

THE FEDERAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU A SYMPOSIUM

I. BY LILLIAN D. WALD, New York.

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Although the National Child Labor Committee stands sponsor for the bill introduced into Congress for the establishment in the Department of the Interior of a Children's Bureau, the Committee can no longer claim sole guardianship of this measure, nor would it indeed desire to do so.

Two and three days ago, twenty-five thousand clergymen in these United States proclaimed once again from pulpits of all creeds the eternal message of the value of the child, outlined to their hearers the modern conception of childhood's claim upon society and the obligations to the child of a society which has prospered by all the results of a progressive civilization. They asked their congregations, whether Jew or Gentile, to consider and support this effort to bring the child into his heritage of this civilization. And not only have the twenty-five thousand clergymen and their congregations shown their desire to participate in furthering this bill, but organizations of many diverse kinds have assumed a degree of sponsorship that indicates indisputably how universal has been its call to enlightened mind and heart. The national organizations of Women's Clubs, the Consumers' Leagues throughout the country, college and school alumnae associations, societies for the promotion of special interests of children, the various state Child Labor Committees, representing in their membership and executive committees, education, labor, law medicine and business, have officially given endorsement. The press, in literally every section of the country, has given the measure serious editorial discussion and approval. Not one dissenting voice has it been possible to discover—not one utterance contradicts the principles that have been laid down by these various representatives of humanitarian thought and unselfish patriotism throughout America, and which values they believe the bill will advance, or that within its scope lie potentialities for such broadening.

It may be, at first, something of a shock to hear of taking the child out of the realm of poetry and pure sentiment into the field of scientific, organized care and protection; but only to the superficially sentimental could it appear that the poetry and purity of childhood might be sacrificed by using all the fruits of modern thought, study, experience and knowledge to their advantage—"Even the least of these." What would the Bureau do? What measures for the advantage of the child, the future citizen and the country would the Bureau further? What innovations in governmental functions would the Bureau introduce? These are pertinent questions that may well be asked, and which must be answered to the satisfaction of the men in both Houses of Congress before we shall have the right to ask them to vote for its creation. The Bureau would be a clearing house, a source of information and reliable education on all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life, and especially it would investigate and report upon the questions now nowhere answered in complete or unified form, and whose enormous importance to national life is so strikingly evident.

It would fix upon government the responsibility. The attitude now is not unlike the small boy's, of whom my friend in New York tells. He had told him of the story of Nero. The brutality of the monster was vividly related; how he slew his mother, how he played while Rome burned, etc., etc. The boy showed no concern and to draw him out my friend said, "Well, what do you think of that kind of a man?" "He never done nothin' to me," quoth the boy, with a shrug.

The Bureau would investigate legislation affecting children in the several states and territories, and all other facts that have a bearing upon the health, the efficiency, the character, the happiness and the training of children. Orphanage has many aspects that should call out the wisdom of the sages. Perhaps not enough has been done. Perhaps, in some respects, too much. The orphan is a child and orphanage means to some people, even now, the commitment to an asylum, the child lost in the obsession to an institution. Many are like the pious philanthropist who prayed, "Oh Lord, send us many orphans, that we may build the new wing to the asylum." Nothing would the Bureau do to duplicate any work now being done by state or federal government, but it would strengthen this work and bring into immediate usefulness all of the statistical facts

that may lie in the treasure-house of any governmental department or any private association. Practical co-operation of this kind, based on intelligent sympathy, has already been assured by the far-seeing chief of the Educational Bureau and the head of the Census Bureau. As much of the results of their researches as would enrich the Children's Bureau would be laid before it almost without the asking, and yet, important as is their information and their knowledge, it covers only a part of what pertains to the whole great question of the wisest and most enlightened guardianship of our children—the most valuable natural asset of our nation. Literally the Education Bureau is the only thing that has been established by the government which could be directly construed for the children,—from which it might be said that we as a nation are indifferent.

The Children's Bureau would not merely collect and classify information, but it would be prepared to furnish to every community in the land information that was needed, and diffuse knowledge that had come through experts' study of facts valuable to the child and to the community. Many extraordinarily valuable methods have originated in America and have been seized by communities other than our own as valuable social discoveries. Some communities in this country have had more or less haphazard legislation, and there is abundant evidence of the desire to have judicial construction to harmonize and comprehend it. As matters now are within the United States, many communities are retarded and hampered by the lack of just such information and knowledge, which, if the Bureau existed, could be readily available. Some communities within the United States have been placed in most advantageous positions as regards their children, because of the accident of the presence of public spirited individuals in their midst who have grasped the meaning of the nation's true relation to the children, and have been responsible for the creation of a public sentiment which makes high demands. But nowhere in the country does the government, as such, provide information concerning vitally necessary measures for the children. Evils that are unknown or underestimated have the best chance for undisturbed existence and extension, and there where light is most needed, there is still darkness. Ours is, for instance, the only great nation which does not know how many children are born and how many die in each year within its borders; still less do we know how many die in infancy of preventable dis-

eases; how many blind children might have seen the light, for one-fourth of the totally blind need not have been so had the science that has proved this been made known in even the remotest sections of the country.

