity. Shooting, killing, hatred, plundering fill the minds and hearts of youngsters living close to danger in a warring nation and highly suggestible children are bound to be affected by this. To use a gun for a stick-up, to loot, even to murder becomes less terrifying in a war-torn world than in the peaceful days before the Hitler fury was unleashed. A youngster formerly influenced to crime by a mystery movie or a detective story or by the persuasion of a gang companion, now is beset from dawn until bedtime with news headlines and radio blasts of killings by the wholesale, of looting by armies; even his sleep is filled with terrors formerly unknown to his limited imaginings.

An English social worker in commenting on wartime delinquency in England points out that "the war-time causes of delinquency are at bottom the same as the peace-time causes; that is to say, unhappy homes, broken homes, inadequate homes, and no homes at all, coupled very often with a bad social environment and the subnormality of the offender. Defective family relationships would, however, appear to be the primary causative factor, in that very few delinquents come from poor homes where the relationships are good, neither does the well-cared for subnormal child fall into crime."<sup>18</sup>

It would appear, therefore, that such increase in crime as has occurred follows the pattern of pre-war delinquency in that wartime delinquents have the same background of underprivilege that characterizes the delinquents of pre-war days, only there are more of them because the pressures of life under wartime conditions tap the resistance level of an increasing number of youngsters and result naturally in social breakdown.

"The war," says this social worker in explaining the increase, "has contributed in a variety of ways to the worsening of the family situation. The most obvious of these is the calling up of the father and the evacuation or war work of the mother. The children cannot be seen off to school if the mother is at work all day, while the evening meal is often a dreary affair where everyone fends for themselves and no one notices particularly if Mary or Jim do not come in. The habit of school attendance was very badly shattered during 1939 and 1940. It was a habit that went against the grain with many, and it has not proved easy to re-establish it. A boy of 9 came into a London juvenile court this July (1941) who could only remember having been in school once since the outbreak of war and who could only recognise a few letters of the alphabet."<sup>19</sup>

Not only have increasingly defective home conditions directly contributed to greater delinquency among juveniles but it is being pointed out by English social workers that the high wages paid to young boys are also having their effects in increasing crime.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 57.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 57.

"It is no uncommon thing to find boys earning £3 to £5 a week, who yet steal money, or goods which they convert into money. Such boys are often earning more than their fathers, they are sometimes working long hours at physically exhausting work, they buy their own clothes but they only give between 25s. and £2 a week at home; rarely do they save. Yet there is far less that they can spend their money on now than in normal times. . . . Why then do they steal? The normal desire for adventure may have something to do with it, enhanced by the general atmosphere of reckless living induced by the war."<sup>20</sup>

Not only are the increasing wages serving to contribute to delinquency but "there is a growing tendency on the part of adolescents to change jobs frequently in order to earn more money, knowing full well that the job on hand may be for a short time only. Some have given up what would have proved to be good jobs of a reasonably permanent nature in order to earn more money now, doing less skilled work which can only lead them to unemployment after the war. . . . Some youths feel that they can now afford to take days off when they feel like it, and still have a fairly good amount in their wage packet at the end of the week. Others have lost jobs with good prospects owing to firms having to close down because of the war situation and have found it difficult to get congenial work because they are approaching military age and are, therefore, forced to take casual and uninteresting work."<sup>21</sup>

This, then is a situation of which we must take increasing cognizance in making any plans for the control of juvenile crime in the war period.

Although we have not yet in this country been faced with air-raids and with the problem of running to shelters, we may well profit from the English experience in this regard as contributory to juvenile delinquency.

"The effects of air-raids play their part from the evacuation of children, through the bombing of the home to the multiple effects of shelter life. The latter are answerable for the break-up of much family life through the mother and children going off to the shelter in the evening; this is still happening, not mainly from fear of air-raids but from certainty of losing the precious bunk ticket if it is not regularly used. Surely a queer situation in which during warm summer nights children slept in the hot and airless shelters, not because there were air-raids but largely because officialdom could not devise some other scheme of bunk reservation. Shelters of course provide a fertile soil for the formation of gangs; they also act in winter as a substitute for the cheap cafe and provide universally available free lodgings for boys or girls who run away from home or institutions."<sup>22</sup>

