

NOTES AND COMMENTS

WELFARE WORK AMONGST THE BOMBAY MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

AT present the Bombay Municipality is conducting ten Welfare Centres for Municipal employees in various Municipal Chawls. By a resolution of the Corporation these centres were taken over from a number of private agencies that were in receipt of grants from the Municipality for running them and were placed under the charge of the Public Health Department from 1st July 1938.

The centres are organized with a staff of two full-time trained social workers and thirty-eight part-time workers. Two male and two female workers are posted at each centre and the centres are run daily from 5-30 to 9 P.M., with some of women's classes in the afternoon. The employees are mostly Harijans and come from various parts of the Presidency: the Dheds from Kathiawar, the Mahars and Chamars from the Konkan and Maharashtra and the Bhangis from Gujarat. They are housed in Municipal Chawls, which are one room tenements.

The programme of welfare work includes:

- (i) Recreational Activities.
- (ii) Educational Activities,
- (iii) Health Work,
- (iv) Labour Officer's Work,
- (v) Social Investigation,

(i) *Recreational activities.* The recreational activities provide ample opportunities for the use of leisure time to the employees and their children. The indoor games rooms and the outdoor playgrounds at the ten centres are used daily by two thousand adults and children.

The games played include carrom, draughts, ludo, "chaupat", snakes and ladders, hu-tu-tu, kho-kho, atyapatya, langadi, volley ball, foot-ball, deck tennis and several other English and Indian group games. Akhada activities include wrestling, malkhamb, lathi, lezim and pole-drill. Gymnastic exercises like free hand drill, wand drill, pole drill, dumb bells, pyramids and boxing are also conducted regularly.

A cheerful feature of the life of the centres is the arrangement of inter-centre matches and tournaments. These matches provide an extraordinary incentive to regular attendance and have most definitely raised the standard of

play. The ideal of clean sportsmanship is always held before the participants by impressing on their minds that the game is more than victory.

No people need contact with country areas and Nature's beauty more than these people who live in congested, uninspiring one room tenements. Every month men, women and children from each centre are taken out of Bombay for picnics. They are also taken to places of interest in Bombay and to see educational and social films.

The Bhajan Mandalis are social gatherings for adults, who take a very keen interest in them, and these occasions are also utilized for giving religious and social discourses. Music and dramatic clubs are organized, where people are allowed to give free expression to their artistic talents and cultivate their inborn capacity for aesthetic enjoyment. Music is taught on harmonium and tablas; gramophone records are played in the chawls and short dialogues and dramas are also taught and performed. Folk songs and folk dances like Garba, Ras-dandya, Kathiawadi Doha and Tipris are regular features of these clubs. Social gatherings are held to celebrate feasts and festivals.

(ii) *Adult Education.* Adult education in a working class community requires distinct methods, for it is difficult for people who have been allowed to remain undeveloped, and whose faculties are inert and sterile, to take their learning seriously.

At every centre literacy classes are conducted for both men and women. Literacy is not regarded as an end in itself but only as a means to an end, in that it opens up the key to knowledge. Therefore lessons are accompanied by and alternated with cultural instruction in the form of lectures with the help of lantern-slides, maps, charts and pictures, story telling and reading of interesting passages from books and magazines.

Classes are run for those who wish to learn English. Coaching is given to those school-going children who are in need of it and facilities for study in the centre-rooms are given to high-school pupils, as they have so little privacy in their own homes.

Talks and lantern slide lectures are arranged on current topics and social subjects of immediate interest to the employees, i.e., on elementary history, geography, cleanliness and sanitary living, domestic economy, maternity and child welfare, balanced diets, first aid and safety first. Debates are organised once a week at all centres. The adults show a keen interest in the subjects discussed and participate in the discussions in great numbers. Every centre runs its own magazine to which articles, stories and plays are contributed by educated boys and men.