Registration and our statistics on these matters are but partial, and their usefulness is minimized by the unavoidable passage of time before their appearance. There could be no greater aid to the reduction of infant mortality than full and current vital statistics of children, such as no one community can obtain for itself, and for want of which young lives, born to be valuable to society, are wasted. We realize only occasionally, or after the occurrence of some tragedy, how little is known of other important incidents of the children's lives. We can not say how many are in the jails or almshouses, though periodically the country is stirred by some newspaper report such as that of the little boy of twelve sentenced to five years in a federal penitentiary, or that of a little boy confined for some months upon a trivial charge and incarcerated with a murderer, and other evil men and women, in the cell of a county jail. Outside the few states which have juvenile courts, there is chaos in the treatment and punishment of difficult children, and largely because of lack of knowledge concerning this important matter. This information can not be effectively obtained by private agencies. It is too vital to be left to that chance. Only the federal government can cover the whole field and tell us of the children with as much care as it tells of the trees or the fishes or the cotton crop!

I remember that some three years ago, when it was our pleasure to bring this suggestion before the President, his first expression of approval was, if I recall rightly, that "It is bully." It was a coincidence that the Secretary of Agriculture was departing that same morning for the South to find out what danger to the community lurked in the appearance of the boll weevil. That brought home, with a very strong emphasis to the appeal, the fact that nothing which could have happened to the children would have called forth such official action on the part of the Government.

What measures for the advantage of the child and the country would the Bureau further? No direct responsibility or administrative function for furthering new measures would fall upon the experts of a Children's Bureau, but proceeding by the experience

of other scientific bodies there would be ample justification for employing the best minds of the country for the application of the knowledge gained, by using the stimulus of suggestion and education. It takes no stretch of the imagination to believe that, with the light of knowledge turned by responsible experts upon all phases of the problem of the child, the American people could be trusted, if not with the immediate solution, then with serious consideration, for what appears to be a national apathy is not really so in fact. What innovation in the governmental function would this introduce? This measure for the creation of a Children's Bureau can claim no startling originality. It would introduce no innovation—no new principle—in the function of government. It is along the line of what we have been doing for many years to promote knowledge on other interests, on material matters. Look carefully into the history of the development and present scope of the various bureaus within the authority of the Government, and ample and fascinating analogies will be found.

Other countries, too, have awakened to realize the import of efficient guardianship of their children, have gathered expert information and are using it under the leadership of trained specialists. The French call this development "Child Culture," which implies the use of scientific minds and trained powers, co-ordinated functions, and the protection of the state to the end of efficient manhood through a well guarded childhood. Current literature every day shows the trend of civilized people to fix the responsibility upon the present generation to preserve and cultivate its resources, indeed charging as a crime against us any reckless waste of these. The English children's bill, that within a day or two has become "An Act," is the best example of this as regards the children. That bill is a most remarkable document indeed, covering practically every incident in the child's life that might come within the concern of the Government. Its ninety folio pages constitute a complete code, and reflect not only the wide range of the government's information, but cover every interesting phase of the development of this vital, social and economic matter. A "veritable children's charter," it has been called. The forms of the English government and ours differ. We do not desire the code; details and administration can be left to the states; but we do desire and we most urgently need information, and the best means of broad publicity on all

matters relating to the children, that the national intelligence and conscience may be stirred. The full responsibility for the wise guardianship of these children lies upon us. We cherish belief in the children, and hope, through them, for the future. But no longer can a civilized people be satisfied with the casual administration of that trust. Does not the importance of this call for the best statesmanship that our country can produce? I ask you to consider whether this call for the children's interests does not imply the call for our country's interests. Can we afford to take it? Can we afford not to take it? For humanity, for social well-being, for the security of the Republic's future, let us bring the child into the sphere of our national care and solicitude.

II. By JANE ADDAMS.

Hull House, Chicago, Ill.

There is very little to add to all the pleas which have been made for the establishment of this Federal Bureau in the interests of children. I shall, however, try to point a moral and adorn a tale from the history of this Child Labor Committee itself.

In the very early days, its annual meetings consisted largely of the people working in their various states to secure some adequate child labor legislation, and they came together to swap stories and to cheer each other forward on their very difficult and stony ways. Gradually it became evident that there was needed at least one central secretary who should discover those states in which no one was even working for child labor legislation; who might be able to visit those states and arouse interest. Another of his duties should be to look over all the states of the Union, dividing the people, as it were, into territory where the first important work needed to be done, and into another territory where information needed to be furnished toward the best methods of securing legislation, and still other territory where unbridled enthusiasm needed to be restrained.

Gradually it was discovered that more than one man was needed, as is shown by the reports of the three secretaries of the Committee, one representing the New England States, another the

Southern States, and still another the States of the Ohio Valley. They prove how absurd state lines are when it comes to industrial questions; how exactly the same industrial conditions prevail, for instance, in that little three-cornered spot near the meeting of two rivers which contains a piece of West Virginia, a piece of Pennsylvania and a piece of Ohio, and where the child labor legislation in the three states differs almost as widely as possible.

Of course, the moral is that a Federal Bureau naturally would have nothing to do with state lines, and that only a Federal authority could adequately deal with such a situation.