Some youngsters "have made bad associations as a result of going to the 'Undergrounds' and shelters, which have resulted in their being drawn into delinquent acts, finally ending with their appearance in court. I have in mind one case in which five youths of excellent character, all under the age of 19 years, were used as accomplices by a man aged 38, who had a very bad criminal record. He met and made friends with them in one of the London 'Undergrounds', and finally used them to transport stolen property and to enter places about which he had some knowledge. The man was committed to prison and the lads, with one exception, were placed on probation. Conditions in shelters have left much to be desired, causing a general state of unsettledness among

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>21</sup> Reginald A. Pestell, p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> Eileen Younghusband, p. 58.

adolescents until they have roamed from shelter to shelter in an effort to find the most attractive from their point of view."<sup>23</sup>

In addition to all these contributory factors, the increasing complications of life in wartime have also been stressed by English social workers as explaining in part the rise in juvenile delinquency.

... "working hours are longer, shopping is much more difficult, the maze of official regulations grows more tortuous. At the same time life is more constricted, and the outlets for pleasure and amusement grow less."<sup>24</sup>

Not only the dangers to young people created by haphazard life in bomb shelters but also evacuations and blackout have to be considered among the major causes of the rise in juvenile crime.

"A sudden large-scale movement such as is represented by evacuation and its consequent uprooting cannot fail to have its effect on behavior which so often leads to the commission of delinquent acts. During enquiries which have followed as a result of a youth's appearance before the court, it has often been found that the other members of the family have been evacuated, including the father, who has obtained a job locally to be near his wife, leaving the youth alone in town in the flat or rooms to look after himself on the money he earns. There is little choice left to the parents in the matter, as there is very little, if any, work for adolescents in the reception areas."<sup>25</sup>

Although we have not yet in this country had to face with any degree of realism the possible effects of blackouts<sup>26</sup> on increasing opportunities for the commission of juvenile crime, we can well profit from the English experience in this regard also.

"Blackout," says an English social worker, "has also made its contribution to delinquency among adolescents by increasing the temptation and making the difficulty of detection greater. During the early part of the war, before the blitz period, forms of hooliganism seemed to be fairly frequent, which resulted in a number of youths being brought before the court charged with 'insulting words and behavior'."<sup>27</sup>

Although we have probably not covered all the precipitating causes of increasing juvenile crime in England, we have from these accounts a fairly clear notion of what the main causative factors are. Let us turn now to some consideration of how wartime England has marshalled its social forces to meet the challenge of increasing crime to see what leads we can get for our own handling of it.

### *Controlling Juvenile Delinquency in Wartime England*

We must remember in considering any of the programs being carried on in England that the organization of English welfare services is quite different from our own and the problems with which the English have to deal are different because the country is small and the population is a homogenous one. In briefly describing some of the efforts being made in wartime England therefore to

<sup>23</sup> Reginald A. Pestell, p. 64.

<sup>24</sup> Eileen Younghusband, p. 58.

<sup>25</sup> Reginald A. Pestell, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> Since this paper was delivered, a partial blackout of the Atlantic coastal area has been ordered.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 65.



control the rise in juvenile crime, our concern rests with the principles that underlie the work and not with the organizational set-up.

Consultation of English reports reveals that at the beginning of the war there was not the awareness on the part of English social workers and other authorities of the need for preserving child welfare services and most particularly those having to do with absorption of leisure time. But after the first few months of blitz when social breakdown began to be apparent in the rising tide of juvenile crime, a conference was called by the Home Office

"with the object of assisting those who are concerned with this problem, including justices and clerks to justices, directors of education, representatives of government departments, the police, and voluntary organisations . . . the members of this conference were particularly asked not to limit their attention to considerations of treatment but to devote as much time as possible to measures by which young people could be restrained from lawless conduct."

