

FOREWARD

The following report is factual. The social problems mentioned are the actual existing conditions; by no means is it complete, however. From time to time this phase of social action may change for the worse or perhaps for the better; such a possibility will depend, by and large, upon the effectiveness of the proposed solutions and recommendations mentioned herein or upon the existing ideology of the Topaz residents.

The study of the school situation, the Boy Scout attitude and activities, conditions and influences of the family relations, and all pertinent data were added to our files through the coordinated efforts of the Educational Division, the Boy Scout Committee, the Community Welfare Division, the Inter Faith Headquarters and the Juvenile Board. Additional information is taken from personal observations and from:

"New Light on Delinquency And Its Treatment"--Healy and Pronner
"Introductory Sociology"--Sutherland and Woodward
"Social Psychology Of Modern Life"--Rinehart and Farrar
"Sociology"--Ogburn and Nimkoff

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXISTING IN TOPAZ

INTRODUCTION

As complex as human beings are, it would be impossible to catalogue fully the social disorders in Topaz in relation to its biological and environmental causes. Only the surface blemishes of maladjustment can be adequately explored from this survey of delinquency. To name the causations of this pressing issue one would have to gather material from every source, starting from the hospital and concluding with the intimate and impervious problems of the family life.

The environmental factor is not a positive cause of delinquency because it is never quite the same for any two children. Reactions to unfavorable living conditions will differ from individual to individual and as such community life in Topaz cannot be termed with authority as a traumatic experience for the youth. It must be admitted, however, that Topaz is not a normal community; it has been artificially created, and whatever problems that breed here will be to a great extent peculiar to this Topaz life of concentrated confinement.

-----INTRODUCTION

-2-

Granted that Topaz is an unusual community it is impossible to forecast that life in this center will invariably produce a certain trait of personality. "A group situation will always have some sort of effect on personality, but there are too many possible variations in the human beings themselves and in the group situation to be cognizant of a marked effect on the child's personality."

6 During the ecological development of the real city the sociologist states that no provision are made for the children--only the adults are considered. More so Topaz, as it exists, is a place designed and built primarily for adults. The one room apartments of the army style barracks, the streets rough and dusty, the latrines without privacy nor facilities for the small children and the large public mess halls--everything points to adult living conditions.

The dissimilarity of the first and second generation Japanese is now accentuated by the war and the entrance of the citizens into the armed forces. Amid the social differences of the people in Topaz the chief sufferers of cultural frustration will be the growing child who now lives in a "cultural-no-man's-land". An artificial community such as Topaz is a dangerous habitat of anomalous attitudes and behaviors for social values tend to be warped into a life of "substitution." How these young children of Topaz will emerge from this incarcerated existence will largely depend upon the unselfish guidance of the parents in moulding their children wisely and by keeping them candidates for the role of normal individuals.

LACK OF PRIVACY

The outstanding conditions existing in center life which definitely influences child development is the aggregation of human beings living in pell-mell fashion with little regard for the innocent child. Living in such close quarters infallibly alters personality development in some way for a hodgepodge community will greatly modify the entire group life of the children and for the older groups as well. The early stages of child life intrinsically determines the type of personality a child will have. Early contact with people will condition children to seek group contact without hesitation (if the child has extroverted tendencies), and in this respect they may acquire extroverted attitudes in these centers. However, the self-centered child who loathes social contact and the little insurgent may find that these concentrated communities are decidedly unhealthy for their mental well-being, since contact with neighbors and acquaintances will be a constant friction.

LACK OF PRIVACY

-3-

In connection with the crowded conditions privacy is an essential element which growing children must have if they are to acquire high social values and wholesome habits. Behaviors of all types of men and women in all of their functions are exposed to the children. The family must counteract the unethical attributes of the group for all adults do not serve as examples to the children in all cases. The latrines, showers, and the mess halls are all public places which the children must frequent side by side with the older people. Wholesome outlooks on life and the correct forms of etiquette will be difficult for the children to attain in this privateless mode of living.

If adequate partitions are built within the apartments much of the bleakness can be eliminated; privacy will be enhanced, and the apartment will be more home-like.