The growth of this Committee in still another direction illustrates the need of a Federal Bureau which shall furnish information in regard to children. During the very first years in the life of the Committee, it was found necessary to gather careful information, not only about child labor laws, but also in regard to compulsory education laws, because the two must be articulated in order to work smoothly. In later annual meetings a great deal was said in regard to industrial education, both as tending to hold children longer in school and fitting them for work. It was discovered, however, that the educational authorities knew nothing in regard to the children during those first two or three perplexing years after they left school and went to work. The children themselves could not find any connection between the things they had learned and the things they were called upon to do, and they all believed, as one boy said to me, that the commencement orator knew what he was talking about when he said they were going out into a cold world. Thus the Child Labor Committee, in pursuit of its aims, was forced from one aspect of child life to another. To-night, as you see, the talk has come more and more to a consideration of health—"conservation" is a popular word—and the Committee is now working for the conservation of the health and efficiency of the children of the nation.

What does all this mean? Certainly two things. One is that these great questions of education and child labor cannot be adequately cared for by states whose boundaries are determined by rivers and mountains, and seem to have nothing to do with industrial problems, and that these problems therefore must be dealt with by a federal authority having power to transcend state lines. Secondly, that we cannot confine our attention to child labor and detach

it from all other things which pertain to children, and that we are forced into a consideration of education, of health, of recreation, into all sorts of other questions which can only be adequately dealt with and their inter-relation understood, if some bureau of dignity and authority is empowered to consider them.

Only the United States itself is in a position to take charge of such a bureau. Does it not seem that the small effort of the National Child Labor Committee—the effort was small at the beginning, and it is small yet compared to the need—illustrates the need of a Federal Bureau which shall be concerned with the interests of children? Is it not inevitable that this Committee itself should be the way to its establishment in Washington? The Committee goes on to Washington for a hearing before the Committee in the House of Representatives on January 27; but such a Bureau will only be established if throughout the United States there is a great interest in it, if the people everywhere feel that it is necessary, not merely that another Bureau shall be added to an already complicated series of governmental bureaus but that a Bureau shall be established which is going to do something which the people demand and feel ought to be done. Such action on the part of the Government may in time do away with the popular impression that the Federal Government is remote and far away, that it seems to concern itself more with canned meats and fisheries than it does with things which have to do with human life and a sane social progress. Nothing after all can make the Government appear quite so—shall we say vital—to the best interests of the nation as the establishment of a Bureau which would concern itself with the appealing and the rewarding task of looking after its children.

III. BY LEO ARNSTEIN.

New York.

It seems peculiarly fitting that the subject of the Federal Children's Bureau should be discussed at a meeting of the National Child Labor Committee, a society whose very existence is based upon the principle that there is a fundamental distinction between the adult and the child, and that in order to have an adult population worthy of the name we must cherish and guard the child in its formative period.

The advisability of establishing a Federal Children's Bureau resolves itself quite naturally into two questions: 1st, is the child worth saving? 2nd, does the proposed establishment of a Federal Children's Bureau give promise of accomplishing the desired end? Assuming that the child is worth saving, I shall take up for consideration the second question.

I think that it will be generally admitted that success in any field, whether it be that of science, social work, business, or manufacture, is predicated upon two conditions—the correct ascertainment of facts in the first place and the proper use of them in the second.

The inter-relation between the ascertainment and use depends upon the success with which these facts have been gathered, correlated and grouped, and unless this has been done properly with an eye to accuracy and availability, and with the idea of using them for a definite purpose, such statistics are of little if any real value.

One of the chief objections urged against the Federal Children's Bureau is that it will duplicate the work now done by the Census Bureau, an objection which, if true, would be of weight, as we are certainly all agreed that duplication of effort is by all means to be avoided in this present state of society where so much remains to be done, and the means at our disposal are so few and ineffective. But as a matter of fact there is not even a remote possibility of duplication, because unfortunately the statistics gathered by the Census Bureau are of practically no value for the purposes contemplated by the Federal Children's Bureau. They are gathered according to some theory of statistical method, which makes them of absolutely no value from the standpoint of changing and improving the conditions under which the children are at the present time being brought up.

If anyone, upon the publishing of the census report, were to go to a locality which, from the census report, he judged to be in a particular condition of development, he would feel like a modern Rip Van Winkle. He would come to the place expecting to find it as depicted in the census report, and he would find everything changed—customs, laws, methods of legislation—everything. Eight or nine years might have elapsed since the particular condition which he was looking for had been mirrored, and he would find that the thing that he was trying to do, the thing that he was trying to improve, did not exist in the form in which he had found it presented in that report.

As a matter of fact, the census report at the present time is a huge mass of inert statistical information, and to behold it one feels that there is a tremendous economic waste there, the sort of waste which would grieve a manufacturer if he thought that there was lying at hand a large amount of potential energy which by one more operation would be changed from an inert, useless mass to a powerful dynamic force, to something which would accomplish great ends; but that if he were not allowed to add that one operation, it would lie there unused and useless.

An example of the loss because of uncorrelated massing of statistics that I refer to, is the fact, for instance, that we find in the census report that out of the 579,000 illiterate children recorded in the United States, 500,000 were contained in thirteen states, the other 79,000 scattered over the remaining ones. There is a fact which seems fairly to bristle with meaning; it means everything, and yet what use is going to be made of that discovery unless there is some particular bureau which exists for the purpose of uncovering that fact and using it for the eradication of conditions of this kind.