It was stressed that

"the best results can be obtained by close collaboration between official and voluntary effort, and we suggest that the best way of securing this collaboration is by the holding of local conferences in which all those concerned can take part and decide as quickly as possible what steps can immediately be taken to meet the needs, having regard to local circumstances."<sup>28</sup>

This conference constituted itself into a National Youth Committee under the direct supervision of the Board of Education, the purposes being

"to advise upon all aspects of juvenile welfare. A special youth branch was established at the Board of Education to administer grants in aid of the work and to give effect to the policy decided upon . . . local authorities for higher education were asked to set up local youth committees representative of both the statutory and volunteer sides and of other interests concerned including the churches, teachers, employers, and employees, to stimulate local interest in action, ascertain local needs and frame practical programs for meeting them . . . the authorities and voluntary organisations are being given every encouragement to maintain and expand their provision for young people. Under the conditions necessarily imposed by the war there are many obstacles to face—the shortage of trained and experienced leaders, the difficulty of finding premises and providing equipment, and the loss of both premises and equipment through enemy action . . . many new centers, clubs and units have been started by both the authorities and voluntary organisations. Some of these are of an experimental type and specially designed to appeal to young people who have not hitherto associated themselves with any sort of organised social activities on leaving school . . . opportunities for the wholesome and profitable occupation of leisure time are being utilised by many young people who have hitherto not participated in such activities. One of the most interesting of the new developments is the Youth Service Corps. . . . These corps constitute spontaneous local developments and differ widely in their character and organisation according to the local circumstances and local outlook of the area in which they operate. . . . The corps spring from the natural desire of young people to express themselves in service to the nation and the community and the initiative in the formation of the youth service squads, into which the corps are generally divided, comes from

<sup>28</sup> Signed by Herbert Morrison, Secretary of State for the Home Department and Howard Ramsbotham, President of the Board of Education, Home Office Circular 807624, London, June, 1941.

the young people themselves . . . in a number of cities youth organisations play a part in the local civil defense organisation, some having cadet units for the training of boys too young to take an active role. . . . The conclusion of the matter seems to be that one of the best means of checking delinquency in war-time, as in peace, is to provide more, and more varied, social and recreative facilities to meet the needs and tastes of all sections of the youthful community—indeed, this has been proved in places where such provision has been made and a decrease in delinquency has resulted—and to challenge youthful exuberance to interest itself in useful service. . . .”<sup>29</sup>

These suggestions and plans refer largely to the needs of young people already out of school. In regard to children still of school age, however, it has been the goal of welfare activity in England to reorganize schooling as quickly as possible following evacuation and damage from air-raids and to reduce school truancy.

“The disturbance of home conditions caused by the war has produced a new crop of truancy, and there is evidence that thoughtless parents, when the routine of school attendance has been broken, do not appreciate the harm done by allowing their children to be absent from school. The need, therefore, has arisen for a stricter enforcement of school attendance and this has come at a time when school attendance officers are reduced in numbers. . . . The employment of school children has an immediate bearing on school attendance. . . . Under war conditions there may well be a tendency to resort to the services of school children. . . . Local education authorities would therefore be well advised to watch this tendency and to see that the provisions of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, are complied with. . . . Care should be taken to see that the kind of work on which school children are employed is suited to their age and capacity, and that the hours for which they are employed are not excessive. . . . But to prevent delinquency among school children it is not enough to secure regular attendance at school; it is also necessary to consider what they are doing in their leisure time, particularly when so many are evacuated, or when one or both parents may be employed on war work and away from home during many of the hours when children are free from school. There is evidence of young children getting out of hand through lack of domestic care before and after school. A number of local education authorities, especially in reception areas, have already recognized this need and have organised centres usually in school buildings, where boys and girls can play games or carry on hobbies. A more general provision of these facilities is greatly to be desired. Supervision of the children is necessary. In spite of the heavy call which the war has made on school teachers it is believed that many will be willing to give their services. The assistance of suitable voluntary bodies should be invited. It is essential that persons undertaking the work of supervision should know how to help children to play games and, if necessary, some simple training can be given to those volunteers who have not had previous experience.”<sup>30</sup>

In connection with carrying out the suggestions made by the National Youth Committee for local Youth Councils, the city of Bristol, England, made some discoveries that are worth bringing to your attention. A study of the leisure time activities of young people a few months after the war began revealed, first of all, that

“the highest proportion of non-membership was in the group which seemed most to need guidance and help towards right development. Boys and girls

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

graded 'C' and 'D' as regards personal character, intelligence, home conditions and parental influence proved to be the very ones whom the facilities offered most often failed to attract or retain."<sup>31</sup>