Classes in sewing, embroidery, literacy and elementary home-nursing are conducted for women; training is also given in the art of homemaking and

in the various duties of wives and mothers. All possible efforts are made to make the women better wives, better mothers and better citizens.

The centres enrol five hundred boy scouts and two hundred girl scouts, affiliated to the Hindusthan Scout Association. Boys are occasionally sent out for camping. Eighteen scouts from the centres were sent to the Amritsar Mela and they had an opportunity of visiting Delhi, Agra and other historical places.

Children and adults are taken to exhibitions whenever they are held in the City.

(iii) *Health.* Home visitation is an important item in the welfare programme. Chawls are visited regularly by the part-time workers, who discuss family problems with the occupants in a friendly manner and endeavour to persuade them to change their unhygienic habits and to realize the importance of cleanliness and sanitary living.

Lectures are delivered on personal hygiene, the care of the eyes, nose, lungs and other organs. These lectures are illustrated by slides, posters, bulletins and films on housing conditions, flies, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, etc.

Children are required to wash their hands, faces and feet and comb their hair in the centres. Competitions are held for the cleanest and best-kept rooms and prizes are given to encourage cleanliness.

Every month a cleanliness campaign is held, when the boys sweep the chawls and clean up their surroundings and homes. In times of illness, people are directed to dispensaries and hospitals. During the last malaria epidemic, statistics of illness amongst the chawl inmates were collected and submitted to the Health Officer who arranged for a medical officer to visit the sick in their homes and provide free medicines.

Every centre is equipped with medical appliances such as hot water bags, ice bags, thermometers, bedpans, quinine pills and iodine, which are supplied to the people whenever needed.

Women are taught how to prepare balanced diets very cheaply. They are persuaded to take advantage of the maternity hospitals and women with large families are also taken to birth control clinics.

(iv) *Labour-Officers work.* Legitimate grievances of the employees regarding their housing, recruitment, leave, conditions of work and co-operative societies are looked into, brought to the notice of the proper officers, and whenever possible redressed.

Efforts are made to procure scholarships for deserving students from the Harijan Sevak Sangh and other associations. People requiring legal advice are directed to the Legal Aid Society.

(v) *Investigations.* Investigations were recently made regarding the

number of school going children not attending schools and the causes of their non-attendance. Statistics about their health and the prevalence of diseases are also being collected.

NATIONAL PLANNING IN INDIA

IN August, 1937 the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress recommended to the Congress Ministries "the appointment of a Committee of Experts to consider urgent and vital problems the solution of which is necessary to any scheme of national reconstruction and social planning."

A second resolution of the Working Committee in July, 1938 resolved that as a preliminary step to planning "the President be authorised to convene a conference of the Ministers of Industries . . . and call for a report of the existing industries operating in different provinces and the needs and possibilities of new ones."

This Conference was held in Delhi in October 1938 and expressed the view "that the problem of poverty and unemployment, of National defence and of the economic regeneration in general cannot be solved without industrialization. As a step towards such industrialization, a comprehensive scheme of national planning should be formulated."

Pursuant to this Resolution a National Planning Committee of 11 original members—subsequently added to—was constituted and the first meeting held in Bombay in December 1938.

A questionnaire issued on behalf of the Committee stated the object of National Planning to be "to improve the well being of the community, principally by intensifying the economic development of the community concerned on an all-round basis, in an ordered, systematic manner, so as to observe a due proportion between the various forms of producing new wealth, its equitable distribution amongst the members of the community, and to secure such adjustment between the interests of producers and consumers, individuals and the community collectively, the present and succeeding generations, as to maintain a proper balance between these several interests."

Twenty-nine sub-committees were appointed to report in eight major fields : agriculture ; industries ; demographic relations; commerce and finance; transport; public welfare; education and the role of women in planned economy.