By a proper grouping and a frequent publication of the facts that are gathered by the Children's Bureau, we shall, in the first place, obtain publicity. Now, when I say publication, I do not mean the publication as it is done at the present time with the Census Bureau statistics. They are indeed published to the extent that if somebody, being particularly interested in the subject, is prepared to give up a great deal of time and is willing to delve into a mass of figures which are recorded there, he can get out the fact that he is looking for.

The publication that I mean is the grouping of these figures, these dead figures, until they make a living mass, and then not to allow them to remain buried there, but send them forth—bring them home to every community that needs them. Do not do as you do at the present time, allow these people who want this information but who do not need it to get these figures, but rather take it to those people who do not want it, but who do need it; the people who do not feel the need of this kind of information are the ones to whom it should be brought home most strongly. Publicity will do more probably toward eliminating evils than legislation. Turn the light of publicity on these evils and they will disappear of themselves.

The further effect of these reports will be to inspire and invigorate those localities which most are in need of a quickening force. There are bound to be in a widespread country such as this a great many communities, which, by reason of their better facilities, their greater opportunities, are going to be considerably above the level of the average, and very much above the level of the least advanced sections. Now, to take these highest points, find out what is being done in the best communities and bring this information to the attention of the people who most need it—that will be doing publicity work of a kind that will count.

In so many cases, bad conditions, inhuman treatment if you will, exist not because of any particular brutality or cruelty on the part of the people who are at fault, but mainly because of inertia. Every business man in this audience will feel with me when I say that one of the hardest things to overcome in a business establishment, is the fact that if you want to change anything, no matter how small the improvement may be, you are met with the statement that it has been that way for twenty years, and there is no reason for changing it. I think that a number of the bad practices which exist in relation to children, exist, not because the people are brutal, not because they are more cruel than others, but merely that they have been calloused to seeing these conditions, and associating under such circumstances, and they do not appreciate the undesirability of what is being practiced there, until they have it brought home to them by contrast, by comparison.

I want for just a moment to touch upon the National Bureau of Education. Those people who feel that the prerogative of this department will be infringed upon by the proposed bureau mistake its purpose and its scope. The Bureau of Education needs information about the child which it does not get at present and the Children's Bureau will need educational information which the Bureau of Education can furnish, and so they will supplement each other and make the work of both departments more effective.

A Federal Children's Bureau will, of course, have far greater prestige and far greater authority than any state organization could have. The jealousy and suspicion between states which now so often prevent the less advanced from profiting by the experience of a more progressive sister state, would be absent. It will eliminate conditions that give rise to the remark that the United States is a

place where old failures are tried over again, only on a larger scale. It is very sad that such should be the case, because aside from the tremendous waste of money, there is a waste of time and a waste of progress which can never be made up. It is truly a pity that there should not be some central organization which can collect all the facts that have been learned by the experience in the past and use them for the benefit of the present and the future.

I think that no better investment of any kind can be made than the establishment of a Children's Bureau as a Federal Department at Washington.

IV. BY HON. BEN B. LINDSEY,

Judge of the Juvenile Court of Denver, Col.

After an experience now going on nine years in the Juvenile Court of Denver, I feel naturally a particular and special interest in this bill. All of our people in Colorado interested in work for children especially feel that interest because eight years ago, as Mr. Walsh, the President of our society for the protection of children and animals, knows, an effort was made to get the House to pass a bill providing for a Bureau similar to this one, and it has been a matter of chagrin during that experience to receive letters from the officials of various governments of Europe, even from Japan, wanting to know where to apply to get certain facts, certain data, regarding the children of this country and the relation of childhood to crime, and not to be able to answer those gentlemen satisfactorily. I remember recently, when the children's bill in England, that great measure that has been discussed at this conference, was being considered, receiving a letter, I think from one of the under secretaries, to get certain facts, and it was simply impossible to provide the information that was needed and expected that this Government could furnish; and I, as a judge of one of the courts of this country dealing with children, felt very much embarrassed that we could not say that our Government was able to furnish such information.

We have found, in our efforts to help these 100,000 children that have been said to be dependent, that nothing is so important as facts. In my humble judgment—I may be wrong, and that is

just why we want a Bureau of this kind, in order that I may know and you may know whether I am right or wrong—in my judgment there are 100,000 children, dependent and delinquent, coming to the courts of this country every year, and within the period of sixteen years that means 1,600,000 children coming to the courts of this nation in every generation of childhood. Is this great Government of ours, with sufficient facts already gathered in this imperfect way to demonstrate that fact, going to neglect this opportunity of spreading the real information, of gathering together the real causes of this awful condition that affects the children of this country?

I was in a certain city recently, and I went to the chief of police and asked him how many children had been in jail that year. He said 100. When we investigated the records, we found there were 650 boys alone brought to the jail in that city of less than 150,000 people. I went into another city of less than 200,000 people, and when I asked the jailer how many boys had been in jail he said five or six hundred. When we investigated the records, we found there were 4000 arrests in that city among the boys alone under twenty years of age and over 2000 brought to the jail were under seventeen years of age.