It was further found that "a district which on paper might appear to be well supplied with youth organisations actually offered a very limited range of activities with which to attract boys and girls of differing tastes and temperaments. In some instances, a bountiful supply of youth units within easy distance of each other in practice catered mainly, if not entirely, for boys and girls already attached to particular organisations."<sup>32</sup>

As a result of these findings the Youth Committee defined its concern as

"everything which affects the welfare of boys and girls, even of those who do not belong to any organisations. . . . The full development of the personality and character of these non-members is of equal importance as is that of the members, and can only be fostered by interest in them as individuals. With this in view, a scheme of after-care is now under consideration, which will offer a friend to every school leaver who needs one and provide for sustained contacts with and constructive work for the minority whose homes, conditions of employment or personal characteristics demand it."<sup>33</sup>

Among the conditions, for example, which the local councils, charged with carrying out the recommendations of the Youth Committee, were asked to follow were that leisure time activities must be concerned with

"all-round development of personality . . . the Youth Committee are not in favor of schemes which aim primarily at 'taking people off the streets' by providing a cheaper substitute for commercialised entertainment." Further it was suggested to the Area Councils that "it is 'the wish of the Youth Committee that there should be a substantial representation of members under 20 years of age'."<sup>34</sup>

Two of the projects which the Bristol Youth Committee has evolved are worthy of our attention. First, following the first series of severe air-raids in Bristol, many clubs and classes were closed not only because leaders were withdrawn for work in the blackouts but because parents, particularly of girls, were not willing to let them attend evening groups during periods when blackouts were a nightly occurrence. Because the existing private agencies were not too well able to carry out the expense of proper blacking out costs and because so many of the buildings were destroyed or commandeered, the Youth Committee secured the use of school buildings in which most of the recreational activities are now being carried on.

Secondly, to provide some relief from war strain among adolescents and to meet the difficulties of the organisations due to staggered holidays often arranged only at short notice, a permanent camp is being maintained not only for use by youth organizations

<sup>31</sup> Youth Work in Bristol by Hilda Jennings, Social Work, published by the Council of the Charity Organisation Society, London, p. 69. October, 1941.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 69.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 71.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 68.

but by individual young workers so that they may enjoy brief holidays during the summer months. Attention has also been directed toward providing wholesome use of leisure time for young workers engaged in industrial training at government training centers.

There are undoubtedly many details of the work going on in England in handling the wartime crime situation which are not yet known to us in this country. However, it would profit us well to learn everything we can from Britain's experience in any plans which we may be devising for handling our own crime problem.

*Suggestions for Controlling Delinquency in Wartime America*

What then can we learn from the English experience on the basis of which we can at least outline if not detail the direction of efforts toward keeping juvenile crime in this country at least to pre-war levels? First of all, we must bear in mind the fact that basically the need appears to be to keep to a minimum the tensions and insecurities of the stressful times in which children are now living. Therefore, any efforts toward improving their home conditions and their environment in work, and play must be of concern. Particularly our attention must be directed toward children living in areas of underprivilege, for it is among them that resistance levels will soon be tapped by the added pressures of the wartime situation and will result in social breakdown.

There can certainly be no question that it is of the utmost importance to preserve all the welfare services that have been built up over the years. We must not permit ourselves (as was done in England at the beginning of the war) to indulge in false economy by restricting those very activities which are necessary to the wholesome development of youth.<sup>35</sup> These include not only recreational services which make possible a richer life for children,—health services, mental hygiene, vocational guidance, services to disintegrating and broken families, adequate relief to those who are unable to earn a minimum for the maintenance of decent homes, housing programs, and all the other social services that are so essential to the maintenance of morale.

Not only is it necessary to preserve these welfare services but to expand them to include areas not previously reached by such programs. There are still considerable areas of our country in which welfare services are extremely meager.

<sup>35</sup> We hope that we will not see much of the kind of false economy which is taking place in New York where, according to the *New York Times* of April 18, 1942, the Juvenile Aid Unit, for 12 years the police department's principal crime deterrent agency will pass out of existence on July 1, at least for the duration of the war, because no appropriations for the Bureau have been included in the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year. According to present plans the civilian personnel of the Bureau comprising 18 crime prevention investigators will be either placed upon Civil Service Preferred lists or transferred to other bureaus of the police department.