Although the Congress Ministries resigned office at the outbreak of the War, the work of the National Planning Committee has continued.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Chairman of the Committee, in addressing the third meeting of the committee in Bombay, May 1940, stated that while under the changed political conditions, planning might appear to be building

castles in the air, yet "thinking and planning for the future was essential if that future was not to end in misdirected energy and chaos. . . Planning aimed at the raising of the material and cultural standard of living of the people as a whole. In India standards were so terribly low and poverty so appalling that the question of raising standards was of the most vital importance."

In view of the particular emphasis of this issue of the *Journal*, a summary of the recommendations of the Labour Sub-Committee is of interest:

1. The scope of regulations relating to the living and working conditions of labour should be expanded to include industries and occupations to which such regulation has so far not been applied.

2. If it is in the interest of the community to do so, the State should protect, subsidize or take over such industries as are not of themselves able to maintain essential human standards.

3. Working hours should be limited to 48 hours per week and 9 hours per day.

4. The provision relating to hours of work should apply to factories and workshops employing five or more persons and using mechanical power, or to factories and workshops employing ten or more persons even though not using mechanical power; to mines and quarries and public transport services using mechanical power.

5. The principle should be extended to other industrial and commercial occupations, with due regard to the nature and varying conditions of the occupation.

6. The minimum age of employment of children should be progressively raised to 15, in correlation with the educational system.

7. A special committee should be appointed to study and make recommendations for improving provisions for the health, safety, and conditions governing night work in all regulated undertakings.

8. A wage fixing machinery should be set up at an early date in all provinces, in order to secure for the workers a living wage and consider other questions relating to wages. A central board should co-ordinate the activities of provincial boards.

9. The question of housing should be considered as a national obligation. During the transition period, employers should be required to erect suitable houses for workers, provided that full provision is made for freedom of movement and association and against victimization by way of ejection during industrial disputes.

10. All industrial employees should be given at least 10 continuous working days (exclusive of public holidays) as paid holidays after 12 months' service.

11. The present rates of workmen's compensation should be examined.
12. Maternity benefit legislation should be undertaken on the general lines laid down by the Geneva Convention of 1919.
13. Legislation should be passed for the full collection of all necessary labour and other statistics.
14. The inspectorate should be strengthened in the various provinces and should include women. There should be co-operation between inspectorates of various provinces.
15. It is desirable to have uniformity and co-ordination in labour legislation throughout the whole of India.
16. Special attention should be paid to those engaged in domestic service and appropriate legislation passed.
17. Women workers should receive equal pay for equal work.
18. A system of compulsory and contributory social insurance for industrial workers should be established directly under the control of the State to cover the risks of sickness and invalidity other than those covered by the Workmen's Compensation Act. Schemes for providing alternative employment to those involuntarily unemployed, Old Age Pensions and Survivors' Pensions, and also Social Insurance to cover risks of sickness and invalidity for all, should be established directly under the State.
19. A nation wide literacy campaign should be undertaken.
20. Provision should be made for technical education of the workers by establishing day and night schools for the purpose.
21. Legislation should be passed to recognize trade unionism as an essential and integral part of the economic system.

At the conclusion of the fourth meeting of the Planning Committee, held in Bombay in June, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru stated that over 20 of the 29 reports have now been considered and that the remaining 7 or 8 will be taken up at a meeting of the full committee in the last week of August. The next step will be to lay down the general principles which should govern the Report and to prepare a draft. "The public will form some idea of how we are proceeding from the resolutions we have published. But these separate resolutions will give little idea of the full nature of the problem, which is not one of advance in one section or another, but of a full co-ordinated activity and advance in all sectors of national life . . . The task of the National Planning Committee is, in effect, never completed, for it goes on with the life and progress of the nation. But we shall complete drawing up this initial and inadequate picture of a Planned Society in India and we have no doubt that whatever changes may be made in it in the future, this edifice will serve as a secure foundation to build upon."