LACK OF PARENTAL CONTROL

When the parents' control over the child becomes lax gregariousness tends to form among the young children. The breeding of gang groups can be attributed to the common interests held among the children and the laissez-faire attitude of the parents coupled with the pronounced social stimuli of gang pressure which the parents find difficult to combat. Perhaps it is not due to parental neglect of children that gangs function: an influencing factor may be the monotony of the one room apartments which furthers the environmental drabness. An outlet into something more attractive is the gang where children find suited activities and mutual approval among their own circle. The gang influence is, of course, unfavorable for the result usually creates rowdism, insubordination, and boisterousness among the affected group.

Instances of gang behavior:

Playing in the latrines (marbles, burning paper on the floors and extinguishing the fire with water) smashing wall of the shower rooms, playing in the showers, going about chasing other gangs, playing games in the night under the barrack lights (marbles, rough and tumble activities), extinguishing safety lanterns about construction areas, bullying the weaker individuals, petty thefts, stealing of personal mail from the doorstep mail boxes.....

Under such conditions the parents are solely responsible for the control of their children; even if the gangs are strong influence for the children the parents must make home life more attractive than the common streets, latrines, and the showers in which they pass a great deal of their leisure time.

LACK OF PARENTAL CONTROL-4-

One of the Intrinsic functions of the (in the early years of the child) parent is to choose the friends for the child. In an artificial and congested community as Topaz the parents can no longer point out the proper companionships for their children; how morally pernicious the new found freedom will be for young children will greatly depend upon the type of people residing in the block, and this is the "chance" life in which the child evacuee finds himself.

SOLUTIONS

Apprehension, correction, and prevention is the threefold program which must be utilized before delinquency can be erased from the list of social ills. A solution is not possible unless consideration is given to social as well as to the individual factors. Workable methods of solution can be drawn up, practiced, and actually solve the majority of the delinquent problems that breed in these unwholesome centers. Measures of care rest with the social workers, who are inadequate in number. Trained leadership must be instituted so that the parents can be educated to give more parental guidance to their offspring; trends of child delinquency must be made apparent to the parents so that they will be able to combat the tendencies of delinquency at home. Recreation should be carried out on more of an inclusive scale so as to embrace all age groups. The building of adequate playground facilities will eliminate most of the breeding places of delinquency. Parents' Teachers' Associations, if carried out consistently, will create more child interest in the parent group, and such a movement will make the parents conscious of their children's development, as a result many of the potential "germs" of child seduction may be arrested in the dormant stage.

Since child extroverts are more liable to delinquent problems, they must be accorded suitable satisfaction. In this respect introverts and ambiverts are also liable to lead to delinquent trends. Activities which are adequately attractive and interesting should be instituted in the centers.

In the center a child will have the opportunity to attend movies regularly; if they attend incessantly the movies may have a pernicious influence in marked degrees, but if they were enjoyed just as an escape from unpleasant experiences perhaps the pastime may have not been harmful. It may be recommended that gangster type of moving pictures be eliminated from the list of movies to be shown. The canteen furnishes the children with an over-abundance of comic books which should be replaced by more educational reading matter.

PROGRAM OF PREVENTION

The Juvenile Board, which is highly cognizant of the effectiveness of prevention as a remedy of social cure, has proposed the following procedures:

A. The Accumulative File Record.

- 6 1. The teacher will strive to Know the child. (ability, attitude) report card, health record, achievement IQ, family background (parents' opinion of school and information similar to WRA #26), teacher evaluation of pupil, example of outstanding work of students, former school record, pupil reading record, all case history pertaining to child.
2. The teacher will pass on to the next teacher all records and knowledge of each child so that no data will be lost in the transfer of the child from one grade to the next.
3. All such data, as in no. 1 & 2, will be filed so that it will be available when the child and his family go into a new area, namely relocation.

Whenever delinquent cases occur this material will serve as a reference.

Through the Community Activities Section the attitudes of the Youth will be objectified through the church group as the Young Peoples' Group etc. and through the schools. In the event of delinquency the ideals of the delinquent will be ascertained; usually the existence of hero worship is discernible, and the CAS will attempt to bind the gang into a constructive group for the attainment of recreational goals and other wholesome activities.

The CAS is proposing to combat tendencies of delinquency this coming summer by the following program: swimming (construction of a pool is being planned), formations of clubs (interest groups, hobby group), overnight hikes into the cooler areas of the county, camping in the local CCC camp.

HIGH SCHOOL

The isolated kibel is to be integrated into the social activities through the high school, which is to be coordinated into the recreational division: extra curricula activities will be extended one hour every Friday (under the guidance of a teacher forums, interest groups in literature, airplane clubs, science clubs, etc.)