If we had a Bureau of this kind it would stimulate the gathering of reliable statistics as it can not be stimulated or done in any other way. The head of a Bureau of this kind would send to the head of a city a blank to be filled out and kept, and it is going to stimulate the official who is to fill it out to keep records and return them to the Government. We have had some experience of this kind showing that this is done. Our State Board sent blanks to different judges, asking for information on this subject, and the information came; but it does not come in any other way. There must be some kind of stimulus, if you please, to officials to get this information together, and it is going to come through a Federal Children's Bureau, and in my judgment in no other way.

For instance, how many boys brought to jails in the cities of this country return within five years? In my own city, through private effort and investigation, we found sixty-two per cent. of all the boys brought to jails returned in five years for worse offenses. In Chicago, under the Commercial Club, about ten years ago, a similar investigation was made, and they found that seventy-five per cent.

returned in five years. What effect does the work have in preventing crime? Another thing, twenty per cent. of the boys in some cities of this country come to jails before they come of age. One out of every five mothers' sons comes to the jails in the cities of this country, according to some private investigations. Isn't that a fact, which this Government should know and be able to demonstrate?

In the nine years of work we have been forced into a certain position in this matter that has perhaps led us to see the necessity of this Bureau more than some other courts. We have, in my court alone, two stenographers furnished us by the county, who work from morning to night largely answering letters and furnishing information that has been gathered in this imperfect way not only in this nation, but in the world. Not less than 3,000 and, in my judgment, nearly 5,000 letters are sent out from there every year; and one of the embarrassing things that has made me ashamed almost of my country is that in answering letters to all the world I have to tell them constantly that these facts are not gathered by our Government, and they can not understand. Sentiment is not, perhaps, a justifiable argument for the establishment of such a Bureau, but it is nevertheless a proper one when it is a practical one. This Government can do no one thing that will be more worthy than to say to the nations of the world and all the cities of this Union asking for this important information about our dearest possession, the children, that we have a Bureau, and here we centralize and specialize and focus all these facts upon this important subject of the child; and however much the Bureau system may have been abused that is not any reason why a Bureau that is needed and necessary, as this for the children is, should not be established, and I do earnestly hope that the Congress will pass this bill.

V. BY HENRY B. FAVILL, M.D.,

Chicago.

It would be a very false conception of the problem which we have met to discuss if it were assumed that in purpose the forces which we try to overcome are directly antagonistic. I think it is safe to say that with very rare exception there is not an em-

ployer of children in mine, factory or sweatshop that would not prefer a different and better order of things.

Conditions of industrial life develop slowly and compactly, and it is as a final and at the moment inevitable phase that child labor bursts into its full enormity. So the employers of children find themselves confronted by a condition quite irrespective of individual preference; a condition so related on the one hand to industrial competition and cost of production, and on the other to labor competition and necessity to exist, that they move on with a fatalistic insensitiveness that puts them in the minds of many into a class of malefactors to whom are too readily ascribed the responsibility for the outrages which they more or less perpetrate. That they are terribly culpable is true in spite of extenuating circumstances, but that they are voluntarily initiating the system which we deplore is not at all true. What they do they do because they rest upon that ancient fallacy that business necessity is paramount to other social considerations.

They are not alone in this misconception. Thousands of right-minded, fairly intelligent men and women participate in the expression which has hardly the dignity of an opinion, that radical disturbance of the social order is bad. I speak slightly as to so-called opinions on these matters because it is eternally true that no opinion is worthy the name which has not as its foundation a reasonable understanding of the facts and I assert without hesitation that the majority of those highly respectable conservatives who are satisfied to let things work out their own solution, are profoundly ignorant of the conditions which they condone. To the masses of citizens who are indisposed to move in these measures of reform are to be added still other masses, who, because of their notions of political economy, object to legislative regulation or to administrative control through governmental bureaus.

Without approaching the abstract argument upon this subject, those who have made this matter a deep and conscientious study, reach conclusions applying to the concrete facts with great definiteness. Absolute control of the health of the individual can never be the function of the state. Control of the conditions under which the lives of the people shall be lived and their energies expended is an inevitable necessity. The state will approach this problem from the standpoint of self-preservation. Defective health is the

foundation of crime, pauperism and degeneracy as well as that widespread inefficiency due to obvious disease.

All sociologic forces have come to recognize this fact. The physical well-being of the people is the deepest interest of the state. If the state is to undertake the establishment of conditions designed to safeguard health, it is imperative that the foundation of accurate knowledge upon which to base radical and comprehensive legislation be laid. The detail of such legislation is too remote to engage our attention here. What we must strive for is knowledge, and to this end, the interested forces demand a National Bureau of Health, the most valuable function of which shall be the culture of intelligence upon these subjects.

If this proposal shall become effective, it will appear to many that the end which we seek has been accomplished. That will not be true unless the interests which we represent be specifically defined. The medical profession has only within a few years come to realize that child health and adult health present distinctly different problems. Our literature upon the physical aspects of childhood is very recent and meager. Our scientists who have devoted themselves to child welfare are comparatively few; yet one glance at the broad proposition should be convincing. Consider the difference in the questions involved as to how an individual goes out of the world and how that individual comes into the world. Is it not obvious that with reference to determining the type of an individual and hence his value to society, the first few years are inexpressibly more important than all the rest? Let us go even further than that, and say that questions involved in the period before birth or conception, which are coming to be recognized as profound and crucial, are only to be interpreted in the light of the deepest knowledge of child life.