NATIONAL PLANNING IN THE UNITED STATES

THE economic situation in the United States was such in 1930 that there was a widespread belief that the time had come for conscious planning instead of following a policy of drift.

The first efforts at planning were directed towards a policy of public works in order to relieve unemployment and to stimulate purchasing power. In 1931, Congress passed an Act establishing a Federal Employment Stabilization Board, composed of the Secretaries of the Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture and Labour. All the construction agencies of government were instructed to prepare a six-year plan for building, together with an estimate of probable private enterprise, in order to enable the President to increase or diminish public building as the employment situation seemed to demand.

But before the scheme had gotten well under way the economic situation became so serious that Congress passed the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1933. Under this Act the President was authorized to set up a Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, one of whose functions was to prepare a comprehensive programme. A National Planning Board was created and the old Federal Employment Stabilization Board abolished and its records transferred to the new department. But though the new board carried the ambitious title "National Planning Board", its activity was in reality limited to one sphere : public works.

In 1934 the Board was again reorganized, re-christened the National Resources Board, and charged with long-term physical planning. When the N R A , which provided the legal authority under which the Board was first established, was invalidated by the Supreme Court, the National Resources Board was reconstituted by Executive Order as the National Resources Committee (June, 1935).

In the general governmental reorganization of 1939, the name was again changed to the National Resources Planning Board, and the new Board attached directly to the White House. This meant that the Board was able to deal with a wider range of public problems from the aspect of planning. The Board is now charged with the study of "problems pertaining to national resources both natural and *human*" and is instructed to report on "the general trend of economic conditions and to recommend measures leading to their improvement or stabilization."

The technical committees in 1939 were eight in number, dealing with Land, Water, Energy Resources, Public Works, Industrial, Science, Population and Local Planning. A number of valuable reports have been issued.

This section is based on an article entitled, "The National Resources Planning Board," by George Soule, in the March 15, 1940 issue of *Frontiers of Democracy*.

The move for planning in the United States has met with considerable opposition, for business naturally feels that planning under auspices other than its own will endanger its power. The man in the street has an innate distrust of anything that savours of regimentation and is particularly suspicious of so-called "brain trusts." But despite opposition and misunderstanding, progress has been registered. The concept of planning has taken root and bids fair to play an increasing part in the national life.

BOMBAY ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL SURVEY COMMITTEE

THE Bombay Economic and Industrial Survey Committee, appointed two years ago with Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas as a chairman, has recently made its report to Government. The Report discusses the general economic condition of the province with particular reference to cottage industries.

The committee feels that the plight of the peasant is so desperate that something must be done to promote and provide subsidiary occupations in order to solve the problem of rural poverty. It is proposed that Government should start a Provincial Cottage Research Institute; that an all India conference should be convened for the discussion of the place of subsidiary industries in rural economy; that Government should organise district associations, which should supply raw materials to artisans and sell their products; that Government itself should purchase products of cottage industries; that Government should examine the question of removing the duties and taxes levied on raw materials required for cottage industries by the local authorities; that Government should promote a small industries bank with a capital of Rs. 25,00,000 in order to provide financial help to such industries; that the Bombay Government should establish a system of licensing for the erection of new factories or the extension of old ones so as to secure proper regional distribution of industries in the province.

The committee further recommends that fundamental problems of transport, health and literacy be attacked immediately, for without the solution of these problems, exclusively industrial measures will not achieve their purpose.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

A STEADY increase in the number of factories and of industrial employees is revealed in the Statistics of Factories for British India, recently published.

The number of registered factories rose from 9,863 in 1937, to 10,782 in 1938—this being the highest number yet recorded. The number of factories

actually working was 9,743, or 813 more than in the previous year; of these 6,086 were perennial and 3,657 seasonal.

Appreciable progress was made in cotton ginning and weaving, coach building and motor car repairing, engineering, printing, book-binding and rice industries. There was expansion also in the hosiery, bakeries, oil, glass, cement, bricks and tiles, tea and tanning industries.