INTER FAITH

Protestant and Buddhist conferences will be held with the

assistance of the CAS so as to weave interest into a large scope of people.

INTER COLLEGIATE

A club room is being contemplated for the collegiate group. The attitude of the students of college age will be objectified.

It must be noted that the Juvenile board does not intend to brand the delinquent after apprehension. Rather the Board will be a "go-between" for the child delinquent (between the family, or whatever group is concerned.) Also it must be emphasized that the Board is not an enforcing agency but a study group of case-histories of all the maladjusted children.

Many cases of social problems will not come to the attention of the Juvenile Board. The stringent mores of the first generation Japanese may be the cultural pressure which suppresses much of the anomalous behavior among the younger sect; if, however, suppression is the cause of preventing problems coming to the fore and to the attention of the Board the effectiveness of the Board will be lost in the veil of secrecy.

One of the most emphatic problems in any group is the existence of illicit sexual relations, but it is also one of the most difficult cases to combat, especially if such action is performed in mutual agreement oblivious of the consequences that are bound to befall them.

-----Conclusion.

In carrying out the preventative measures of the Juvenile Board, extreme care is to be instituted so as to deal effectively with the over-sensitiveness of Japanese parents who possess cultural and parental pride to such an extent that they often times hesitate to acknowledge the misbehavior of their children. Not only will the Juvenile Board instrument tact in the approach of delinquent problems but also due consideration will be given to all ethical codes of jurisdiction.

CONCLUSION

No mention was made of the biological aspect of this social problem for it would require psychiatrists, psychologists, or social workers who are trained in their professions to analyze the actual causes of social maladjustment. With the change in diet, climate, altitude, etc, in Topaz perhaps some glandular disorders may result. Such glandular disorder as the malfunction of the thyroid gland should be considered. Also the abnormal personalities such as neurotic, psychotic, etc. must be referred to competent psychoanalysts. Glandular

disfunctions can be traced in many cases, but they are very indirect; nevertheless it remains a potent cause of many serious cases of erratic over behavior. Neurotics and personality deviates, the aggressive, the overrestless or overlively, those showing uninhibited impulses, and various functional causations are all accountable with the delinquent problems in Topaz.

Another attribute of delinquency is poverty, which may not be the absolutely source of it, but it is a condition which furthers much child unhappiness. In order to comprehend the influence of poverty in relation to delinquency an investigation of financial resources of the family would be necessary.

Thus the incidence of delinquency cannot be positively stated in this report for figures are unobtainable, and an insight into certain types of social deviation such as promiscuity among the particular classes are impervious or very difficult to obtain if ever congenially possible.

It is expected that when the weather permits, delinquency will become more widespread, and between spring and autumn special emphasis must be placed upon apprehension, prevention, and solution of delinquent cases. Since the incidence of delinquency will fluctuate with various conditions, supplementary studies should be made periodically by the Board so as to facilitate social improvement.

In the subsequent pages the function of the Juvenile Board will be explained. It shall be the intention of the Board to employ social therapeutic methods, not regimentation, for the mitigation of the delinquent tendencies.

The following information was received from:

Pre-School: Miss Grace Fujii and Miss Kay Uchida

Grammar school: Mr. Nuttal

High School: Dr. Woolf, Mr. Goertzel, and Mr. Henry Tani

Boy Scout: Messrs. Tyler Nakayama, Keigo Inouye

Juvenile Board: Mr. Ernest Takahashi

At the present time specific serious cases have not appeared in the schools. Case histories, of whatever incidents which may occur, will be reported as soon as the Juvenile Board begins to function.

PRE-SCHOOL

In the pre-school types of misbehavior are innocent and not a serious problem to the teachers. The problems that do arise are easily apprehended and cured. Often times parents express the desire to have disciplinary action placed upon their children by the teacher because discipline tends to wane amid the crowded conditions of the center.

The types of misconduct are: climbing on top of tables, sneaking into the school building after school after school hours in order to play with the toys, and the ordinary fights which are prevalent among any group.

Outside play is very limited due to the lack of lumber and playground facilities. The major schoolroom activities are also limited; the children have not trees, flowers, or anything green to draw. Their art must become barren and artificial; therefore, the only subject of interest is the human form. With the activities numbered to a few, the teachers must emphasize singing as one of the chief activities.

