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The Governor's Probing Committee

Herald Photo.

Gov. Charles M. Smith's Vergennes Industrial School investigating committee is shown above. Dr. Edward A. Tuttle of Bennington, chairman, is in the center, with Col. Loren R. Pierce of Woodstock on the left and Professor A. R. Gifford of Burlington, right.

of certain articles of food but there should be no starvation.'

PERSONNEL.

"The efficiency of the school and the efficiency of its discipline depend essentially on the individual caliber and the collective morale of the staff. The physical plant, size of groups and other factors, while of importance, are subsidiary to the crucial importance of the personal example and influence of teachers, masters, matrons and other employes.

THE SUPERINTENDENT.

"1. Policy and morale depend upon the equipment and personality of the superintendent. His success depends upon both personal qualities and methods of procedure. The chief duties of the superintendent relate to administration and policy; maintenance of close and dynamic relations with the community; relations with and direct influence upon the children; close supervision and control of discipline and punishment.

"(a) Testimony presented indicates that the superintendent should be relieved of routine and mechanical attention and thought on matters of administration and the coordination of various departments of activity. There should also be provision for freer accessibility of the superintendent to inmates with grievances, whether fancied or real.

"(b) Testimony indicates an inadequate control of disciplinary measures in the past and tardy discovery by the superintendent of cases of excessive severity or improper behavior on the part of certain members of the staff.

PROGRAM.

"In view of the necessity of keeping children busy and of training which develops social interests and social attitudes, and prepares for normal social living and self-support, a school program must include a number of more or less distinct but closely related activities, such as:

"1. SCHOOL WORK. Your committee is inclined to doubt the adequacy of the school hours—four hours per day—under the present schedule. The 1927 study by The National Committee of Mental Hygiene also found the attendance in regular in many instances, 'even when children were not being excused. (83) children not being excused. This same study found that the trade training program was not adequate.

"2. VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

"(a) Shop work; (b) agriculture; (c) home economics.

"(a) SHOP WORK. It would seem possible to develop more extensive and effective programs involving definite training which would facilitate the adjustment of children on discharge to normal social living and self-support. It has been suggested that certain of the students co-operate with outside industries, similar to those in the St. Johnsbury and Springfield school systems might be introduced. There are perhaps, however, certain limitations in the vicinity of Vergennes in virtue of which such programs could not be as readily developed as in the towns of St. Johnsbury and Springfield.

"3. GROUP RECREATION. The desirability of mixed play groups under adequate supervision has already been remarked on.

"4. HOBBIES. Such hobbies as the building of ship models; developed by Mr. Ford, and similar lines, represent a form of individual self expression and of absorbing or compelling interest which should contribute not only to the occupation of the child in wholesome ways but to the reduction of disciplinary incidents and problems.

"5. MUSIC. The band at present represents a form of individual self expression and of group activity which undoubtedly is of great value to those participating. Orchestral work, chorus work, etc., would also serve a similar purpose.

"6. ART. The band is important, its activity should be fitted in and adjusted to the school program as a whole. In the past it would seem that in too great measure the rest of the program has been adjusted to and organized around the band. There is question as to whether the band should be the dominant factor in the school life and that the major of the children at least should have longer school hours.

"6. SEX EDUCATION. The experience of sex deviations and perversions revealed by The National Committee study of 1927 suggests the desirability of some form of sex education which includes physiology and hygiene of sex and also ethical and social aspects. In the case of girls, particularly, it is important to prepare them for normal and and social and adjustments on discharge.

FARM WORK. Farm work, kitchen work, boiler room and firing, etc. Testimony seems to indicate that in some instances hours of duty have been excessive, either because the hours were long or because time thus spent might better be given to school. Your committee doubts the desirability of work periods of any kind for inmates lasting 12 hours. Not only is the shift too long but after night work the boy finds it difficult to get normal sleep during the day time.