Side by side with the increase in the number of factories was the increase in the number of workers. The average number of operatives rose from nearly 16,76,000 in 1937 to 17,38,000 in 1938—again the highest figure so far recorded. The most marked increases were in Bombay, Madras, the Punjab, Bihar, Assam, Sind and the United Provinces.

In the cotton industry the number of operatives increased from 4,74,000 to 5,12,000, but in the jute mills, because of the restrictions imposed under the Bengal Jute Ordinance on concerns having double shifts, the number declined from 3,06,000 to 2,95,000.

There was a slight decline in the number of children employed, the figure being 10,742, or 91 less than in 1937. The number of women employed increased by about 9,000 to 2,41,000. Bombay was the only province where there was an appreciable increase in the number of children employed. Penal action was taken in Bombay, Bengal and Sind against irregular employment of women and children.

The safeguarding of machinery and plant received close attention in all the provinces. Steps were taken for better provision of fencing and guarding. The importance of tight-fitting clothing was brought home to factory managers.

There was steady progress with housing schemes. In the United Provinces 454 quarters have been constructed—sugar factories being responsible for the bulk of them. In Madras, housing accommodation is provided on nominal rent in many of the rice, oil and textile mills and tea factories. In Bombay, considerable progress has been made in popularising and improving the Development Department chawls. In Bengal, additional accommodation has been provided in 20 concerns and in several cases *kutch*a houses have been replaced by *pucca* ones. In the Punjab, except in the case of a few large factories, the housing conditions were unsatisfactory.

The health of the factory employees in all Provinces was reported as generally good. Ventilation, lighting and sanitary facilities in the larger establishments were on the whole adequate. Bombay continued to make progress in air-conditioning the textile mills. Experience is showing that air-conditioning is not only improving conditions, but has also increased efficiency from four to eight per cent, with fewer breakages and more even conditions for the yarn and cloth.

The nature of dust hazards which cause respiratory and other disabilities, is being investigated in Assam, Bengal, Madras and the Punjab.

REPORT OF THE BIHAR LABOUR INQUIRY COMMITTEE

THE Report of the Labour Inquiry Committee appointed by the Government of Bihar under the chairmanship of Dr. Rajendra Prasad was published the last week in June. The Report consists of 25 chapters and 281 pages and covers a wide range of subjects. Among the recommendations are the following :

(a) Due to conditions arising out of the war the matter of a compensatory allowance to correspond with the rise of the cost of living should be investigated.

(b) Ex-employees should be given the first claim on employment and preference should be given in employing the relatives of employees. Discrimination against Biharis in matter of employment should be discontinued.

(c) Government should assume power to prohibit contract labour, save in exceptional circumstances.

(d) Every establishment should have service rules, framed in consultation with the labour unions or representatives of workers and submitted to the Labour Commissioner for approval and registration.

(e) Reduction of wage-rate as a means of punishment should be abolished.

(f) Provident funds should be made compulsory save where Government specifically grants exemption.

(g) Holidays with pay should be granted to workers who have completed a minimum number of days of service in a period of 12 months.

(h) The matter of a compulsory scheme of sickness insurance on a contributory basis should be investigated.

(i) The Factories Act should be extended to all manufacturing establishments not using power, provided they employ at least 40 persons.

(j) Employers should be required to provide shelters for rest, and to maintain creches for the care of children.

(k) Government should assume power to investigate serious grievances regarding the rate of rents for workers' quarters.

(l) Workers' housing should be a statutory obligation on industry, with due reference to the financial condition of an industry. Workers should be encouraged to build homes by loans on reasonable terms and by concession leases.

(m) A debt conciliation act applicable to industrial workers should be passed.

(n) Attempt should be made to acquaint the workers with their rights under the Workmen's Compensation Act.

(o) The Payment of Wages Act should be extended to mines and quarries. All wage contracts should be reduced to writing.