What effect will such a barren training (in regard to nature) have on the later development of these children?

Now that the children live with their relatives more Japanese is spoken among the school children; of course, the children of issei tend to be more fluent in Japanese than the children of Nisei, and as a result of such a difference in the language a mild dissension exists in the child relations. Of course, this problem will diminish with the passing of time when all the children will learn to speak more English after their association with the teacher and the schoolmates.

A reflection of parental attitude was made evident in the discrimination of three Caucasian children by a minority of the Japanese children. In order for young children to be conscious of racial differences to such a degree, the parents undoubtedly must have been the influencing factor. The Caucasian children were shunned by the Japanese children as in the following instance: whenever all the children were required to sit next to one another a few of the Japanese children would express open dislike for the Caucasian youngsters and walk away to their preferred places among the Japanese children.

During the army registration of the Topaz residents restlessness was expressed by irritableness, fighting, and other acts of discontent. From time to time the child attitude and behavior can thus be expected to change temporarily as a direct consequence of the pending issue in the center.

The weather has been one of the vital factors of child behavior in Topaz. In the cold climate the hands of the children becomes shuffed. During the cold crying tends to be more widespread, and naturally they want to sit near the stoves, since the space heaters do not adequately heat the school barracks. Often illness results because the children are oblivious to the cold.

The Parents' Teachers' Association is well-integrated into the pre-schools, therefore relations between the family and school is favorable under the circumstances. In addition, the outside church organizations contribute toys which alleviate the shortage of the playground facilities.

Thus this critical period of child development, while confronting many deprivations and physical hardships, is proceeding quite successfully under competent guidance.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL

To date the delinquent behavior among the grammar school students is termed as "not serious". Examples of misbehavior are: breaking of windows, insubordination, and isolated cases of absenteeism.

The breaking of windows probably arise out of out of general rowdism and perhaps due to the fact that the buildings of the school are substandard which are often times referred to as "barns" and "barracks" instead of "school". Of course, it would be difficult to ascertain the actual reason for vandalism. Also the backless benches, the roughly made tables, etc., are not considered as "respectable" pieces of furniture.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL

-10-

Insubordination usually arises from the unwholesome attitudes of the pupils coupled with parental unrest in the homes. One instance of such behavior was exemplified by one pupil who stated that he did not care what he did because his "mother said that they were going to Japan after the war."

Truancy is not a serious problem. A method has been devised whereby absenteeism has been reduced to a minimum. Daily a list of absentees are given to the clinic nurses by the teachers; the block nurses check the list, and the absentees are visited by the block nurses in the afternoon. If the visit reveals that the absentee is not ill a report is forwarded to the principal and vice-versa when the absentee is ill.

Recreational facilities are very much under the needs of the grammar schools, and, with other needy departments, the grammar school is awaiting appropriation which will enhance recreation and physical education.

HIGH SCHOOL

The high school problems can be numerated as follows:

1. Books being lost or taken--this is serious problem especially when there is about only one book to every six students.
2. Electric bulbs taken from the school buildings, also pencils.
3. Failure to cooperate with the instructors.
4. Failure to study.
5. Absenteeism
6. Breaking of walls, windows

Insubordination and failure to cooperate usually arises from the desire of some students for the appointive teachers instead of the resident instructors. Failure to study can be explained, in part, by the one-room apartments and the crowded conditions prevailing about the homes and the lack of school supplies, but more important the students exhibit much unrest over their future status.

Truancy is expected with the coming of good weather, but to a large extent "cutting" is discouraged due to the lack of recreational pastimes during the class hours, and the space in which the roam is also limited.

There are two recreation halls in the high school grounds--one for the girls and one for the boys. Recreational facilities are steadily improving, and when the Community Activities Section institutes their proposed plan into the high school recreation is to be further improved.

In view of the present adequate educational facilities, the high school youths are well adjusted to the unusual atmosphere, except, of course, the students who were formerly pursuing a machine shop course. Under such adverse conditions widespread problems can be expected, but to date, fortunately, the school system is progressing without uncontrollable problems.

With the construction of the high school gymnasium and classrooms many of the physical maladjustments will undoubtedly be corrected, and with such an improvement student attitude also will probably improve.

BOY SCOUT

When the scouts are about 15 years of age they begin to lose interest in the scout movement. This lack of interest is attributed, by the scoutmasters, to ring leaders who coax others to retire from Boy Scout activities. As a result of such unfavorable influences one Scout troop was disbanded.