In a report made in the April, 1942 *Survey Midmonthly Magazine* on "Child Welfare in the States" by Gertrude Springer we are given an opportunity to see what, in the opinion of responsible state welfare officials, are the serious gaps in services to children. Despite all the splendid efforts which have been made in this country by the U. S. Children's Bureau and other groups to stimulate and finance welfare services, it is still an appalling fact that these services are in many places lacking even of bare essentials; and even where needs are recognized and money has been made available for certain services, it becomes apparent from reading the reports of the various states that the greatest problem at the moment is in securing adequately qualified personnel to carry out these services. For example, in one state,

"the need for child welfare services all over the state is obvious. It is particularly acute in the several areas where training camps and war industries are concentrated. Lack of personnel bars expansion to meet both normal and emergency demands for service. Recruitment of personnel for child welfare services is complicated by the fact that other social agencies in the state pay about the same salaries and do not require professional training. As a consequence there is little incentive for promising young college graduates with pre-professional courses in social work to acquire the specialized experience and training that children's work demands."<sup>36</sup>

As we read these reports from the several states we see this problem repeating itself and it certainly seems evident that attention must now be paid more seriously than ever before not only to filling in the many gaps in services to children but in providing adequate training and salaries for personnel.

We must remember that total war places many additional burdens on the doorstep of welfare agencies. They will have, for example, many more broken homes to salvage than formerly. Fathers and brothers are going into the armed forces, some never to return. The homes they leave have to be maintained physically and spiritually. The welfare agencies must also take on the task of serving families crowding into defense industry areas. Towns are mushrooming over night. Hasty but well coordinated organization of the life of such communities must be accomplished. Unless some semblance of normal living is quickly established in these communities, anti-social activities not only among the adults but certainly among the children are bound to flourish.

Although it cannot be emphasized too strongly that all welfare services to children have to be preserved and strengthened, we must particularly concentrate our attention toward absorbing the energies of youth, first in the direction of activities which will preserve health and morale and secondly toward recreational activities *which are directly related to the war effort*. We must avoid the tragic mistake which was made in England in the early months of

<sup>36</sup> Survey, April, 1942, p. 105.

the war when so many of the none too extensive recreational activities were curtailed, partly because the need for them was not recognized, but also because, following upsets due to the blackouts and evacuations, it was difficult to re-establish some of these activities.

As regards the preservation of the physical health of youngsters, we have, I think, already taken to heart the lesson revealed by the large proportion of draft rejectees who were found to be suffering from nutritional defects. We could not have had a more dramatic index of the need for strengthening the health of young people than has come to us so forcefully in this way. Just what any particular community might or should do in this direction, it is not our place to describe here. Certainly if we have an awareness of the problem, the means and the machinery for bringing the desired result to fruition should not be lacking.

Toward the preservation of mental health, there is a definite need for the expansion of all types of mental hygiene work in schools, guidance clinics, juvenile courts, day nurseries, and the many other agencies and organizations that deal with children. Such services must for the sake of the welfare of children be extended also to parents, many of whom are already suffering from the stresses and strains of wartime uncertainties and whose moods and insecurities must necessarily reflect themselves in the behavior of children.

In regard to the absorption of the leisure time energies of youth in the direction of activities related to the war effort, we can of course learn much from the English experience. We have seen how many different types of activities young people there are engaged in. Already in this country there are innumerable signs that there is recognition of this need. In Massachusetts for example, a Junior Victory Army has been formed through which the youth of New England are being recruited

"in the victory drive for the preservation of our democratic way of life . . . the Junior Victory Army movement should answer the question of the many boys and girls in our community who ask themselves how they can be of help in America's defense efforts. Not only will it give youth a definite place in the defense program, but the many infinitesimal efforts should add up to a tremendous movement. The knowledge that they are doing something real will build morale in our boys and girls."<sup>37</sup>

And in Massachusetts also the State Committee on Public Safety is enlisting the services of 50,000 youths who will be trained to carry on the work of messengers and couriers during emergencies. Among the activities which young people in England between the ages of 11 and 18 have been carrying on so successfully under the sponsorship of the National Youth Committee (described in the previous section) are collection of all kinds of waste; clerical help