"8. DISCIPLINE. The desirability of a more effective system of punishment has already been discussed. There is also the need of more definitely known to the staff and adhered to by all, with adequate provision for personal decision, action and responsibility in emergencies. Such emergencies would be reduced by a staff of suitable caliber and adequate training, and by the use of a staff of adequate training, experience and personal qualities in desirable close, intimate and friendly relations with the children

FIELD WORKERS.

"The importance of adequate case histories setting forth the family and social background of the child, the school history—his mental level—his personality traits and difficulties has already been touched upon. Such case histories call for a full investigation of a child's home and social history, as well as for certain specialized investigations, such as:

"Investigation before and supervision after work-placements; maintenance of contact with parole cases; foster home placements; and transfers, involve the services of a field worker.

"The evidence presented makes it clear that a single field worker cannot handle the investigations, investigations, follow-up work and the preparation of adequate Case Histories. Miss Anderson, who impresses your committee as a competent individual, has a visiting load of one hundred and twenty (120) children. This load represents a job for three (3) such workers without the added necessity of typing records, and yet Miss Anderson, in addition to doing her field work, is expected to keep and type her own records.

"Since more attention to field work and placing out as substitutes for detention is desirable, and since adequate case histories and records are a prerequisite for intelligent and individualized treatment, your committee recommends strongly, as of urgent need, the employment of one or two additional field workers suitably trained and qualified for such work.

PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC.

"The foregoing discussion has emphasized the importance of personality analysis and study,—determination of social attitudes, etc., as essential to an adequate classification and to individualized treatment. It has also valuable as a basis for effective maintenance of contact and follow-up work in parole cases.

"It seems highly desirable to your committee that the facilities of a psychiatric clinic, or at least of a competent psychiatrist or psychologist should be made available to the staff of the Industrial School for the state prison and the houses of correction might also profit well by the use of such facilities, the cost of establishing a psychiatric clinic would not necessarily be borne by the state industrial school alone. The services and the expense thereof might well be shared by the several institutions named.

VISITING COMMITTEE.

"In view of testimony presented and the outcome of this investigation, your committee recommends that the department of public welfare be authorized to appoint a visiting committee of three (3) members, at least one (1) of whom should be a woman. Such committee should inform itself by personal visitation at least twice a year regarding the policy and working of the school, morale of staff and inmates, and should also offer opportunity for the presenting of complaints by members of the staff or children committed to the institution. Ordinarily the recommendations of such committee should be communicated in duplicate to the superintendent of the school and to the commissioner of public welfare, but the special cases recommendations might be communicated to either of these alone when circumstances seem to warrant such action.

INCORRIGIBLES AND OLDER BOYS.

"Testimony corroborated by the records indicates a considerable undesirable number of transfers to the State Prison at Windsor during the years 1930 to 1935. In this period fifteen (15) boys have been thus transferred at the following ages:

Age 15 years	3 boys
Age 16 "	3 "
Age 17 "	2 "
Age 18 "	4 "
Age 19 "	3 "
Total	15 boys

"If the experience and judgment of penologists is to be accepted, the whole association of juvenile delinquents with mature criminals tends to make these boys criminals too.

"If cases of transfer to Windsor are made as a counsel of desperation, these cases of transfer should not be recorded as "discharged" but should be raised and recorded as "transfers." Discharge when effective should, ordinarily at least, be discharge by and from the Industrial school.

"In this connection, it may be noted that the incorrigible so-called, is frequently corrigible when conditions requisite to suitable discipline and training exist and the staff has adequate personal caliber and experience.

"The transfer of these boys to the State Prison at Windsor and other evidence indicates clearly a serious gap in our state facilities for handling delinquents. Between the Vermont Industrial school at Vergennes and the House of Correction at Rutland, and the transfer to the state prison at Windsor, no suitable provision is made for older boys and for so-called incorrigibles.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

"The scope and efficiency of the work and discipline of the Vermont Industrial school depend upon a number of factors, among which may be distinguished the following:

"1. Appropriations by the General Assembly for the maintenance and support of the school.

