

# THE LISTENING POST

## Extended School Services for America's Children

POSTWAR AMERICA can and should offer our nation's children and youth even better education than ever before—and this education for modern living includes development of extended school services in every community,—nursery schools, before and after school care, Saturday and vacation programs.

During the war under the Lanham Act, and under various State and local measures, many communities set up all-day child care centers for very young children and for those of elementary school age. Their school systems also provided for the care of older children after regular school hours, through craft, music, and indoor and outdoor play activities, through teen-age canteens, and the like. All this was done primarily to enable mothers to do war jobs, and to see that their children were well cared for—not allowed to roam the streets and neighborhood and there perhaps to take the first steps toward social maladjustment, even delinquency.

These extended school services which helped no little toward the winning of the war have real carry-over value into the peacetime period. They have proved to be of educational and social worth to the children themselves, to their parents, and to the community as a whole.

This is *not* to say that all families should be compelled to take advantage of nursery schools before and after school, Saturdays, and vacation school programs. Whether or not parents want to make use of extended facilities should be a matter of their own decision, after they have had the opportunity to see for themselves the benefits to be derived for their children and families.

Opponents of these special services will charge that such educational facilities tend to take the education of children out of the home. These services, they also contend, will enable mothers not working outside the home to ignore or escape their recognized responsibilities—to spend their free time, for example, in playing bridge and in window shopping instead of in rearing their own youngsters.

But this charge must be studied in the light of the facts of present-day living. Since World I, there has been a definite trend for women, many of whom are mothers, to work outside the home. Some are doing this of necessity, to permit their families to have incomes sufficient to provide the food, clothing, medical care, education, and other things which make life worth living. Still others, whose husbands have reasonably good incomes, not only prefer outside jobs to housework and child care, but also believe that teachers and others trained and experienced in child development can, with parents, do an even better job of educating John and Mary.

The opinions of these outside working mothers are also shared by many whose work is confined to the home. Among this latter group are mothers who at times would enjoy a respite from the over-taxing physical, mental, and emotional burdens of caring for household and children twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, with no real vacation. After all, they too are entitled to benefits similar to those which workers on a standard forty-hour week and two weeks' vacation with pay now enjoy in many occupations within industry and government.

The question immediately arises as to how these extended school services can be provided. Some communities may be tempted to place the burden for these services upon the present teaching staff who for the most part are already doing even more than a full-time job. But this is not the solution.

To furnish such education, communities probably with some State and Federal aid must supply the funds, the trained personnel, and the facilities required. An important part of the development, of course, is the education of parents so that they learn and practice better ways of rearing their children and of conducting family life in their own homes. This education should have an early beginning. Secondary schools in particular, have a responsibility here. Our schools must do an adequate job of educating our young people

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tion, growing and manufacturing lumber, paper, plywood, and other wood products. The organization will also send out information when requested, along with the photographs. Those interested should write for the free catalog of forestry photos. (The American Forest Products Industries, Inc., 16 East 48th Street, New York 17, N. Y.)

**FILMS, PAMPHLETS, Maps, Charts and Posters** are available free from School Service, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, 306 Fourth Avenue, P. O. Box 1017, Pittsburgh 30, Pa. These teaching aids for science are completely described in a small catalog issued by the corporation. They include a "Little Science Series" booklet written by scientists for use in secondary schools, and published in an attractively illustrated format. Teachers may secure these booklets in quantities sufficient for all members of the class. The motion picture and slide films are listed separately and are available if the school agrees to pay transportation. Teachers are asked to allow one month between the request and the time they expect to show the film. Many other audio-visual teaching materials are available from this same address.

**NOT SO NEW** but worthy of attention from educators who may not know about it is *Education in the United Nations*, a pamphlet prepared by members of the International Education Assembly, and distributed free by the Liason Committee for International Education, 1201 16th Street, Washington 6, D. C. This presents in simple form the answers to twelve questions concerning major problems in education in each of twenty-six of the United Nations. Many of the answers are reported in tabular form. They serve to give some comparative information about education in these various countries. While much of the information is necessarily subjective, it at least gives some basis for analyzing the current status and future problems of education in the United Nations.

**TO THE MANY** educators and lay people interested in developing a curriculum at the higher education level which fits the times in which we live, Helen Merrell Lynd's *Field work in College Education* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1945, \$2.75) is a welcome addition to literature in this area.

In her account of students' experiences at Sarah Lawrence College, Mrs. Lynd describes various types of field work "used in specific situations to help students to acquire facts, skills, concepts, or methods which they cannot so well, or more often cannot get at all, in any other way." In the introduction, which gives a point of view concerning higher education, is found the statement whose influence permeates the entire account—"Individual education, as conceived by Sarah Lawrence, is rooted in the conviction that community responsibility and individual development are essential to each other, that individuals who have gone as far as possible in realizing their potentialities are the stuff of a democratic society, and that these potentialities can only be realized in responsible social relations."

Those chapters in the book which deal with the part the college may play in community living, and the way in which field work functions in the development of individual students are of particular significance. The descriptions of United Nationalities Roundtables and lecture discussions in which the community played an active part as well as those of activities in which students participated in service projects give a clue to the way in which a small college may be a member of the community neighborhood rather than simply existing in the community.

Other chapters deal with field work in different subject areas of the curriculum and at the various college levels. An appendix includes detailed descriptions of various types of projects and the methods used by members of the college staff in carrying through these projects. One of the most valuable features of the entire account is the evaluation by staff members of experiences with discussions of those methods which did not work and reasons for their possible failure. These statements give the reader an understanding of process as well as goals attained.

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to gain real satisfactions from successful and happy family life. Thus schools and parents together can better give children the security, growth, and happiness which they so much need, want, and deserve,—better education for better living.

ASCD Legislative Committee

Educational Leadership

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