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Strengthening The Personality Of Youth

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ment. Thus in most of the states employers have this additional incentive to make a quick and effective shift from war time production to peace time production once the war is over. The combined thinking, planning and action under this unemployment-prevention incentive should facilitate further the transition to peace time operations.¹²

CONCLUSION

Employment, unemployment, and production are social phenomena resulting not from discernable, invariable natural laws, but rather resulting from human decisions. Because of the growth of industrialism and the extreme dependence of the great bulk of the people upon employment opportunities for their standard of living, these human decisions underlying our economy must be more carefully planned in the future than in the past. If we had a flexible price and wage system we might be able to make the transition to peace-time relatively-full employment with only individual initiative. But because of the pressure groups, price and wage rigidities and the magnitude of the post-war conversion problem, we should be prepared to combine governmental and private efforts in making the transition. Just as the best defense is an offense, so the best part of post-war planning must be done *now* by following the suggestions, if sound, made in this paper as well as others which may come to the mind of the reader.

In the period 1914-1918 no one could forecast the nature of problems following the war. We are in a similar position with respect to the problems to follow World war II. International relations following the war are a matter of guesswork. Nevertheless, their impact on domestic problems will be enormous; contrariwise, a strong productive post-war America will have a real contribution to make to the rebuilding of stable international relations. Domestic and international policies require coordination, although in this paper the former has been our concern.

STRENGTHENING THE NATION FOR WAR

STRENGTHENING THE PERSONALITY OF YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

The author presents a general discussion of the effect of war upon the personality of youth with suggestions as to how it may be

¹² Unfortunately a few important states, for example New York and Pennsylvania, have not incorporated this unemployment-prevention device in their state laws. See: *Stabilization Experience Manual*, American Legion Employment Stabilization Service, Minneapolis, for a significant collection of ways and means to regularize operations.

strengthened to meet the present critical period and the one that will follow the war.

After emphasizing that "both the innate equipment and the conditions of life experience are of importance" in the development of personality, five main factors are considered. These are the hereditary factor, the organic influences, the family, cultural and psychological needs of the individual.

A brief summary is then given of the effect of war on each of the five factors. "The primary hereditary effect of war is to impair the quality of human stock" and several suggestions are given for counteracting this effect. It is urged that everything possible should be done to increase rather than slacken efforts to detect, control and care for mentally abnormal persons; that diagnostic and treatment services should be improved, that the anti-marriage and other laws relating to such persons should be better enforced and that support should be given to programs for mental hygiene and the legal sterilization of the unfit. The latter is defended on the ground "that it would aid in assuring that a child would at least have the benefit of being reared by normal parents."

The tendency toward lessened physical stamina and the development of mental disorder are listed as the principal effects upon the organic influences. The large number of mental casualties of the last war and the fact that even in normal times "it is estimated that a million boys and girls yearly will develop some form of mental disorder" is cited as evidence of the seriousness of the problem with which we are now faced. The need for protecting both the physical and mental health of youth is emphasized and the development of an effective mental hygiene program is urged.

The effects of war on the family are described as economic, social and psychological. "War not only brings a lower standard of living but tends to destroy the unity of family life." "Most serious of all is the increase of anxiety, tension and feelings of insecurity on the part of the parent and the insidious inoculation of youth with the toxins of fear, suspicion, hatred and revenge—those four mental parasites which are so closely associated with personality breakdowns." It is emphasized, however, that "it is neither possible, nor desirable to shut children and youth away from the realities of war but that they should be encouraged to reveal their feelings and anxieties in order to provide emotional catharsis and re-assurance."

It is urged that every effort should be made to protect the health of children, prevent the disruption of homes and unnecessary separation of families and that increased facilities for recreation and for effecting better family adjustments should be provided.

The tendency toward suspicion and isolation, the development of racial hatreds, and the disintegration of social forces are listed as the most important social-cultural effects of war. The need to resist efforts to "shackle or restrict education and to discourage notable

social advances" is stressed as of great importance in combating these destructive influences.

The fact that juvenile crime has increased fifty per cent in England since the war is cited as evidence of this lapse in social control and the author warns that the United States must take action if it is "to avoid the mistakes which England has made" in handling this and similar problems.

Finally the effects of war upon the psychological needs of the individual are briefly considered. Of these, the inculcation of fear and insecurity, the denial of normal contacts and affection, and the limitation of satisfying achievement are viewed as of particular concern.

It is concluded that there is no single approach to the problem of strengthening the personality of youth but that all the factors of the life situation must be considered.



MORALE IN WARTIME

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The responsibility for the maintenance of national morale in times of war rests partly on the government and partly on the people. For the purposes of this discussion, we might include in this second group everyone who does not occupy a position of official responsibility. We are, however, most interested in those citizens who are sufficiently prominent that anything they may say or do will carry weight. In this group will be found radio commentators, editorial writers, people who make up the headlines in newspapers, college professors, clergymen, lawyers, and lecturers of all kinds. We should also include corporation executives, labor leaders and others who can on occasion quiet the fears of the people or arouse them to action, wise or otherwise. However, we may err in placing emphasis on the more vocal social groups. Sometimes the masses have an uncanny way of sensing where their own true interests lie and then pursuing those interests despite press, pulpit and platform.

During a great war, it is important to maintain among the people full confidence in the good intentions, character, and wisdom of the government. This should not, however, necessarily be a blind, uncritical confidence. The criticism should always be present, but it must be of a constructive nature aimed to improve rather than to undermine our position, animated by a keen desire to further the ultimate general welfare of all concerned, and determined to bring support to the government when needed. One of the great dangers in time of crisis undoubtedly is the mistake of regarding any criticism as objectionable. Often essential changes involving the