(p) All trade unions which are registered and have been in existence for at least six months and command a minimum membership of 5 per cent, of the total labour force in any establishment should be recognised by that establishment for purposes of negotiation.

(q) Cases of victimisation arising out of strikes should be decided by the Labour Commissioner or any other officer authorised by him.

(r) There should be no strike or lockout without notice.

(s) Stay-in Strikes should be prohibited by law.

(t) Peaceful picketing should be permitted.

(u) An Industrial Court and a Labour Department with the Commissioner of Labour at its head should be established.

SIND INDUSTRIAL ADVISORY BOARD

AN Industrial Advisory Board of 15 members has been appointed by the Government of Sind to study problems relating to the industrial development of Sind. The Board will function for three years and will prepare schemes and examine proposals relating to industries, acting in an advisory capacity to Government.

SICKNESS INSURANCE

THE Government of India have requested the provincial Governments to consult important associations of employers and workers in an endeavour to ascertain whether they are willing to accept the principle of compulsory contributions to the proposed sickness insurance fund. The opinions elicited and the comments of the provincial Governments are to be in the hands of the Central Government by September.

WHERE WELFARE AND HOUSING MEET

AVERY useful pamphlet under the above title has recently been issued by a Joint Committee on Housing and Welfare of the American Public Welfare Association and the National Association of Housing Officials.¹

The Report stresses "that public policy and administration in welfare and housing have the same basic general objective—the groundwork for a decent, healthful, civilized way of life for all families in the community,

¹ American Public Welfare Association, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago, 25 cents.

including those at the bottom of the economic heap Many officials both in housing and welfare habitually fail to see the scope of the others' programmes and activities. To altogether too many housers welfare administration is solely or almost exclusively the granting of family relief—handing out certain sums of money or forms of script or goods to destitute families. Too large a proportion of welfare officials think of housing either as the enforcement of a few rudimentary standards of sanitation or the building of a few isolated, heavily subsidized housing projects The first job, therefore, both of housing and welfare officials, is to find out what manner of men the others are and what they are doing and trying to do."

The Report urges the co-operation of welfare and housing officials in developing reasonable housing standards. It points out that planning, building and managing low-rent housing are not simple jobs. They demand trained and specialized abilities. On the other hand, housing officials should take the advice of experienced welfare officials on housing needs, location of housing projects and family habits and requirements. Before undertaking clearance projects, housing and welfare officials should confer regarding the proper disposition of dispossessed families. They should consult together regarding tenant selection. Housing authorities should not attempt to provide extensive welfare activities. They should rather co-operate with the welfare agencies equipped to render such services.

Much sound common sense is compressed within a few small pages and a supplementary bibliography supplies a competent guide for those who desire to pursue the subject further.

WHY NOT PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WELFARE ?

IN the winter of 1936-37, The Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work organized a series of public lectures around the general theme, "Some Social Services of the Government of Bombay." It was considerable of a problem to decide what should be included under the social services, but as finally arranged the topics presented were: The Public Health Activities of Government; The Medical Programme of Government; The Work of the Labour Office; Factory Law Administration; The Administration of Workmen's Compensation; The Work of the Labour Officer; Industrial Housing; Rural Reconstruction; Co-operative Societies; and the Working of the Bombay Children Act.

A recent English volume on *Social Administration*¹ discusses such topics as Public Health, Housing, Town and Country Planning, Education, Maternity and Child Welfare Work, Employment of Children, Juvenile Delinquency,

Clarke, John J., London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd., Rev. Ed., 1939.

National Health Insurance, Labour Legislation, Unemployment, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Pensions, Blind Person's Pensions, and Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Acts.

The term "Public Welfare" is difficult of exact definition, but in general usage it refers to the public tax-supported social work carried on as a function of either the Federal, Provincial or Local Governments.