That there must be in this general pursuit of broad intelligence as to health problems, a specific and definite examination of the child problem, admits of no question. It seems best, therefore, that a distinct bureau in this broad movement should be secured. It is true, however, that there are questions of immediate importance which need not wait for this extensive investigation. Among these questions is child labor. As a definite factor in our social economy, the iniquity of its existence is enormous. There is inherent in it the same ethical stigma that there

is in slavery or polygamy or in any other widespread national moral obliquity. It ought not to exist and the intelligence and effort of all right-minded citizens should be committed to its extirpation.

There are questions, it is true, which are open to reasonable difference of opinion. What constitutes the proper age for labor; what are justifiable considerations in determining customs of labor, are appropriate studies for a health bureau. Those, however, are outlying territories. The plain unvarnished proposition, that children shall bear the industrial burden of this people cannot much longer be countenanced.

My privilege to address this meeting comes through my connection with the warfare upon tuberculosis. Could one come from a territory more deeply concerned with this issue? Where is found the safety of any individual against tuberculosis? In physique. Where is laid the foundation of physique? In childhood. Where bear the heaviest the burdens of bad hygiene? In childhood. Where concentrate most the direct forces of infection? In childhood. So far as tuberculosis is concerned, there is no hope for the race until the territory of childhood has been fortified. History should teach us to be without surprise that a great people can have gone on to such development with so little foresight.

Foresight is a rare combination of qualities. A joining of vision with judgment; an attribute of maturity; a power by no means universally vouchsafed to men. Myriads of people see the menace of an iniquity, and fainthearted turn aside with a feeling of impotence. Recognition of the difficulty without conviction as to the moral obligation which it implies accomplishes nothing. Under the guise of conservatism masquerade indifference, timidity and self-interest. True conservatism is concerned only with genuine progress, hesitates only at mistakes; may be wisely quiescent, but never supine. It is curious that foresight and conservatism having so much purpose in common should be, in fact, so divergent through the major part of their respective paths.

In social development the struggle is always between those who have vision and those who have caution. In this alignment, the forces of caution under the conception of prudence receive very exaggerated recognition and support. Those who have vision and imagination command undue criticism and discredit. The time has

come to act in behalf of the child, and those who see must dominate those who fear to move, and to this end all sympathetic forces must be combined. That there should be any difference of opinion as to the imperative need of properly rearing and protecting the children of the nation is unthinkable. In fact there is no such difference of opinion. The thought of those who think at all is unanimous upon this subject. The problem is how to combine the insight of those whose sympathy has reached the root of the matter with the effectiveness of those who have the courage and ability to deal with it. These forces can only be combined under conditions which satisfy both. There must be a broad and evolved policy of correction and protection. There must be a convincing mass of accurate information. So far as appears, nothing offers to satisfy these requirements but a National Bureau devoted to the welfare of the Nation as represented in the growing child. We hesitate not at all in adding our influence to the movement in that direction.

VI. BY PROFESSOR CHARLES R. HENDERSON,
University of Chicago.

I. There are already several important national organizations charged with the watch care of public health interests in this country; among these is The American Health League, established as a committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This league aims to promote unification of Federal action in relation to the health of the people of the land, and to forward local interest in matters of sanitation and hygiene. It is a laymen's movement, inspired by a scientific spirit. The American Medical Association, with its special section on Public Health, lends its high authority to a movement of trained medical experts. The American Public Health Society is also under the direction of specially trained medical men. The Public Health and Marine Hospital Service is at once official and expert, with a remarkable history of guarding the quarantine ports and fighting fever during the past century. All of these associations center their attention upon the physical interests of all classes and all age groups throughout the nation.

2. The Bureau of Education is already a "Children's Bureau" in the sense that it aims to publish the results of scientific study of children, and seeks to promote the knowledge of child nature and the best methods of education and organization of schools. All friends of children should strive to support the efforts of this Bureau, at whose head we have had distinguished men, and under its present administration it continues to deserve the respect and warmest support of the nation.

3. And now we have the National Child Labor Committee, which aims to promote the physical and moral interests of the working child and to secure for it suitable education. Therefore we are here interested in each of these agencies, since they are all working for the same end from a different starting point, and by various means, and they all have their claims upon our moral co-operation.

4. The specific call of this meeting and this hour is for the establishment of a "Children's Bureau" in the Federal administration. From the standpoint of those who are asking concentration and co-ordination of public health activities at Washington, this is a reasonable effort. A Bureau which aims to promote all the interests of childhood would, of course, include care for their physical well-being.

VII. BY MRS. FLORENCE KELLEY,
New York.

I have been deeply impressed with the meagreness of our knowledge of what is to-day being done for the children, after all these years of effort. For instance, in the southern states there has been much patient agitation, much constant effort to get statutes on the statute books. We know that in Louisiana there is an exceedingly energetic factory inspector and in the neighboring state of Mississippi there is no enforcement, no official whose duty it is to give us information. In the other neighboring state of Alabama an unfortunate official was appointed with the three-fold duty of inspecting jails, insane asylums and cotton mills. He did not do it very long, he committed suicide. I have learned since I came here of the current appointment of his successor.