<sup>37</sup> Boston Daily Record, February 3, 1942.

to A. R. P. authorities; helping in assembling gas masks and boxes, messenger service for police and A. R. P. authorities in the day-time and during blackouts; helping in summer vacations with the harvests, serving as fire-watchers, digging trenches and gun emplacements, filling sandbags, collecting waste paper, collecting books, games, etc. for hospitals and camps; cleaning shelters and first-aid posts, entertaining and supervising evacuee children; addressing envelopes, killing pests and vermin on farms, collecting kitchen waste for feeding farm stock, painting curbstones white, cultivating allotment gardens, keeping pigs and poultry; acting as reliefs in village services and shops after all-night raids in order to give some rest to the regular staff; delivering milk and newspapers, collecting and chopping wood for fuel; selling and buying war savings stamps.<sup>38</sup>

In this country, Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A. units, boys clubs and other organized groups of youngsters are volunteering for similar work. There is no question that most youngsters respond enthusiastically to such calls for service.

By and large the *need is for making young people feel that they have a stake in the total war effort* and that destructive activity militates against the successful termination of the war. If we can accomplish this, we will prevent a certain amount of selfish depredation in which impulsive and suggestible youngsters would naturally indulge in the face of the many opportunities that present themselves during a period of severe crisis. If we can strengthen children to resist such temptations by giving them a real and not a superficial understanding of why the war is being fought and their stake in it for the future, we should succeed in keeping anti-social activity to a minimum.

Profiting further from the English experience we must be on the alert to guard the welfare of young people who are leaving school to enter gainful employment. They, like English youth, are or will be receiving high wages, will perhaps not work regularly because in a few days they can make as much as they ordinarily would in a week; they will be less inclined to parental discipline than formerly, and we may expect that some of them who would not otherwise have joined the ranks of delinquents will now do so. Easy money, easy spending, many temptations, desire for adventure and excitement will add to the mounting toll of juvenile crime. Some provision, therefore, for special attention to this group of young people must be provided. In England it was suggested in this connection that legislation be introduced compelling employers to pay wages up to a certain level in cash and the rest in National Savings Certificates.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Information from the British Press Service, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, N. Y. C.

<sup>39</sup> London Herald Tribune, December, 2, 1941.

And also, again borrowing from the English experience, we must be particularly on the alert, it seems to me, to provide suitable recreation and supervision to children of *subnormal mentality*. From their ranks we may expect the greatest increase in juvenile delinquents. As so many of these children are of the underprivileged group we are faced with the problem of providing substitute parental care in situations where both parents are now working in defense industries and possibly where one or both parents have actually gone to another community to work. Already some of the social agencies are beginning to report that more children are being left without proper supervision than heretofore. A good sized city in Massachusetts (Springfield), for example, notes an increase in the number of school children being left without home supervision as their mothers have been drawn off into defense industries. Fitchburg, another large city, reports that the Children's Aid Society there

"could have placed 50 children last month for mothers who want to go to work not because they have to but because they want to . . . many of the foster mothers have given up their children and gone to work in factories and the question of finding foster homes has become quite a serious problem."

In connection with any supervisory programs we must recognize the growing difficulties of finding suitable foster homes for neglected, dependent and delinquent children. Foster parents are finding it more profitable to engage in defense industries than to accept children into their homes for very small pay. It may be that during the period of war emergency it will be necessary to establish small boarding homes or institutions under expert and full-time supervision to replace foster home care.

There is another aspect of wartime delinquency control which is particularly worthy of our attention and this has to do with protective work among young girls, with the control of prostitution, and with the prevention of the spread of venereal infection among youth. The varieties of approach to these problems are legion. Thus far, more interest is manifest in this aspect of crime control than in any other phase, possibly because the spread of venereal infection is such a very understandable menace. It is not my purpose here to describe the activities which are already being so effectively carried out by the public health authorities, by Social Hygiene Societies, and by the newly formed United Service Organizations in the control of these problems. Innumerable communities are providing recreational facilities for soldiers, sailors and youths concentrated in defense industry areas. Legislation has been passed making prostitution a Federal offense within prescribed limits around camps and defense industries (H. R. 2475) and a varying amount of effort is being exerted in areas around encampments to keep away suggestible and attention-seeking young girls, who though not