From a functional standpoint, public welfare has been described as including "all Governmental Activities for the prevention and treatment of dependency, neglect, delinquency, crime, and physical or mental handicap. It includes programmes for various type of public assistance, such as general relief, unemployment relief—whether direct or work relief, disaster relief, and assistance to special groups such as underprivileged children, the physically and mentally handicapped, and the delinquent, and the administration of public institutions for these groups. Related to these institutional programmes are probation, parole, and clinical services. Closely related to public welfare are other fields of social insurance and social planning."²

The modern conception of public welfare is thus far removed from its historical antecedents—the Elizabethan Poor Laws and subsequent "pauper legislation."

Local bodies, both official and non-official, have attempted to supply relief for the destitute and institutional care for the insane, delinquent and physically handicapped. The obvious inability of local bodies to cope with such problems in any adequate manner, has led larger units and the State Authorities themselves to establish Government Institutions for those members of society requiring special care.

In every country, the first step so far as Government was concerned, was to establish institutions for the care of the handicapped. It has been in relatively recent times that public welfare work has passed beyond the institutional stage.

Today, in any modern State, public welfare work is no longer confined to institutions. It now includes child welfare activities, family case work, old age assistance, mother's aid for the care of dependent children within the home, mother's pensions, cash payments to the needy blind, and in more recent years—unemployment relief and unemployment insurance.

The extension of the case work activities of Governments has been most interesting. Both local, and what would correspond to our Provincial Governments, have interested themselves in the placing and adoption of orphan children; work with unmarried mothers; care and education of the blind, deaf and crippled—particularly children; and case work for the mentally deficient

² Social Work Year Book, 1939, p. 348,

and delinquent. In a number of States the work of probation and parole is controlled in its entirety by State Departments of Public Welfare.

The State Welfare Authority is directly charged with the responsibility of administering such state institutions as those for the care of the insane, feeble minded, and epileptics; for dependent, neglected and delinquent children; for the physically handicapped, and the prisons and reformatories. The State Welfare Authority has also the responsibility of supervising local public institutions, such as almshouses and orphanages, and insisting that these institutions maintain a certain standard of excellence.

It has been well pointed out in this connection that "The ability of a State Department to use these powers in a constructive educational way depends as much upon the quality of the personnel employed as it does upon the statutory provisions. Effective supervision of institutions and agencies, public or private, presupposes a state department capable of exerting leadership through initiation, stimulation, and education. It is important that the State should experiment and co-operate in the establishing of standards rather than rely merely on 'inspection' for that result." ³

The object of centralizing public welfare activities in a single department of government is to prevent duplication of effort and to bring about co-ordination of the agencies in the field. At present in India, welfare functions may be found scattered through many departments of Government. A re-organization, bringing related functions together in a single department of public welfare, would, without doubt, result in an improvement of the services rendered by the various agencies.

If public welfare work is to progress satisfactorily in India, there must be not only proper administration and supervision of existing agencies, but the creation of new local agencies under the direction of the provincial authority. If funds are allotted for public welfare by the Central Government, or by the Provincial Governments themselves, it will be the task of the provincial welfare departments both to allocate funds to local bodies and to prescribe rules and standards for these bodies. They may also lay down qualifications for personnel and arrange for auditing the accounts of the local bodies. Central Government supervision of the provincial departments and thus indirectly of the local agencies should help to improve the standard of work.

The administrative control of a Provincial Department of Public Welfare might be vested in a single appointed welfare executive, or in an appointed board which would either name an executive or act jointly as the executive.

The qualifications for the public welfare administrator are a thorough knowledge of the field, and proven executive competence. The workers entrust-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

ed with carrying out the programmes should be adequately trained in modern methods of social work.

We are living in a time of rapid changes in the social field. The problems of public welfare are too complicated to be relegated to departmental subordinates with no particular genius or enthusiasm for the task in hand. They demand the continuous attention of able and well-trained minds. Is the time not at hand for the establishment of Provincial Departments of Public Welfare ?