Many of the scouts ask: "What do I get out of scouting; what's in it for me?"

The probable cause of problems may be listed as follows:

1. Empty recreation halls which hold little appeal for the boys.
2. The inability of the scouts to purchase complete scout uniforms and handbooks.
3. No flags, no Court of Honor.
4. Hiking is not anticipated due to the parents' complaints.
5. Swimming is demanded, but swimming pool is not constructed yet.

Whenever trouble arises the scoutmasters trace the matter to the family where preventive measures are attempted; usually emphasis is placed upon the need of more disciplinary action on the part of the parents.

Scoutmasters realize the need for more athletic activities and less socials as dancing, especially for the 15 to 17 age group. Since funds are lacking, the scouts are now contributing 10¢ monthly to the scout treasury. A summer camp is to be established, and a swimming pool is also under plans for construction. The Chief Steward is now providing materials for the cooking tests, and "bean feeds" are available for the scouts.

Misbehavior is inhibited to a large extent during the period of the scout meeting, but what these scouts do outside of their role as Boy Scouts one cannot discern unless full-time Scoutmasters are assigned to the matter. As a result of this study delinquency is not widespread within the scout group, but such attitudes as indifference, "gang psychology", and the lack of discipline must be corrected or, at least, attempted to be improved.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

Topaz, Utah
April 2, 1943

MEMORANDUM TO: Mr. L.O. Noble
Superintendent of Education

FROM: Ernest Takahashi
Executive Secretary, Juvenile Board

SUBJECT: Possible procedures and technique to be followed
to keep the principles of democracy alive in these
relocation centers.

Since the policy of the W.R.A. is for relocation of as many Japanese into areas outside these centers, as soon as possible, the problem of keeping democracy alive has become increasingly important for the following reasons:

As you probably have noticed, most of the evacuees leaving the center are Nisei seeking jobs of employment which do not require too much salary. Persons with families and persons who have answered "no, no" to questions 27 and 28 will remain in these centers.

In the city of Topaz it seems that the population remaining in the city may be classed into two separate categories:

- (1) Parents, who constitute 33% of the population, and
- (2) the 2,000 younger Nisei who will be going to your schools.

Unless a definite educational policy is established to keep the principals for which we are fighting for alive, it seems that the students attending your schools will become more "Japanese" than ever. For this reason I am proposing certain measures to be carried out in your schools which might lessen the sting of evacuation and educate each student to look objectively at this problem of democracy as it affects them.

Mr. L.O. Noble

-13-

I am listing briefly the procedure that might be followed in your classes.

First of all, to lessen the sting of evacuation, it might be worthwhile to study minority groups throughout the world. In so studying a student will realize that the discrimination that they are now facing is not peculiar only to the Nisei but is a general discrimination of all minority groups.

Secondly, most of the nisei in these centers left normal American life in an era of comparatively peace and quiet. For this reason they do not understand the meaning of rationing, control pressed, etc. It might be worthwhile, therefore, that the student study America in peace as compared with America at war, and therefore could realize that we are now under the virtual dictatorship of the army.

Thirdly, most of the schools in California have taught these students the ideals of democracy. They know democracy only as has been taught by the constitution, bill of rights, four freedoms, and emancipation Proclamation. They have never taught democracy in America as it actually operates and cannot realize the effects of pressure groups, lobbying, political measure, etc., as it affects their lives. Therefore, in the core classes a frank picture of American democracy at work might better acquaint the student to realize just how democracy operates in America.

Fourth, as we probably all realize democracy as knew prior to evacuation still clung to the principles of rugged individualism, laissez-faire, and the individual rights of man. It might be therefore worthwhile to acquaint each child with the America in which he will live in the post war period.

American democracy is no longer based on the above principles but has tendencies towards state socialism, managerial system and the principle of voluntary cooperation, and finally, in view of the above-mentioned points, I believe that each student should be made to realize that the America in which he will live will necessitate him to understand the actual problems and discriminations that he will be forced to bear. For this reason an objective viewpoint on the whole Japanese American problem must be taught in the high schools.

This briefly is my opinion of how democracy may be taught in the high school in an objective manner so that it will benefit not only the people concerned but the nation who hopes to keep them as Americans.

Ernest Takahashi
Executive Secretary
Advisory Board