"Your committee recommends that the committees of the General Assembly which undertake to study the school situation in the light of your report and recommendations and consider the making of a more adequate appropriation for the Industrial school.

"In this connection a minor adjustment seems highly desirable. Under present procedure the earnings of the various productive enterprises are turned into the general fund of the state. It would seem highly desirable to adjust the state's system of accounting so that there would be an adequate provision for auditing but permitting a refund to the school of its net earnings. Such an adjustment would put a premium upon intelligent efficiency in those enterprises which have value not only for giving occupation to the inmates but also in connection with their training and vocational education. Under the present scheme of procedure, the school turning its earnings into the general funds, loses the cost of seed, fertilizer, material and labor involved in its productive undertakings.

"2. Material equipment.

"(a) FARM. So far as your committee could observe, the school farm represents an adequate basis for farming activities necessary to the production of food supplies and to the occupation and training of inmates.

"(b) BUILDINGS. As earlier noted in this report, there is undesirable crowding in several boys' dormitories and in general the cottage groups are considerably above the optimum size. This condition suggests the desirability of increasing the number of cottages.

"3. THE STAFF. The decisive importance of the personnel, their personality, their experience and training, as well as of organization and morale have all been emphasized in earlier sections.

"4. POLICY AND ORGANIZATION. As earlier sections have indicated, the highest efficiency of the school requires the development of cottage groups, the development of more individualized treatment, the provision of facilities for psychiatric examination and personality studies and the development of placing out, parole and field works.

"5. ADMINISTRATION OF PUNISHMENT. Certain possible improvements in principle have also been brought out in earlier sections of this report.

"6. PAROLE BOARD. Testimony presented suggested the possibility of forming a parole board which would include members not of the institution staff. Your committee finds that such a parole board should comprise a majority of members of which are drawn from outside the institution, including the superintendent, the field workers and such other members as the superintendent might designate. Such a parole board should sit as a committee to consider cases of potential parole.

Woodstock Inn Scene of Gay Costume Party

(Special to The Herald.)

WOODSTOCK, Aug. 15.—More than 300 persons, including scores of summer visitors, tonight attended the colorful mid-summer costume party at the Woodstock Inn. Louis Werner of Boston was master of ceremonies.

Mrs. Pauline Brown of New York, dressed to represent "Miss West" won the prize for the best costume for women.

The first prize for men went to Theodore Kelly of New York, who was dressed as an Argentine cowboy.

Other prizes were awarded as follows:

Best home-designed and made costume, women, Miss Katherine Arving, Woodstock, "Fan Dancer"; second prize, C. Richard Williams, Woodstock, "Tin Woodman"; most humorous, women, Mrs. C. E. McDonald, Woodstock, "Native woman of Hawaii"; men, William Dewey, Dewey's Mills, "A Cook's Tourist"; best costume for child under 12, girl, Joan Pearsons, Woodstock, "Mother Hubbard"; boy, Peter Cook, Wayne, Pa., "Le Marquis de LaFayette."

Arthur Wilder, manager of the Woodstock Inn, awarded the prizes. Music was furnished by the inn orchestra. The judges were A. L. Stearns of Woodstock, Ralph H. Cameron of Greenwich, Conn., and Mrs. Robert Lethbridge of New York.

SEEKS $5,400,000 REFUNDING ISSUE

MONTPELIER, Aug. 15 (AP).—Permission for a refunding bond issue of $5,400,000 was sought from the Vermont Public Service commission today in a petition filed by the Public Service company of New Hampshire, which also operates in this state.

The company wants to issue mortgage bonds bearing not more than four per cent interest and maturing in not more than 20 years, and to refund $5,400,000 five per cent bonds maturing November 1, 1934. A hearing will be held August 21 at Montpelier.

The New Hampshire Public Service commission already has granted the authorization.

CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE BILL GOES TO WHITE HOUSE.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 15 (AP).—A Senate bill extending the time for construction of a bridge over Lake Champlain between Port Kent, N. Y., and East Alburg, Vt., has been passed today by the House. It now goes to the White House.

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