In North Carolina there is a Commissioner of Labor. There are no truant officers, no factory inspectors, and the Commissioner of Labor has no right of entry into any factory. Wherever he enters it is as the guest of some friend. He has no *right* of entry.

In our own state of New York we have an admirably organized factory inspection bureau. Every day the inspector finds from two to twenty children working illegally in Greater New York. That is after we have had a child labor law and factory inspection for twenty years. In the city of New York the bureau of inspection sends us every day a list of the children found illegally at work the day before, a duplicate of the list is sent to the Department of Education, in order that the children may be returned to school. They must be either legally at work or in school until they are sixteen years' old. Hitherto a subordinate clerk in the Department of Education seems to have put that list into the waste basket. When, this fall, we inquired of the head of the truancy department what his method was for using that check list, he seemed entirely unaware that it had ever been sent to his department or that such a check list existed.

In the city of New York we have eighty-three salaried truant officers. Every time the State Department of Labor finds a child illegally at work who has never had working papers, it thereby shows that some school official has let that child go illegally from school (assuming that the child had ever been in school). This fall one young college graduate undertook the task of following up children whom the factory inspectors' reports day by day showed to be illegally at work, to learn why it was that eighty-three city truant officers let from two to twenty children be found illegally at work every day.

Some interesting things transpired. One was that not very long ago one of the eighty-three truant officers had been regularly drawing his salary while serving also as interne in a hospital. I do not know anyone except a convict serving a term in a penitentiary who would be less able to get children into school than an interne in a hospital. Other truant officers were found who appeared to be turning a dishonest penny, not by getting children into school but by escorting the children and their parents to the office of the Department of Health to facilitate their getting working papers to get out of school.

We have had compulsory education for twenty years just as we have had factory inspection, but we have never had any official whose duty it was to know the daily methods of the truant officers.

It is nobody's sole duty to inspect the truant officers. But one young volunteer in a few months showed that if those officers have to report in writing every day what they do with their time, and if those reports were public documents which we could all look at as we can look at the factory inspectors' reports, we may get the same sort of efficiency on the part of our school authorities that we have already to an admirable degree on the part of the Department of Labor in its bureau of factory inspection.

We asked how often the truant officers report to the head of the department and found that some of them report once a week,—not directly to him but to the district superintendent,—and by the time the information reaches the center, instead of being twenty-four hours old as in the case of the factory inspectors, it may be thirty-four days old and the child may have moved and may be lost forever to the schools.

We wrote to the Commissioner of Education at Washington asking for a standard daily report blank. That was about three months ago. We have received no letter in reply; we have received four pamphlets of irrelevant information but no reference whatever to a daily truant officer's report. We wrote to several heads of truancy departments in different states. The head of the truancy department in our own state wrote after long delay that he had never seen a blank for a daily report for truant officers, but he had no doubt that if we wrote to every city in the State we might find one.

Now, that is the sort of chaotic lack of knowledge and lack of standard of work which we want the proposed federal bureau in the interest of children to deal with. It ought not to be necessary to write to every city in the United States with the hope that ultimately one may find a truant officer's daily report blank. We have no authoritative list of persons responsible for keeping non-working children in the schools and no authoritative list of all the persons responsible for the inspection of factories in this nation.

We have sadly little authoritative knowledge with regard to the children who work in any state. I believe that in New York we come a little nearer to having up-to-date knowledge than anywhere

else, because once a month the Department of Labor prints a list of the convictions obtained during that month for violation of the child labor law.

We need to know about the prosecutions, because there are always sinister charges that it is only petty offenders, little people who cannot retaliate by insisting on the removal of the too efficient inspectors, who are prosecuted. That is a cruel charge and if it is not true it ought never to be made. It is only by giving us full publicity which in most states we do not get that that charge can be silenced.

Finally we want to know what our children know when they leave school. In many states they need not go to school at all. In some southern states thousands do not go at all. In many other states they have to go until they have reached a certain nominal age and then they may leave school whether they know anything or not. Even here, in Illinois, it is only necessary for a Syrian child to say that it can read and write in Syrian, or a Russian child to say that it can read and write in Yiddish. If it has not attended a public school it is not required to read and write in the language of the people among whom it is going to live all its life.

We want objective tests and one centralized bureau to standardize those tests instead of the chaotic condition in which we are to-day.

VIII. BY SAMUEL McCUNE LINDSAY, PH.D.,

Professor Social Legislation, Columbia University; Vice-Chairman, National Child Labor Committee.

Why do we who are associated in this child labor movement, want to see a Federal Children's Bureau? Our reasons are set forth in the section which outlines the compass of the Bureau itself, section two of the bill which is now re-introduced in Congress and is still pending in the House and the Senate. It reads:

"The said Bureau shall investigate and report upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life, and shall especially investigate the questions of infant mortality, the birth rate, physical degeneracy, orphanage, juvenile delinquency and juvenile

courts, desertion and illegitimacy, dangerous occupations, accidents and diseases of children of the working classes, employment, legislation affecting children in the several states and territories, and such other facts as have a bearing upon the health, efficiency, character and training of children."