prostitutes are nevertheless hunting for excitement of contact with soldiers and sailors. But even in this direction, only a bare beginning has been made. Unless a more concerted effort is expended, a great toll will be paid in illegitimate pregnancies, venereal disease, and, most important of all, in a general lowering of the moral tone of youth. Plans need to be worked out for the adequate protection of girls and boys from the temptations of self-indulgence in the sexual realm which are legion in these days of stress, and every possible educational and spiritual resource must be utilized to build up their resistance to such self-expression.

This brings us naturally to the whole problem of adequate policing. In normal times it is not too easy to convince police officials that they have a very real place in crime prevention programs. Now, however, the need for their services becomes urgent. Trouble of a serious nature may well be expected during prolonged periods of blackout as has been the case in England. As yet we have only been playing the game of blackout but it probably will not be long before, in our coastal cities and towns at least, we will have long continued periods of blackout when vandalism will grow rife. Only adequate patrol work will prevent the kind of depredations that have occurred in England. However, the police have even a more important function to perform and that is to know, watch, and refer to the proper authorities all children in their communities who are beginning to show any signs of delinquent conduct. The neighborhood policeman is likely to be well acquainted with youngsters and must now more than ever play his part in any community organization for crime control.

Regarding other aspects of controlling wartime delinquency, there is the whole matter of keeping anti-social conduct to a minimum during bombings and evacuations. If either of these contingencies become realities, those of us who are interested in juvenile crime control must give our attention to the protection of children from nervous tensions and from the unwholesome companionships and influences that have been found present in English shelters. We have had some hint of what would be likely to happen if we did not give adequate supervision to children in shelters and provide wholesome recreation for them. We also know something of the dislocations which would occur in their lives were they to be evacuated from their homes. Certainly plans are underway by various agencies for handling the major problems of child welfare under the drastic conditions of total war. But I think it would still be necessary for a particularly designated group or agency to give its attention to the specific programs having to do with the prevention of juvenile crime under war conditions.

There is another suggestion from wartime England by which

we might profit in making plans for the treatment of those children who become delinquent under wartime pressures and that is by the setting up of military camps for juvenile offenders, where they would be trained with the same discipline as ordinary soldiers and paid a nominal sum. At a certain age they could be drafted as sufficiently trained soldiers into the Army.<sup>40</sup> I am not aware that this plan has actually yet been carried out in England but it seems to me that it has very real possibilities. We know already from researches which Professor Glueck and I have been carrying on that there are certain delinquents who respond exceedingly well to life in the Army and Navy, much better in fact than they do to supervision under probation or other types of peno-correctional treatment.<sup>41</sup> At any rate the idea is worth considering and experimenting with, for certainly with the increasing shortages in trained personnel in the courts, probation services, institutions, and parole departments, and so on, there will be need for devising other methods of supervision, preferably directly related to the defense effort.

There are undoubtedly many other considerations to which attention would have to be given in any well-rounded program of controlling delinquency in wartime and it is not possible here to describe them all. But to me the most evident need and one which civic organizations should be most deeply concerned about, is *in centering in some one group the responsibility for stimulating, working out, and carrying through the necessary preventive programs*. I do not know whether there should be any Federal direction of this project, but certainly whatever organizations already exist or might be organized for this specific purpose, should have a *state-wide function*. Regardless of the form which such an organization takes in any particular state, it must be concerned *specifically* with the problems of controlling juvenile delinquency and *not in a more general way* with the promotion of all child welfare services. Attention to the delinquent has too often fallen between the boards of other activities and has been lost in the functions of innumerable social agencies that are concerned with one or another aspect of child welfare. The problem of controlling juvenile delinquency in wartime is so urgent that only a prompt and closely coordinated attack on it will bring the desired results.

<sup>40</sup> London Daily Mail, August 11, 1941.

<sup>41</sup> See Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor T. "Juvenile Delinquents Grown Up," Commonwealth Fund, New York City, 1940. Another volume soon to be published by the Commonwealth Fund under the probable title of "Criminals Under Treatment" further confirms this judgment.