That is a pretty comprehensive program. The reason why we want so comprehensive a program enacted into law is in order that somewhere there may be a co-ordination of the various lines of activity that are now being put forth on behalf of childhood. We feel that the child labor movement alone is a one-sided movement; that it must be brought into direct relation to the efforts and the work that is being done in so many other departments of activity for the benefit of children if it is to reach the greatest possible efficiency.

The watchwords, or keynotes, of this program for a Children's Bureau are the following: Investigation, information, interpretation of facts. This investigation, this collection of information, this interpretation, must be scientific, must be impartial, must be thorough. As a private organization supported by voluntary contributions, we have had to carry on investigation, to gather information, to interpret the facts that we have found in connection with child labor; but at best the information we gather is always open to the suspicion that it is the information gathered by interested parties. They tell us we are looking for child labor, we are looking for the evils of child labor. We are not interpreting these facts with that absolute impartiality and scientific attitude of mind that is necessary in order to carry authority with it.

I will not stop to argue that question. The records of this Committee are printed in several volumes. The results of our field investigations are subject to the examination and criticism of the world at large, and I am perfectly satisfied for one to stand on our platform and to submit that that investigation has been thorough and impartial and fair, and has gone as far as the means and resources at our command would allow. But I submit this further question to you, and to the public at large; Is it fair that a private society like the National Child Labor Committee should have placed upon it the burden of the expenditure of nearly \$100,000 which we have expended in the five years of our organization—is it fair that the burden should be placed upon us to gather this information

when it is clearly a duty of the Government to furnish information for its citizens? Is it not fair that such efforts as are being put forth by private committees like this Committee, like all the other agencies that are working for social betterment, shall have their resources to use for carrying out their program? There is no other Government in the civilized world that does not furnish more information on these subjects upon demand than the Government of the United States. It is absolutely impossible to verify with any degree of certainty the various statements that are made here by these speakers with respect to so simple a matter as the number of children of a particular age at work. We could spend the entire time of this conference in controversy over the question of whether there are 1,750,000 or 2,000,000 children under sixteen years of age at work, because the figures of the United States census are not conclusive upon that subject; because such data as we have in the census have not been worked up by any body of experts, whose chief business it is to correlate, verify, amplify and interpret such information as we already have at hand.

I think it was pointed out in several of the speeches last night that the significant thing to be expected of such a Bureau would be exactly what has happened in every other country that has gathered the statistics that we want; that with investigation and with information collected we are bound to develop a better policy with respect to childhood. We have developed here in the last few years a corporation policy in our Government which is now pretty well understood by our politicians and statesmen, by the organs of public opinion in all quarters, and why? Very largely, as a direct result of the organization and establishment of the Department of Commerce and Labor and of the Bureau of Corporations in that department, a Bureau that has made it its business to co-ordinate all the information that the Government possesses on the subject of corporations, and to go out gathering facts with respect to our great industrial corporations.

As a result of the gathering of that information there has necessarily grown up a government policy based upon the idea of publicity in corporate business.

I do not believe, for one, that our program is going to make very great progress,—our program for the restriction of child labor in certain sections where it is most needed—if we rely merely upon

the compulsion of law. That will always bring opposition, it will always create opposition and resistance, but we can rely upon the compulsion of publicity, and I think one of the very best signs of the times is a growing sensitiveness in those sections of the country through which our good friend Doctor McKelway travels so frequently, to the conditions of life brought out by the facts with respect to child labor. Once let those facts be put out in a manner that is beyond the suspicion of any interested motives, once let them be brought forward with the authority of government investigation back of them, the facts that we positively know are true with respect to child labor, and nine-tenths of the battle against child labor will be won.

I think that in this national conference there has been no more significant result to be observed than the coming together of people of many diverse opinions and representing widely divergent interests and geographical areas, in hearty favor of a Federal Children's Bureau. I have watched the different speakers coming from different states, from different surroundings, representing different ideas, even with respect to this one topic which has brought us together, and I find how they have all come around to one point as we face the problem, as we go further into the work that we have set ourselves to do, that we have increasingly a common need for information, and we feel increasingly our own helplessness as a private society with any resources that this organization can command to get that necessary information, and we feel that this is a paramount duty of our Federal Government.

I, for one, have been an ardent advocate of federal legislation, and I am still an ardent advocate of federal legislation as a necessary part of a really effective legislative remedy for the evils of child labor. All my colleagues do not agree with me on this subject. Personally I do not think that we will get at the heart of the forces that defeat in operation so much of our state legislation on this subject until we have that uniformity that can come only through some sort of supplementary federal legislation. But I am perfectly willing to hold that as an individual view and to tolerate a wide divergence of views on the part of others who do not think as I do on that subject.

I am very sure that however we may disagree as to the wisdom or as to the constitutionality, if you please, of our Federal Govern-

ment passing a law directly or indirectly to regulate child labor, we can have no doubt and I have yet to hear a single expression of doubt from any quarter as to the wisdom, as to the propriety, and as to the constitutionality of the Federal Government collecting information and disseminating an intelligent interpretation of it to aid and support those efforts which the citizens of this great and rich nation are willing to put forth on behalf of its children. The resources of private philanthropy and private charity are spent generously for the benefit of the children of the nation. Let us hasten the day when the nation shall do its full part in this matter, perhaps the only part it can do, by spreading abroad an educational influence with respect to this subject that will make child labor an impossibility throughout the length and breadth of our land.